

**Absolute Key to Occult Science**

# **The Tarot of the Bohemians**

**The Most Ancient Book in the World. For the Exclusive Use of Initiates**

**By PAPUS**

[Gérard Anaclet Vincent Encausse, b. 1865 d. 1916]

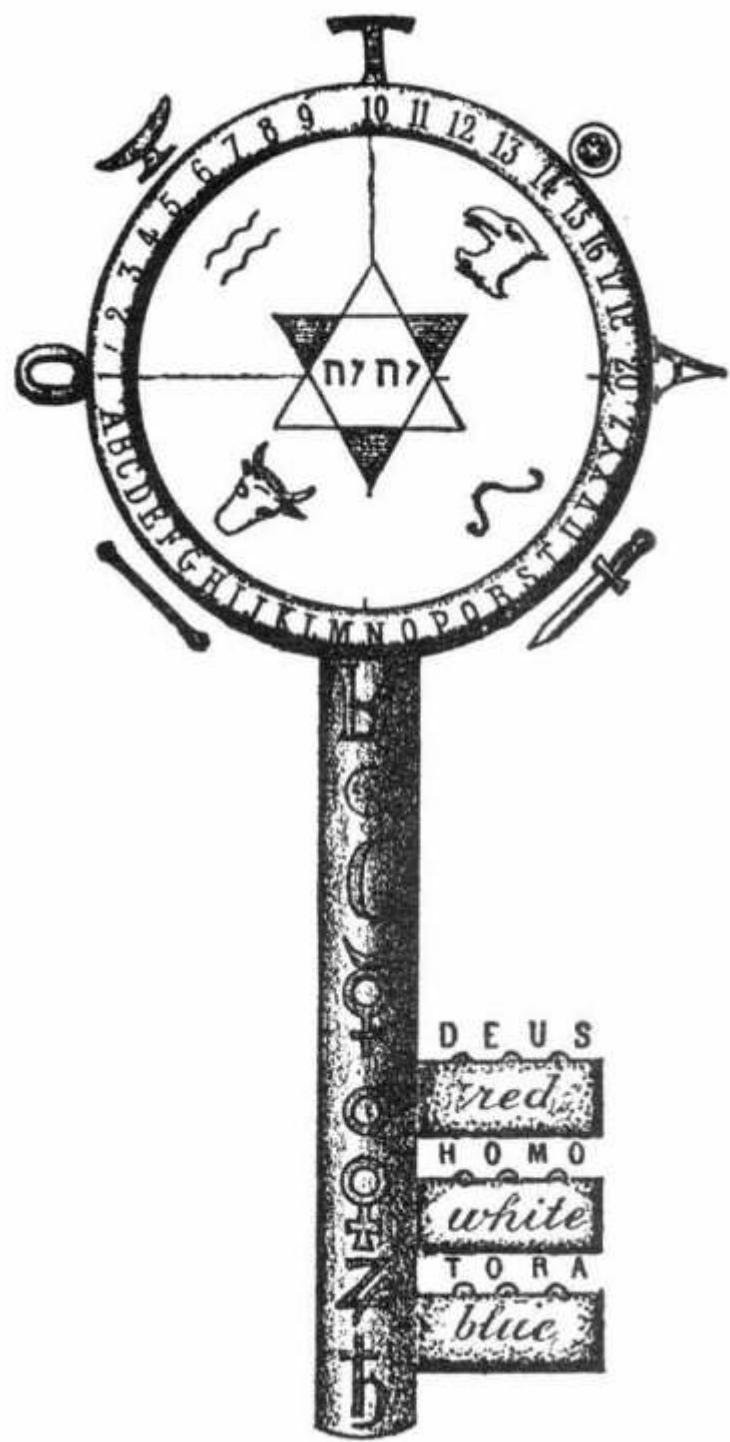
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To The Occult Science  
AND  
TO ALL ITS DISCIPLES.

# 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*

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# THE TAROT.

## CHAPTER I.

### 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*. 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. 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 *Aeneid* 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.

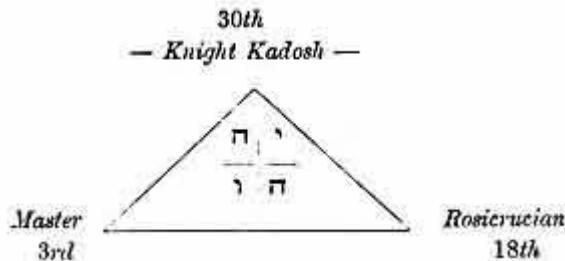
We must admire the wisdom of the Initiates, who utilized vice and made it produce more beneficial results than virtue.

The Gypsy pack of cards is a wonderful book according to Court de Gébelin and Vaillant. This pack, under the name of TAROT, THORA, ROTA, has formed the basis of the synthetic teachings of all the ancient nations successively.

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; 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 refound. 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!

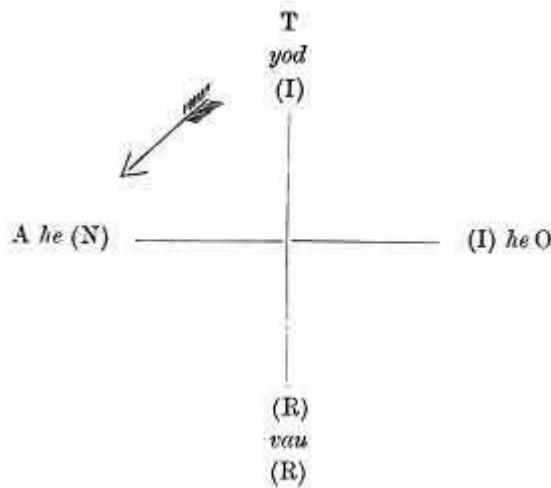
Remember, ROSICRUCIAN, the mysterious word which thou hast sought for so long, of which the meaning still escapes thee!

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!

*Igne Natura Renovatur Integra.*

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

YOD-HE-VAU-HE (יהוָה) 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.

# PART I.

## GENERAL KEY TO THE TAROT, GIVING THE ABSOLUTE KEY TO OCCULT SCIENCE.

# CHAPTER II.

הוהי

## THE SACRED WORD YOD-HE-VAU-HE.

*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*, [1](#) 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*, [הוהי](#).

It is used in the *Sepher Bereschit*, or *Genesis* of Moses, to designate the divinity, and its grammatical construction recalls even by its formation [1](#) 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.

• *Yod* = 10

[ה](#) *he* = 5

[ו](#) *vau* = 6

The total numerical value of the word [הוהי](#) is therefore

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

Let us now study each letter separately.

## THE YOD.

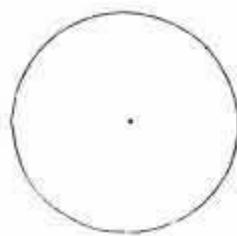
The *Yod*, shaped like a comma or a dot, represents the *principle* or *origin* of all things.

The other letters of the Hebrew alphabet are all produced by different combinations of the letter *Yod*.<sup>1</sup> 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 *Sefer Yetzirah*,<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup>

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).<sup>1</sup>



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.<sup>2</sup>

## THE HE. 1

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.

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.

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.

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:

*The Yod*                    The active principle pre-eminent.

                                  The Ego = 10.

*The He*                    The passive principle pre-eminent.

                                  The Non-Ego = 5.

*The Vau*                    The Median letter, the *link*, 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.

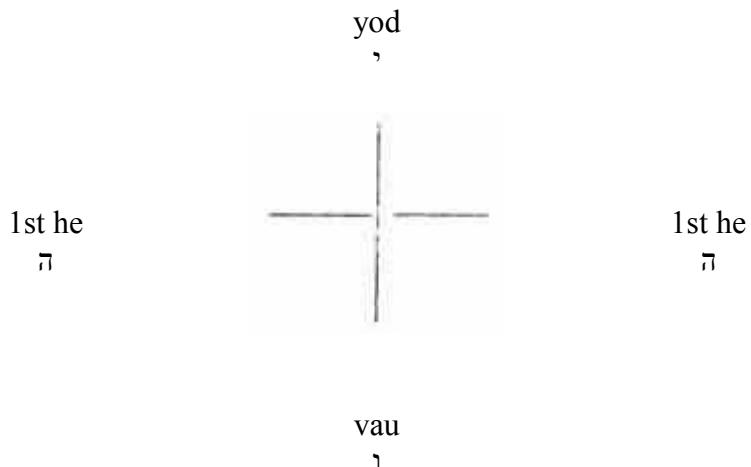
This second *He* represents the complete Being, comprising in one Absolute Unity the three letters which compose it: Ego, Non-Ego, Affinity.

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.

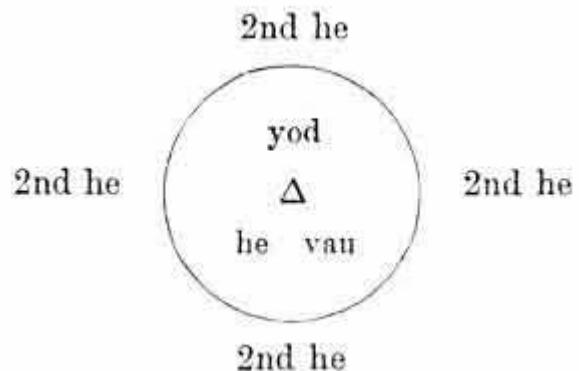
The circle can be drawn in this way



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, the sacred word can be represented, with the *second he under the first yod*, thus—

*yod*                    *1st he*                    *vau*  
*2nd he*

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 III.

## 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.

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.

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--

$$1. \ 2. \ 3 \qquad \qquad 4. \ 5. \ 6$$

$$4 = 10 = 1 \qquad \qquad 7 = 28 = 10 = 1$$

Or one could write--

$$1. \ 2. \ 3$$

(1)

$$4. \ 5. \ 6$$

(1), 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--

$$1 = 1$$

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

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

$$10 = 1$$

$$13 = 4 = 10 = 1$$

$$16 = 7 = 28 = 10 = 1$$

$$19 = 10 = 1, \text{etc., etc.}$$

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 acceptation of the Unity as an active principle.

The law of these principles is therefore as follows--

Unity or return to unity.	Opposition antagonism.	Action of opposition upon the unity.
Active 1	Passive 2	Neuter 3
Active 4	Etc. . . .	
	<i>Active</i> 1	
<i>Passive</i> 2	+ +	<i>Passive-Active</i> 4
	+ +	
	<i>Neuter</i> 3	

# CHAPTER IV.

## 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	---	Vau
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.

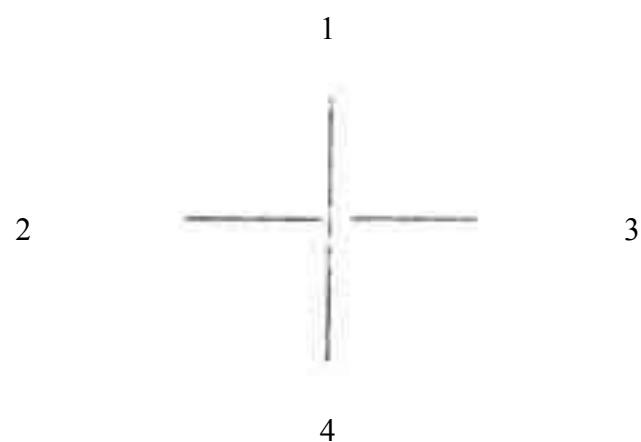
In comparing the two identical series we obtain the following figures--

*Kabbalistic sequence*

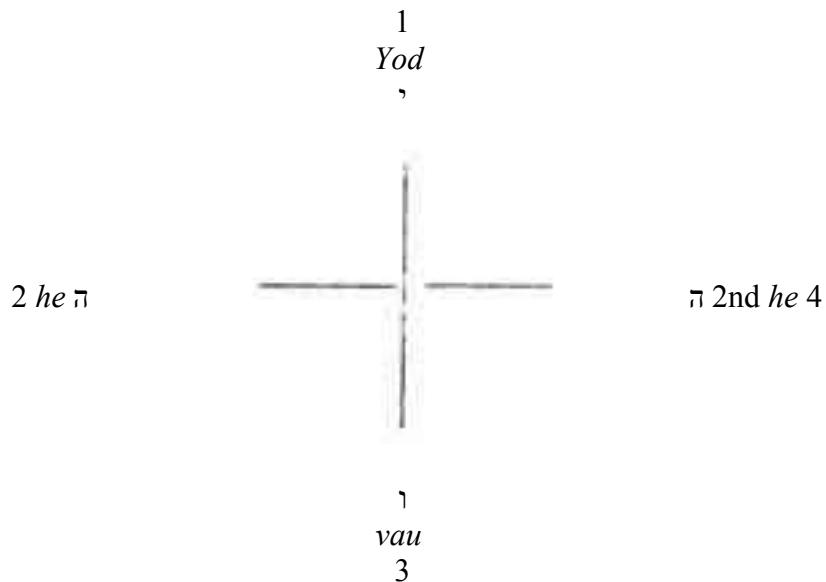
*Yod*



*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.

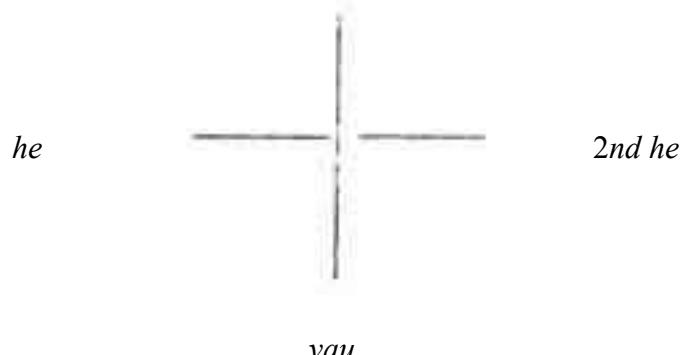
The *Vau* or the 3.

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--

*Yod*



symbolized through antiquity by the Cross.

# CHAPTER V.

## 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 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.

$$14 + 14 + 14 + 14 = 56$$

$$1 \text{ packet of 21 cards} = 21$$

$$1 \text{ packet of 1 card} = \underline{1}$$

$$\text{Total . . . . .} \quad 78$$

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.

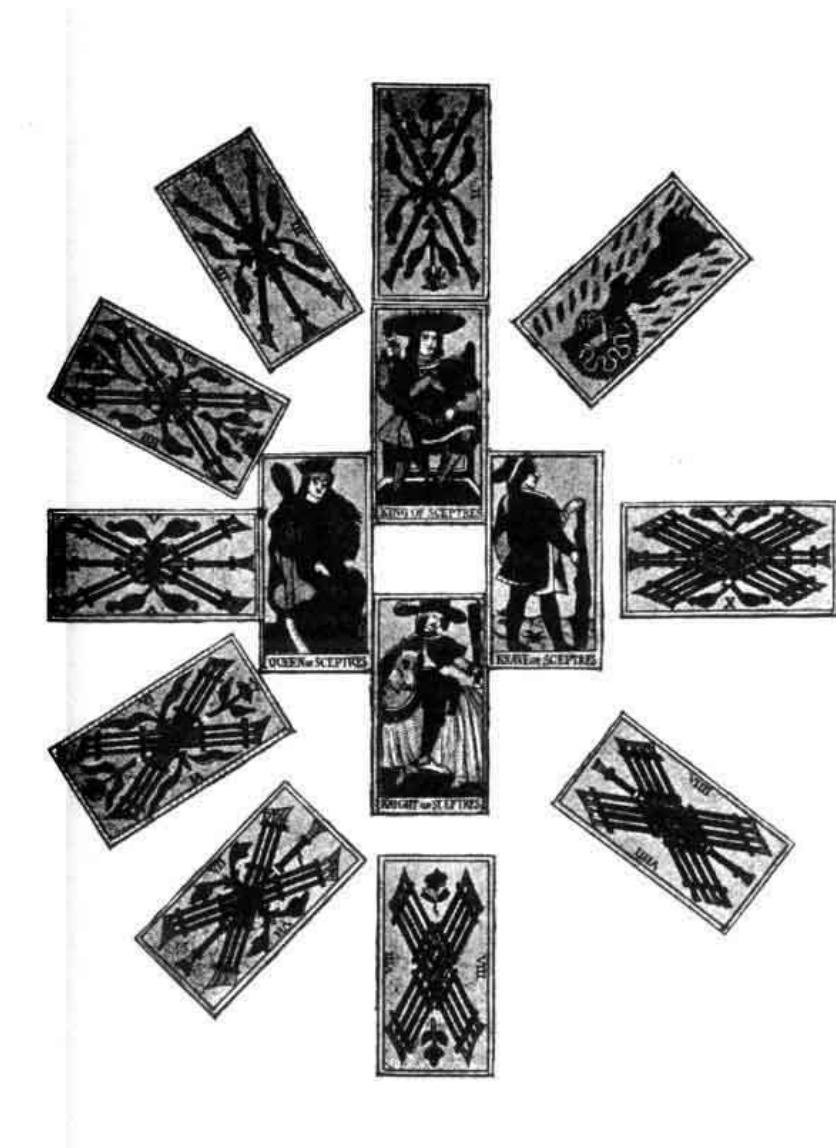
Let us now take one of the packets of fourteen cards and analyze its construction.

