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سوفير

CONTAINING AN ESSAY ON

نامت

ALI SLOPER; OR, THE FORTY LIARS

A CHRISTMAS DIVERSION

هو که دست از جان بشوید

هر چه در دل دارد بگوید

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

(With suggestions for cast)

ALI SLOPER (aged 120 years)	. . . . .	Mr Christian Rosenkreutz.
BONES ("Greatly Honoured Frater C.C.R.")	. . . . .	Mr. W..d..n Gr..ssm..th.
BABY BONES (aged fifteen months)	. . . . .	{ Mr. ..sc..r ..sch.. or Miss L..c..l.. H..ll.
BOWLEY ("Greatly Honoured Frater N.L.")	. . . . .	Miss L..ly Br..yt..n.
IMAGINARY CHAIRMAN, WAITS, ETC.	. . . . .	Any imaginary actors.
DR. WAISTCOAT'S FAMOUS TROUPE OF PANTOMIMISTS ("THE FORTY LIARS"):		
Whitehead	. . . . .	Equilibrist.
Din and Doni	. . . . .	Knockabouts.
Daath	. . . . .	Sensation Baby.
Nehushtan	. . . . .	Serpentine Dancer.
The Ales (Ralph, Mike, and Sam)	. . . . .	Serio-Comics.
Lucy Furr and Florrie Farr	. . . . .	Egyptian Duettists.

THE MYSTERIOUS MATHERS in his great sketch, "THE FAMILY VAULT"

(*Mr. Mathers will borrow any required properties from the audience.*)

"I reside on Abiegnus, and my name is 'Flodden' James.
I am not up to small deceits or any sinful games:
And I'll tell in simple language what I know about the bounder
That broke up our Society—and also broke the founder!"

The Clippers	. . . . .	Eccentrics.
Happy Hal Barthe with Tim Urah and Ike Baker	. . . . .	Quick Change Artists.
Le Marbre	. . . . .	Lightning Calculator
Mac and Mic	. . . . .	Face Artists

THE YONLY YEATS.

What *are* Yeats?

Berridge and his Magic Clasp.

Mo Locke and Bill Feegur Serios.

Miss Schnarr Diseuse.

Shaddai L. Hye in his great songs:

“The Yonisuckle and the Bee.”

“New every morning is the love.”

“Hire a member, hire a member.”

“How’s that for Hye?” and

“LINGAM LONGER, LUCY.”

Dr. Jellinek Contortionist.

Barry Ether Society Reciter.

La Chic Ina In her famous

GLORY SONG.

The
Freaks.

{ Harry Canpin The India-rubbed-faced Man.

{ May Imm The only genuine Mermaid exhibiting

{ Constance Sylphide, the living skeleton, in her songs “I’m the
Empress of Rosher,” etc.

{ Tabicat The Horny Man from Mazawattee.

{ Supermen and other supers.

Nogah “The little bit of sweet-stuff.”

Lieber Herr Gott with his trained beasts; includes the Unicorn from
the Stars, only one in Europe.

Adam Cadman Low Comic.

The Terrible Tetragrammaton

Græw-Jewish Wrestler.

GRAND PATRIOTIC SPECTACLE

Warlike Preparations—General Eloah arrives from Temain of Edom—Colonel
Holiun summoned from Mount Paran—The Wilderness of Seir—The Tents of
Cushan—A Dervish stronghold—General Tetragrammaton’s flying column—
City of Meroz I.V. desert in a body—A traitor in the camp?—Melchizek Pasha’s
cunning move—The river Kishon sweeps away the Moabites (by Mr. Frank
Parker)—Battle at last—Desperate stand of the Kings of Edom—Marshal Jah’s
flank attack—Everlasting Mountains scattered—Perpetual Hills bowed (by Mr.
Frank Parker)—Charge of the gallant Karnaim—Rout of the Edomites—The
Dukes in full flight—And Grand Finale “Blowing up of the Tower of Babel” (by
Mr. Frank Parker).

“GOD SAVE THE KING.”

SCENE

Practicable Drawing-room littered with innumerable sheets of double Elephant Whatman paper, about to be an impracticable Table of Correspondences. A roaring fire. Sofas and Chairs.

In presenting this play before a British audience, the Manager should come forward and say: "Ladies and Gentlemen, owing to the severe indisposition of the Author, no obscene jests will be found to occur in the dialogue of this play. The actors have, however, been instructed to pause and wink at frequent intervals, when you are at liberty to imagine an unusually profound and peculiarly foul double entendre. We have also gone to the expense of hiring people to sit in the stalls and start the laughs, so that there is no excuse whatever for any of you to complain of having passed an unprurient evening."

The scene rises. The BONES FAMILY and MR. BOWLEY sitting round the fire. Up stage, MRS. P. TR..CK C..MPB..LL chased by MR. M..RT..N H..RV..Y runs off R. and barks her shin on a chair.

Mrs P. C. I am not happy! I am not happy! O Glwyndyvaine, what shall I say?

