

NEW DIMENSIONS

Our ideal is to promote a wider understanding of what occultism stands for—and to open the way to unity of purpose among all esoteric schools.

Basil Wilby—EDITOR

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MAKING MAGICK WORK

by MARGARET BRUCE

Margaret Bruce is a professional occultist specialising in the creation and preparation of Instruments of the Art, Ritual and Devotional Incenses, Talismans, Perfumes, Medicinal and Occult Herbs, Oils and Magical Robes, Symbols and Tools. She prefers the spelling 'Magick' in order to distinguish her calling from stage illusionists on the one hand and rank superstition on the other. "Magick is a way of life for the young in heart," she says and in this first of a series of articles gives detailed instructions on how to 'magnetise' an amulet.

THE LATE Aleister Crowley defined Magick as "The Science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will." Giambattista della Porta, the author of "Magia Naturalis", a book of Natural Philosophy first published in Naples in the year 1558, claimed that there were two kinds of Magick, ***"the one is infamous, and unhappie, because it hath to do with foul spirits, and consists of Inchantments and wicked curiosity; and this is called Sorcery . . . The other Magick is natural . . . nothing else but the survey of the whole course of Nature."***

There are scores of other definitions of Magick and most of them are conflicting. The truth is that all these ideas are to some extent correct because Magick permeates every sphere of life and nature. It is principally a way of thinking which is the very opposite of intellectualism. That is why it is impossible for an intellectual person to grasp the real meaning of Magick. This inability to use or understand Magick bears no relationship to intelligence or education but depends entirely upon how far we have been conditioned away from the pattern of thinking with which we were born.

Every child comes into the world with the innate ability to use Magick. Many infants do exactly that until they are weaned away from their natural sensual and emotional pattern of thinking and forced, by means of environmental conditioning, into conforming to thought patterns based on the materialistic concept of logic. Magickal thinking is intuitional, being based on neither logic nor step-by-step reasoning, but on "just knowing." The prodigy who, without any tuition, can make lightning calculations, is following this method of intuitional thought. It baffles the intellectual simply because he cannot visualize a thought process that by-passes the conscious mind.

A feature of the ability to think in terms of Magick is that one can keep a flexible mind and accept ideas which, at first sight, may appear to be conflicting. The Garden of Eden, Darwin's theory of Evolution, the cosmogonic themes of Thebes and Heliopolis are all simultaneously acceptable to one who "thinks Magick". They are simply different aspects of a single eternal truth as observed from different levels of thought. Children have little difficulty in accepting these seemingly conflicting ideas and they don't get half so confused as

adults in the process. A child can create a very substantial world out of make-believe without becoming in any way deluded or confused. An ordinary match-box may become a house, a motor-car, a bed or an animal and yet still retain its reality as a match-box in the mind of an infant. I well remember a psychologist friend addressing a group of small children who were playing soldiers. "What sort of gun is that you have there?" he said to a four-year-old who was busy taking aim. The grubby little face regarded my friend with a look of undisguised scorn. "That's not a gun; it's my mummy's umbrella!" Children have imagination; it's adults who have delusions!

The admonition to "become as little children" is a piece of sound advice to anyone who hopes to make Magick work and yield practical results. Be as sceptical and critical as you like provided that you re-learn the art of thinking with the heart instead of with the intellect. Once this is achieved, your critical faculty becomes an asset instead of a millstone that prevents your imagination soaring to the heights of which it is capable. This ability to "think with the heart" is an essential pre-requisite of any successful act of Magick, whether it may be a simple folk charm or else an involved piece of Qabalistic ritual. There are many distinguished and brilliant people who have written the most scholarly books on folk-lore and Magick, but, because of their intellectual pattern of thinking, they find it impossible to put into practice the simplest of magickal acts. On the other hand, those most highly skilled in the practical use of Magick often turn out to be simple and unlearned—but far from unintelligent—folk. Most of them know nothing more than, that when they say and do certain things, a magickal result follows.

The sort of person most likely to have retained the ability to think in terms of Magick is one who inclines towards the arts rather than the sciences. He tends to be creative and a lover of nature. If you are the sort of person who gets frequent reliable hunches, the chances are you will be able to make Magick work if only you try. Feminine intuition is just an aspect of natural unconditioned thinking and is often worth more than a lot of logic. Actors and actresses are likely to have a more or less natural inclination towards Magick. After all, every ritual is a piece of play-acting, using gesture, words and "props" in order to bring the mind into a particular condition.

Putting Magick into practice isn't at all complicated or difficult once you understand that the only thing preventing you from working minor miracles is the way you have been brought up to think. You don't need faith or gullibility but only the knack of thinking with the heart. Just as a little experiment, say the word "warm". Close your eyes and repeat the word "warm" again. The chances are that you see a mental picture of the printed word. This is intellectual thinking and not emotional thinking so try again. Erase the printed word from your mind and replace it with a picture. Now what do you see? A cosy fireside or else a beach in the sunshine? This is an improvement but now you must go a step farther and actually *experience* the warmth. Make your mind-picture so real that you can stretch out your hand and feel the heat of the fire or the rays of the sun warming your flesh and making it tingle. With practice you should be able to utter the word "warm" and produce a clear mind picture and actual physical sensation of warmth. This is one of the first steps in practical Magick and is really a simple form of invocation. Ideally it should be possible, by utter-

ing a word in the correct manner, to create the very thing you have named. In the temples of Ancient Egypt, the power to create conditions simply by uttering the right words with the correct intonation and mind picture was called "*hekau*". This is the sort of idea which the intellectual cannot accept; the reason being that most of his words are divorced from their emotional and sensual associations and have become dead symbols, to be used purely as a means of communication and to express ideas rather than emotion. In Magick a word is an integral part of the thing it names.

