



Absolute Key To Occult Science, The Tarot Of The Bohemians

Papus

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PREFACE

THE Tarot pack of cards, transmitted by the Gypsies from generation to generation, is the primitive book of ancient initiation. This has been clearly demonstrated by Guillaume Postel, Court de Gébelin, Etteila, Eliphas Levi, and J. A. Vaillant.

The key to its construction and application has not yet been revealed, so far as I know. I therefore wished to fill up this deficiency by supplying Initiates, i. e. those who are acquainted with the elements of occult science, with an accurate guide, which would assist them in the pursuit of their studies.

The uninitiated reader will find in it the explanation of the lofty philosophy and science of ancient Egypt; whilst ladies are enabled to practise the use of the divining Tarot, by methods which we have rendered easy in Chapter XX.

The book has been so arranged that each part forms a complete whole, which can, if necessary, be studied separately.

I have used every effort to be as clear as possible; the public that has warmly welcomed my other books will, I hope, forgive the imperfections inherent to a work of this kind.

PAPUS.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF THE TAROT

Approaching End of Materialism--Synthesis--The Occult Science--The Secret Societies--The Cultus--The People, Organ of the Transmission of Esoterism--The Gypsies--The Sacred Word of Freemasonry--Our Work.

"Therefore you must open the book and carefully weigh the statements made in it. Then you will know that the drug within is of very different value from the promise of the box, that is to say, that the subjects treated in it are not so frivolous as the title may imply."--RABBLAIS.

WE are on the eve of a complete transformation of our scientific methods. Materialism has given us all that we can expect from it, and inquirers, disappointed as a rule, hope for great things from the future, whilst they are unwilling to spend more time in pursuing the path adopted in modern times. Analysis has been carried, in every branch of knowledge, as far as possible, and has only deepened the moats which divide the sciences.

Synthesis becomes necessary; but how can we realize it?

If we would condescend to waive for one moment our belief in the indefinite progress and fatal superiority of later generations over the ancients, we should at once perceive that the colossal civilizations of antiquity possessed Science, Universities, and Schools.

India and Egypt are still strewn with valuable remains, which reveal to archæologists the existence of this ancient science.

We are now in a position to affirm that the dominant character of this teaching was synthesis, which condenses in a few very simple laws the whole of the acquired knowledge.

But the use of synthesis had been almost entirely lost, through several causes, which it is important to enumerate.

Amongst the ancients, knowledge was only transmitted to men whose worth had been proved by a series of tests. This transmittal took place in the temples, under the name of *mysteries*, and the adept assumed the title of *priest* or *Initiate*.¹ This science was therefore secret or occult, and thus originated the name of *occult science*, given by our contemporaries to the ancient synthesis.

Another reason for the limited diffusion of the higher branches of knowledge, was the length and difficulty of the journeys involved before the most important centres of initiation could be reached.

However, when the Initiates found that a time was approaching when these doctrines might be lost to humanity, they made strenuous efforts

to save the law of synthesis from oblivion. Three great methods were used for this purpose--

1. Secret societies,, a direct continuation of the *mysteries*;
2. The cultus, a symbolic translation of the higher doctrines, for the use of the people;
3. Lastly, the people itself became the unconscious depository of the doctrine.

Let us now see what use each of these groups made of the treasure confided to it.

THE SECRET SOCIETIES.

The school of Alexandria was the principal source from which the secret societies of the West arose.

The majority of the Initiates had taken refuge in the East, and quite recently (in 1884) the West discovered the existence in India, and above all in Thibet, of an occult fraternity, which possessed, practically, the ancient synthesis in its integrity. The Theosophite Society was founded with the object of uniting Western initiation with Oriental initiation. But we are less interested in the existence of this doctrine in the East, than in the history of the development of the initiative societies in the West.

The Gnostic sects, the Arabs, Alchemists, Templars, Rosicrucians, and lastly the Freemasons, form the Western chain in the transmission of occult science.

A rapid glance over the doctrines of these associations is sufficient to prove that the present form of Freemasonry has almost entirely lost the meanings of the traditional symbols, which constitute the trust which it ought to have transmitted through the ages.

The elaborate ceremonials of the ritual appear ridiculous to the vulgar common sense of a lawyer or grocer, the actual modern representatives of the profound doctrines of antiquity.

We must, however, make some exceptions in favour of great thinkers, like Ragon and a few others.

In short, Freemasonry has lost the doctrine confided to it, and cannot by its self provide us with the synthetic law for which we are seeking.

THE CULTUS.

The secret societies were to transmit in their symbolism the scientific side of primitive initiation, the religious sects were to develop the philosophical and metaphysical aspects of the doctrine.

Every priest of an ancient creed was one of the *Initiates*, that is to say, he knew perfectly well that only one religion existed, and that the cultus merely served to translate this religion to the different nations according to their particular temperaments. This fact led to one important result, namely, that a priest, no matter which of the gods he served, was received with honour in the temples of all the other gods, and was allowed to offer sacrifice to them. Yet this circumstance must

not be supposed to imply any idea of *polytheism*. The Jewish High Priest in Jerusalem received one of the Initiates, Alexander the Great, into the Temple, and led him into the Holy of Holies, to offer sacrifice.

Our religious disputes for the supremacy of one creed over another would have caused much amusement to one of the ancient Initiate priests; they were unable to suppose that intelligent men could ignore the unity of all creeds in one fundamental religion.

Sectarianism, chiefly sustained by two creeds, equally blinded by their errors, the Christian and the Mussulman, was the cause of the total loss of the secret doctrine, which gave the key to Synthetic Unity.

Still greater labour is required to re-discover Synthesis in our Western religions, than to find it in Freemasonry.

The Jews alone possessed, no longer the spirit, but the letter of their oral or Kabbalistic traditions. The Bible, written in Hebrew, is marvellous from this point of view, for it contains all the occult traditions, although its true sense has never yet been revealed. Fabre d'Olivet commenced this prodigious work, but the ignorant descendants of the Inquisition at Rome have placed these studies on the list of those prohibited.² Posterity will judge them.

Yet every cultus has its tradition, its book, its Bible, which teach those who know how to read them the unity of all creeds, in spite of the difference existing in the ritual of various countries.