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.

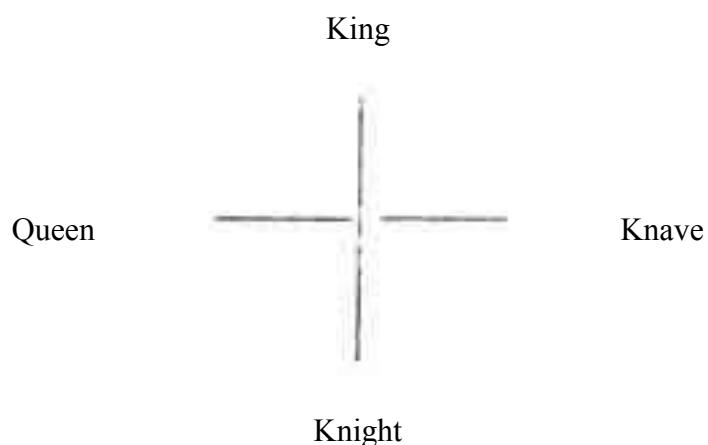
We must first consider the four figures--

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

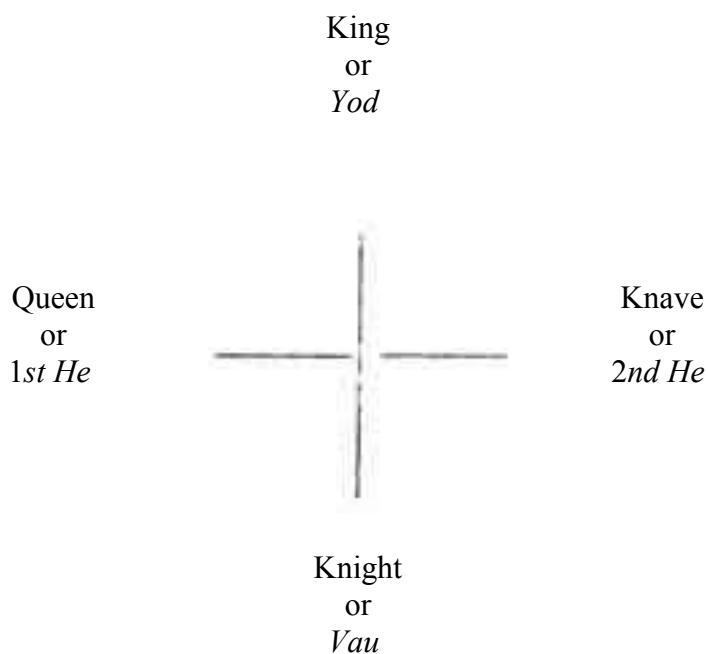
The queen represents the passive, the woman, or female.

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

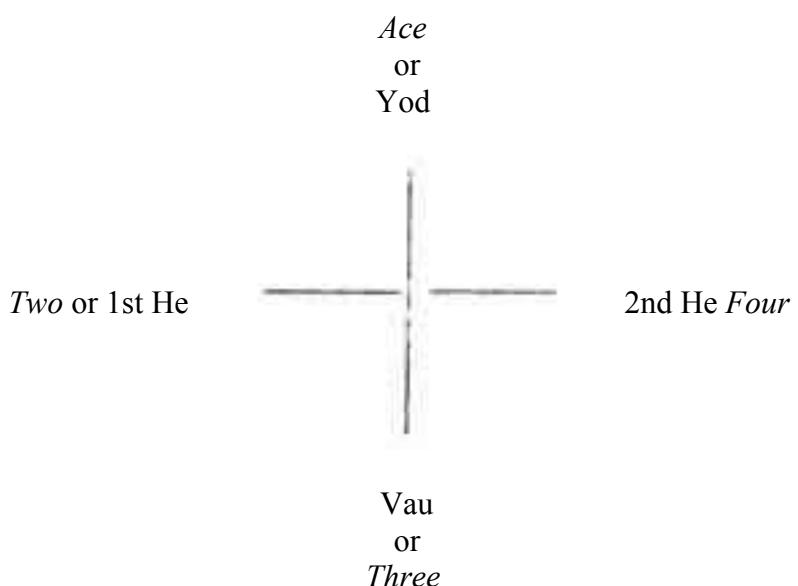
4 -- 5. 6

7 -- etc.

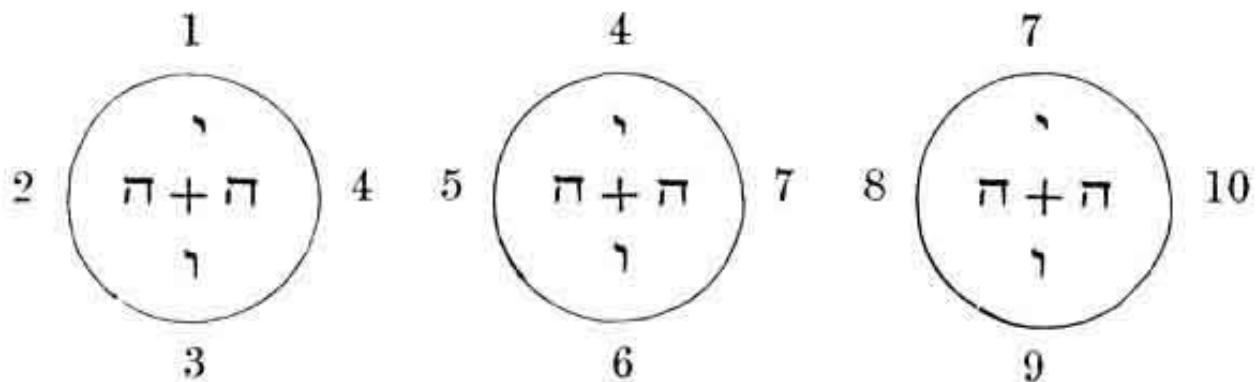
The ten cards cannot escape from this law, and we can at once arrange them in series.

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--



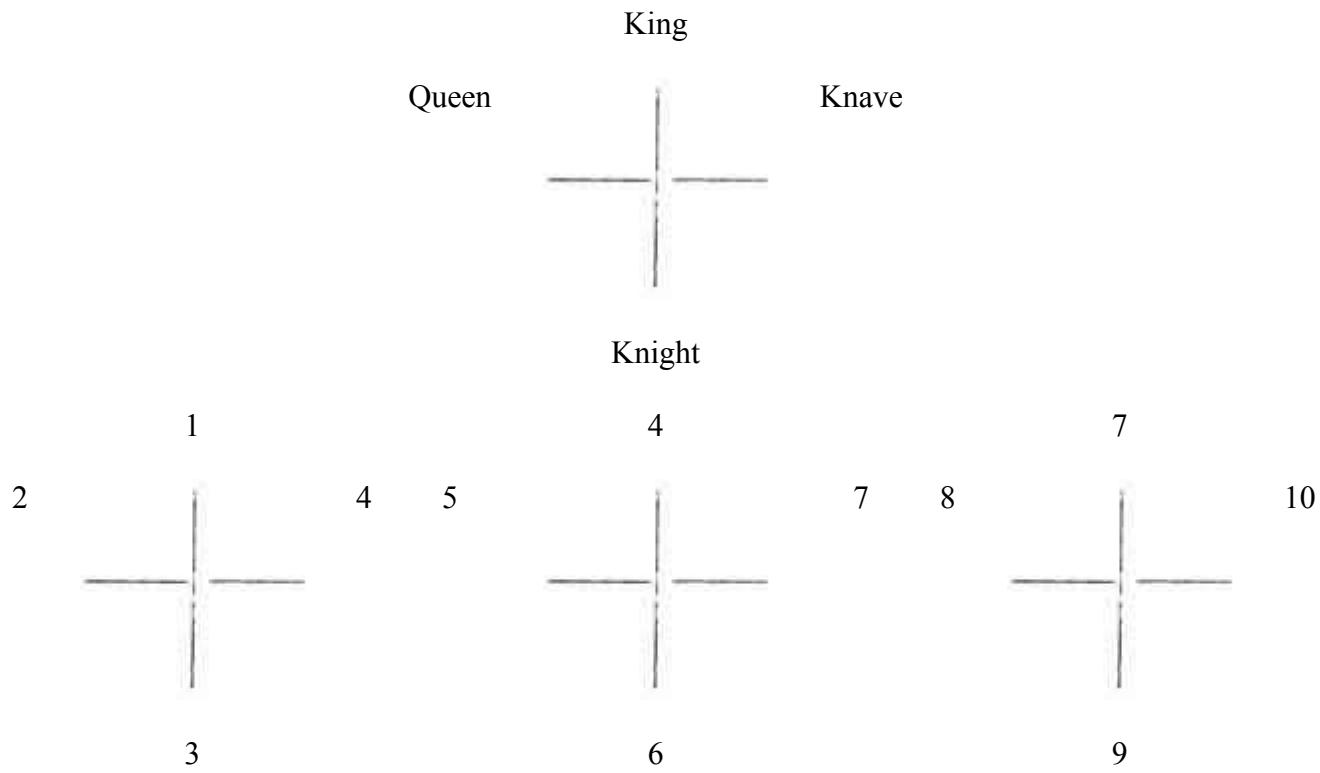
The other series follow the same rule exactly, the *second He* of the preceding series becoming the *Yod* of the following, series: thus 4, the fourth term of the first series, becomes the first term of the second series; 7, the fourth term of the second, becomes the first term of the third, as follows—



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



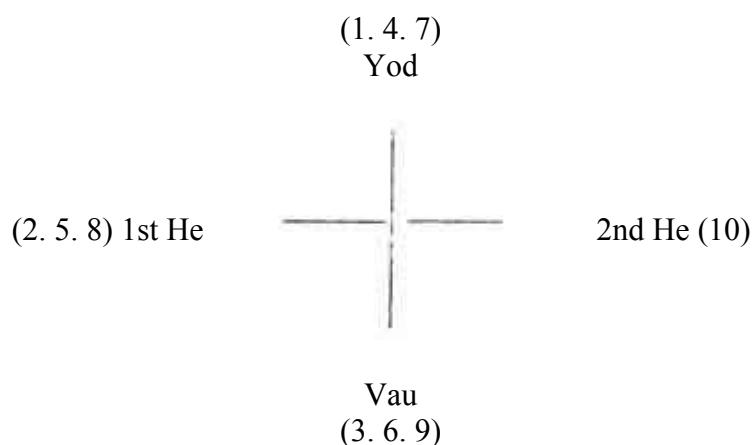
If we now group all the numbers of the sequence according to the letter of the tetragrammaton, to which they are analogous, we shall find—

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.

We have already studied both the figures and the numbers separately, let us now see what connection exists between the figures and the numbers.

If we group the similar terms according to the identical *Law* which rules them, we shall find them as follows--

The King is the	<i>Yod</i>	of	1. 4. 7
The Queen ---	<i>He</i>	of	2. 5. 8
The Knight ---	<i>Vau</i>	of	3. 6. 9
The Knave---	<i>2nd He</i>	of	10

The sequence of the figures is reproduced *three times* in the series of numbers, that is to say, that each series of numbers represents a conception of the figures in each of the three Kabbalistic worlds.

The series 1, 2, 3, 4 represents the emanation of the sequence king, queen, knight, knave in the divine world.

The series 4, 5, 6, 7 represents this evolution in the human world.

The series 7, 8, 9, 10 represents this evolution in the material world.

Each colour is a complete whole, formed after the manner of beings.

Of a material body:

(Knight---7.8.9)

Of a vital force:

(Queen---4.5.6)

Of an intellect:

(King---1.2.3)

Of reproductive organs:

(Knave---10)

Each of these parts can subdivide itself into three others, as the numbers indicate.

Ut us, however, return to our deduction, and by summing up the results obtained, we shall find--

Representations of the *Yod*:

- The King
- The 1 or Ace
- The 4
- The 7

Representations of the *He*:

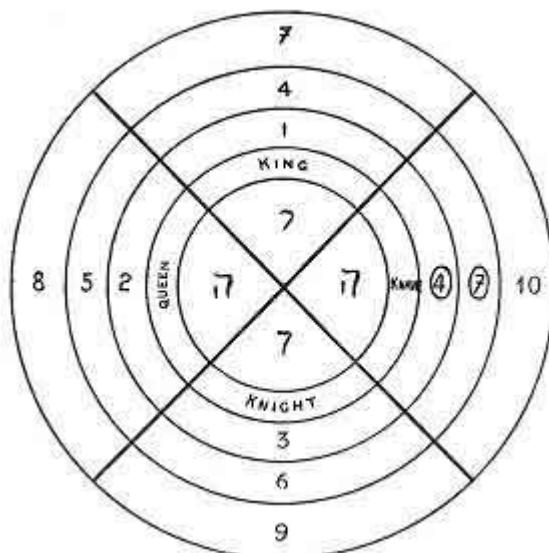
- The Queen
- The 2
- The 5
- The 8

Representations of the *Vau*:

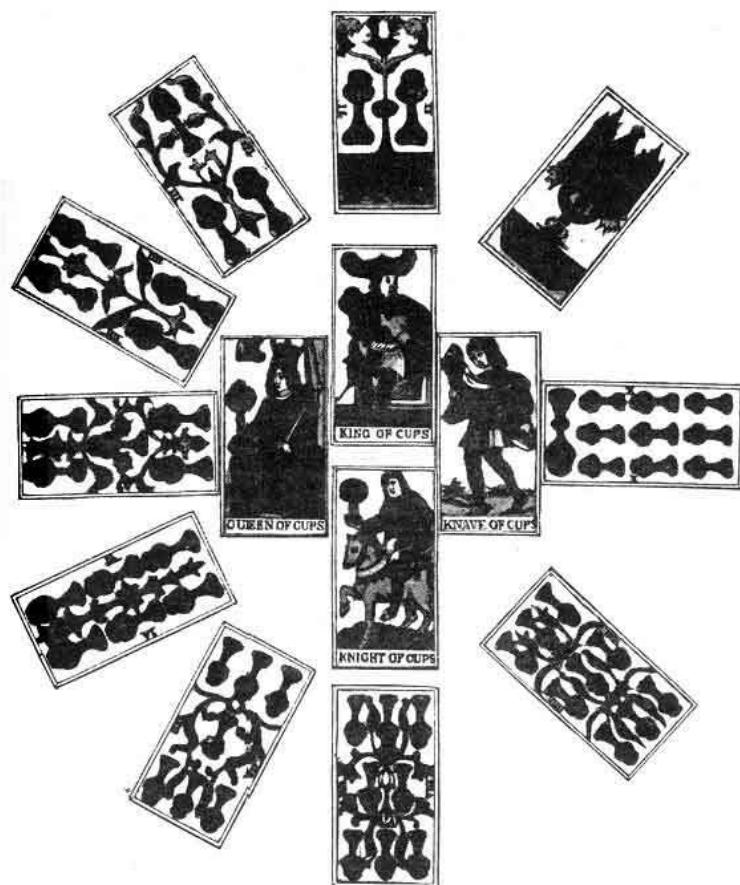
- The Knight
- The 3
- The 6
- The 9

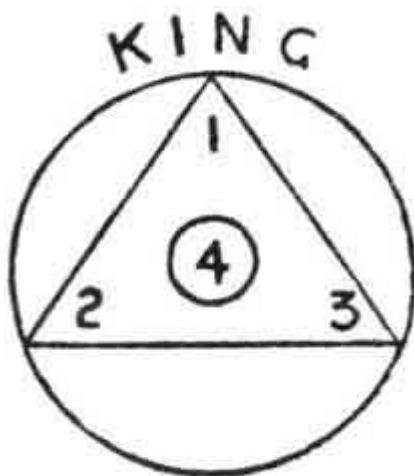
Representations of the *2nd He*:

- The Knave
- The 10



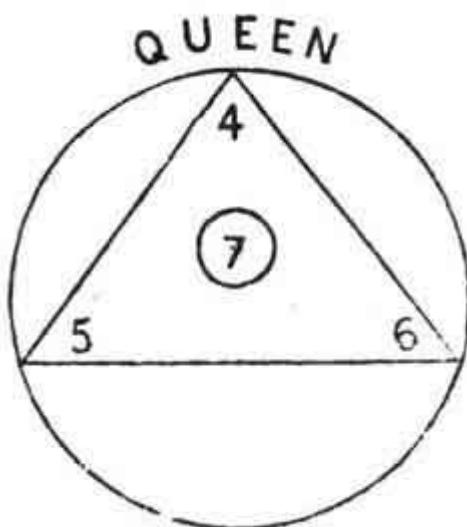
FIGURATION OF ONE COLOR





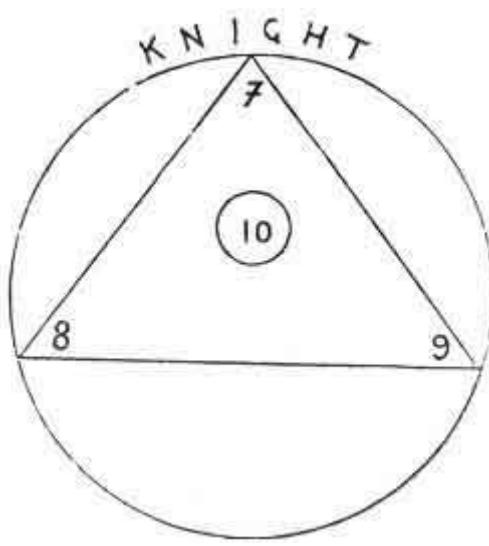
*Head--Spirituality*

Divine World



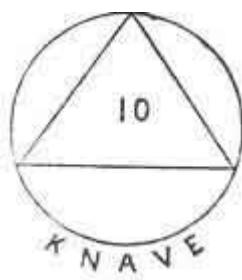
*Chest--Vitality*

Human World



*Body--Materiality*

Material World



Transition from one being to another

Transition from another one world to

## STUDY OF THE FOUR COLOURS.

Supplied with these data, let us continue our study, and apply the same principle to the other cards.