Mr. M. H. Most people would say Damn, ma belle Mygraine!

Mrs. P. C. [*Aside.*] If Maeterlinck gives me a name like a headache, will not Shaw call me simply a cough-drop? [*Exit.*]

Prompter. [*Angrily.*] The Truth!

Mr. M. H. The Truth! The Truth! The Truth!

[*Exit. Blare of Trumpets.*]

Mrs. Bones. A truce to this theatrical folly! More coffee, Mr. Bowley?

Bowley. Please. I hope you will forgive me, Mrs. Bones, but in honour of the festive season, and as relaxation of our severe labours upon the Table of Correspondences, I have taken the liberty of engaging Dr. Waistcoat's celebrated troupe of Variety Artistes to perform at intervals during the evening.

Mrs. Bones. I'm sure we're very much obliged by your kindness; I trust it did not cost you too much.

Bowley. Waistcoat is an old friend of mine, you know; connected with the Straights—the Dover Straights—on the mother's site. Non Omnis Moriar is his motto. Very likely; but on the other hand, he's never really *quite* alive; so one can bargain with him to great advantage.

Mrs. Bones. Well, I'm sure it will all be most delightful. We get very little of the old-fashioned Christmases now.

Bones. Two thousand years hence we shall all be saying the same about Bowleymas Day in the sunset of Bowleyanity.

Bowley. Respect my modesty—Pyrrho-Zoroastrianism, if you please.

Mrs. Bones. More coffee?

Bowley. Please. You do not ask what your husband means.

Mrs. Bones. I give you two up.

Bones. To-day we celebrate Christ's birth; then, Bowley's.

Bowley. I hide my blushes in thy breast, O babe! [*Does so; the child weeps.*]
Take it, for God's sake! [*Done. The child smiles.*]

Mrs. Bones. But I thought your birthday was in October.

Bowley. It is; and why did I arrange it on that date? Because I knew that I was the Messiah—pass the baby, please!—and that people would celebrate the day according to my word.

Mrs. Bones. But why? [*BONES signals wildly to her, but in vain.*]

Bowley. Because children born in summer thrive best.

Mrs. Bones. But why?

Bowley. Brother, you waste alarm. They have ears and hear not. But I am not talking; I am making my Table of Correspondences. I drink to my Table of Correspondences.

[*Drinks. BONES picks up a book on Indian Mysticism. Thunder. Slow music.*]

Bowley. More coffee, please. I attribute the Baby to Malkuth. Mrs. Bones, may I paint the baby bright yellow all over? Heedless of Mother's sighs and groans He painted blue the Baby Bones, in the well-known porphyrean of the late John Keats, on whom be peace. At this stage in my career—drop that silly Babu twaddle!—I offer you the following desperate alternative, greatly honoured Frater! We will go on with the Table, or I will read you my latest glorious masterpiece entitled Amath. The Hebrew for Truth, Baby! Reflect, O bat-eyed child, upon the circumstance that Amath adds up to 441, which is the square of 21, Eheieh, divine name of Kether, also mystic number of Tiphereth—*vide* Tiphereth clause in "J"—"I will devote myself to Great Work," etc., you remember—meaning Truth is of Kether the end and of Tiphereth the means, also Aleph is the Fool, Kether, Mem the Hanged Man, Tiphereth; and Tau the Sign of the Cross and the Virgin of the World. May be read by Tarot (McGregor Mathers) Fools hang Virgins! What about wise men? Hush, baby dear! Wait till you're an Arahat on Ararat, and then you'll know all about it, you beetle-headed little bitch! Nothing like early and clear instruction, Mrs. Bones. Train up a child and a moustache—why don't you get Cecil some Pommade Hongroise? I attribute Pommade Hongroise to Gemini; and it is called the Waxen or Sticky Intelligence, because it sticketh together everything that is stuck together, and disposeth in right conformation the hairs that are beneath the supernals in that Orifice of the Nose of the Most Holy Ancient One which is called His Nose, and distributeth tens of thousands of severities upon the Inferiors. This is that which is written. Psalms, xcix, 4. "The nose which is not a Nose." And again "His Nose"; wherein no mention is made of the Most Holy Ancient One, but only of Tetragrammaton. Also we have heard in Barietha that this is spoken of the Shells—Qliphoth you would call them, Baby! As it is written, She sells sea shells. Nay, Mrs. Bones, if I be drunken, it is of the Wine of Iacchus, the Dew of Immortality, the Lustral Fountain in the chalice of the Stolistes or Stolistria. Or rather attribute it to your own Mince Pie, and its Awful and Avenging Punitive Currants! But as I say, your alleged husband trains neither his child nor his moustache; and I will contend with him, I will fight and overcome him; yea, I will inflict upon him my celebrated

essay upon Truth—and he shall never rise again! It is written in the manner of Immanuel Kant? Ay, but of Immanuel Kant in bed with Bessie Bellwood. The hands are the hands of Schopenhauer, but the voice is the voice of Arthur Roberts.