The *Sepher Bereschit* of Moses is the Jewish Bible, the *Apocalypse* and the *Esoteric Gospels* form the Christian Bible, the *Legend of Hiram* is the Bible of Freemasonry, the *Odyssey* the Bible of the so-called polytheism of Greece, the *Æneid* that of Rome, and lastly the *Hindu Vedas* and the *Mussulman Koran* are well known to all students of ancient theology. To any one possessing the key, all these Bibles reveal the same doctrine; but this key, which can open Esoterism, is lost by the sectarians of our Western creeds. It is therefore useless to seek for it any longer amongst them.

THE PEOPLE.

The Sages were under no illusions respecting the possible future of the tradition, which they confided to the intelligence and virtue of future generations.

Moses had chosen a people to hand down through succeeding ages the book which contained all the science of Egypt; but before Moses, the Hindu Initiates had selected a nation to hand down to the generations of the future the primitive doctrines of the great civilizations of the Atlantides.

The people have never disappointed the expectations of those who trusted it. Understanding none of the truths which it possessed, it carefully abstained from altering them in any way, and treated the least attack made upon them as sacrilege.

Thus the Jews have transmitted intact to us the letters which form the Sepher of Moses. But Moses had not solved the problem so authoritatively as the Thibetans.

It was a great thing to give the people a book which it could adore respectfully, and always guard intact; but to give it a book which would enable it to live, was yet better.

The people intrusted with the transmission of occult doctrines from the earliest ages was the Bohemian or Gypsy race.

THE GYPSIES.

The Gypsies possess a Bible, which has proved their means of gaining a livelihood, for it enables them to tell fortunes; at the same time it has been a perpetual source of amusement, for it enables them to gamble. Yes; the game of cards called the Tarot, which the Gypsies possess, is the Bible of Bibles. It is the book of Thoth Hermes Trismegistus, the book of Adam, the book of the primitive Revelation of ancient civilizations.

Thus whilst the Freemason, an intelligent and virtuous man, has lost the tradition; whilst the priest, also intelligent and virtuous, has lost his esoterism; the Gypsy, although both ignorant and vicious, has given us the key which enables us to explain all the symbolism of the ages.

We must admire the wisdom of the Initiates, who utilized vice and made it produce more beneficial results than virtue.

The Gypsy pack of cards is a wonderful book according to Court de

Gébelin³ and Vaillant.⁴ This pack, under the name of

TAROT,⁵ THORA,⁶ ROTA,⁷ has formed the basis of the synthetic teachings of all the ancient nations successively.⁸

In it, where a man of the people only sees a means of amusement, the

thinker will find the key to an obscure tradition. Raymond Lulle has

based his *Ars Magna* upon the Tarot; Jerome Cardan has written a

treatise upon subtilty from the keys of the Tarot;⁹ Guillaume Postel has

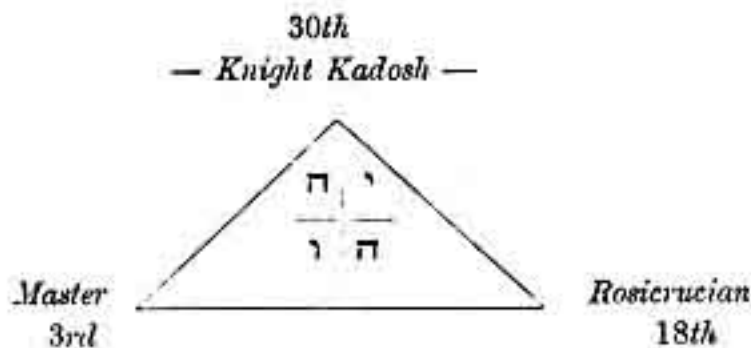
found in it the key to the ancient mysteries; whilst Louis-Claude de

Saint-Martin, the unknown philosopher, finds written in it the

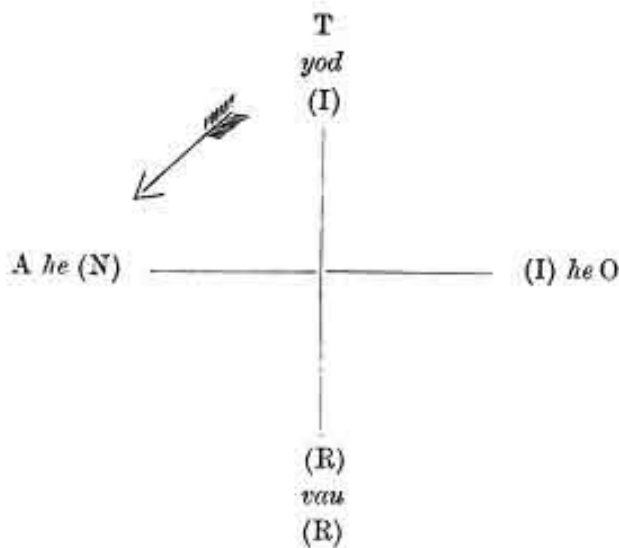
mysterious links which unite God, the Universe, and Man!

Through the Tarot we are now able to discover and develop the synthetic law, concealed in all these symbolisms.

The hour is approaching when the Missing word will be refund.
 Masters, Rosicrucian and Kadosh, you who form the sacred triangle of
 Masonic initiation, do you remember!



Remember, MASTER, that illustrious man, killed through the most
 cowardly of conspiracies; remember *Hiram*, whose resurrection,
 promised by the Branch of Acacia, thou art looking for in faith!
 Remember, ROSICRUCIAN, the mysterious word which thou hast sought
 for so long, of which the meaning still escapes thee!
 Remember, KADOSH, the *magnificent symbol* which radiated from the
 centre of the luminous triangle, when the real meaning of the letter G
 was revealed to thee!
 HIRAM--INRI--YOD--HE--VAU--HE! indicate the same mystery under
 different aspects.
 He who understands one of these words possesses the key which opens
 the *tomb of Hiram*, the symbol of the synthetic science of the Ancients; he
 can open the tomb and fearlessly grasp the *heart* of the revered Master,
 the symbol of esoteric teaching.
 The whole Tarot is based upon this word, ROTA, arranged as a wheel.



INRI! is the word which indicates the Unity of your origin, Freemasons and Catholics!

Ignis Natura Renovatur Integra.

Jesus Nazareus Rex Iudeorum are the opposite poles, scientific and religious, physical and metaphysical, of the same doctrine.