The laws which we have defined for the constitution of one colour, apply in the same way to the other three colours.

But when we consider the four colours of the Tarot, new deductions will be called forth. We must remember that these four colours are: the Sceptre, the Cup, the Sword, and the Money or Pentacles.

The Sceptre represents the Male or the Active.

The Cup is the image of the Passive or Feminine.

The Sword represents the union of the two by its crucial form.

Lastly, the Pentacles represent the second He.

The authors who have philosophically studied the Tarot are all unanimous in asserting the analogy that exists between the tetragrammaton and the four colours. Guillaume Postel, and above all Eliphas Levi, have developed these studies with great results, and they show us the four letters of the tetragrammaton applied in the symbolism of every cultus.

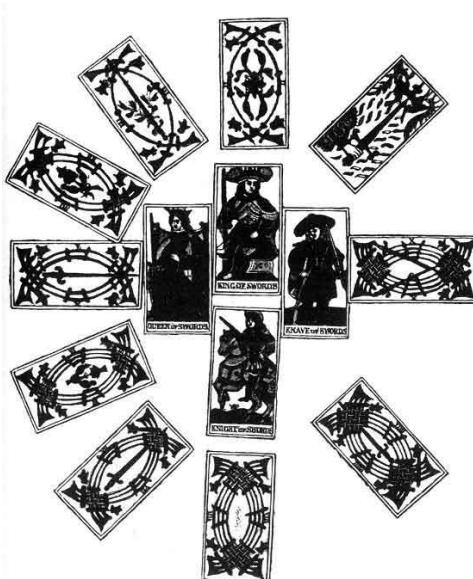
We must pause one moment to notice the analogy, between these letters and the symbols of the Christian religion.

*The Yod* or Sceptre of the Tarot is represented by the episcopal crosier.

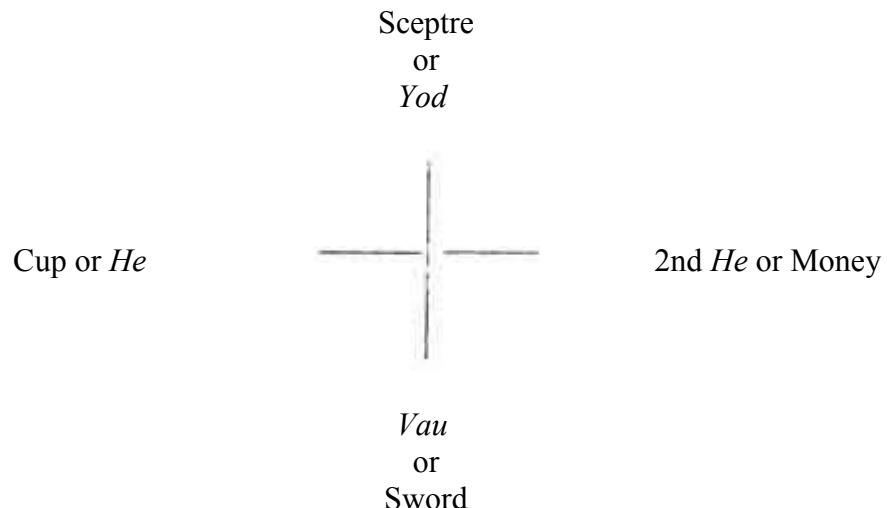
*The 1st He* or Cup is represented by the Chalice.

*The Vau* or Sword by the Cross, bearing the same form.

*The 2nd He* or Pentacles by the Host, the transition from the natural to the Supernatural world.



The series which we have studied in one colour is defined equally strictly in the four colours regarded as a whole, thus--



#### A COMPREHENSIVE GLANCE OVER TIRE MINOR ARCANA.

If we look back a little, we can easily judge the road we have traversed.

The four colours considered *in globo* have shown us the application of the law *Yod-he-vau-he*.

But the same law is reproduced in each of the colours taken separately.

The four figures represent *Yod-he-vau-he*;

The four series of numbers also.

Let us then arrange all the cards according to their affinities, and we shall obtain the following results--

The 4 Kings	
The 4 Aces	$= Yod$
The 4 Fours	
The 4 Sevens	
The 4 Queens	
The 4 Twos	$= He$
The 4 Fives	
The 4 Eights	
The 4 Cavaliers	
The 4 Threes	$= Vau$
The 4 Sixes	
The 4 Nines	
The 4 Knaves	$= He$
The 4 Tens	

If we wished to represent this arrangement by a synthetic diagram, we should place the sacred name in *the centre* of a circle divided into four parts, which respectively correspond with each of the letters *Yod-he-vau-he*. In each of the quarters, the cards that are analogous to the letters of the tetragrammaton will radiate from the centre. See the diagram on page opposite.

The figures have the same connection with the colours as the numbers have with the figures.

The sequence of the figures is reproduced in the three worlds by the numbers; the same thing takes place in the sequence of colours: Sceptre, Cup, Sword, Pentacles are reproduced in the figures.

The Sceptre is the *Yod* of the 4 Kings.  
The Cup is the *He* of the 4 Queens.  
The Sword is the *Vau* of the 4 Knights.  
The Pentacles is the *He* of the 4 Knaves.

And just as each colour has a complete whole, formed of a body, of a soul, and of a mind or vital force, so the four colours form a complete whole thus composed:--

The material body of the minor arcana:

The 4 Knights  
The 4 Sevens  
The 4 Eights  
The 4 Nines

The vital body of the minor arcana:

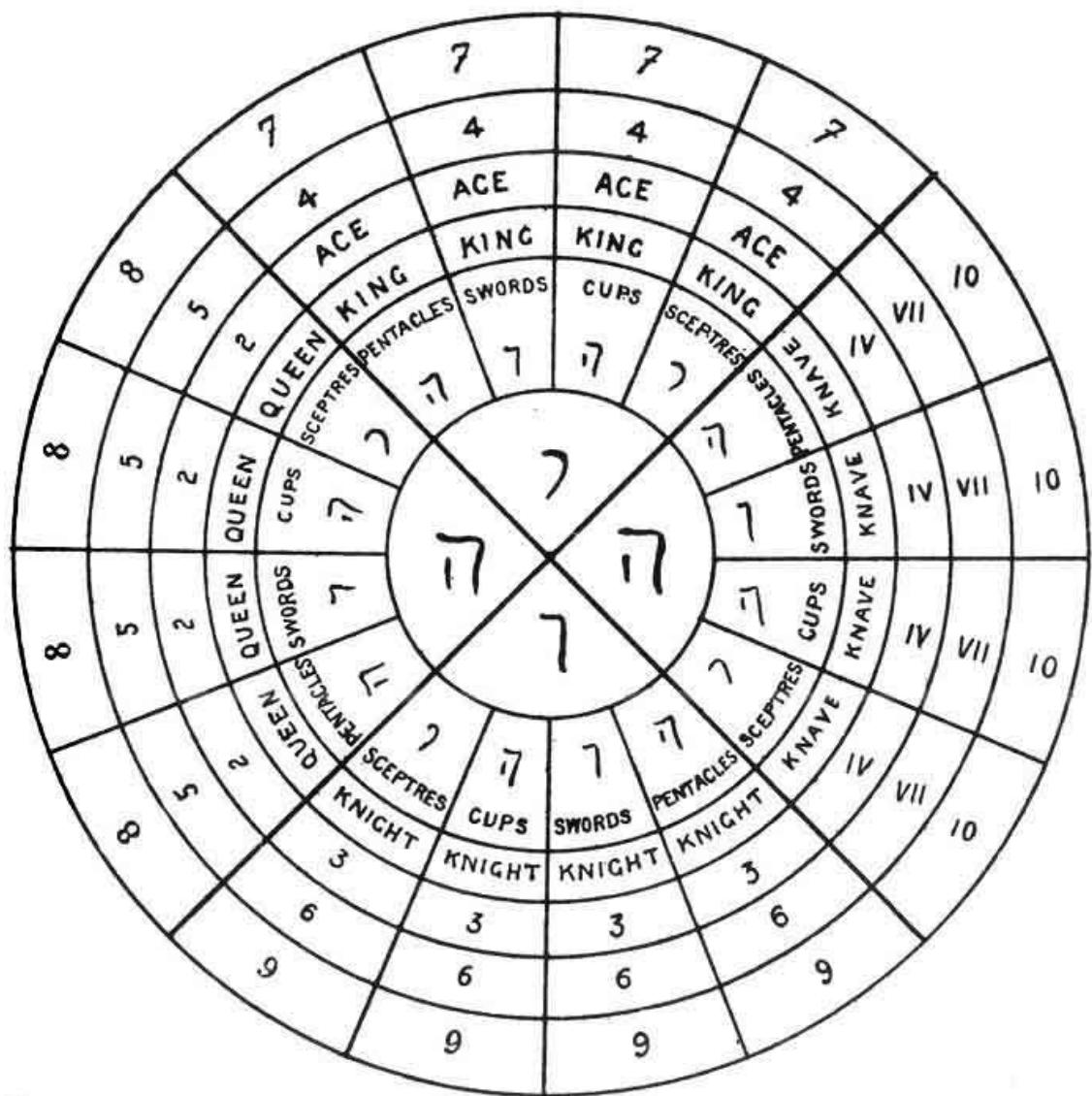
The 4 Queens  
The 4 Fours  
The 4 Fives  
The 4 Sixes

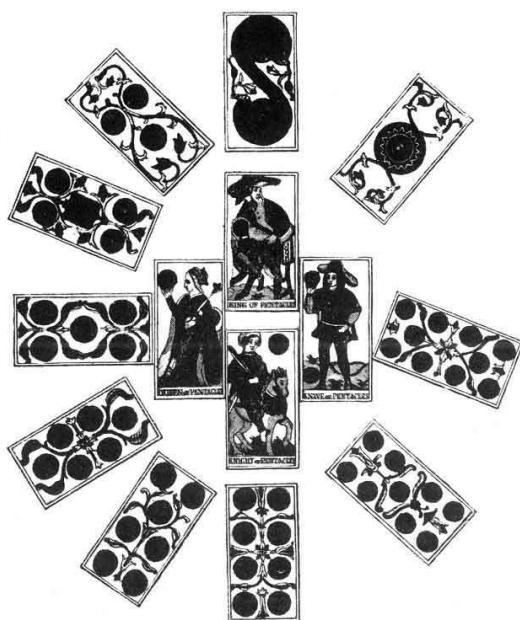
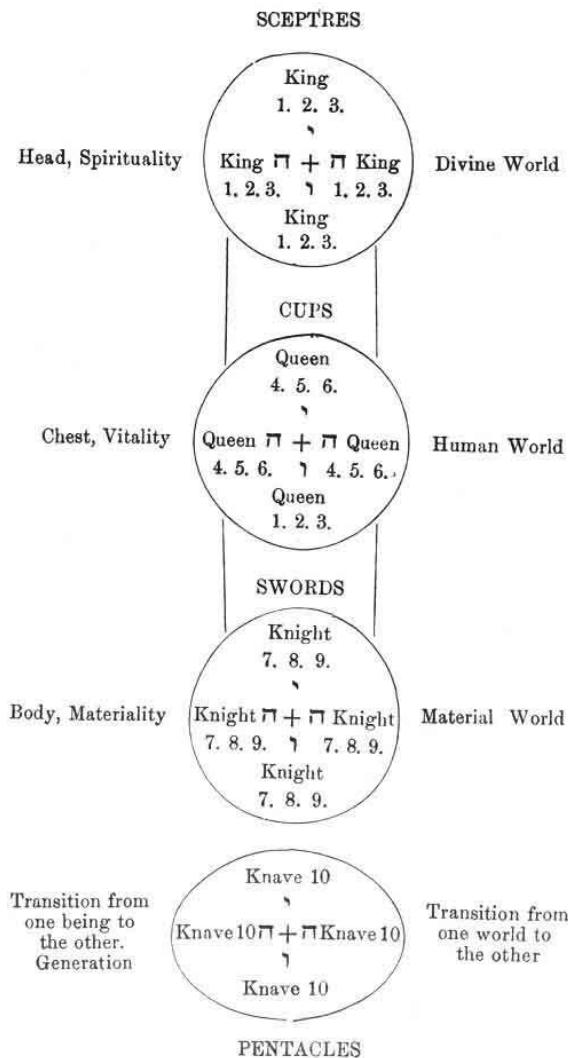
The intellectual body:

The 4 Kings  
The 4 Aces  
The 4 Twos  
The 4 Threes

Reproductive organs:

The 4 Knaves  
The 4 Tens





We can only point out the very instructive affinities shown in these figures; they can be carried to a great length.

We give these indications in order to demonstrate the management of *analogy*, the method of the occult science, to which we have so frequently alluded in our preceding works.

We need only compare this last diagram, which represents the four colours, with the first, which depicted one only, to see at once that the law upon which these two diagrams are constructed is the same, only that the applications of it are varied.

It is the same law by which the cells that form the human being group themselves to constitute *organs*, the organs group themselves to form *members*, and the grouping of the latter produces the *individual*.

We have drawn the following conclusion from all that we have already stated--

The *Pentacles*, responding to the second *He*, indicates a transition.

Between what?

Between the *minor and major arcana*.



GENERAL KEY TO MINOR ARCANA

# CHAPTER VI.

## THE KEY TO THE MAJOR ARCANA.

*The Major Arcana--1st Ternary--2nd Ternary--1st Septenary--2nd Septenary--The Three Septenaries and the Ternary of Transition.*

### THE MAJOR ARCANA.

THE fundamental difference which exists between the minor and major arcana, is that in the latter the figures and numbers are united, whilst in the former they are distinct.

There are 22 major arcana, but one of them bears a 0, so that, in reality, there are only 21 great or major arcana.

Most of the authors who have studied the Tarot have devoted all their attention to these 22 cards, without noticing the others, which, however, contain the real key to the system.

But we will leave these digressions and commence the application of the law *Yod-he-vau-he* to this portion of the Tarot.

A little reflection will suggest to us that there should be *some sequences* in the major arcana as well as in the minor arcana. But how are we to define the limits of these series?

Each card of the minor arcana bears a symbol which easily connects it with the whole scheme (Sceptre, Cup, Sword, or Pentacles); it is different in this case. Each card bears a *different symbol*. Therefore it is not *symbolism* that can guide us here, at all events for the moment.

Besides the symbol, each card expresses an idea. This idea is already a better guide, for it is easier to classify than the symbol; but this guide does not yet offer all the security that we could desire, for it may be read differently by various persons. Again, the idea proceeds from the action of the symbol upon the other term expressed by the card, *the number*.

The number is certainly the most reliable element, the easiest to follow in its evolutions; it is, therefore, the number that will guide us; and through it we shall discover the two other terms.

Let us now recall our explanation of the numbers, and we shall easily define the series of the major arcana.

However, from the commencement we must make one great reservation. The series which we are about to enumerate are the *most usual*, but they are not the *only ones*.