Listen to the Jataka, O child of wonder and the innocent eyes, and if you yell you will be deposited in the coal-hole. Superlatively Honoured Fratres and Sorores of the Order of the Tin Sunset—compare Charles Baudelaire our Lord!—assist me to open the temple—my mouth, Mrs. Bones—Mouth is part of body, and body is Temple (Colossians, iv, 15), you may say I need no assistance—in the Grade of Ten equals One and don't you forget it! [*Reads from MS.*]

אמת¹

An essay upon Truth by the boy O.M., Member of the Order of the A.:A.:

To the first paragraph of “Ascension Day” (dearly beloved brethren), it is written as a Fingerpost—and worthy is it to be graven with a needle upon the eye-corners so that whoso would be warned should be warned! “What is Truth? said jesting Pilate; but Crowley waits for an answer.”

He did more than wait: he took active measures to discover; and though an answer in the Key of Affirmation would, in its very exordium, beggar human language, yet we may do a certain amount to destroy some of the minor fallacies that obscure the vision of our weaker brethren, not, alas! veiling their eyes from Truth, but from the perception of the Great Falsehood. Just as in chemistry the schoolboy blunders over the law of Combining Weights, and finds difficulty in accepting it, only to discover that the real difficulty of the chemist is that the law is *not* true; just as the golfer painfully corrects his pull and his slice, only to learn that the pull and the slice are the master-strokes of the game; just as the brilliant and studious person arrives at the summit of his academic career, only to discover (if he have sufficient wit left over from the process) that the qualities required for success in life are a set different from, and even incompatible with, those which gave him his fellowship; so also we may help those weaker brethren who animadvert scornfully upon the circumstance that a poet, a philosopher, an adept, an emancipated man of any sort, rarely speaks the truth in the sense that the witness in a divorce case is expected to, by indicating to them the true nature of those sparks of light shaken off from the invisible Crown of Glory, sparks which they have mistaken for corpse-lights or marsh-vapours, surrounding—they think it an inexplicable paradox!—one who, in all other respects, is so high and pure a being.

The first point is, it takes two to make a lie.

A. says to B.: “I have emptied all the water from the bottle,” and tells the truth.

Student C. says the same words to Professor D., and lies. The bottle and its contents being the same in each case. [*BONES laughs contemptuously and is frowned*

¹ The views in this essay have been deliberately left as they were originally written on 18th December, 1906, by Aleister Crowley. The discussion which follows represents with great essential fidelity the actual argument which was held after its perusal on Christmas Day. The stage directions in the essay represent the facts.

at.] Because B. wants a drink and Professor D. a bottle free from moisture. This is a malicious lie if Student C. is trying to excuse his slackness, and the accident of his having truly emptied the bottle would not absolve him.

This is Confusion of the Matter of Speech.

[BONES *opens his mouth—and shuts it again with a severe effort.*

E. says to F.: “John the Baptist had red hair,” and lies (whether in point of fact his hair was red or not), because he has no just ground for saying so.

Confusion of the Modality of Assertion.

When the Auditor is in an inferior position as to knowledge, this ranks as a malicious lie.

Mrs. G. says to Father H. in the confessional, “I have not flirted with Mr. I.,” and lies, because (on the theory) Father H. has a right to know. [BONES *interjects*, “Flirted! Autres temps, Autres mots! You’re improving, Frater!” *Reader replies* “Pig!”] But she says the same words with truth to Mrs. J., who is merely asking out of curiosity. For if she changes the subject, or is rude, it is tantamount to a confession, and Mrs. J. has no right to trick or force one from her.

This is called Keeping the Vow of Secrecy which one has sworn to one’s own Soul. [BONES *protests violently, and is reminded that discussion follows, never interrupts, the Paper.*] But why insist? The so-called casuists of the Christian Church have exhaustively investigated this subject; and all they say is none the less true because it is subtle or immoral, as the stupid and puritan pretend. Cardinal Newman may have had his faults, but he is at least a pleasant contrast to Gladstone and Kensit. If my truth is not the truth of the Divorce Court, it is because my world (thank God!) is not the Divorce Court. I prefer Christ to Sir Gorell Barnes as an authority on the Seventh Commandment; and the Spiritual Interpretation of facts is the formula “Solve” of the Theurgic Alchemist.”

What is a poet? What are his powers?

He can watch from dawn to gloom
The lake-reflected sun illumine
The yellow bees in the ivy-bloom;
Nor heed, nor see, what things they be . . .