YOD-HE-VAU-HE (יהוה) is the word which indicates to you both, Freemasons and Kabbalists, the Unity of your origin.

TAROT, THORA, ROTA are the words which point out to you all, Easterns and Westerns, the Unity of your requirements and of your aspirations in the eternal Adam-Eve, the source of all our knowledge and of all our creeds.

All honour, therefore, to the Gypsy Nomad, to whom we are indebted for the preservation of this marvellous instrument, the synthetic summary of the whole teaching of antiquity.

OUR WORK.

We will commence by a preliminary study of the elements of the Kabbalah and of numbers.

Supplied with these data, we will explain the construction of the Tarot in all its details, studying separately each of the pieces which compose our machine, then studying the action of these pieces upon each other. Upon this point we shall be as explicit as possible. We will then touch upon some applications of the machine, but upon a few only, leaving to the genuine inquirer the work of discovering others. We must confine our personal work to giving a key, based upon a synthetic formula; we can only supply the implement of labour, in order that those who wish for knowledge may use it as they like; and we feel assured that they will understand the utility of our efforts and of their own.

Lastly, we will do our best to explain the elements of divination by the Tarot as practised by the Gypsies.

But those who think that occult science should not be revealed must not be too angry with us. Experience has taught us that everything may be fearlessly said, those only who should understand can understand; the others will accuse our work of being obscure and incomprehensible.

We have warned them by placing at the head of our work--

For the exclusive use of Initiates.

It is one characteristic of the study of true occult science, that it may be freely explained to all men. Like the parables, so dear to the ancients, it appears to many only the expression of the flight of a bold imagination: we need, therefore, never be afraid of speaking too openly, the Word will only reach those who should be touched by it.

To you all, philosophers of Unity, enemies of scientific, social. and religious sectarianism, I now address myself, to you I dedicate this result

of several years' study. May I thus aid in the erection of the temple which you are about to raise to the honour of the UNKNOWN GOD, from whom all the others emanate throughout Eternity!

**PART 1. GENERAL KEY TO THE TAROT,
GIVING THE ABSOLUTE KEY TO OCCULT
SCIENCE**

CHAPTER 2. THE SACRED WORD YOD-HE-VAU-HE

יהוה

The Kabbalah and the Sacred Word--The Yod--The He--The Vau--The second He--Synthesis of the Sacred Word.

ACCORDING to the ancient oral tradition of the Hebrews, or *Kabbalah*,¹⁰ a sacred word exists, which gives to the mortal who can discover the correct way of pronouncing it, the key to all the sciences, divine and human. This word, which the Israelites never uttered, and which the High Priest pronounced once a year, amidst the shouts of the laity, is found at the head of every initiative ritual, it radiates from the centre of the flaming triangle at the 33rd degree of the Freemasonry of Scotland, it is displayed above the gateways of our old cathedrals, is formed of four Hebrew letters, and reads thus, *Yod-he-vau-he*, יהוה.

It is used in the *Sepher Bereschit*, or Genesis of Moses, to designate the divinity, and its grammatical construction recalls even by its formation¹¹ the attributes which men have always delighted to ascribe to God. Now we shall see that the powers attributed to this word are real up to a certain point, for with its aid the symbolical gate of the arch, which contains the explanation of the whole doctrine of ancient science, is easily opened. It is therefore necessary to enter into some detail respecting it.

The word is formed of four letters, *Yod* (י), *he* (ה), *vau* (ו), *he* (ה). This last letter *he* is repeated twice.

A number is attributed to each letter of the Hebrew alphabet. We must look at those which relate to the letters we are now considering.

י Yod = 10

ה he = 5

וּוּוּ = 6

The total numerical value of the word יהוה is therefore

$10 + 5 + 6 + 5 = 26$.

Let us now study each letter separately.

THE YOD.

The *Yod*, shaped like a comma or a dot, represents the *principle* or *origin* of all things.

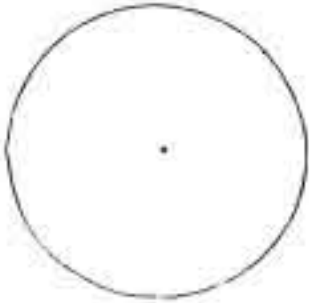
The other letters of the Hebrew alphabet are all produced by different combinations of the letter *Yod*.¹² The synthetic study of nature had led the ancients to conclude that one law only existed, and ruled all natural productions. This law, the basis of analogy, placed the Unity-principle at the origin of all things, and regarded them as the *reflections* at various degrees of this Unity-principle. Thus the *Yod*, which alone forms all the other letters, and therefore all the words and all the phrases of the alphabet, was justly used as the image and representation of this *Unity-principle*, of which the profane had no knowledge.

Thus the law which presided over the creation of the Hebrew language is the same law that presided over the creation of the Universe, and to know the one is to know the other, unreservedly. The *Sepher Yetzirah*,¹³ one of the most ancient books of the Kabbalah, proves this fact.

Before proceeding any further, let us illustrate the definition which we have just given of the *Yod* by an example. The first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, the aleph (א), is composed of four yods placed opposite to each other; the other letters are all formed on the same basis.¹⁴

The numerical value of the yod leads to other considerations. The Unity-principle, according to the doctrine of the Kabbalists, is also the Unity-end of beings and of things, so that eternity, from this point of view, is only an eternal present. The ancients used a dot in the centre of a circle as the symbol of this idea, the representation of the Unity-principle (*the*

dot) in the centre of eternity (*the circle*, a line without beginning or end).¹⁵



According to these demonstrations, the *Unity* is regarded as the *whole*, of which all created beings are only the *constituent parts*; just as the Unity-man is formed of an agglomeration of molecules, which compose his being.

The Kabbalah, therefore, places at the origin of all things the absolute assertion of the being by itself of the Ego-Unity, which is represented by the *yod* symbolically, and by the number 10. This number 10, representing the All-principle 1, with the Zero-nothing 0, well supplies the requisite conditions.¹⁶

THE HE.¹⁷

But the Ego cannot be realized except through its opposition to the Non-Ego. The assertion of the Ego is scarcely established, when we must instantly realize a reaction of the Ego, Absolute, upon itself, from which the conception of its existence will be drawn, by a kind of division of the Unity. This is the origin of *duality*, of opposition, of the *Binary*, the image of femininity, even as the Unity is the image of the masculine. Ten, divided by itself, in opposition to itself, then equals $10/2 = 5$, five, the exact number of the letter *He*, the second letter of the great sacred name.