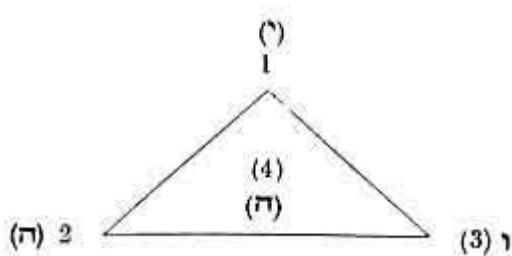
This said, we will now study the four first major arcana.

The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 at once indicate the classification to be adopted and the nature of the terms.

1	corresponds to	<i>Yod</i> ,	and is active.
2	---	to <i>He</i>	--- passive.
3	---	to <i>Vau</i>	--- neuter.
4	---	to the 2nd <i>He</i> ,	and indicates transition.

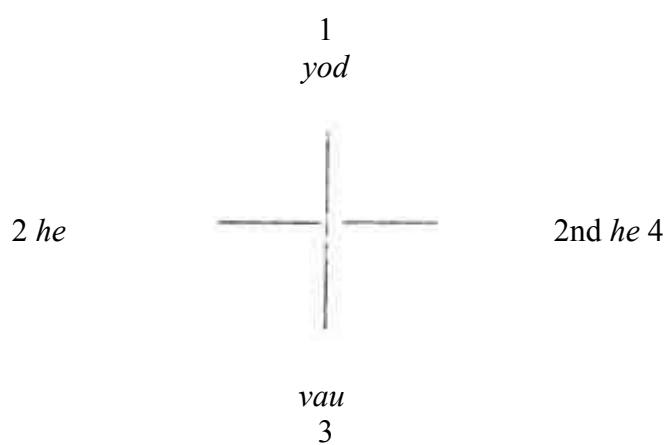
This 4th arcanum corresponds to the Knave and to the 10 of the minor arcana, and becomes Yod in the next or following series.

If we wish to make a figure of the first ternary 1, 2, 3, we should do it in this way--



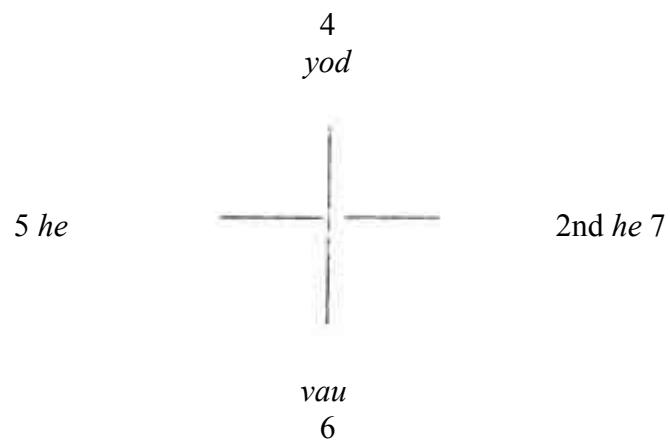
The active term 1 is at the head of the triangle, the two other terms are at the other angles.

This ternary can also be represented in its affinities with *Yod-he-vau-he--*

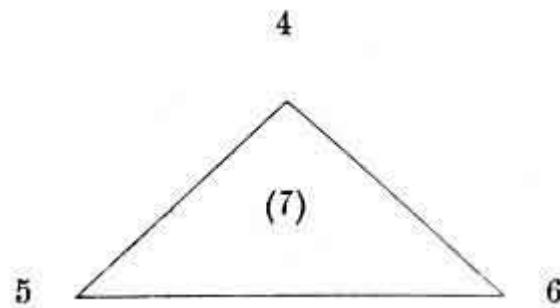


SECOND TERNARY.--We have stated that the 4 becomes the Yod or active term in the following sequence.

This is realized in the figure below--



The 4 representing the Yod, therefore, acts with regard to 5 and 6, as the 1 acted with regard to 2 and 3, and we obtain another ternary.



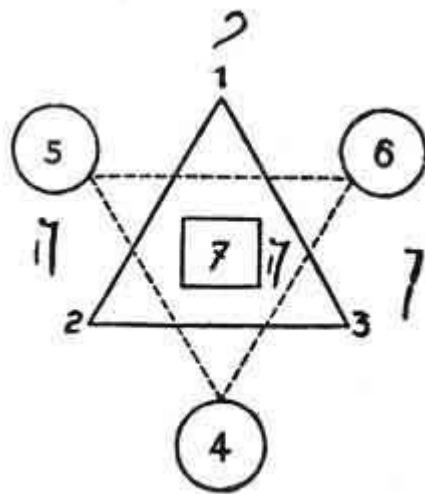
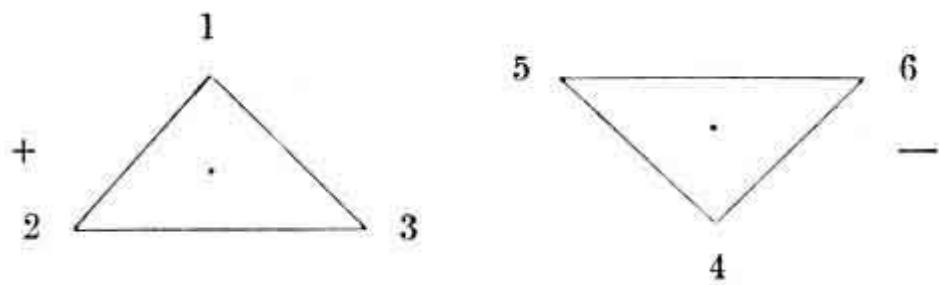
The 7 acts here as the 4 acted previously, and the same rule applies to all the series in the arcana.

FIRST SEPTENARY.--The application of one law to very different terms has led us so far; we must not abandon this system, but persevere and say--

If in one ternary exist an *active* term = *yod*, a *passive* term = *he*, and a *neuter* term = *vau*, resulting from the two first, why should not the same result be found in several ternaries taken together?

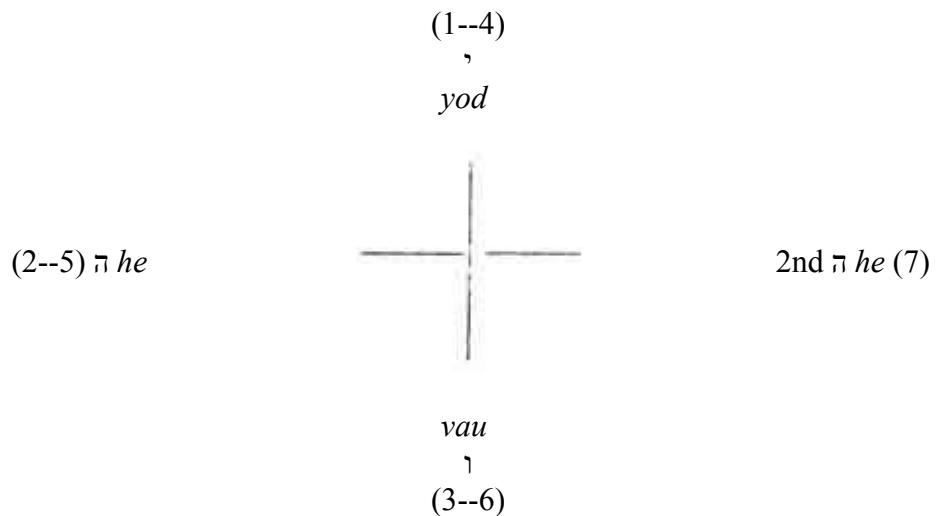
The first ternary is active and corresponds to *yod*; the second ternary is passive and corresponds to *he*; the reaction of one ternary upon another gives birth to a third ternary or *vau*.

Let us make a figure representing this--



The 7 therefore forms the element of transition between *one septenary* and another.

If we define the analogy between this first septenary and the *Yod-he-vau-he*, we shall find--

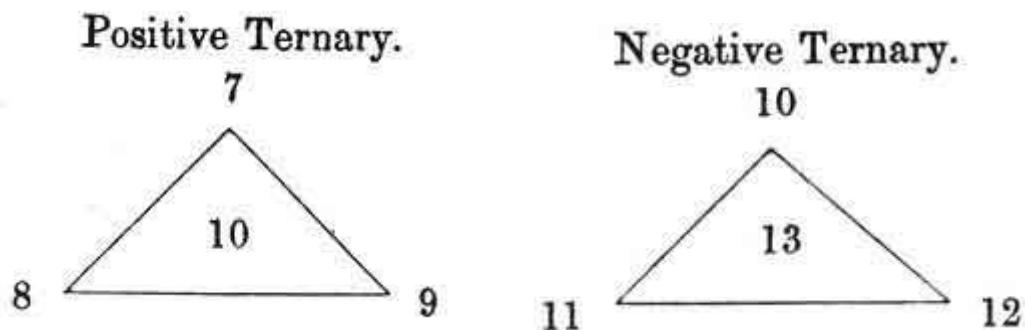


A deduction may be made in passing, from which a great deal of information may be derived, if it be carefully studied: the 4 being only the 1, considered *negatively*, the 5 is only the 2 considered negatively, whilst the 6 is the negative of 3. It is always *the same number under different aspects*.

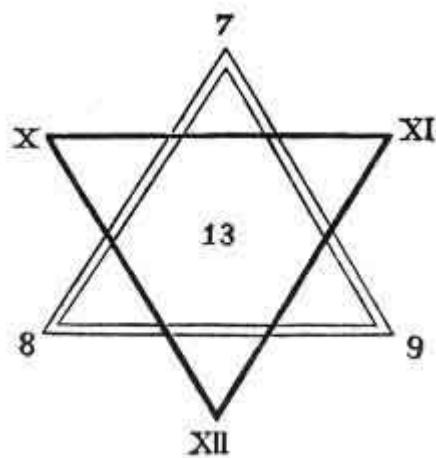
We have therefore defined a first septenary, formed of two opposing ternaries.

We have seen that this septenary also reproduces *Yod-he-vau-he*.

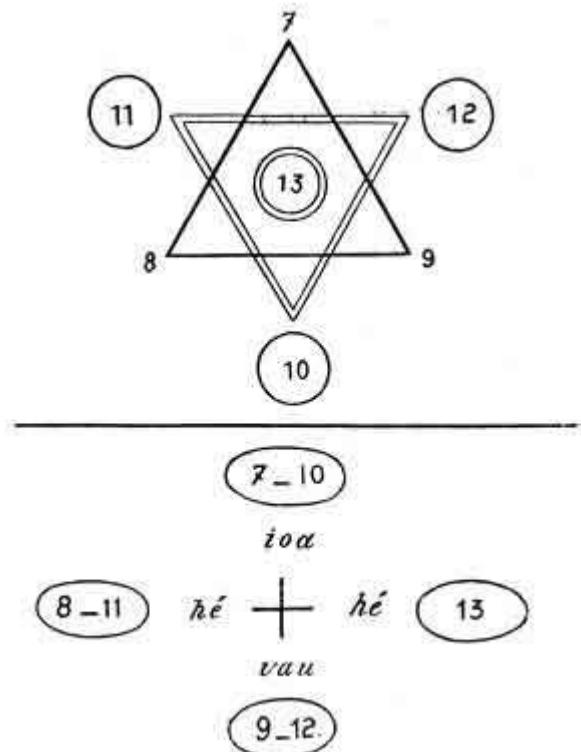
SECOND SEPTENARY.--The law that applies to the first ternaries is also true for the others, and following the same method we obtain a second septenary, thus formed--



The two ternaries, positive and negative, will balance each other to give birth to a second septenary and to its term of transition 13. Thus--



General figure--



But if the two ternaries respectively act as positive and negative, why should not the two septenaries do the same?

The first septenary, taken as a whole, will therefore be *positive*, relatively to the second septenary, which will be *negative*.

The first septenary corresponds to *yod*, the second to *he*.

THIRD SEPTENARY. The third septenary is thus formed--

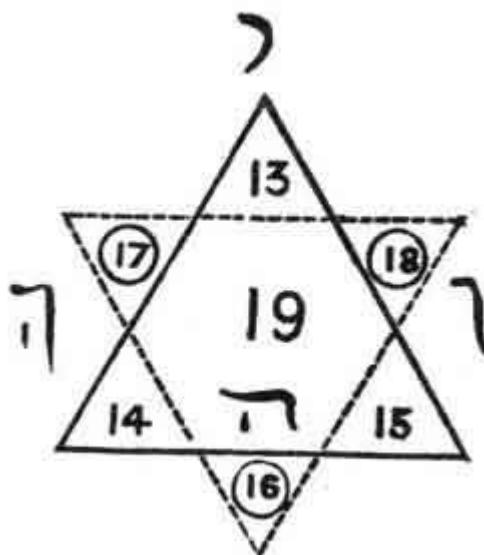
(13--16)  
*yod*

(14--17) *he*



he (19)

*vau*  
(15--18)



If the first septenary is positive and the second negative, the third will be neuter, and will correspond with *vau*. We should have therefore, definitely--

1st, A POSITIVE SEPTENARY = *Yod*.  
2nd, A NEGATIVE SEPTENARY = *He*  
3rd, A NEUTER SEPTENARY = *Vau*.

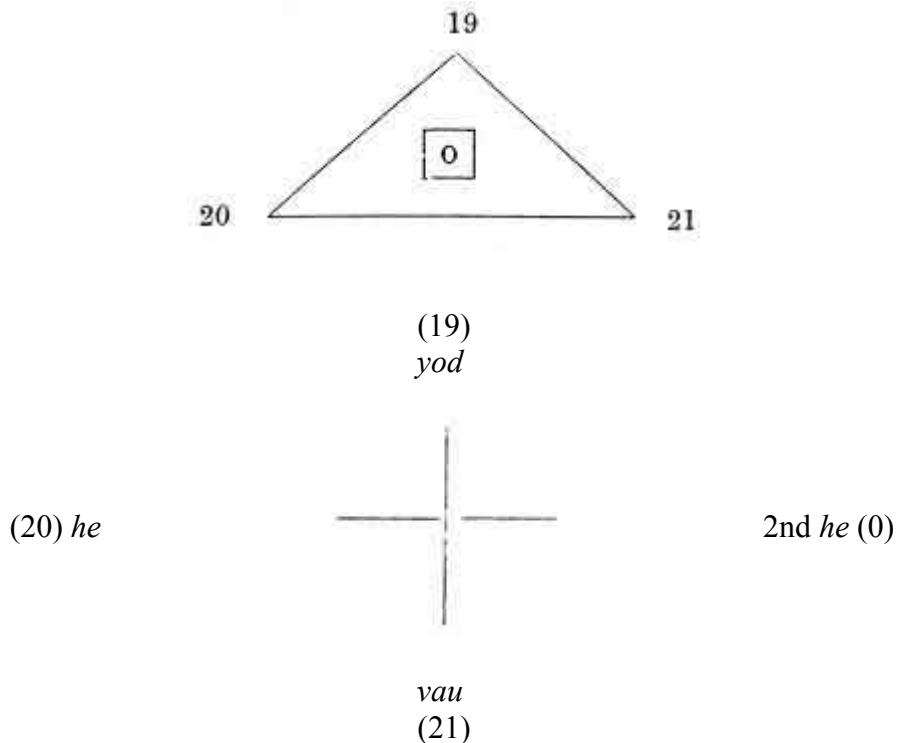
Yet each septenary contains one term which belongs to the preceding septenary, and one which belongs to the following septenary.

Thus the 7 is the 7th term of the first septenary and the 1st term of the second. 13 is the last term of the second septenary and the 1st of the third, etc.

The result is that three terms remain to be classed. These are--

19 ---- 20 ---- 21

These three terms form the last ternary, the ternary of transition between the *major arcana* and the *minor arcana*, a ternary which corresponds to the second *he*, and which may be thus represented--



The last numbered card, which ought correctly to bear the number 22 (or its Hebrew correspondent), closes the Tarot by a marvellous figure, which represents its constitution to those who can understand it. We will return to it presently. Therefore, in the major arcana, the great law is thus definitely represented. (See next page.)

