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MAGICK IS REAL

by MARGARET BRUCE

"What is your real purpose in studying occultism?" is the challenging question of practising magician Margaret Bruce. To many it is just to escape from reality, and theoretical "pie in the sky" is preferred to the achievement of practical results. If it works, it must be "Black" is the timid cry of many armchair or lecture room occultists. Yet real magic is not a form of escapism but a method of facing reality and remoulding it in accordance with Will.

WHY ARE YOU reading this article? No, I mean the real reason, which is almost certainly not the obvious one. All right then, read a little further before you decide on the answer.

Some years ago a prominent and successful business man called on me and expressed a deep interest in occultism and a wish to study the subject really seriously. "Would it not be possible," he asked, "for me to join a witch coven?" He had read a considerable number of books on the subject of the witch cult and felt that here was the answer to what he was seeking. He gave a brilliant discourse on paganism and presented soundly logical and rational reasons why he should join a pagan group.

When he had finished, I offered him a cigarette and said, "Now tell me the real reason why you want to join a pagan group!" He blushed, stammered, and then began a long confession. The mask of formality was gone and he was pouring out the

story of his unhappy childhood, his unsatisfactory marriage and the sheer aching need for sexual relief that was the real motivating force behind his every action.

It was a full twenty minutes before he stopped talking and then he leaned back in his chair and, for the first time since his arrival, looked relaxed and perfectly at ease. He smiled. "This is the most revealing conversation I have ever had in my life," he said at length, obviously not realising that, apart from my original question, he alone had been doing all the talking. He was an intelligent man and soon saw that he could find the emotional outlet he needed through the opposite sex without going to the lengths of swearing solemn allegiance to some "high priestess" or "magus". I don't know if he found what he wanted but he certainly discovered that his interest in paganism was a piece of camouflage as misleading to himself as to those

with whom he came into contact. The energies he might have dissipated in an occult wild goose chase, he was able to direct towards the improvement of his business. Instead of pursuing a delusion he kept his feet on the ground and used his energy where it would produce the best results. That is, in brief, the whole art of Magick. He discovered it in the only place where Magick is to be found—within his own heart and by his own efforts.

Dozens of people write to me every week, describing themselves as "earnest seekers". Seekers after what? "TRUTH!" they reply, in capital letters. To which the only retort is "Quid est veritas?"—"What is truth?"—or, if I happen to be in impatient mood "Hooey!" If you are genuinely an earnest seeker and you wish to make use of Magick, the basic essential is to know precisely what it is you are seeking. Be honest with yourself and name it! The majority of "earnest seekers" are looking for an escape from reality, a tendency that is reflected in their everyday circumstances. They are usually incapable of holding a job, of uttering a coherent sentence or of showing a spark of moral courage. Their favourite topic of conversation is self. Their way of life is death to Magick because they are impractical people. Magick is essentially practical and concerned with solid material results.

Nobody would try to buy a diamond tiara at the greengrocery shop and yet there are plenty of people who do this in the occult sense.

Having failed to define what they are seeking, they wander in the dark labyrinths of phoney occultism looking for "truth". Remember that truth is merely a word. Discover the reality that it represents for you personally and you are well on the way to achieving your object. The possibility is that the truth you are seeking isn't the thing of Light and Purity you would like to imagine. Don't worry, we are all human and if all you are seeking is a slinky limousine, wall-to-wall carpeting or the freedom to live it up whenever you feel like it your aims are probably still more worthy than those of many an "adept" whose analogies and euphemisms, like Charity, cover a multitude of sins.

Knowing what you want is half the battle in practical Magick. Knowing the order of importance of your aims is the other half. There is little point in using magickal invocations for World Peace if you are always bickering with your marriage partner or neighbours, although this is the sort of ludicrous situation that often prevails when interest in things occult is really an unconscious cover-up for a wish to escape from things as they are. Magick is not a form of escapism. It is a method of facing reality and remoulding it in accordance with the Will. A successful business man does exactly that. An artist or sculptor does the same. Their Magick is still Magick even although they may scoff at occultism.

It is this utterly down-to-earth and practical quality of real Magick that produces shocked cries of "Left

Hand Path!" from those who prefer an amorphous occult philosophy to a workable method of altering circumstances in accordance with the Will. The assumption appears to be that, if it works, it must be Black Magic—whatever that might be! The aversion to making use of a knowledge of Magick for betterment of one's circumstances seems to be almost pathological. This is due probably to the artificial pattern of thinking which separates Magick from everything else instead of regarding it as a continuation of natural law. A farmer who refuses to consume part of his own produce on the grounds that the rest of humanity should have priority might well be thought a fool. By the same rule, a professed "adept" who lives in poverty and unhappiness is deserving of similar epithets provided that he is not merely suffering from the delusions of mental sickness. Unless Magick produces solid and substantial material as well as spiritual benefits it is a complete and utter delusion and one would be better occupied backing horses or washing dishes. The treasures of Magick are real treasures. The jewels of Magick are the real Hatton Garden Macoy and not fairy gold that turns to withered leaves before one's eyes. An invocation for a means of transport should produce a four-engine jet plane, a chauffeur-driven automobile or a reserved seat in a first class Pullman coach. This is reality, not a cloud cuckoo land of sick daydreams.

It is this realistic approach that distresses the average student whose experience has usually been limited to "spiritual exercises". These are, all too frequently, regarded as an end in themselves instead of simply a limbering-up in preparation for action. Practising golf swings in the lounge is all very well provided that one intends to play the game seriously.

In practical Magick one uses the best method for the job. This may mean rolling up your sleeves, donning a pair of dungarees and getting your hands dirty and blistered. It could entail appearing at a cocktail party in your zingiest dress and practically seducing some prominent guest whose support might be needed in a new venture. This is Magick! The real thing. The power that topples thrones, builds empires and, to quote a classical Grimoire, "procureth Gold, Gems and Riches. Obtaineth favour and benevolence and raiseth men to honours . . ."

Besides the thurible, the wand and the incenses, the instruments of Magick are such things as the typewriter, the telephone and the computer. The robes of Magick may be anything from blue jeans to a swish cocktail dress and the Temple can be a beauty salon, a board room or a night club.

If you happen to be an earnest seeker perhaps you have now decided what is the Truth you are seeking. If you have been honest with yourself and have accepted the reality of Magick, the way is open to the attainment of your desires.