The *He* therefore represents the passive in relation to the *Yod*, which symbolizes the active; the Non-Ego in relation to the Ego, the *woman* relatively to the *man*; the *substance* relatively to the *essence*; *life* in its relation to the *soul*, &c., &c.

THE VAU.¹⁸

But the opposition of the Ego and the Non-Ego immediately gives rise to another factor; this is the *Affinity* existing between this Ego and this Non-Ego.

Now the *Vau*, the sixth letter of the Hebrew alphabet, produced by 10 (*yod*) + 5 (*he*) = $15 = 6$ (or $1 + 5$), signifies link or analogy. It is the link

which, uniting antagonisms in the whole of nature, constitutes the third word of this mysterious Trinity.

Ego--Non-Ego.

Affinity of the Ego with the Non-Ego.

THE 2nd HE.

Nothing can exist beyond this Trinity, considered as a law.

The Trinity is the synthetic and absolute formula to which all the sciences converge; and this formula, forgotten with regard to its scientific value, has been transmitted to us integrally, by all the religious of the world, the unconscious depositaries of the SCIENCE WISDOM of primitive civilizations.¹⁹

Thus the great sacred name is formed of three letters only. The fourth term of the name is formed by the repetition of the second letter, the *He*. This repetition indicates the passage of the Trinitarian law into a new application; that is, to speak correctly, a transition from the metaphysical to the physical world, or generally, of any world whatever to the world that immediately follows it.²⁰

The knowledge of the property of the second He is the key to the whole divine name, in every application of which it is susceptible. We shall presently see *the proof of this statement*.

SUMMARY UPON THE WORD YOD-HE-VAU-HE.

Now that we have separately studied each of the letters that compose the sacred name, we will apply the law of synthesis to them, and sum up the results obtained.

The word *Yod-he-vau-he* is formed of four letters, signifying:

<i>The Yod</i>	The active principle pre eminent. The Ego = 10.
<i>The He</i>	The passive principle pre-eminent. The Non-Ego = 5.
<i>The Vau</i>	The Median letter, the <i>link</i> , which unites the active to the passive. The Affinity between the Ego and the Non-Ego = 6.

These three letters express the Trinitarian law of the Absolute.

The 2nd He The second He marks the passage from one world to another. The Transition.

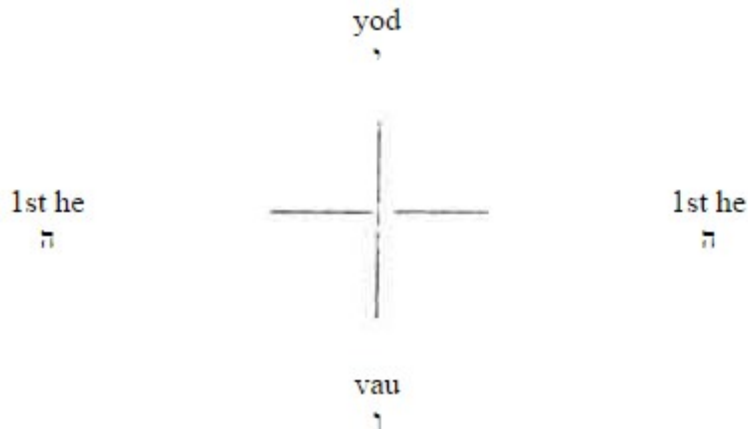
This second *He* represents the complete Being, comprising in one Absolute Unity the three letters which compose it: Ego, Non-Ego, Affinity.

It indicates the passage from the noumenal to the phenomenal or reciprocal; it serves as means of ascension from one scale to another.

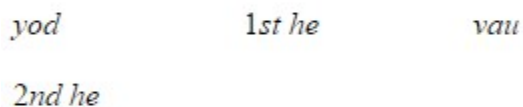
REPRESENTATION OF THE SACRED WORD.

The word *Yod-he-vau-he* can be represented in various ways, which are all useful.

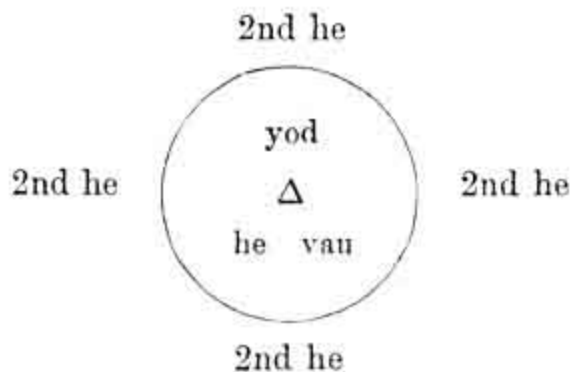
The circle can be drawn in this way--



But since the second *He*, the sign of transition, becomes the active entity in the following scale, *i. e.* since this *He* only represents a *yod* in germ,²¹ the sacred word can be represented, with the *second he* under the *first yod*, thus--



Lastly, a third method of representing the word consists in enveloping the Trinity, *Yod-he-vau*, with the tonalising letter, or second *He*, thus--



Now we will leave these data, to which we must return later on, and speak of the occult or Pythagorean conception of numbers.

CHAPTER 3. THE ESOTERISM OF NUMBERS

The Theosophic Numbers and Operations--Signification of the Numbers.

THE NUMBERS.

THE ancients had a conception of numbers which is almost lost in modern times.

The idea of the Unity in all its manifestations led to numbers being considered as the expression of absolute laws. This led to the veneration expressed for the 3 or for the 4 throughout antiquity, which is so incomprehensible to our mathematicians.

It is however evident that if the ancients had not known how to work any other problems than those we now use, nothing could have led them to the ideas we find current in the Hindu, Egyptian, and Greek

Universities.²²

What then are these operations, that our savants do not know?

They are of two kinds: theosophic reduction and theosophic addition. These operations are theosophic because they cause *the essential laws* of nature to penetrate throughout the world; they cannot be included in the science of phenomena, for they tower above it, soaring into the heights of pure intellectuality.

They therefore formed the basis of the secret and oral instruction confided to a few chosen men, under the name of *Esoterism*.