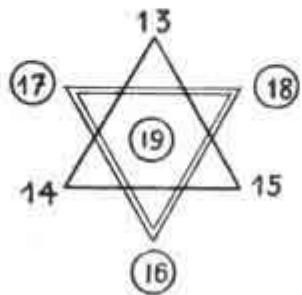
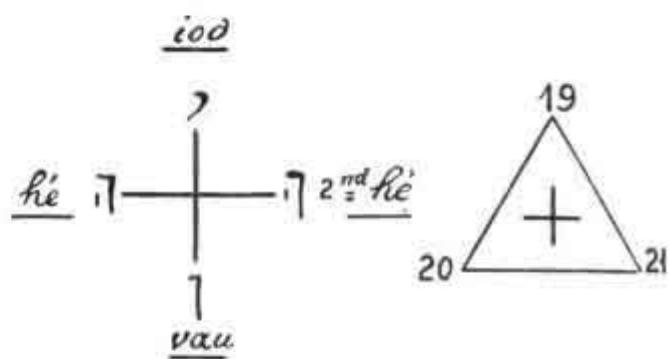
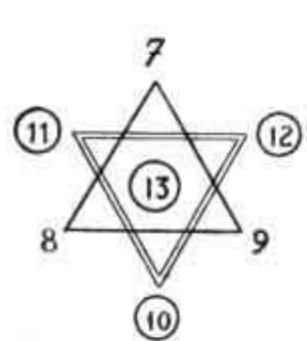
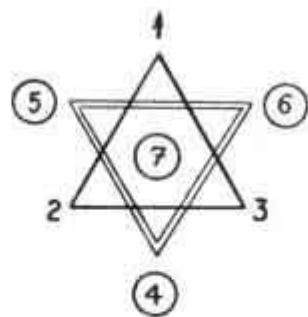
The first septenary corresponds to the Divine World, to God.

The second to Man.

The third to Nature.

Finally, the last ternary indicates the passage from the creative and providential World to the created and fatal world.

This ternary establishes the connection between the *major* and *minor arcana*.



# CHAPTER VII.

## CONNECTION BETWEEN THE MAJOR AND MINOR ARCANA. GENERAL AFFINITIES.

### KEY OF THE TAROT.

*Domination of the 1st Septenary--Affinities of the 2nd Septenary in the Tarot, Card by Card--Ditto of the 3rd Septenary--General Affinities--Affinities of Yod, He, Vau, and of the 2nd He.*

General figure giving the Key to the Tarot.

### CONNECTION BETWEEN THE MAJOR AND MINOR ARCANA..

THE *Pentacles* on one side, the *Ternary of transition* on the other, establish the connection between the major and minor arcana.

This connection is found in the general affinities of the four letters of the tetragrammaton.

The 1st septenary, which corresponds to *yod*, governs all the correspondents of *yod* in the minor series, that is to say--

The 4 Kings.  
The 4 Aces.  
The 4 Fours,  
The 4 Sevens.

Each element of the septenary governs different terms, thus--

#### *1st Septenary.*

The arcana	1 and 4	govern	<i>King-1.4.7</i>	of Sceptres.
---	2 and 5	---	---	of Cups.
---	3 and 6	---	---	of Swords.
The arcanum	7	---	---	of Pentacles.

Moreover--

The 1st arcanum especially governs the positive terms of the series, i. e.--

Arcanum      The King of Yod or of Sceptres (+).

1 (+)      The King of Vau or of Swords (-).

The 4th arcanum especially governs the negative terms of the series--

Arcanum      The King of He ... Cups

4 (-)      The King of the 2nd He + Pentacles (-).

By applying the same law to the other arcana we find--

Arcanum      Ace of Yod (+) Sceptres.

(+) 2      Ace of Vau (-) Swords.

Arcanum      Ace of He (+) Cups.

(-) 5      Ace of He (-) Pentacles

Arcanum 3      4 of Sceptres (+).

(+)      4 of Swords (-)

Arcanum 6      4 Of Cups (+).

(-)      4 of Pentacles (-).

Arcanum 7      All the transitional terms.

(∞)      7 (∞).

SECOND SEPTENARY.--The second septenary, corresponding, to *He*, governs all the correspondents of the first *He*, in the minor series, that is to say--

The 4 Queens.

The 4 Twos.

The 4 Fives.

The 4 Eights.

Each element of the second septenary has the following dominations--

Arcanum 7 (+)	Queen of Sceptres, (+) Queen of Swords, (-)	Arcanum 10 (-)	Queen of Cups, (+) Queen of Pentacles, (-)
Arcanum 8 (+)	Two of Sceptres, (+) Two of Swords, (-)	Arcanum 11 (-)	Two of Cups, (+) Two of Pentacles, (-)
Arcanum 9 (+)	Five of Sceptres, (+) Five of Swords, (-)	Arcanum 12 (-)	Five of Cups, (+) Five of Pentacles, (-)
	Arcana 13 (∞)	All the 8, (∞)	

THIRD SEPTENARY.--The third septenary corresponds to *Vau*, and rules over--

The 4 Knights.  
The 4 Threes.  
The 4 Sixes.  
The 4 Nines.

Arcanum 13 (+)	Knight of Sceptres, (+) Knight of Swords, (-)	Arcanum 16 (-)	Knight of Cups, (+) Knight of Pentacles, (-)
Arcanum 14 (+)	Three of Sceptres, (+) Three of Swords, (-)	Arcanum 17 (-)	Three of Cups, (+) Three of Pentacles, (-)
Arcanum 15 (+)	Six of Sceptres, (+) Six of Swords, (-)	Arcanum 18 (-)	Six of Cups, (+) Six of Pentacles, (-)
	Arcanum 19 (∞)	All the nines, (∞)	

TERNARY OF TRANSITION.--The ternary of transition rules over--

The 4 Knaves.

The 4 Tens.

Each of its elements thus rules over--

Arcanum 19 $(\infty)$ (+)	Knave of Sceptres, (+) Knave of Swords, (-)	Arcanum 20 $(\infty)$ (+)	Knave of Cups, (+) Knave of Pentacles, (-)
	Arcanum 21 $(\infty)$	All the 10, $(\infty)$	

Value of the signs +, -, and  $\infty$ .

The signs which follow each card in the preceding lists define the exact value of the card. One example will suffice to make this clearly understood.

Each term can be taken in two principal acceptations: in the positive (+) or in the negative (-). The same rule applies to the sub-divisions of these terms.

For instance, the correspondents of the first septenary are 1 and 4.

1 is the positive (+)  
4 is the negative (-)

1 governs two minor arcana: the King of Sceptres and the King of Swords.

The King of Sceptres is positive.  
The King of Swords is negative.

The definite value of these terms would therefore be--1st King of Sceptres.

Positive (+) of the positive (+);  
or  
King of Sceptres  
+ +

2nd King of Swords.

Negative (-) of the Positive (+);  
or more simply  
King of Swords  
+ --

The same rule applies to the other terms in combining the sign which follows the *major arcanum* with that which follows *the term under consideration*.

The value of each of the 78 cards of the Tarot is thus defined.

GENERAL AFFINITIES.

AFFINITIES TO *Yod*.

	<i>Positive.</i>	<i>Negative.</i>
Major Arcana	Arcanum 1	Arcanum 4
	---- 7	---- 10
	---- 13	---- 16
Minor Arcana	King of Sceptres	King of Cups
	Ace	Ace ----
	4	4 ----
	7	7 ----
	King of Swords	King of Pentacles
	Ace	Ace ----
	4	4 ----
	7	7 ----

AFFINITIES TO THE 1ST *He.*

	<i>Positive.</i>	<i>Negative.</i>
Major Arcana	Arcanum 2	Arcanum 5
	---- 8	---- 11
	---- 14	---- 17
Minor Arcana	Queen of Sceptres	Queen of Cups
	Two ----	Two ----
	Five ----	Five ----
	Eight ----	Eight ----
	Queen of Swords	Queen of Pentacles
	Two ----	Two ----
	Five ----	Five ----
	Eight ----	Eight ----

AFFINITIES TO *Vau*.

	<i>Positive.</i>	<i>Negative.</i>
Major Arcana	Arcanum 3	Arcanum 6
	---- 9	---- 12
	---- 15	---- 18 <small>p. 67</small>
Minor Arcana	Knight of Sceptres	Knight of Cups
	Three ----	Three ----
	Six ----	Six ----
	Nine ----	Nine ----
	Knight of Swords	Knight of Pentacles
	Three ----	Three ----
	Six ----	Six ----
	Nine ----	Nine ----

AFFINITIES TO THE 2ND *He.*

<i>Positive.</i>	<i>Negative.</i>
Arcanum 19	Arcanum 20
Knave of Sceptres	Knave of Cups
---- of Swords	---- of Pentacles

*Equilibrium.*

	Arcana 21-22
Ten	of Sceptres
----	of Swords
----	of Cups
----	of Pentacles

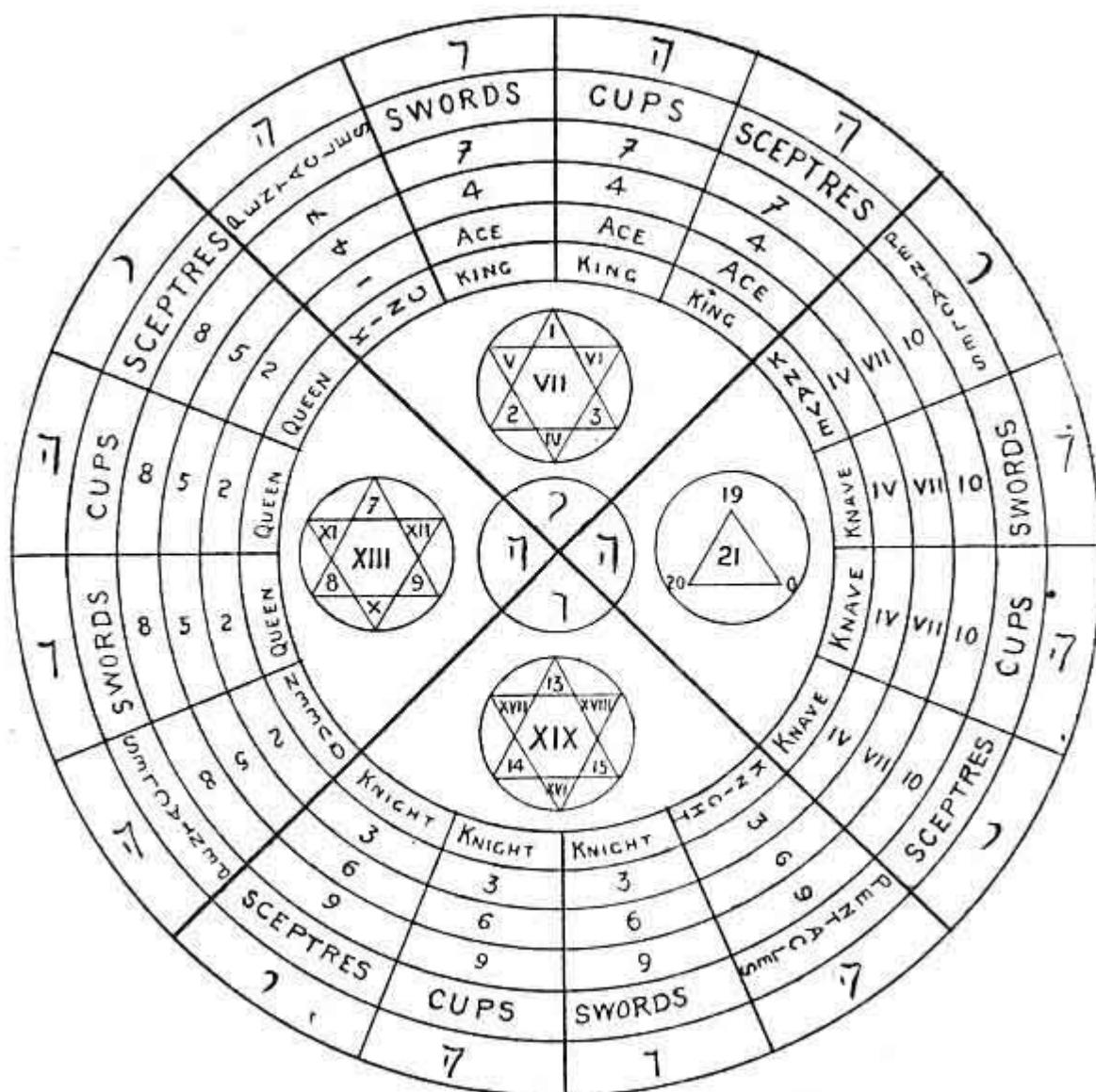
GENERAL FIGURE OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE TAROT, SHOWING ALL THE AFFINITIES.

The absolute law.

*Yod He Vau He*

is in the centre of the figure.

Each of the letters of the tetragrammaton governs one quarter of the circle which contains its affinities. The different colours indicate the especial dominion of each arcanum.



GRAND GENERAL FIGURE OF THE TAROT.--*Arrangement of Series*

# PART II.

## SYMBOLISM IN THE TAROT.

### APPLICATION OF THE GENERAL KEY TO SYMBOLISM.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF SYMBOLISM.

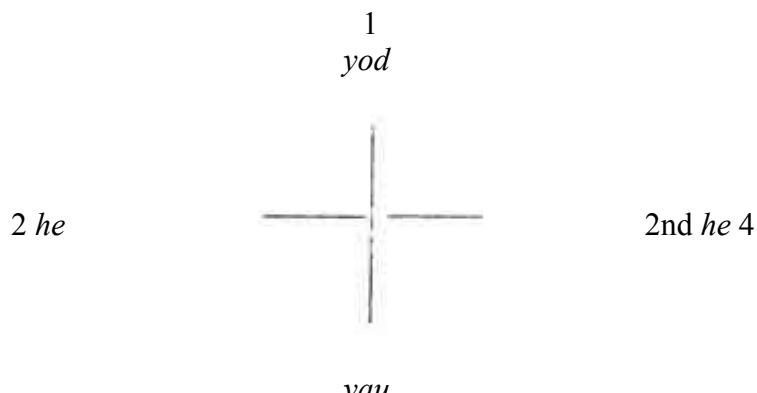
*The Symbols--The Primitive Terms--Key of Symbolism--Definition of the Sense of one of the Symbols--The General Law of Symbolism.*

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF SYMBOLISM IN THE TAROT.

OUR study of the Tarot and its numerical arrangement has given us the *general key*, which should be applied to all the further developments of which our subject may be susceptible.

The symbols should therefore exactly follow the evolution of the numbers, and this we shall find them do. However, as we shall now study each of the cards of the Tarot in turn, and as the reader's attention may be a little diverted by all these details, we have determined to commence by a short introduction to the study of the symbolism of the Tarot, an introduction in which we shall say a few words upon the grouping of the symbols.

This point explained, we can pass on to further details, which we shall terminate by a synthetic recapitulation. We thus hope to obtain the greatest possible light upon these difficult subjects. The analysis of the word *Yod-he-vau-he* has given us the general law upon which the whole Tarot is constructed. This law is thus represented--

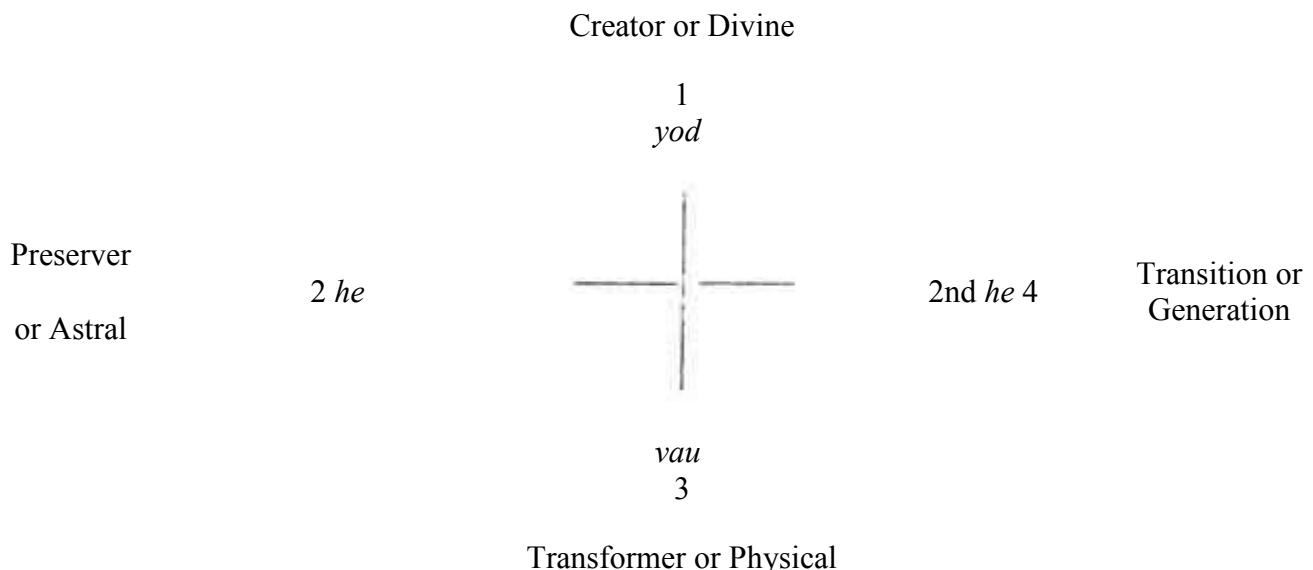


We must therefore first define the four primitive terms in our symbols, which form the law exactly applicable to the whole symbolism.