Let Mr. Straightforward and Mr. Veracity and Mr. Scorn-to-tell-a-lie and Mr. George Washington Redivivus reflect that there are people in the world with sensoria sighted to a different range from themselves! There is such a thing as a point of view.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto the Man in the Moon, who stood on the shores of Lake Copernicus and said: “What a beautiful earth-rise! How wonderful are the dark shadows on yon silver globe! They are like a hare, like a dog, like a bally great rabbit with its tail in its mouth. One would say a young virgin in pink sandals with her hair in curl papers.” (For the man in the moon has read Maeterlinck and the divine Oscar.) The Angel replied: “O Man in the Moon, this is an error which is spoken concerning silver globes, hares, dogs, rabbits, Virgins, pink slippers, and the ubiquitous products of the immortal Hinde. Let us examine more closely!” Tucking forthwith the Man under his wing, the Angel flew incontinently

earthward. “The globe is bigger than I thought,” said the Man. “Curious illusion: it is a concave bowl of blue,” said the Man. “Nay! but it is a vast plain; and there go the ships; no doubt, were it only August I should see that great Leviathan, whom Thou (addressing the Almighty) hast made to play therein. But the silly season is long past.” And he cursed it for a barren ocean. Luckily he was not Christ, or Mr. Swinburne would have found it difficult to find similes for everything he writes about; from Blake and Byron to Dekker, Dickens, Dionysius, Dio Chrysostom, and Diogenes.

Then said the Man: “It is not blue but gray; it is far-resounding and makes an anarithmical gelasm; it is salt; it is wet; it is a generator of ozone, or my olfactory organs are deceived—and oh! but my bowels are stirred within me like the young lady in the Song of Solomon when the young gentleman——” “Hush!” said the Angel. “All this is delusion; examine more closely!” “It is a universe of living things!” exclaimed the Man, for it was Thames Water that he examined through the Angel’s 90 h.-p. Mercédès Pocket Microscope. “And oh! if God thought that they were good, what peculiar tastes He must have!” “Look more closely!” said the Angel, handing him a pair of Spectacles from the firm of Kelvin, Boscovitch, Son, and Haeckel. “Nothing is now visible,” said the Man, “but a purely geometric conception of the mind, and a self-contradictory one at that.” “Go back to the moon,” said the Angel, throwing him thither with the supple yet powerful jerk which had won him the Cricket Ball event in the Celestial University Athletics, and entitled him to wear a Dark Blue ribbon round his crown (for “As above, so Beneath”—Oxford produces Angels and Cinaedes, Cambridge only men). Go back to the Moon—and mind! *No Travellers’ Tales!*”

The question of the point of view leads us naturally to a consideration of the speech of those for whom the Master of Samadhi has radically changed the aspect of the Universe. How shall a god answer a man?

Frater Neophyte K. asks our S. H. Frater L. $8^\circ=3^\circ$.

“Are there such things as elemental spirits in the scientific sense?”

Now Frater L. knows that there are (just as Professor Ray Lankester would assure a Hottentot of the reality of microscopic objects), but he also knows that there are not, seeing that all is but an illusory veil of the Indicible Arcanum in the Adytum of God-nourished Silence.

Frater L. will therefore reply Yes! if he thinks Frater K. in danger of scepticism. He will reply No! if he thinks Frater K. is a curiosity-monger. In neither case will he consider the fact of the question, unless (with a secret smile) he for his own sake wishes to affirm the illusion of all thoughts. In this event he is really nearer “untruthfulness” than otherwise, even though his answer chance to coincide with fact.

This is called Perception of the Illusion of the Opposition of Contraries.

Again, Professor M. will reply truthfully to his disciple N.’s question, “Master are you hungry?” “I do not know,” or cast gloom over Xenophon’s *θαλασσα, θαλασσα* with *φαντασμα φαντασμα*, or even *κολυμβεθρα κολυμβεθρα*. Because he is sceptical of the instrument of knowledge. But he would lie in saying the same words (taking the second instance) to a common soldier of the 10,000 who did not know who he was but took him for a person acquainted with the locality.

He would not, however, care an obolus whether he was lying or not—unless he happened to be making experiments involving the subject. What he would care about was whether or no his answer showed that he was thinking as a sceptical philosopher. If so, good.

This brings us—how subtly!—to a statement which I do not wish to support by proofs. I imagine that he who is able to receive it will receive it.

This is Truth, that one should be concerned with one's own business, and with nothing else whatever. If I enter thy laboratory, O Fellow of the Institute of Chemistry, who protestest that thou dost aspire to the Great White Brotherhood, and demand of thee, "What art thou doing?" wilt thou reply, "I am extracting the enzymes from this ferment," or rather, "I am aspiring to the Great White Brotherhood.?" And if that question puzzle thee, as well it may, seeing that either answer is in some sense or other a lie—then see to it, I say, that thou lie not to the Holy Ghost!

Shakespeare is perhaps thought by some (may it be credited?) to have written the lines:

To thine own self be true,
And it will follow as the night the day
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

'Tis a worthy aphorism. Let the consciousness be ever directed towards the Self—by whatever Name I call Thee, Thou art Nameless to all Eternity!—and the possibility of lying is avoided.

For one speaketh not, nor, if one spake, is there any to hear. Know that the greater the Adept, the more truthful; should he—in error—speak, the more must he appear a liar to those of his fellows who hear his voice. For he speaks, as beholding the Face of God; they hear, as idols the work of men's hands that have ears and hear not, neither have they any understanding. Therefore, have the chance words of Adepts been ill-heard throughout the ages; therefore, has the world run red with blood because the Adepts have spoken Truth, and the falsehood thereof has rung its sepulchral summons down the Halls that men call Time.