1. *Theosophic Reduction.*

Theosophic reduction consists in reducing all the numbers formed of two or several figures to the number of a single figure and this is done by adding together the figures which compose the number, until only one remains.

EXAMPLE:

$$10 = 1 + 0 = 1$$

$$11 = 1 + 1 = 2$$

$$12 = 1 + 2 = 3$$

$$126 = 1 + 2 + 6 = 9$$

$$2488 = 2 + 4 + 8 + 8 = 22 = 2 + 2 = 4$$

This operation corresponds to that which is now called the *proof by 9*.

2. *Theosophic Addition.*

Theosophic addition consists in ascertaining the theosophic value of a number, by adding together arithmetically all the figures from the unity to itself inclusively.

Thus the figure 4, in theosophic addition, equals all the figures from 1 to 4 inclusively added together, that is to say, $1 + 2 + 3 + 4 = 10$.

The figure 7 equals--

$$1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 + 7 = 28 = 2 + 8 = 10.$$

Theosophic reduction and addition are the two operations which it is indispensable to know, if we would understand the secrets of antiquity.²³

Let us now apply these rules to all the numbers, that we may discover the law which directs their progression.

Theosophic reduction shows us, first of all, that all numbers, whatever they may be, are reducible in themselves to the nine first, since they are all brought down to numbers *of a single figure*.

But this consideration is not sufficient, and *theosophic addition* will now furnish us with new light.

Through it we find that 1, 4, 7, 10 are equal to 1.

for: $1 = 1$

$$4 = 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 = 10 = 1$$

$$7 = 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 + 7 = 28 = 10 = 1$$

$$10 = 1$$

So that all the three numbers ultimately return to the figure 1, thus--

$$1. \ 2. \ 3$$

$$4. \ 5. \ 6$$

$$4 = 10 = 1$$

$$7 = 28 = 10 = 1$$

Or one could write--

$$1. \ 2. \ 3$$

$$(1)$$

$$4. \ 5. \ 6$$

$$(1), \text{ etc.}$$

The results of this consideration are: (1) That all the numbers in their evolution, reproduce the 4 first;

(2) That the last of these 4 first, the figure 4, represents the unity at a different octave.

The sequence of the numbers may therefore be written in this way--

1.	2.	3
4.	5.	6
7.	8.	9
10.	11.	12
13.	14.	15
16.	17.	18
19	

We may notice that 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, etc., are only *different conceptions* of the unity, and this may be proved by the application of theosophic addition and reduction thus--

$$\begin{aligned}
 1 &= 1 \\
 4 &= 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 = 10 = 1 \\
 7 &= 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 + 7 = 28 = 10 = 1 \\
 10 &= 1 \\
 13 &= 4 = 10 = 1 \\
 16 &= 7 = 28 = 10 = 1 \\
 19 &= 10 = 1, \text{ etc., etc.}
 \end{aligned}$$

We see that in every three numbers the series reverts to the unity abruptly, whilst it returns to it progressively in the two intermediate numbers.

Let us now repeat that the knowledge of the laws of numbers and the study of them, made as we have here indicated, will give the key to all occult science.

We must now sum up all the preceding statements in the following conclusion: that all numbers may be reduced, in a final analysis, to the series of the 4 first, thus arranged--

1. 2. 3
4

THE SIGNIFICATION OF NUMBERS.

But our knowledge of the numerical science of the ancients does not end here. It also attributed a meaning to each number.

Since we have reduced the series of all the numbers to the 4 first, it will suffice for us to know the meaning attributed to these 4 first.

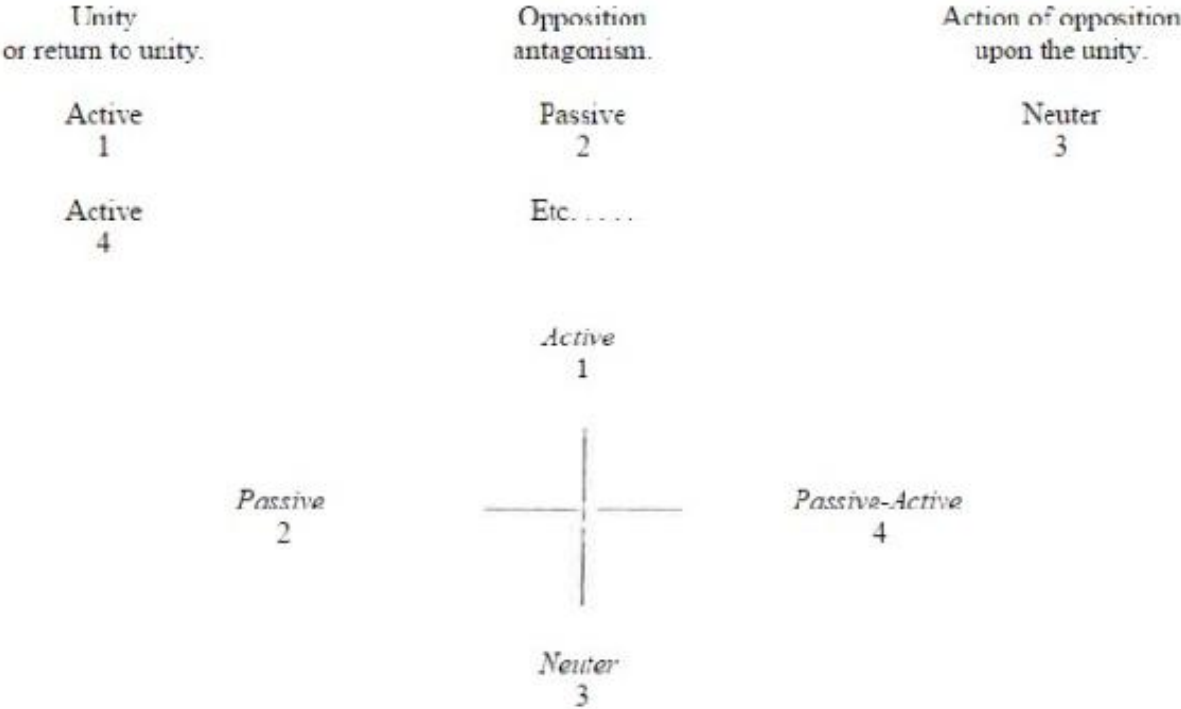
The Unity represents the creative principle of all numbers, since the others all emanate from it; it is the active principle pre-eminent.

