

*On the power of mind,
unruffled by desire.*



Éliphas Lévi on the power of mind, unruffled by desire.

From *Transcendental Magic*, (PREPARATIONS) pp. 192, 193; translated by Arthur Edward Waite.
Frontispiece by Mahmoud Farshchian.

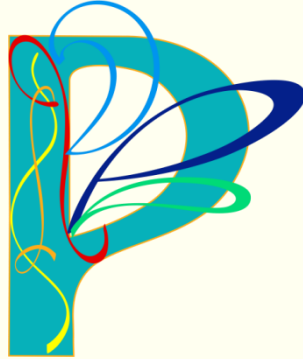
MAGICAL OPERATIONS ARE THE EXERCISE OF A NATURAL POWER, but one superior to the ordinary forces of nature. They are the result of a science and a practice which exalt human will beyond its normal limits. The supernatural is only the natural in an extraordinary grade, or it is the exalted natural; a miracle is a phenomenon which strikes the multitude because it is unexpected; the astonishing is that which astonishes; miracles are effects which surprise those who are ignorant of their causes, or assign them causes which are not in proportion to such effects. Miracles exist only for the ignorant, but, as there is scarcely any absolute science among men, the supernatural can still obtain, and does so indeed for the whole world. Let us set out by saying that we believe in all miracles because we are convinced and certain, even from our own experience, of their entire possibility. There are some which we do not explain, though we regard them as no less explicable. From the greater to the lesser, from the lesser to the greater, the consequences are identically related and the proportions progressively rigorous. But in order to work miracles we must be outside the ordinary conditions of humanity; we must either be abstracted by wisdom or exalted by madness, either superior to all passions or beyond them through ecstasy or frenzy. Such is the first and most indispensable preparation of the operator. Hence, by a providential or fatal law, the magician can only exercise omnipotence in inverse proportion to his material interest; the alchemist makes so much the more gold as he is the more resigned to privations, and the more esteems that poverty which protects the secrets of the *magnum opus*. Only the adept whose heart is passionless will dispose of the love and hate of those whom he would make instruments of his science.

The magus must hence be impassible, sober and chaste, disinterested, impenetrable, and inaccessible to any kind of prejudice or terror. He must be without bodily defects, and proof against all contradictions and all difficulties. The first and most important of magical operations is the attainment of this rare pre-eminence.

We have said that impassioned ecstasy may produce the same results as absolute superiority, and this is true as to the issue, but not as to the direction of magical operations. Passion forcibly projects the astral light and impresses unforeseen movements on the universal agent, but it cannot check with the facility that it impels, and its destiny then resembles Hippolytus dragged by his own horses, or Phalaris himself victimised by the instrument of torture which he had invented for others. Human vo-

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lition realised by action is like a cannon-ball, and recedes before no obstacle. It either passes through it or is buried in it, but if it advance with patience and perseverance, it is never lost; it is like the wave which returns incessantly and wears away iron in the end.



Suggested reading for students.



From our Living the Life Series.

- ATTUNE YOUR SELF WITH THE SELF IN ALL
- BLAVATSKY ON BUDDHISM
- BRAHMANISM IS THE ELDER SISTER OF BUDDHISM
- CAN THERE BE JOY WITHOUT LOVE?
- CHARITY EMPTIES HER PURSE WITH AN INVISIBLE HAND
- DELIGHT IN THE BEAUTY OF THE SOUL
- DENUNCIATION IS NOT A DUTY
- DISCORD IS THE HARMONY OF THE UNIVERSE
- EMERSON ON LOVE
- EVIL OMENS AND MYSTERIOUS DISEASES
- GODLESS BUDDHISM IS PHILOSOPHICAL AGNOSTICISM
- GOETHE'S MAXIMS AND REFLECTIONS
- HAPPINESS IS BUT A DREAM
- HARTMANN ON CHASTITY
- HYPOCRISY, DIAGNOSES AND PALLIATIVES
- IMPRISONED IN THE NARROW VASE OF DOGMATISM
- JUDGE ON THE UNIVERSAL APPLICATIONS OF DOCTRINE
- JUDGE ON THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD
- LET EVERY MAN PROVE HIS OWN WORKS
- LET YOUR DAILY LIFE BE YOUR TEMPLE AND GOD
- LODGES OF MAGIC
- MARCUS AURELIUS' MEDITATIONS - TR. CASAUBON
- MEDICINE OF THE MIND
- OCCULT LAWS AND PARADOXES
- OCCULT LAWS CAN BE ENTRUSTED ONLY TO THOSE WHO LIVE THE LIFE DIRECTED BY THEOSOPHY

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SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- OPPOSITE AND OPPOSING FORCES ARE CONVERTIBLE
- PARADOX IS THE LANGUAGE OF OCCULTISM
- PHILOSOPHERS AND PHILOSOPHICULES
- PLUTARCH ON HOW WE MAY PROFIT FROM OUR ENEMIES - TR. HARTCLIFFE
- PLUTARCH ON HOW WE MAY SHOW OFF WITHOUT BEING ENVIED – TR. LANCASTER
- PLUTARCH ON LOVE - TR. PHILIPS
- PLUTARCH ON MAN’S PROGRESS IN VIRTUE – TR. TOD
- PLUTARCH ON MORAL VIRTUE
- PLUTARCH ON WHETHER VICE IS SUFFICIENT TO RENDER A MAN UNHAPPY
- PROCLUS ON THE GOOD, THE JUST, AND THE BEAUTIFUL
- PROVERBIAL WISDOM FROM THE HITOPADESHA
- PYTHAGOREAN ETHICS AFTER STOBÆUS
- PYTHAGOREAN SYMBOLS - TR. BRIDGMAN
- SENTENCES BY SECTUS THE PYTHAGOREAN - TR. TAYLOR
- SERJEANT COX ON THE NEGATORS OF SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION
- SEVEN OCCULT TAMIL PROVERBS
- SPIRITUALITY IS NOT A VIRTUE
- THE ENNOBLING POWER OF THORACIC EXPANSION
- THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS THE TEMPLE OF TRUTH
- THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU BY TOLSTOY
- THE KREUTZER SONATA
- THE NELLORE YANADIS
- THE NILGIRI SANNYASIS
- THE NOBLE AIM OF EDUCATION IS TO AWAKEN THE DIVINITY WITHIN
- THE POWER TO HEAL
- THE PRAYER OF THE TRUE PHILOSOPHER IS HIS ADORATION
- THE SAYINGS OF LAO TZU - TR. GILES
- THE SCIENCE OF LIFE BY BLAVATSKY AND TOLSTOY
- THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE
- THEAGES ON VIRTUE
- THEOSOPHICAL JEWELS - LIVE IN THE IDEAL
- THEOSOPHICAL JEWELS - THE RAINBOW OF HOPE
- THOU SHALT CROUCH AT MY FEET

LIVING THE LIFE SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- TRUTH DESCENDS LIKE DEW FROM HEAVEN
- WHAT SHALL WE DO FOR OUR FELLOW-MEN?



- DESIRE PROPER IS BEING
— *in our Secret Doctrine's First Proposition Series.*
- THAT PURE DESIRE, OF WHOM LOVE IS BORN
— *in our Living the Life Series.*
- THE VOICE OF THE WILL IS THE ATOMIC POINT
— *in our Constitution of Man Series.*
- WILL AND DESIRE
— *in our Confusing Words Series.*