[BONES *boils over*. MRS. BONES *strokes his marble brow*.

Now it hath occurred that some of the younger Adepts, the light-hearted and foolish of the Great White Brotherhood, those who slip back oftenest to normal consciousness of the Universe, so that even their pure wings are soiled in the mire of sense, perception, reason, and their foul kind, some of those boys, I say, forget the Writing on the outer Veil of the Indicable Arcanum, that rune which is written, "No separate existence!" in golden letters on the silver of the veil (just as within is written "No existence" in silver letters upon the gold of the veil).

[BONES *smiles, seeing the way to destroy the argument of the Paper*.

That rune these boys forget, miserable ones!

Therefore, lost in the unthinkable depths of their depravity, do they dream evil dreams called "Others," "Fellow-men" and the like (Fellow-men is really a nightmare so appalling that only the "pass-men" of the G. W. B. ever dream it, since it implies the ghastly and horrible phantasm of "mankind").

Now in their better selves is a certain force whose troubled reflection is called “Love.” This tinctures the dream, and they instantly feel compassion for the “Others”—who, being merely unpurified parts of the consciousness, simply need annihilating—and set to work (if you please!) to redeem these “Others,” to initiate these “fellow-men,” to emancipate these “separate beings.”

[The bitterly sarcastic tone of this passage chills the blood of MRS. BONES, and she hastily prepares more coffee.]

Therefore they determine to announce Truth to men, that Truth may make them free—it is but a step to Jonah’s Whale.

Now the process of waking from these dreams of evil, of arising into the Dawn of Glory that is the true consciousness of the Adept, of annihilating these disturbed phantasms, may involve some symbolic dealing with them; but I should be inclined to assert that it need never go so far as to postulate their reality, though one might possibly conceive of *them* as credulous to that extent.

One could only harm them, though, by allowing them to possess such thoughts (involving further discrimination) as the perception of the pairs of opposites as real. In fact, my thought “Bones” may be allowed to believe that he is real, and that there is no other God but he—for such a thought is hardly an illusion—but Bones must not and shall not think that there is an opposition of black and white, good and evil, truth and falsehood.

One of our weaker brethren (and I alas! had relied on him as strong among the strong!) recently plumed himself vastly on this perception of the Illusion of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil—though “Why in the name of Glory was he proud?” considering that he had the authentic dictum of very Tikkunim for referring that Tree to Malkuth, the first and easiest broken of the false fires of Loki that surround the Virgin of the World!—and yet a week or so passed by, and he was found carping at a question of mere verbal accuracy. [BONES, *conscience-smitten, protests feebly.*] Truth and falsehood in the British “I’m a plain man, sir, and I like a plain answer to a plain question” sense are, on the lowest grounds, but details of Morality: Morality is but a branch of that Tree of Knowledge; and yet so far may the Adept fall from his Samadhic consciousness that he is found with atavistic ardour recalling his father’s last instructions ere he left home for school—“and, Talbot, mind you always tell the truth, whatever comes of it!” the “Talbot” itself being a deliberate lie told under the sacred seal of baptism in the silly snobbish hope of persuading strangers that his ancestors were all Talbots, and that it is but by some complication of the *loi Salique* that his surname is Stubbs—even though that is notoriously but an honest British corruption of St. Hubert.

Once leave *The Truth*, however the mind interpret that Aleph of the Samadhic Language, and it seems there is no road back to it. Thus Samadhi comes as a shock, as a negation, as a cessation; because only by destruction can one attain thereto. Samadhi is never the idea House of Cards one thinks to build; but the toppling over of such a house may mean somewhat. The toppling over of Babel by Temurah (in the mode Athbash) is Sheshak (Jeremiah, xxv, 26) 620, Kether. One cannot construct an Adept, train, breed, or even imagine or create one; but by destroying all the thoughts of a man—what remains?

David, we conceive, entered into no intrigues to obtain the Crown of Israel; on the contrary, he slew a lion and a bear¹ that rose up against him; and when he had further destroyed Goliath,² the prophet sought him out and anointed him King over Israel.

Surely who is anointed shall be crowned. Verily; but when? When not only Saul the usurper, but Jonathan whom he loved more than his own soul, are Dead.

We do not hear of the resurrection of Jonathan; we do not read of a Jonathan Memorial Ward in the Jerusalem Lock Hospital; no word has come down to us through the ages of a Honeycomb Day, in view of the fact that the primrose is not indigenous to Palestine.

[Laughter and cheers.

Jonathan was dead, and David probably let the dead bury him. Come Thou, and follow Me! adds Christ to a similar exhortation, and while we pass with a pitying smile over the antithesis, or allow that it is but a talking-down to the level of his hearer, we must adoringly recognize the One-pointedness of the command. Let everything die, and stay dead. Let there be one thing, which is No thing. Enough.