But the Unity alone cannot produce anything except by opposing itself to itself thus 1/1. From this proceeds duality, the principle of opposition

represented by two, the passive principle pre-eminent.
 From the union of the Unity and Duality proceeds the third principle,
 which unites the two opposites in one common neutrality, $1 + 2 = 3$.
 Three is the neuter principle pre-eminent.

But these three principles all reduce themselves into the fourth, which
 merely represents a new acceptance of the Unity as an active
 principle.²⁴

The law of these principles is therefore as follows--



CHAPTER 4. ANALOGY BETWEEN THE SACRED WORD AND NUMBERS

The Kabbalistic Word and the Series of Numbers--Explanation of the Tetractys of Pythagoras--Figuration of the General Law.

NUMBERS AND THE KABBALISTIC WORD.

This sequence of numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4, representing the active, the passive, the neuter, and a second active principle, corresponds in all points with the series of the letters of the sacred name, so that the latter may be thus written--

Yod--He--Vau--

2nd He = Yod, etc.,

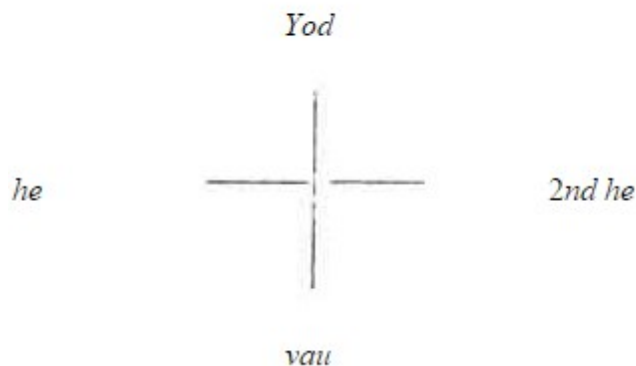
which demonstrates analogically that--

1	represents	Yod
2	---	He
3	---	Van
4	---	The 2nd He

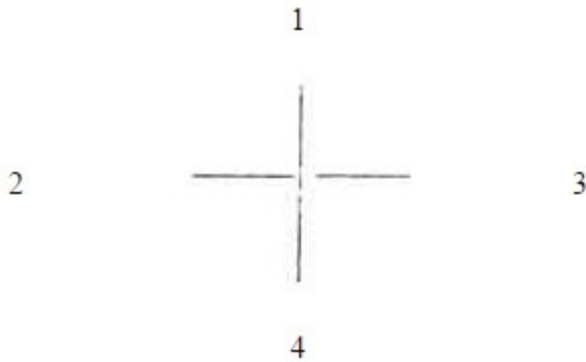
We can prove the truth of these analogies by the identity of the action of the *number 4*, which becomes a unity ($4 = 10 = 1$), and of the *second He*, which represents the Yod of the following sequence.

In comparing the two identical series we obtain the following figures--

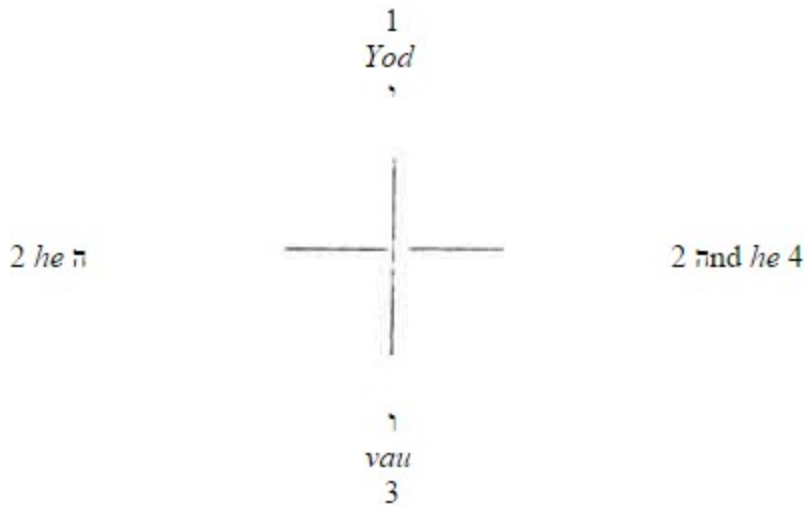
Kabbalistic sequence



Sequence of numbers



Identity of the two sequences



We can now understand why Pythagoras, initiated in Egypt into the mysteries of the sacred word *Yod-he-vau-he*, replaced this word in his esoteric teachings by the sequence of the 4 first numbers or tetractys. This sequence of the numbers is, in all points, identical with the sequence of the letters of the sacred name, and the tetractys of Pythagoras, 1, 2, 3, 4,, equals and absolutely represents the word *Yod-he-vau-he*.

The sequence of the numbers, or the sequence of the letters, therefore, resolves itself definitely into the following data--

1 Term positive and generator.

The *Yod* or the 1.

1 Term negative or generant.

The *He* or the 2.

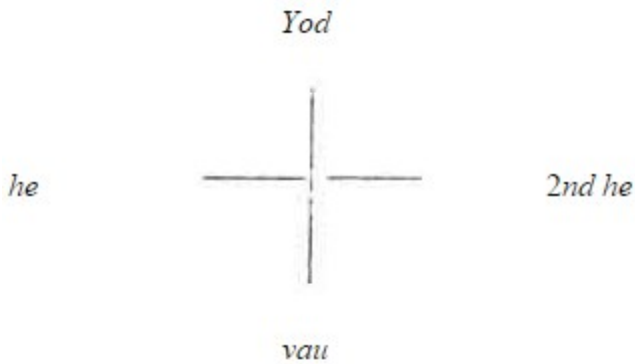
1 Term neuter or generated proceeding from the two preceding.

The *Vau* or the 3.

1 Term of transition individualizing itself in the following sequence.

The 2nd *He* or the 4.

Provided with these preliminary data, which are absolutely indispensable, let us now take our pack of cards, or *Tarot*, and see if we cannot find the universal law in it - symbolized through antiquity by the Cross.



CHAPTER 5. THE KEY TO THE MINOR ARCANA

Formation of the Tarot--Study of a Colour--The Four Figures--The Ten Numbers--Affinity between the Figures and the Numbers--Study of the Four Colours--General Study of the Minor Arcana.