And, in fact, we find these four terms in our four first cards; the general sense of these terms being--

- 1--Creator or Divine.
- 2--Preserver or Astral.
- 3--Transformer or Physical and Diffuser.
- 4--Generator or Transitional becoming Creator.

This law corresponds in all points with our sacred word, thus--



We shall see that this law applies exactly to each of the cards which possess three meanings.

- A superlative or Divine meaning.
- A comparative or Magic-Astral meaning.
- A positive or Physical meaning, responding, to a transition.

## GENERAL STUDY OF THE FOUR FIRST CARDS.

### *Key to the Symbolism of the Tarot.*

The four first cards of the major arcana form, symbolically as well as numerically, a complete sequence, which corresponds with the sacred word *Yod-he-vau-he*.

For the first card expresses the *active absolute*, and corresponds with *Yod*.

The second card denotes the *reflex* of the first, the *passive absolute*; it corresponds with the *first He*.

The third indicates the median term, the convertible transforming term, corresponding to *Vau*.

Lastly, the fourth card is a term of transition between the preceding series and the one that follows it.

The symbolic series of the Tarot is therefore completely represented by the four first cards, exactly as the numerical sequence is represented by the four first numbers. This fact produces a very important consideration, namely, that all the symbols of the Tarot are but transformations of the *three first*, and that the latter will supply us with the *general law* of symbolism, a law which will enable us to determine mathematically the sense of each card that follows.

But we can go still further.

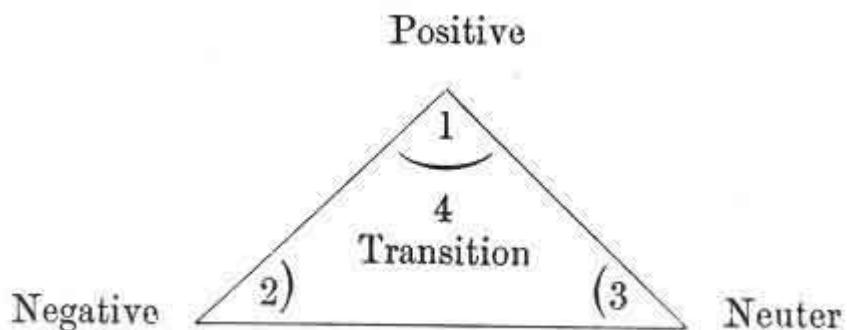
Since the second card is the reflex of the first, and is formed by the first considered *negatively*, and since the third card results from the two others, *it suffices to be perfectly acquainted with the first card of the Tarot to determine mathematically the sense of all the others*.

Some details upon this subject are necessary.

The general law of the four first cards is as follows--

- 1--Positive. Creator.
- 2--Negative. Reflex of the first. Preserver.
- 3--Neuter, enveloping the two others. Transformer.
- 4--Passage from one series to another.

We can then represent the series in this way--

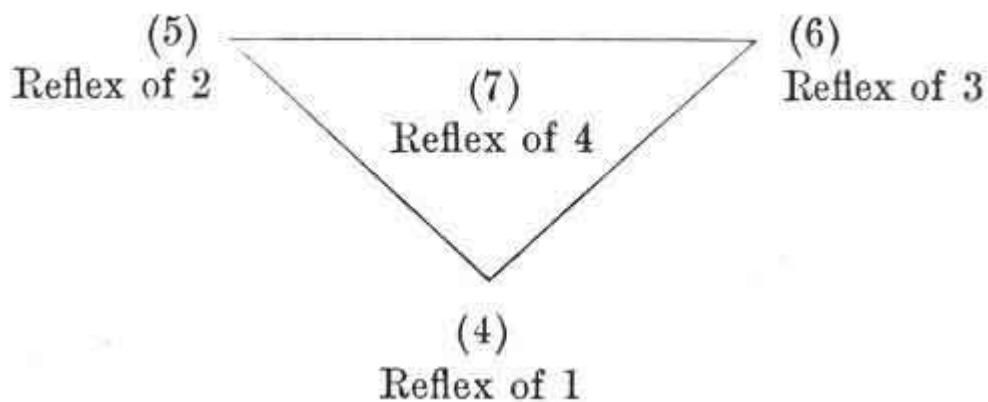


And what is true for each of the terms of a ternary is also true for the ternary taken *as a whole*, and this leads us to new considerations.

For the first ternary would be positive, corresponding to *Yod*, the active, the creator.

The second ternary would be negative, and would correspond to the first *He*, i. e. that all the terms of this ternary would be reflections of the terms of the first, just as the second card was the reflex of the first.

This gives us--



We can thus determine the meaning of the arcana 4, 5, 6, 7 in the three worlds, since we know the meaning of the arcana 1, 2, 3, 4.

We need only refer to the study of the Tarot by numbers, to find the symbols, which correspond respectively to *Yod*, to *He*, to *Vau*, and to the second *He*.

But if the second ternary is the reflex of the first, the same rule applies to the septenaries.

All the cards of the second septenary will therefore be the symbolical reflection of those of the first.

All the cards of the third septenary are representatives of the third term, or of transformation.

We have then--

*The 1st septenary*, Which represents the *active Creation*. The Divine Osiris-Brahma, or the Father.

*The 2nd septenary*, Which represents *Preservation*. The Astral, Isis, Vishnu, the Son.

*The 3rd septenary*, Which represents *Transformation*, Physics, Horus, Siva, the Holy Spirit.

The three first arcana will therefore give the sense of all the others according to the following figure:

FIGURE							
SHOWING THE SENSE OF EACH OF THE 22 MAJOR ARCANA							
<i>yod</i> positive or creative series	1.	4.	7.	10.	13.	16.	19.
1st <i>he</i> negative or preservative series	2.	5.	8.	11.	14.	17.	20.
<i>vau</i> neuter or transforming series equilibrium	3.	6.	9.	12.	15.	18.	21.
2nd <i>he</i> transitional series	4 = + positive	(1) = negative	----	----	----	----	----
	<i>yod</i> positive or creative series		<i>he</i> negative or preservative series		<i>vau</i> neuter or transforming series equilibrium		2nd <i>he</i> transitional series

This figure is very important, for it enables us to see at once the symbolical value of any card in the Tarot, by working in the following way--

## TO DISCOVER À PRIORI THE SYMBOLICAL VALUE OF ANY CARD IN THE TAROT.

We must see--

(1st) Which Hebrew letter is written to the left in the *horizontal column*, which contains the card under consideration.

(2nd) Which Hebrew letter is written *at the foot* of the *vertical column*, containing the card.

(3rd) Which sign (+ or -) governs the secondary vertical column, containing the card in question.

### EXAMPLE:

I wish to determine the sense of the 5th arcanum.

I look to the left and find the Hebrew letter *he*.

This shows that the 5th arcanum is the *he* of what?

In order to know, I look at the vertical column and find *yod*.

The 5th arcanum is the *he* of *yod*, but that is not enough, so I look at the secondary column which contains the sign (-) negative.

I thus obtain a definite description of the 5th arcanum.

The fifth card of the Tarot is--

*The He of Yod considered negatively.*

This is a synthetic formula comprehensible to those only who are used to manipulating the sense of the word *Yod-he-vau-he*. It is therefore necessary to give further explanations.

*He* represents the *reflex*.

We may therefore say, more explicitly-- The 5th arcanum is:

*The reflex of yod* considered negatively. But what is *yod* considered negatively?

To find this out, I look in my left column at the letter *yod*, I seek in the secondary vertical column the sign (-) negative, and at the intersection of these two lines I find the 4th arcanum.

The *yod* considered negatively is the 4th arcanum.

This leads me to conclude-- *That the 5th arcanum is the reflex of the 4th arcanum.*

All the arcana can be explained in this way by each other, according to the above rules.

This tableau is the key of the *Ars Magna* of Raymond Lulle.

## CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE CARDS OF THE TAROT.

To obtain the origin and derivation of any card in the Tarot, it suffices to take the third card before it, and the third card after it.

Thus the 8th arcanum is derived from the 5th arcanum, and gives rise to the 11th arcanum.

5

8

11

Universal life.

Elementary existence.

Reflected and transitory  
life.

\*

\* \*

From this it ensues that, when two cards added together give an *even* number, we need only take the half of the number to discover the card which serves to *unite* those under consideration.

Thus, in order to discover the link which binds the 4th arcanum to the 6th, *i.e.* the universal vivifying fluid, to universal love, I add together  $4 + 6 = 10$ , and I take one-half of the number obtained  $10/2 = 5$ .

The 5th arcanum (universal life) therefore unites the two opposites.

The passage of the vivifying fluid (4) into love (6) is performed through the medium of universal life (5).

Since each card of the Tarot has three meanings, it is easy to philosophize by means of our pack, without taking too much trouble about it.

\*

\* \*

Another result of this rule is, that each card of the Tarot has a complementary in any card bearing a number which, added to its own, gives a total of 22.

For instance, what is the complementary card of the 1st arcanum?

It is the 21st arcanum, since  $21 + 1 = 22$ . What is the transition from 1 to 21?

According to what we have just stated it is  $21 + 1 = 22/2 = 11$ .

The 11th arcanum (reflected and transitory life) therefore forms the transition between the 1st arcanum (creative principle) and the 21st arcanum (universal generation).

To find the card that serves as complementary to any other, we must therefore subtract the number of the card in question from 22.

For instance to find the complementary card to 14--

$$22 - 14 = 8.$$

The 8th arcanum is therefore complementary to the 14th.

We have made this digression because all these details

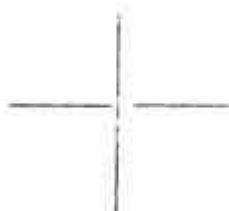
will be most useful to us presently. We can now return to the study of our major arcana.

Let us once more recall the manner in which the four first arcana have given us the key to the symbolism of all the others, according to their affinities with the sacred word, as follows—

#### THE GENERAL LAW OF THE SYMBOLISM OF THE TAROT.

*Positive*

(1)  
*yod*



*Negative Reflex of*  
*yod* (2) *he*

2nd *he* (4) *Transition yod of*  
*the following series*

*vau*  
3

*Neuter*  
Union of *yod* and of *he*

# CHAPTER IX.

## HISTORY OF THE SYMBOLISM OF THE TAROT. INQUIRY INTO ITS ORIGIN.

*The Tarot is an Egyptian Book--Its Transformations--Mantegna's Pack--Venetian Tarot--Florentine Tarot--Bolognese--Hindu Tarot--Chinese Tarot--Modern Tarots--Etteila--Marseilles--Besançon--Watillaux--Oswald Wirth--Italian and German Tarots--Constitution of the Symbolism of the Tarot--The 16 primitive Hieroglyphic Signs--The 22 Hebrew Letters.*

### ORIGIN OF THE SYMBOLISM OF THE TAROT.

As we have already stated, each card of the Tarot represents a symbol, a number, and an idea.

We have endeavoured to avoid empiricism as far as possible in the course of these explanations; and therefore we first studied the numbers, for they are the most settled element, and give the most unvarying results in their combinations.

Relying firmly upon the basis which we have thus constructed, we can now study the symbols with absolute assurance.

We hope that for this purpose you have procured the Tarot of Marseilles, the most correct in its symbolism, or else the twenty-two keys designed by Oswald Wirth; perhaps--and this is really almost indispensable--you have both of them.

You need, then, only deal the cards upon the table, to see at once that the personages depicted upon them all wear *dresses of the Renaissance* period.

And yet, is this pack of cards of ancient origin? It does not appear so.

Look at your figures more attentively and you will soon perceive Egyptian symbols [the triple cross (No. 5), ibis (No. 17)] combined with these Renaissance costumes.

They at once prove that the Tarot of Marseilles is really the exact representation of the primitive Egyptian Tarot, slightly altered to the epoch denoted by the costumes. Only the gypsies possess the primitive pack intact.

The studies of those learned men who have investigated the Tarot have confirmed this fact by the strongest evidence. And the works of Chatto, Boiteau and above all of Merlin, show us that history corroborates our assertion.

Merlin conducted his researches very scientifically, and succeeded in discovering the original of our Tarot of Marseilles in an Italian Tarot at Venice, the father of all the later packs.

He believes also that he has discovered the origin of this Venetian Tarot in the philosophical pack of *Mantegna*.

But he cannot determine the origin of this pack, because the one that Merlin believed to be the source of the Tarot is on the contrary a *reproduction*, made by one of the Initiates. The *Ars Magna* of Raymond Lulle was produced in the same way; it is drawn entirely from the Tarot.

We have given for reference the *pack of Mantegna*, known in the trade as the *cards of Baldini*, as well as the packs of the Italian Tarots, from which most of ours are derived.

The tableau which indicates the connection between the Tarot packs and that of Mantegna, ought to be reversed, and on the contrary show the cards of Mantegna derived from the Tarot, as we have stated.

Here are the figures of the Tarots. (See next page.)

MANTEGNA'S PACK.

1 The beggar.	11 Calliope.	21 Grammar.	31 Astronomy.	41 Moon.
2 The knave.	12 Urania.	22 Logic.	32 Chronology.	42 Mercury.
3 The artisan.	13 Terpsichore.	23 Rhetoric.	33 Cosmology.	43 Venus.
4 The merchant.	14 Erato.	24 Geometry.	31 Temperance.	44 Sun.
5 The Nobleman.	15 Polyhymnia.	25 Arithmetic.	35 Prudence.	45 Mars.
6 The Knight.	16 Thalia.	26 Music.	36 Strength.	46 Jupiter.
7 The Doge.	17 Melpomene.	27 Poetry.	37 Justice.	47 Saturn.
8 The King.	18 Euterpe.	28 Philosophy.	38 Charity.	48 8th sphere.
9 The Emperor.	19 Clio.	29 Astrology.	39 Hope.	49 Chief agent.
10 The Pope.	20 Apollo.	30 Theology.	40 Faith.	50 First cause.
A = Trumps.	B = Sceptres.	C = Cups	D = Pentacles.	E = Swords.
E = Positions in life.	D = Muses and Arts.	C = Sciences.	B = Virtues.	A = The system of the Universe.

## ORIGIN OF THE OTHERS.

Minchiate of Florence. 97 cards, of which 40 are Tarots.	Venetian Tarot, 78 cards, of which 21 are Tarots.	Tarot of Bologna, 62 cards, of which 21 are Tarots.
0 The Foolish Man.	0 The Foolish Man.	0 The Foolish Man.
1 The Juggler.	1 The Juggler.	1 The Juggler.
2 The Grand Duke.	2 The High Priestess	2 The High Priestess.
3 The Emperor of the West.	3 The Empress.	3 The Empress.
4 The Emperor of the East.	4 The Emperor.	4 The Emperor.
5 Love.	5 The Pope.	5 The Pope.
6 Temperance.	6 The Lovers.	6 Love.
7 Strength.	7 The Chariot.	7 The Chariot.
8 Justice.	8 Justice.	8 Temperance.
9 The Wheel of Fortune.	9 The Hermit.	9 Justice.
10 The Chariot.	10 The Wheel of Fortune.	10 Strength.
11 The Old Man, with an Hour-glass.	11 Strength.	11 Fortune.
12 The Hanged Man.	12 The Hanged Man.	12 The Old Man.
13 Death.	13 Death.	13 The Hanged Man.
14 The Devil.	14 Temperance.	14 Death.
15 Hell.	15 The Devil.	15 The Devil.
16 Hope.	16 The Lightning-struck Tower.	16 Thunder.
17 Prudence.		
18 Faith.		
19 Charity.		
20 Fire.		
21 Water.		

22 The Earth.

23 Air.

24 The Scales.

25 The Virgin.

26 The Scorpion.

27 The Ram.

28 Capricornus.

29 Sagittarius.

30 Cancer.

31 Pisces.

32 Aquarius.

33 The Lion.

34 The Bull.

35 The Twins.

36 The Star.

17 The Star.

17 The Star.

37 The Moon.

18 The Moon.

18 The Moon.

38 The Sun.

19 The Sun.

19 The Sun.

39 The Universe.

20 The Last Judgment.

20 The Universe.

40 Fame.

21 The Universe.

21 The Angel.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE PRIMITIVE ITALIAN PACKS AND THE MODERN  
TAROT--

Modern Tarot.	Mantegna.	
The King	King	No. 8 of Mantegna
The Knight	Knight	6
The Knave	Knave	2

The Emperor	4	of the Tarot is the	IX	series	E	of Mantegna
The Pope	5	---	X	---	E	---
Temperance	14	---	34	---	E	---
Strength	11	---	36	---	B	---
Justice	8	---	37	---	B	---
The Moon	18	---	41	---	A	---
The Sun	19	---	44	---	A	---

The Foolish Man	(unnumbered)	Beggar	No. 1	Mantegna
The Star	17	Venus	42	---
The Chariot	7	Mars	10	---
The Hermit	9	Saturn	47	---
The Universe	21	Jupiter	46	---
		First cause	50	----

If, however, the existence of purely Egyptian symbols in these so-called Italian Tarots do not convince the reader, a few words on the transformation of the Tarot in the East, and in other countries of Europe besides Italy, will completely enlighten him on the subject.