As an illustration, lets get back to children, those mortals who have not had time to be hoodwinked by the mind-deadening processes of civilization. Mention cookies to a small boy and see his eyes light up. For him, words still live and are capable of working Magick. He doesn't simply *hear* the word "cookies". He actually sees, smells, feels, and tastes the delicious, curranty, golden-brown, scrumptious piece of confectionary in the, as yet unspoiled, realms of his young mind. The adult who wants to really make use of Magick must re-learn the art of thinking in this way. Learn to make words evoke some signs of life in your mind rather than bounce off the defensive armour of materialism like hailstones off a tin roof. Let words and ideas fill your mind with tastes, scents, textures and emotions. To put it another way, become young in heart, for this is the beginning of true Magick.

How about applying this attitude to the achievement of magickal effects? Well, the simplest of spells consists of two main ingredients; a ritual which indicates in symbolic form how the power is to act, and the power itself which is compressed emotion. The simple idea behind any spell or ritual is to nullify, for a time, the effects of the mind conditioning, resulting from contact with the Graeco-Roman brand of intellectualism upon which our civilization is based. An effective spell should drive the mind over the brink of consciousness and away from the limitations of material being. It achieves this by means of imposing a mental strain which can take any form, from shock, ordeal or extreme fatigue, to the repetition of mantras or else the acceptance of some idea which goes against all logic. The method matters very little but the result is that the consciousness is displaced so that the mind is able to function in its original and natural primordial manner.

Experiments in the field of space research, in which a human "guinea-pig" is subjected to tests involving lack of physical sensation, intense fatigue and solitude, sometimes produce the very results that the magician strives so hard to attain by means of his rituals. The phenomena which are written off by experimenters as "hallucinations", are really examples of magickal thinking; the sort of thinking that changes ideas into facts and abstract concepts into living things without the tedious process of conscious reasoning. This imposition of a strain upon the mind is an essential part of any magickal act because it is this which tunes the mind to the level of consciousness upon which one wishes to work. The old Grimoires called these levels the "Heavens" or the "Aethyrs" and they were said to be the dwelling places of Angels, Daemons, and elemental spirits—this is seen to be true once one understands the nature of such entities.

Magick is essentially a primitive thing, however sophisticated certain branches of it may appear. It cannot be undertaken like some cold scientific experiment, because it depends for its results upon a mind inflamed with Love, Hatred,

Religious Fervour or some other all-consuming emotion. If one performs an act of Magick that has no personal emotional associations then one must raise these emotions by means of ritual. One must strive to weep real tears, feel the gnawing pangs of Love, melt in an ecstasy of religious frenzy. Magick is not for insipid or lukewarm people because only a passionate intensity of purpose can supply the life power that changes intention into accomplished fact.

One of the first things to be learned in the practical application of magickal principles, is how to "magnetize" or imbue objects with amuletic or other occult properties. Ideally, this should be done with an object you have created yourself, from the gathering together of the basic materials right through to the last finishing touch. However, it is possible to simplify the whole process and still retain an element of sound magickal practice. Let us assume that you want to make a small knitted garment which is to have amuletic properties. If you intend making it for someone you love, there you have the emotional Force that will put your spell into action. The first step is to bless the wool and the knitting needles which should all be brand new. Use your own words and don't forget to make them *living* words and not just a thoughtless mumble. Such a blessing can be quite simple. The traditional form goes something like this, "*Blessed be, thou creatures of thy kind. Thee I consecrate to my purpose and to the successful accomplishment of my aims.*"

As you make your first stitch you say a short mantra, introducing the name of the one for whom the garment is intended, together with the name of his or her mother, like this; "*Blessed be Frank, son of Elizabeth.*" If the garment is for yourself, you should use your own name and that of your mother in the same way.

This little mantra has to be repeated at every single stitch until the garment is finished! Tedious and monotonous? Of course it is; but this is the mental strain that will edge your mind over the brink of consciousness. As you repeat the words they will gradually cease to have their ordinary meaning. You will begin to see them as shapes, sounds, sensations and in fact anything but commonplace words. Gradually, tedium will give way to a feeling of intense peacefulness, which is a sign that your Magick is working. When you reach the finish of the garment, the chances are you will be quite reluctant to break off the soothing, rhythmic process of weaving (or knitting) your magickal spell. For best effect the article should be without pattern so that it can be completed without your having to break off the recitation of your mantra. A scarf or shawl is the ideal thing to make because it can be finished in one long session even if this means going without a meal. Little sacrifices like that are all a part of practical Magick.

The effect of such a garment on the wearer varies according to the degree of intensity that went into its creation. Usually it turns out to be a really "lucky" article of clothing. Things will just "seem to go right" when it is worn and it should have definite soothing properties which will be apparent to anyone suffering from a troubled mind. The degree of its power will depend entirely on the effort that went into its making; this is a most important point to remember. Magick is not a substitute for intelligence and hard work, nor is it simply a matter of waving a wand or reciting a spell. Neither is Magick a short cut to health, happiness, power or easy money. Rather it is a way of life for the young in heart who can still hear, and respond to, the call of the Old Gods.