THE KEY TO THE MINOR ARCANA.

THE Tarot is composed of 78 cards, divided as follows--

56 cards called the *minor* arcana.

22 cards called the *major* arcana.

The 56 minor arcana are formed of 4 series of 14 cards each.

The 22 major arcana are formed of 21 numbered cards, and of one un-numbered.

In order to study the Tarot with success, we must then arrange the following packets--

4 packets of 14 cards each.

14 + 14 + 14 + 14	=	56
1 packet of 21 cards	=	21
1 packet of 1 card	=	<u>1</u>
Total		78

We shall presently return to the origin of this marvellous conception of the human mind, but for the present we must confine ourselves to the dissection of the machine, and to displaying its mysterious arrangement. Starting from a fixed and immovable principle, the constitution of the sacred tetragrammaton, *Yod-he-vau-he*, the Tarot develops the most divers combinations, without one departure from its basis. We shall now unveil this wonderful construction, which confirms in its application the universal law of analogies.

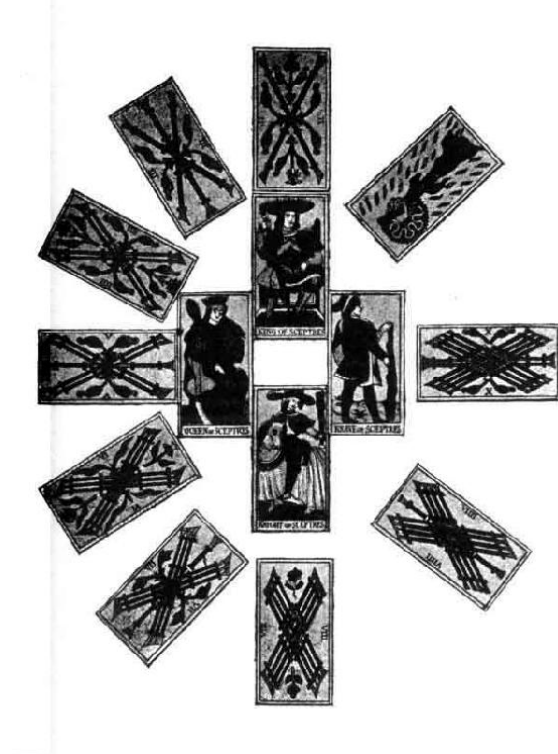
The explanations which follow may appear dry to some persons; but they must remember that we are now giving them an almost infallible key to the ancient or occult science; and they will understand that they must open the door of the sacred arch for themselves.

STUDY OF A COLOUR.

Let us now take one of the packets of fourteen cards and analyze its construction. This packet, taken as a whole, corresponds to one of the *colours* of our pack of cards. The 4 packets respectively represent the *wands* or *sceptres*, corresponding to our clubs; the *cups* or *goblets*, corresponding to our hearts; the *swords*, corresponding to our spades; and *money* or *Pentacles*, corresponding to our diamonds.

We shall now study one of these packets, for instance that of *Sceptres*.

The packet consists of 4 figures: the king, queen, knight, and knave, and of ten cards which simply bear numbers. The ace, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, and ten.



THE FOUR FIGURES.

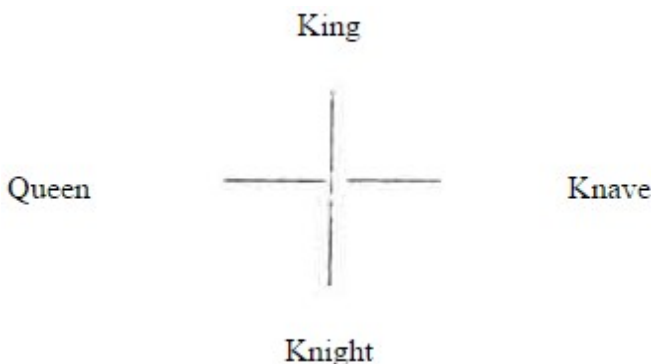
We must first consider the four figures--

The king represents the active, the man, or male.

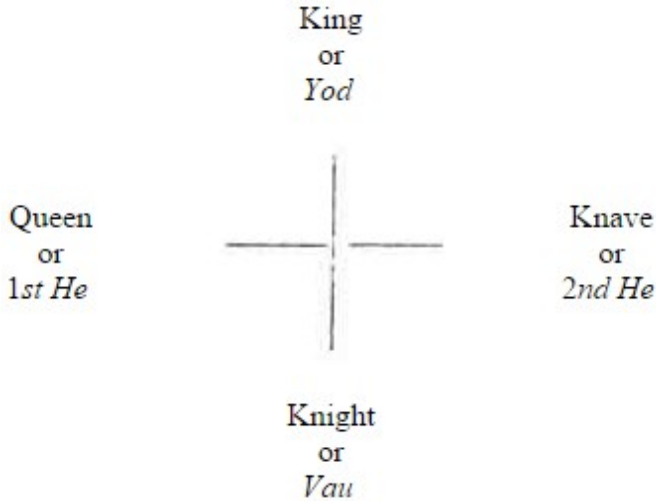
The queen represents the passive, the woman, or female.

The knight represents the neuter, the adolescent.

Lastly, the knave represents the 4th term of this sequence, which may be figured in this way--



This sequence is only an application of the general law *Yod-he-vau-he*, which we already know, and the analogy is easily established--



The knave therefore corresponds with the *second He*, i. e. it is only a term of transition; but transition between what?

Between the four figures and the ten numbers following.

THE TEN NUMBERS.

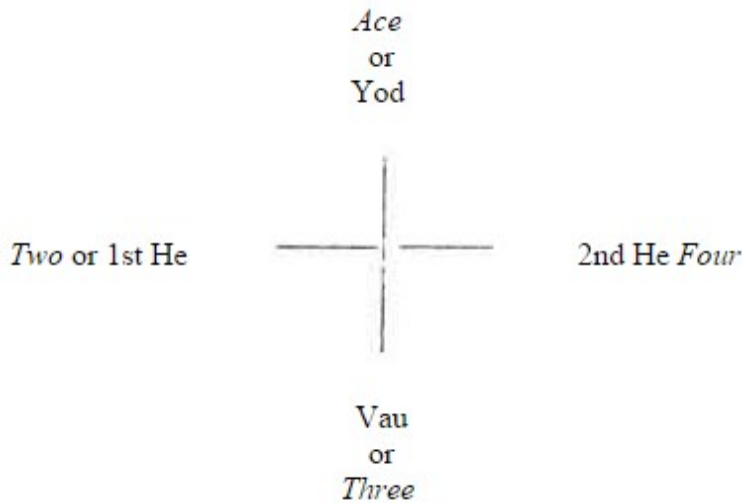
Let us now study these numbers. We are acquainted with *the Law* of numbers, or law of the sequences, which we have already stated in these terms--

- 1 -- 2. 3
- 4 -- 5. 6
- 7 -- etc.