Such is the foolish attempt of the boy O.M. to instruct the adults with whom he is thrown by the force of the Great Falsehood. Let him become as a little child!

He has sought to write Truth; is any ready to receive it? Will he not be misunderstood? Will not one set of fools cry “Casuist!” and their twin brethren exclaim: “Here, indeed, at last shine wisdom, and virtue, and multiscent truth!”?

No: for the Essay, and the Hearer, what are they but dog-faced demons, that manifest no sign of Truth, but seduce ever from the Sacred Mysteries? Affirm their identity with the One that is None, or destroy them—these are the two aspects of the supreme Ritual, and these two are one, which is None. Thus far the authentic voice of O.M.

[Respectful silence.

The Chairman. Now, Mr. Bones, with the accent on the Now, we shall be glad to hear any remarks you may have to make.

Mr. Bones. We have all listened, I am sure, with great attention to Mr. Bowley’s valuable paper. At this late hour, however, it would ill become me [*No! No!*]—it would little accord with the disposition of this meeting were I to [*A voice:* “Cut the cackle, man, and come to the ’osses.”]—I am sure our greatly honoured Frater [*A voice:* “Speak up!”]—I thunder in your ears! It’s a fine paper, but it’s all R. O. T. Rot. [*Christmas waits outside begin the hymn:*

In the hospital bed she lay
Rotting away—Rotting awa-a-y!

¹ Babel—correctly spelt בבל = 36, 6 × 6. אריה, Lion = 216 = 6 × 6 × 6. And רב, Bear = 6. Six is Tiphereth, the symbol of the Ruach.

² ג'י"ה 443 short by Unity of 444—the divine Tetragrammaton *without* Kether, the top point of the * (for 444 = 4 × 111 which is ל"ד the type of letters. So Goliath is all that which is not Kether—and must be destroyed.

Sortie of MRS. BONES to disperse them.] What I principally wish to point out is the element of contradiction in the valuable paper to which we have all I am sure listened with remarkable pleasure. [*Oh! chuck it!*] Was I called upon, or were you?

The Chairman. Order, if you please, greatly honoured Frater. Mr. Bone has the floor.

A Voice. What will Mrs. Bones say to that?

The Chairman. [*Sternly.*] If I have any more unseemly interruptions of this kind, I shall clear the Court.

Mr. Bones. Thank your, sir. The very valuable paper to which I am sure——

[*Tumult.*]

The Chairman. All those below the grade of Lords of the Absence of Paths in the Abyss of the Great Gulf Fixed will kindly leave the Court. I will myself set the example.

[*Exeunt. BONES and BOWLEY soli.*]

Bowley. Your method of keeping silence is a good one. Dialogue is the best form, after all. But hush! who comes?

Enter the YONLY YEATS, with druid apple-blossom in his hair, and the druid casting-net of the stars in one hand. Does his turn and exit.

Bones. To continue—True! And saying “true,” let us discuss “truth.” In the lower worlds, where are we? Take this frivolous Mrs. I. Why does she elude Mrs. J.? From fear.

Bowley. Fear is failure.

Bones. More, G. H. Frater! It is the forerunner of failure.

Bowley. I certainly recommend people to be without fear.

Bones. The more so that in the heart of the coward virtue abideth not.

Bowley. Pass thou on!

Bones. I take in my hand page 39 of your able monograph and follow my guide Axiokersos, the Second of the Samothracian Kabeiri, to the Portal on whose veil is written “No separate Existence!” If I assert my own point of view, I deny the Unity—But hush! who comes here!

Enter WHITEHEAD, equilibrist, does his turn, makes a Long Nose, and exit.

Bowley. Re what you just said now, you can’t play at Kether down in Malkuth.

Bones. I scorn the remark. Wait! By answering the fool according to his folly——

Bowley. You degrade yourself to his level. But hush! who comes here?

Enter NOGAH.

My little bit of sweet-stuff!

[*She exhibits her External Splendour and Internal Corruption, and exit.*]

Bones. As to levels though, all levels are one. If I cancel out a and –a, the result is the same as if I cancel 1000a and –1000a. I am only concerned to cancel.

Bowley. All right, my gay 10=1—in Kether its all very well. In the Ruach one must do as the Ruach does.

[MRS. BONES, *without, screaming*, “My spoons! My silver spoons!
Where are my spoons?”

Bones. Then what becomes of the Great Work?

Bowley. Ignore the fool and his silly questions is as good a formula as yours. But hush! Who comes here?

Enter the MYSTERIOUS MATHERS, but, failing to borrow the necessary properties, is unable to give his performance, and exit.

Bones. This action *does* interrupt the dialogue.

Bowley. Go to! Do you think I’ve studied British Drama for years for naught?

[*Voices without, complaining of material loss.*

Bowley. As I was saying, I would rather destroy the fool by ignoring him and his silly questions. But hush! who comes here?

Enter NEHUSHTAN, and performs Serpentine Dance. Exit.