## HINDU TAROTS.

In spite of Merlin's assertions, the Tarot represents the summary of the scientific knowledge of the ancients. This is unquestionably proved by Chatto's researches amongst Orientals on this subject.

In fact the Indians possess a game of chess, the *Tchaturanga*, evidently derived from the Tarot, from the manner in which the men are arranged in four series.

Elephants, chariots, horses, foot-soldiers.

The Mussulmen of India also possess a pack of cards that is derived from the old symbols of the Tarot: the *Gungeifu* or *Ghendgifeh*.

This game is composed of eight series of twelve cards each, divided in this way—

*Superior Section* or Bishbur:

Crowns

Moons

Sabres

Slaves.

*Inferior Section* or Kunbur:

Harps

Suns

Royal diplomas

Bales of Merchandise.

## CHINESE TAROT.

An inexperienced eye might find some difficulty in recognizing the Tarot in these games, but the Chinese have given us an irrefutable argument in favour of our assertion, in the arrangement of their Tarot, which is here represented.

We have placed the correspondences of the minor and major arcana, and of the four letters of the tetragrammaton, above this figure.

A description of this Chinese pack will be found in Court de Gébelin (*Le Monde Primitif*), and in the work of J. A. Vaillant.

With regard to the foreign Tarots, we possess nearly all of them at the present time, and this induces us to name the various editions of the Tarot which we are now able to consult.

MINOR ARCANA.				MAJOR ARCANA.	
<i>yod</i>	<i>He</i>	<i>vau</i>	<i>he</i>		
1	15	29	43	57	71
12	16	30	44	58	72
3	17	31	45	59	73
4	18	32	46	60	74
5	19	33	47	61	75
6	20	34	48	62	76
7	21	35	49	63	77
8	22	36	50	64	
9	23	37	51	65	
10	24	38	52	66	
11	25	39	53	67	
12	26	40	54	68	
13	27	41	55	69	
14	28	42	49	56	

## MODERN TAROTS.

The following are the most important of these modern Tarots--

The Tarot of Etteila.  
The Italian Tarot.  
The Marseilles Tarot.  
The Tarot of Besançon.  
The double-headed Tarot of Besançon.  
The Tarot of Watillaux.  
The German Tarot.  
The Tarot of Oswald Wirth.

## THE FRENCH TAROT PACKS.

The *Tarot of Etteila* is of no symbolic value, it is a bad mutilation of the real Tarot.

This pack is used by all our fortune-tellers. Its sole interest lies in the strangeness of its figures. It can be obtained for 5 or 8 francs from all the great card-sellers in Paris.

The *Tarot of Watillaux*, or pack of the princess Tarot, reproduces the minor arcana very correctly. It is worth consideration on this account.

The *Italian Tarot, that of Besançon and of Marseilles*, are unquestionably the best which we now possess, particularly the latter, which fairly reproduces the *Primitive symbolical Tarot*.

## FOREIGN PACKS OF TAROTS.

Besides the Italian we must quote the German Tarot, in which the symbols of the minor arcana are different

For

The Cups	are represented by	The Hearts
The Pentacles	----	The Bells
The Swords	----	The Leaves
The Sceptres	----	The Acorns

However, this Tarot is a very bad one.

## THE TAROT OF OSWALD WIRTH.

It became necessary to have a Tarot pack in which the symbolism was definitely established. This work, suggested by Eliphas Levi, who defined the principles on which it was to be based, has been accomplished by Mr. Oswald Wirth.

This clever occultist, aided by the advice of Stanislas de Guaita, has designed the series of the twenty-two major arcana. These drawings reproduce the Tarot of Marseilles, with the symbolical modifications suggested by the researches of Eliphas Levi upon this important question.

Owing to the kindness of M. Poirel, who assisted the work by printing these designs, we now possess a marvellous symbolic document in the *Tarot of Oswald Wirth*.

It is therefore wise, as we have already said, for those who wish to study the Tarot very thoroughly, to procure the *Tarot de Marseilles*, and that of *Oswald Wirth*.

We shall use them both presently in our explanation of the symbolical meaning of each card, but before passing to the study of these symbols, card by card, we must see if there are no means of positively defining the symbolism of the Tarot.



## HOW CAN WE HOPE TO DEFINE THE SYMBOLISM OF THE TAROT CONCLUSIVELY?

We have already and sufficiently explained that the Tarot represents the ancient or occult science in every possible development.

If we then wish to find a solid basis for the study of the symbols represented in the 22 major arcana, we may put the Tarot on one side for an instant, and devote ourselves to this ancient science. It alone can enable us to attain our end, not in *finding* the explanation of the symbols, but in leading us to *create* them one by one, by deducing them from fixed and general principles.

We shall thus commence work of quite a new character, whilst avoiding, so far as possible, falling into those errors which arise from the effort to explain the symbols of the Tarot by themselves, instead of seeking for their solution at their original source.

The first step in the search for these particular symbols leads us to discuss the grave problem of the origin of symbolism itself.

We cannot enter upon, much less solve, this question by ourselves; we shall therefore quote the opinions of several writers upon this subject. Truth, having Unity for its criterion, the agreement of various conclusions in one point will be a valuable guide for us.

*Claude de Saint-Martin*, the unknown philosopher, states in his book, the *Livre des Rapports*, that the primitive alphabet is composed of sixteen signs. He received these data, so far as we can judge, from intuitive revelation, joined to the teaching of the Illuminism, of which he was one of the members.

*Lacour*, in his book on the Elohim or Gods of Moses, has inductively determined the existence of a primitive alphabet, also composed of sixteen signs. Another author, *Barrois*, pursuing inquiries of quite a different nature, also reaches the conclusion of the existence of sixteen primitive signs in his system of Dactylogy.

But the labours of *Court de Gébelin*, and above all of *Fabre d'Olivet*, are the most remarkable in this respect. In his *Langue Hébraïque Restituée*, this learned Initiate established the existence of primitive hieroglyphic signs from which the Hebrew letters are derived.

All these writers, starting from very different points, agree in their conclusions, and this gives us a strong argument in favour of the truth of their inquiries.

But it matters very little to us whether these 16 primitive signs are the direct origin, either of the Hebrew, Sanscrit, Chinese, or Greek letters. The identity of source tends strongly to identity of results, and any one of these derivative alphabets will answer our purpose.

The Hebrew alphabet, composed of 22 letters, seems preferable to us, on account of the concordance between the number of its letters and that of the Arcana in our Tarot.

We shall therefore adopt, as the starting-point of our study, the Hebrew alphabet of 22 letters, derived from the 16 primitive hieroglyphic signs.

This conclusion is scarcely reached, when fresh light shines upon us from all sides.

*Guillaume Postel* reveals to us the connection between the Hebrew letters and the Tarot; *Van Helmont fils*, *Claude de Saint-Martin*, *Fabre d'Olivet*, all confirm our opinion; lastly, *Eliphas Levi* also throws the weight of his marvellous learning into the question.

But we are more surprised to find that the *Sepher Yetzirah*, an old book of the Kabbalah, which contains a study upon the formation of the Hebrew alphabet, arrives at a division of the letters which exactly corresponds with the astrological data contained in an old manuscript in the Vatican, upon which *Christian* based his horoscopic works.

One single and identical conclusion arises from all these different points of view: the value of the Hebrew letter as a symbol.

In it we possess a real symbol, of which we can ascertain not only the meanings, but also the origin.

We could then make a Tarot exclusively composed of Hebrew letters and of numbers, but this is not our object; we are seeking to discover in the symbolism of the Hebrew characters the symbolism of the Tarot, and we shall thus realize our intention of ascertaining deductively the value of the figures of the Tarot and the reason they have been chosen.

## THE HEBREW LETTERS AS THE BASIS OF THE SYMBOLICAL TAROT.

We shall now study the Hebrew letters one by one, in determining successively--

1st. The hieroglyphic value of each one of them according to its origin (Fabre d'Olivet, Barrois),

2nd. Its symbolic value derived from this hieroglyphic (Fabre d'Olivet, Eliphas Levi, Christian);

3rd. Its astronomical value (Christian and the *Sepher Yetzirah*.).

Once acquainted with these data, it will be easy for us to deduce from them the application of the letters to the symbols of the Tarot.

But before we enter upon this study, it is necessary to say a few words upon the Hebrew alphabet in general and its constitution.

The alphabet of the Hebrews is composed of 22 letters; these letters, however, are not placed by chance, one after the other. Each of them corresponds with a number according to its rank, with a hieroglyphic according to its form, with a symbol according to its affinities with the other letters.

As we have already said, all the letters are derived from one amongst them, the *yod*. <sup>1</sup> The *yod* has generated them in the following manner (see *Sepher Yetzirah*)--

1st. Three mothers:

The A	(Aleph)	א
The M	(The Mem)	מ
The Sh	(The Shin)	ש

2nd. Seven doubles (double because they express two sounds, the one positive strong, the other negative soft);

The B	(Beth)	ב
The G	(Gimel)	ג
The D	(Daleth)	ד
The Ch	(Caph)	כ
The Ph	(Pe)	פ
The R	(Resh)	ר
The T	(Tau)	ת

3rd. Lastly, twelve simple, formed by the other letters.

To render this clearer, we will give the Hebrew alphabet here, indicating the quality of each letter and its rank.

We have now given a fixed principle for symbolism in the Hebrew letter, and need not fear being deceived by the false interpretation of a costume, or of an incorrect figure. The Hebrew letter will be always there, to enlighten us upon obscure or difficult points.

We can therefore safely return to the Tarot, which we have left to make this digression.

NUMBER IN ORDER	HIEROGLYPHIC	NAMES	VALUE IN ROMAN LETTERS	VALUE IN ALPHABET
1	א	aleph	A	mother
2	ב	beth	B	double
3	ג	gimel	G	double
4	ד	daleth	D	double
5	ה	he	E	simple
6	ו	vau	V	simple
7	ז	zain	z	simple
8	ח	heth	H	simple
9	ט	teth	T	simple
10	י	Yod	I	simple and principle
11	כ	kaph	CH	double
12	ל	lamed	L	simple
13	מ	mem	M	mother
14	נ	nun	N	simple
15	ס	samech	S	simple
16	ע	ayin	GH	simple
17	פ	phe	PH	double
18	צ	tzaddi	TS	simple
19	ק	qoph	K	simple
20	ר	resh	R	double
21	ש	shin	SH	mother
22	ת	tau	TH	double

# CHAPTER X.

## THE SYMBOLICAL TAROT.

### THE FIRST SEPTENARY, 1ST TO 7TH ARCANA. THEOGONY.

*Scheme of Work--Key to the 1st Septenary--The 1st Card of the Tarot the Origin of all the others--The three Principles of the Absolute--The Trinity--Figure of the first Card and its Affinities--The High Priestess and the Beth--The Gimel and the Empress--The Daleth and the Emperor--The He and the Pope--The Van, the Lovers--Summary of the 1st Septenary--Constitution of God.*

#### STUDY OF EACH OF THE 22 MAJOR ARCANA.

##### *Scheme of Work.*

WE shall now apply this general law of symbolism to each of the twenty-two major arcana.

We must here beg for the reader's careful attention in spite of the length of the subject under consideration. We shall make every effort to be as clear as possible, and therefore we shall first explain the scheme which we have adopted in the study of each of the cards of the Tarot.

(1st) We shall always start from the hieroglyphic sign which has given birth to the Hebrew letter. Court de Gébelin is the author whom we shall consult chiefly upon this subject.

(2nd) We shall explain from the hieroglyphic character all the ideas that can be progressively deduced from it, and which characterize the Hebrew letter considered as a *sign*. Kircher and Fabre d'Olivet are our authorities in this work.

(3rd) When we have once defined the ideas signified by the Hebrew letter, we shall search for the application of these ideas in the symbolic figure of the Tarot.

Eliphas Levi, Christian and Barrois will aid us in our inquiries.

(4th) Lastly, we shall determine the meaning which must be attributed to the card of the Tarot, according to its numerical and symbolical affinities with all the others, in applying to it the general law of symbolism. This portion of our work is strictly personal.

(5th) We shall end the study upon each of the cards by a figure showing all that we have said.

We must warn the reader that the perusal of the recapitulations only will be of no use as a means of understanding the card of the Tarot, and that the best way will be to carefully follow the successive explanations of each card, with the Tarot before him.

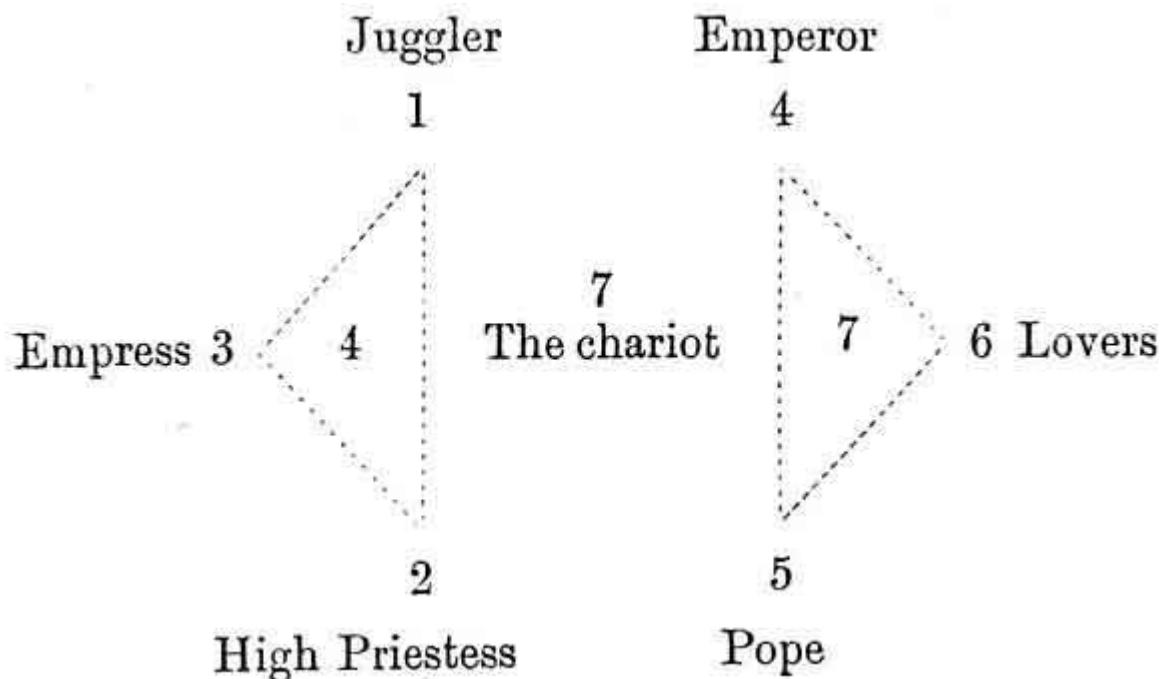
We cannot end this opening chapter without alluding to the basis upon which we have established the astronomical relations of each card of the Tarot.

One of the most ancient books of the Kabbalah which we possess, the *Sepher Yetzirah*, says that the three mother letters of the Hebrew alphabet correspond with the three worlds, the seven doubles with the seven planets, and the twelve simple with the twelve signs of the zodiac.