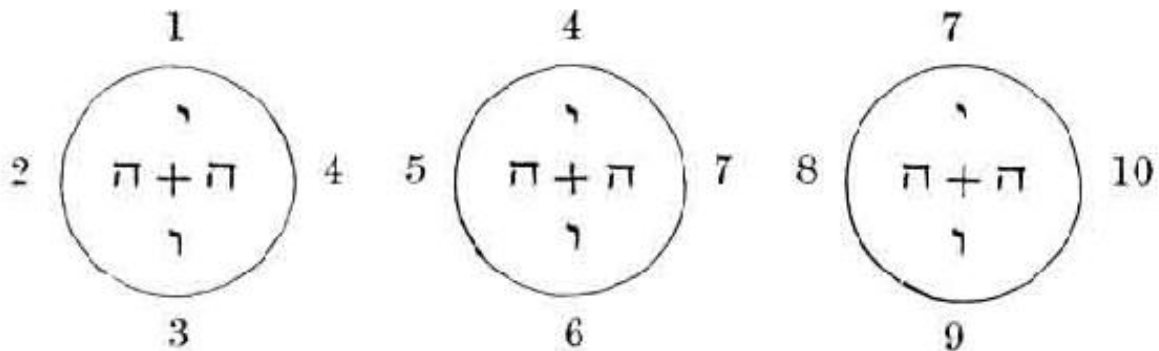
The ten cards cannot escape from this law, and we can at once arrange them in series.

The first series will be formed of the ace, or 1, representing the *active*, of the 2 personating the *passive*, of the 3 for the *neuter*, and lastly of the 4, which represents the transition from one series to another.

1, 2, 3, 4 therefore correspond also with the *Yod-he-vau-he*, and are thus formulated--

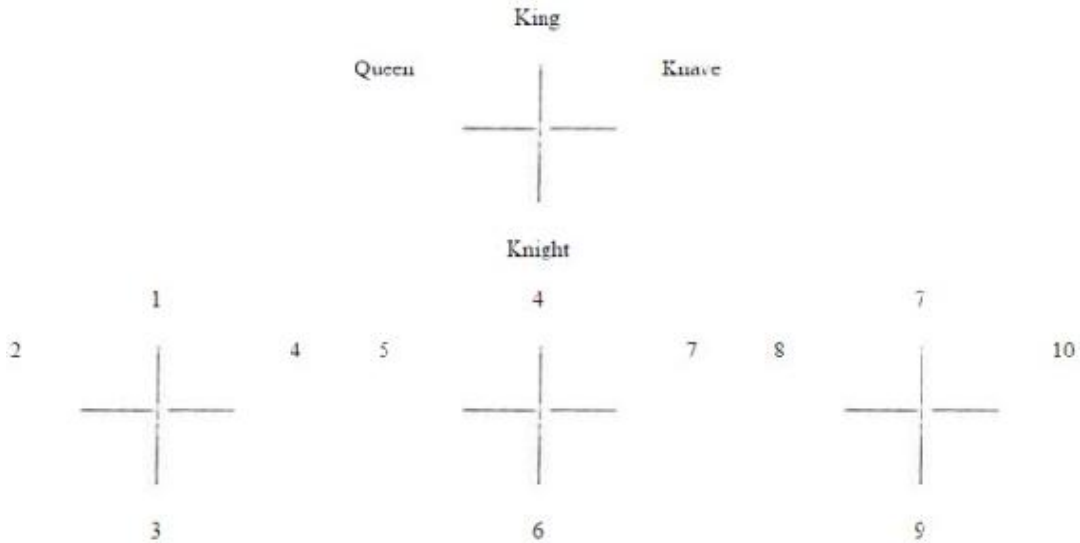


The other series follow the same rule exactly, the *second He* of the preceding series becoming the *Yod* of the following, series: thus 4, the fourth term of the first series, becomes the first term of the second series; 7, the fourth term of the second, becomes the first term of the third, as follows--



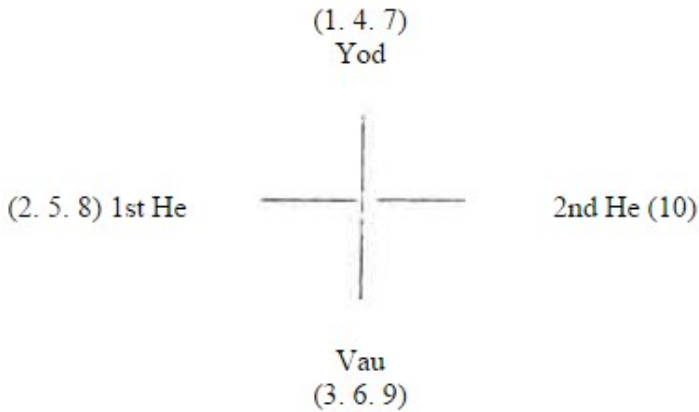
We see that the same law, *Yod-he-vau-he*, can be applied to these series. Since this law is also applicable to the four figures, we can make a comparison based on the following proposition--
Two terms (the numbers and the figures) equal to a same third (the law *Yod-he-vau-he*) are equal between themselves.

THE SEQUENCE IN ONE COLOR



If we now group all the numbers of the sequence according to the letter of the tetragrammaton, to which they are analogous, we shall find--

- Representing *Yod* 1--4--7
- Representing the 1st *He* 2--5--8
- Representing the *Vau* 3--6--9
- Representing the 2nd *He* 10



The figure 10 therefore acts for the *numbers*, as the knave acts for the *figures*, that is to say, it serves as a *transition*. Between what? Between one colour and another.

AFFINITY BETWEEN THE FIGURES AND THE NUMBERS.