Bones. In answer to your last remark, you and I are near enough to the Halls of the Great Order to know how secret is the Brotherhood. What if your fool with his silly question should be a Master of the Temple talking to you in Samadhic language?

Bowley. My dear man, I will destroy him as soon as the rest. *ὄυ μῆ* is my reply to Binah as well as to Jesod. But hush! who comes here?

*Enter SHADDAL L. HYE, sings his songs and exit.*¹

Anyway, all this is a silly bit of morality. It arose from my trying to save my wife pain by concealing from her the fact that she was not, in the grand phrase of Emerson——

Bones. Washington Irving, I think——

Bowley. Some Yankee—the only oyster in the stew.

Bones. Who told you, Supreme Magus of our Ancient Order! [*with profound sarcasm*] to go about saving people pain?

Bowley. I give in. But really I tell you that you will never attain to the Brotherhood until you have genuinely conquered the Illusion of the Pairs of Opposites. Truthfulness and Lying are just as much opposites as white and black, good and evil——

Bones. I sometimes doubt if any of these are opposites at all. Next time you run up to Kether, look down the Tree and see what Truth looks like from up there! Take the case of heat and cold, at one time the typical opposites. Nowadays we conceive of a hot body as one in violent internal motion, a cold body as in moderate motion.

Bowley. Fast and slow.

Bones. Or even (to allow the enemy every advantage, let us say) moving and reposing. But these are not opposites. Zero and unity are not opposites.

Bowley. Yet in another sense *any* two things are opposites.

¹ It needs little creative genius to introduce dextrously the various members of Dr. Waistcoat’s troupe. I therefore leave the rest of it to Stage Managers to arrange as they will.

Bones. That is in Kether again. If you wish to cancel a number, however, zero is no use to you; you need a minus quantity.

Bowley. Which (you are no doubt going to say) demands a geometrical interpretation, and a very conventional one at that.

Bones. Yes; even the Ruach can in a sense get rid of the Opposites. How much more then when we observe the matter from the point of view of Samadhi!

Bowley. Then what is the converse of Truth?

Bones. My dear Pilate, it certainly is not falsehood. A crooked line is not the contradictory of a straight one. Curves and corners alike exclude the straight line and——

Bowley. No proposition can possibly have *two* logical contradictories.

Bones. There I pass.

Bowley. Keynes.

Bones. I should certainly have brought it in justifiable homicide had the remark been Abel's.

Bowley. Our old friendship——

Bones. All very well—you know I should never have made such a remark in real life and it's dam bad form to give it me in a dialogue where I can't help myself, but have to say exactly what you like.

Bowley. Oh, come! I've given you all the best speeches. The Lord hath given—look out!

Bones. I trust to your honour. Where were we? Anyway, I tell you this: it's a ripping good formula as such.

Bowley. Now we come down to the Black Magician and his circle again; all right, I am with you. I can never help suspecting you of morality, though; you're a devilish deep Johnny, but the atavism comes through. As long as you wear a tie that the Neanderthal cave man would have discarded as out of date I can never quite class you with this century.

Bones. Before Abraham was, I am.

Bowley. [*Taking no notice.*] I call it a Christian tie. Faith in your wife's affection surviving it; charity, which is not ashamed; hope—no, only Hope Brothers.

Bones. This is in some ways a digression——

Bowley. I can prove——

Bones. I know you can. Don't.

Bowley. Well, about truth. Surely I am right in saying that “I don't know” and keeping silence—both subjective formulas—are equal in value to yours of telling truth to a man in the sense he understands.

Bones. Yes; I may grant so much: but my formula is a good one too.

Bowley. I promise to try it.

Bones. You have two advantages. One is the common or Garden Magic; you acquire the habit of telling truth in the low material objective sense, and nature is bound (as Levi says) “to accommodate herself to the statement of the magician.” Thus, one may take hold of a hot iron, or coal, saying “It does not hurt” and it doesn't.

Bowley. I have tried that. But I thought it a question of courage and will.

The Hindus have a game they call the Act of Truth. I remember one time King Brahmadata or some ass wanted to cross the Ganges with his army and like a fool hadn't brought pontoons; so he damned around for a hell of a time like a cat when you pepper her nose, and by and by up comes "well, I won't say a —, but a lady of no reputation," and says, By Gosh, king, why don't we go and give long-armed Bhishma and that crowd Johnny up the Orchard? All right, saucy! says Brahmadata, 'ow are we goin' to cross the bloomin' ditch?

Keep your hair on, old cock, chirps the darling of India's teeming but unsaved population. Step aside a mo, and let the Dauntless Daisy of the Deccan Drains perform. See here, boys, I'm a—well, what a flapper grows up to be if she's good!—and I've given every son of a — what's—tut! tut! this story is a very difficult story to tell—flirted with me his dollar's worth, and Lord knows how many cents change, not to mention a rare lot of things which I will not specify, thrown in. Any one in this army who denies this can come round any time and get square free of charge.