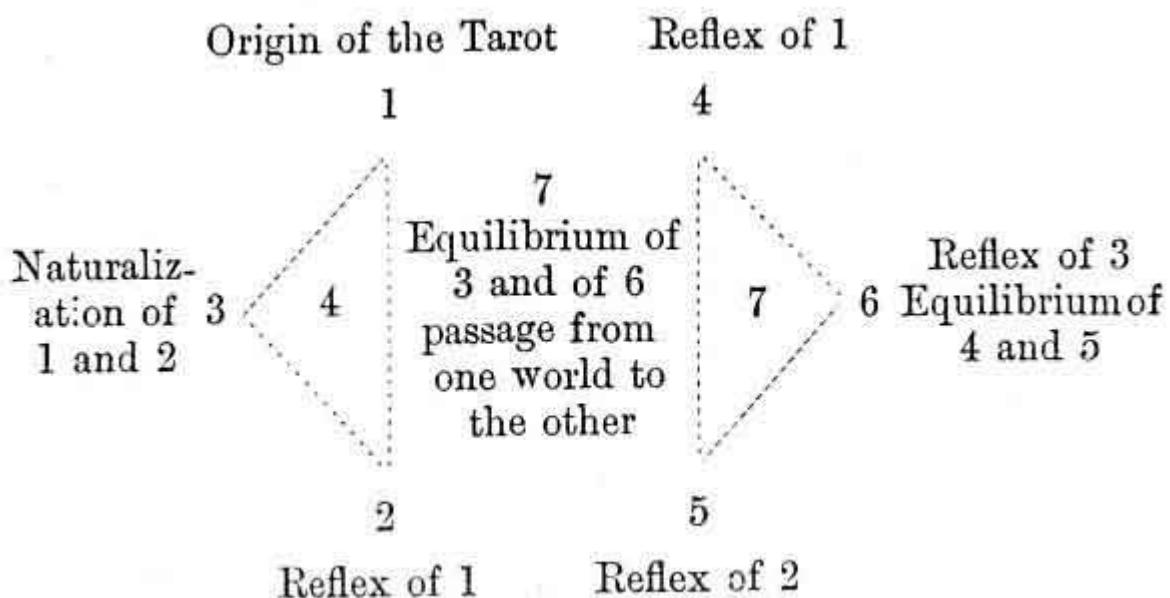
Now in studying the astrological manuscript published by Christian, we have discovered that the numbers attributed to the planets by the author of this manuscript exactly correspond with the *double* Hebrew letters. The numbers attributed to the twelve signs of the zodiac exactly correspond with the simple letters. We considered that this absolute agreement between two documents of such different origin deserved our serious attention, and we have therefore given with each letter its astronomical correspondence.

## KEY OF THE FIRST SEPTENARY.

## ARRANGEMENT OF THE FIGURES FOR STUDY.



## CHARACTER OF THE FIGURES.



## THE FIRST CARD OF THE TAROT.

### ORIGIN OF THE SIGNIFICATION OF ALL THE OTHERS.

We see from our preceding work that if we know the exact meaning of the first card of the Tarot we can, from that, discover the signification of all the others.

We cannot approach this subject without great hesitation. The hope of ascertaining the truth is, in fact, troubled by the possibility of making a mistake which might have very serious results.

The work which we have already accomplished will, however, enable us to decipher the meaning of the symbolism of the first card of the Tarot almost mathematically, but the general meaning only; whilst we know that each card must have not one, but three meanings.

We must discover three sufficiently general principles to be applied to every order of human knowledge; for this should be the object of the Tarot.

In this case we will, as usual, resort to those eminent authors who have treated these questions from different points of view, and the agreement between their teachings will give us new light to illuminate our path.

The Pole HŒNÉ WRONSKI, [1](#) who died of hunger in the suburbs of Paris, was perhaps one of the most powerful intellects produced by the 19th century. He asserted that he had discovered the formula of the absolute, and his works are unquestionably a summary of one of the most elevated syntheses that we have ever seen. We need not discuss the doctrines of Wronski, but will only say a few words upon the three primitive elements which enter into his law of creation.

Wronski places at the origin of all creation three elements, which he designates by the names--

Of Neuter Element (E. N.)  
Of Element of Being (E. B.)  
Of Element of Wisdom (E. W.)

*The Neuter Element* represents the Absolute, Reality resulting from the total neutralization of the two other elements by each other.

*The Element of Wisdom* represents the CREATIVE FACULTY with its especial characteristics, autogeny and spontaneity.

*The Element of Being* represents the PERMANENT FACULTY with its characteristics, autothesis and inertia.

Principle of the Creation or Element of Wisdom.  
Principle of Preservation or Element of Being.  
Principle of Neutralization or Neuter Element.

These are the three terms upon which Wronski establishes the foundations of Reality, and, consequently, of all the systems of creation. We must remember these conclusions.

FABRE D'OLIVET, in his researches upon the first principles which direct everything, determines the existence of three elements, which he names Providence, Destiny, and Human Will.

*Providence* is the principle of ABSOLUTE LIBERTY, of the creation of beings and things.

*Destiny* is the principle of ABSOLUTE NECESSITY, of the preservation of beings and of things.

Lastly, the *Human Will* is a neuter principle intermediate between the two: the principle of mobility and CHANGE, in all their forms. Now it is not necessary to be very learned to perceive the absolute agreement which exists between the two authors; the one, Wronski, reached his conclusions by mathematics, the other, d'Olivet, attained his by profound study of antiquity and its mysteries. The words used may vary, but the idea is fundamentally the same.

Wronski's Element of Wisdom (E. W.), the *principle of the creation*, is the same thing as the Providence of d'Olivet, who thus places it as the principle of the creation.

Wronski's Element of Being (E. B.), the *principle of the permanent faculty*, exactly represents what d'Olivet calls Destiny, and which he concludes to be the principle of preservation.

Lastly, d'Olivet's human Will corresponds in all points with Wronski's Neuter Element.

Here then are two very different systems, which lead to the same signification. But our conclusions do not stop here.

If we study these three primitive principles more attentively we shall find in the first: Providence or the Element of Wisdom, represented in philosophy by the word *God*.

Destiny or Being shows us its identity with the immutable laws which govern the *Universe*.

Lastly, it does not require much study to prove to its that the human Will responds to Man.

### GOD, MAN, AND THE UNIVERSE.

This is the basis of all the esoteric philosophy of the ancients, and not only Wronski and Fabre d'Olivet agree in their conclusions respecting this mysterious ternary; occult science itself proclaims its identity with these principles by the mouth of all its disciples. *Hermes Trismegistus*, the *Holy Kabbalah*, *Neo-Platonism*, and the *Alchemists* through *Pythagoras* and all the Greek philosophers assert the division of the Great All into THREE ENTITIES OR WORLDS.

In less remote ages *Guillaume Postel* gives the key of the Tarot without explaining it, and the basis of this key is formed by this mysterious entity--

### DEUS, HOMO, ROTA.

*Trithemie* and his pupil *Cornelius Agrippa* also give us this fecund and sublime trinity in all their analogical figures.

The Jesuit *Kircher* describes this division into three worlds as the basis of the Egyptian mysteries.

Lastly, *Claude de Saint-Martin* has written a book entirely based upon the keys of the Tarot, and it is entitled--*Tableau Naturel des rapports qui unissent DIEU, L'HOMME, ET L'UNIVERS*.

Let us question India upon the law of the absolute, she replies--

*Trimurti*: BRAHMA, SIVA, VISHNU.

Let us ask China for the great secret of her philosophy, and she will give us the *Tri-grams of Fo-Hi*.

Address ourselves to one of the ancient initiated Egyptians, he will tell us--

OSIRIS, ISIS, HORUS.

The founder of *Greek Cosmogony*, the disciple of the science of Egypt, *Hesiod*, also transmits this law to us, and they all confirm Louis Lucas when he states: "I feel that hidden beneath this mystical formula of the Trinity is one of the most important scientific laws that man has ever discovered."

God, Man, and the Universe, these are the most general principles that we can attain, and they constitute the three meanings of the first card of the Tarot.

It remains for us to ascertain first, whether these meanings respond to the primitive hieroglyphic, and then to determine how far they extend through the whole Tarot.



THE JUGGLER



THE JUGGLER

1. ♀

1st Hebrew letter (Aleph).

## ORIGIN OF THE SYMBOLISM OF THE FIRST CARD OF THE TAROT.

The Aleph hieroglyphically expresses *Man* himself as a collective unity, the master principle, ruler of the earth.

From this hieroglyphic meaning are derived ideas of the *Unity* and of the *principle which determines it*, ideas which give to Aleph its value as the sign of Power and Stability.

Man, or the Microcosm, the Unity and the Principle in all the worlds, is the meaning of the primitive hieroglyphic, which, as we see, exactly renders the general ideas which we have established.

But attentive consideration of this first card of the Tarot will enlighten us still further.

### *Symbolism of the First Card of the Tarot.*

#### THE JUGGLER.

If you take the first card of the Tarot and examine it attentively, you will see that the form of the juggler depicted upon it corresponds in all points with that of the letter Aleph. If we now apply to the study of this card the principles of the elucidation of symbolism, according to the *Traité Élémentaire de Science Occulte*, we at once find new explanations of it.

The top of the figure is occupied by the divine sign of Universal Life  $\infty$  placed upon the head of the Juggler.

The bottom of the figure represents the Earth ornamented with its productions, the symbol of Nature.

Lastly, the centre is occupied by the Man himself, placed behind a table covered with divers objects.

The right and left of the figure are occupied by the hands of the Juggler, one of them bent towards the Earth, the other raised towards Heaven.

The position of the bands represents the two principles, active and passive, of the Great All, and it corresponds with the two columns *Jakin* and *Bohas* of the temple of Solomon and of Freemasonry.

Man with one hand seeks for God in heaven, with the other he plunges below, to call up the demon to himself, and thus unites the divine and the diabolic in humanity. In this way the Tarot shows us the *rôle* of universal mediator accorded to the Adam-Kadmon.

If we wish to make a summary of the meaning of the symbol, so far as we have now deciphered it, we can represent it in this way--

	Top	Divine	<i>Head</i>	
RIGHT				LEFT
<i>(Arm lowered)</i>	CENTRE	Human	<i>Body</i>	<i>(Arm raised)</i>
Necessity				Liberty
Evil	BOTTOM	<i>Natural</i>	<i>Feet</i>	Good

Yet the symbolism of this first card of the Tarot does not end here.

The Juggler holds the wand of the Mage in the left hand, which he raises, and the four great symbols of the Tarot are placed before him.

The Cup, the Sword, the Pentacles or Talisman, which, as we have already seen, exactly correspond with the letters of the Tetragrammaton--

*Sceptre or Yod*, symbol of the active Principle preeminent, and of God.

*Cup or He*, symbol of the passive Principle pre-eminent, or of the Universe.

*Sword, Cross or Vau*, symbol of the Equilibrist Principle pre-eminent, or of Man.

*Pentacles or 2nd He*, the cyclic symbol of Eternity, which unites the three first Principles in one Whole.

From the human point of view these symbols correspond with the four great human castes.

*The men of Yod*, or the Inventors, the Producers. The Nobility of Intellect.

*The men of He*, or the depositaries of the great truths discovered by the men of Yod: the Savants, the Judges. Professional nobility.

*The men of Vau*, or the guardians and defenders of the former: the Warriors. Nobility of the sword.

*The men of the 2nd He*, the multitude from which the other classes are continually recruited: the People.

The four great symbols are placed upon the table at random, and Man rules them and must arrange them; in the twenty-first arcana we shall find these symbols arranged in a cross.

We already know that the first card of the Tarot is completed by the twenty-first ( $21 + 1 = 22$ ), and we see why, if this first card represents *Microcosm*, the last would represent *Macrocosm*, and the eleventh card, which serves as the universal link to all the complements of the Tarot, represents the *Vital reflex Current*, which serves as a link between the worlds.

But we must not anticipate, so we will return to our first arcanum.

This symbol is the first of the whole Tarot, and it bears the Unity as its characteristic number.

The Unity-principle, the origin of which is impenetrable to human conceptions, is placed at the beginning of all things. We cannot seize the origin of this primal cause, which we are content to assert according to the absolute law of analogies so well expressed by Eliphas Levi--

"Je crois à l'inconnu que Dieu personnifie,  
Prouvé par l'être même et par l'immensité,  
*Ideál SURHUMAIN de la philosophie,*  
Parfaite Intelligence et Suprême Bonté."

If we cannot follow this Unknown in its principle, it is at least easy to us to follow it in its consequences, and therefore our study will be only the development of the Unity-principle in creation, related according to the Cosmogony of ancient initiation.

*God, Man, and the Universe* are, then, the three meanings of our first card, and we will now say a few words upon the application of these data to all the other cards of the pack.

## EXTENSION OF THE THREE GREAT PRINCIPLES THROUGH THE TAROT.

The three meanings of the first card respectively represent--

- The Creator or *Yod*.
- The Receiver or *He*.
- The Transformer or *Vau*.

Lastly, the transition to the second *He*, which is not under consideration at present.

But the first card of the Tarot, taken *as a whole*, represents the *Creator or Yod*, the second card taken as a whole will therefore represent the *Receiver or He*, and the third the *Transformer or Vau*. Each of them will also show the four aspects of *Yod-he-vau-he* in the idea which it expresses.

But what is true of the ternary, is also true of the Septenary, so that the first Septenary, taken as a whole, will represent the CREATOR.

The second septenary will represent the RECEIVER.

The third the TRANSFORMER.

Lastly, the ternary of transition will represent the return of effects to causes, and of consequences to the principle.

Let us condense this all by saying--

1st <i>septenary</i>	represents	God.
2nd <i>septenary</i>	----	Man.
3rd <i>septenary</i>	----	the Universe.

Moreover, each of these elements is contained in the two others in all points of their manifestations.

## GENERAL RECAPITULATION.

We have now to recapitulate all the acceptations of the first card in a general figure. As each card in the Tarot will have the same recapitulation, we think it may be useful to explain the scheme followed in this arrangement. At the head of the figure will be found the Hebrew number and letter of the card. Below it, the name usually given to the card in the Tarot.

To the right of the figure are the significations in the Three Worlds: Divine, Human, and Natural.

Below these three significations is found the absolute key to each card, according to the figure of the revolutions of the word *Yod-he-vau-he*. The Hebrew letters placed upon the upper line of this key indicate the origin of the card under consideration, the Hebrew letters placed above it indicate the exact meaning of the card.

1. ♣

*The Juggler.*

AFFINITIES	SIGNIFICATIONS
Primitive Hieroglyph: Man  Kabbalah: Kether  Astronomy: No Affinity	Key to the Card: <i>yod</i> <i>yod</i>  The divine creator or GOD  the Father  OSIRIS  <i>yod of yod</i> <i>yod-yod</i>
OBSERVATIONS	The divine transformer  THE ACTIVE UNIVERSE NATURA NATURANS  <i>vau of yod</i> <i>yod-yod</i>  _____  <i>2nd he of yod</i> <i>yod-yod</i>



THE HIGH PRIESTESS.



THE HIGH PRIESTESS.

2. ב

**2nd Hebrew letter (Beth).**

## ORIGIN OF THE SYMBOLISM OF THE SECOND CARD OF THE TAROT.

The Beth hieroglyphically expresses the mouth of man as the organ of speech. Speech is the production of man's inner self. Therefore Beth expresses that inner self, central as a dwelling, to which one can retire without fear of disturbance. From this ideas arise of a Sanctuary, an inviolate abode for man and for God. But the Beth also expresses every production that emanates from this mysterious retreat, every internal activity, and from it issue ideas of Instruction, of the higher Knowledge, of Law, of Erudition, of occult Science or Kabbalah.

Beth corresponds with the number 2, and astronomically with the moon. This number has given birth to all the passive significations emanated from the Binary, hence the ideas of reflection, of Woman; applied to the Moon relatively to the Sun, and to Woman relatively to Man.

## THE SECOND CARD OF THE TAROT.

### *The High Priestess.*

God himself, or God the Father, reflects himself, and gives birth to God the Man, or God the Son, the negative relatively to his creator. As we have seen, man is the divine receiver, therefore this second card of the Tarot will express all the ideas of the first conceived negatively.

The first card represents a man standing; this, on the contrary, bears the figure of a *seated woman*.

(First idea of passivity) by the woman and by her position.

The man, endowed with all the attributes of Power, was placed in the midst of nature.

The woman is adorned with all the attributes of Authority and persuasion, and she is placed under the porch of the temple of Isis, between two columns.

Idea of a sacred dwelling, of a divine recipient.

The two columns, like the arms of the Juggler, express the Positive and the Negative.

The woman is crowned with a tiara, surmounted by the lunar crescent, she is enveloped in a transparent veil falling over her face. On her breast she bears the solar cross, and upon her knees lies an open book, which she half covers with her mantle.

This is the picture of Isis, of Nature, whose veil must not be raised before the profane. The book indicates that the doctrines of Isis are bidden; but she divulges to the magi the secrets of the true Kabbalah, and of occult science. We must admire this profound symbol.

The first card expressed Osiris in the three worlds; this second gives us the signification of Isis, the companion of Osiris--

*In God* it is the reflex of Osiris, the reflex of God the Father, Isis, or God the Son.

*In Man* it is the reflex of Adam of the absolute man: Eve, the woman, life (min).

*In the Universe* it is the reflex of *natura naturans*: it is *natura naturata*.

AFFINITIES	SIGNIFICATIONS
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Hieroglyphic: The Mouth of Man

Kabbalah: *Chochmah*

Astronomy: *The Moon* ☽