So the river rolled back and Brahmadata walked across and gave long-armed Bhishma the Togo Touch, and wiped the maidan with Brer Bhima, and biffed Greatly Honoured Frater Dritirashtra in the eye, and mopped up Old Man Saraswati, and clave Sir Jnanakasha from the nave to the chaps, and generally made a Grand Slam in Swords. Any one but a benighted Hindu would have declared Hearts and sent the girl across on a raft!

Bones. I don't see it, quite.

Bowley. Nor do I. It's the story, though.

Bones. I suppose devotion to one's profession is a form of Truth. But even if, as you say, it is often a question of courage and will, these are the very qualities which this truth telling stimulates. It's a V.C. touch to reply to a lady who asks how her hat suits "Not at all."

Bowley. It seems to me mere boorishness.

Bones. No! the lady is none the worse for the stab to her silly vanity; and though she may be angry or sulky, she will remember it in your favour when anything serious turns up.

Bowley. You dog! You devil! You Machiavellian satyr! On my word, sir—words fail me.

Bones. One thing more—it's the first truth that's difficult to tell; the habit is easily acquired.

Bowley. You know what an expert liar I have always been. You know my capacity for making a full and true confession of countless crimes without enlightening a soul. You know my shameless maxim, "Tell the truth, but lead so improbable a life that the truth will not be believed." To try your formula I must control not only my words, but my tones, the shape of my mouth, the mirth of my eyes, the ready ambiguity of my shoulders.

Bones. A good exercise, Frater.

Bowley. Another point. I am, after all, a Poet. That's right about the lake-reflected sun illuminating the blooming bees. I often hold long conversations with people and discover long after that *I* wasn't there at all. I often dream and am honestly puzzled whether the events of it have or have not happened.

Bones. Consciously refuse to admit that your sensorium is not another's—that is all. About my second advantage—Brother, what is a Black Magician?

Bowley. A bold bad man, brother.

Bones. What does he do, brother?

Bowley. He buys eggs without haggling, and the horns of a goat *cum quo*, and parricide's skulls, and wands, and daggers, and Sanitary Towels, and——

Bones. Then what does he do, brother?

Bowley. He gets a beautiful big circle——

Bones. [*In a voice of thunder.*] Stop! do not parody the most formidable words that agony ever wrung from the lips of initiation. He works in a circle, brother. He says: I am inside, and *you* can't get at *me*. He says One and One are Two!

Bowley. The blaspheming Jew! I want his liver.

Bones. For your own cauldron, deboshed child of Belial that you are!

Bowley. I see. When you are up in 10=1 or thereabouts, and see that dog-faced demons are only illusions (with the rest of Maya), there is no sense in keeping them out. Once you realize the Universe as Infinite L.V.X., why, to Hell with the Circle—let it rush in!

Bones. Good boy!

Bowley. Very good: we are agreed; but the trouble is that you seem to me to rush up to Kether for an attitude, and then bring it down to Malkuth. You take the Virgin of the World and swear she has a Venerable Beard with thirteen Fountains of magnificent oil running down it. All being one, why not brush your hair with a pitchfork?

Bones. It is a very difficult matter to deal with in speech; in practice there is never any doubt or hesitation. What I say about Kether is of course not true; I cannot even know the truth unless I am actually *in* Kether. If I describe Samadhi, I fail. You understand enough (may be) to feel sure that I was there; but how is an outsider to judge?

Bowley. True; Buddha, Christ, Mohammed, all try to describe it—how great is the contradiction of their teaching!

Bones. Especially as interpreted by followers absolutely wallowing in Ruach.

Bowley. Shall we leave it at that? That Bones finds objective truth a Way up the Tree, and a Fruit in the topmost bough?

Bones. I am more positive than that.

Bowley. Less Zoroaster and more Pyrrho, please Lord, for Brother Bones! else you will fall into the way of Paul, and perish in the gainsaying of Mohammed.

Bones. You are obstinate about the necessity of scorning the objective results of illumination. But let us consider the perfect man.

Bowley. Oh, brother, this is fulsome.

Bones. Ass! . . . He lives (it is true) in Kether; but his mind and body, perfect though they are, work, as it were automatically, in their own plane. At present I am quite unconscious of my heart beating; it is not even an illusion! Yet it maintains its just relation to the other illusory things. So, no doubt, an adept is quite unconscious of the acts and thoughts performed by him, acts and thoughts which seem to imply conscious volition. What about your poetry?

Bowley. Certainly, I am never—very seldom—very very seldom—aware of what I am going to write, am writing, have written. I know, for example, roughly, that we have been talking about Truth to-night. But Heaven help me if I should try to reproduce the arguments or apportion the speeches! A great deal of my verse is the mere reflection of my rapture—a rapture, may be, of dissimilar nature. I fall in love, and write “The God-Eater”; see Citlaltepēt, and out comes “Night in the Valley!” “What he poured in at the mouth o’ the mill as a 33rd Sonata (fancy now!) Comes from the hopper as bran-new Sludge, naught else, The Shakers’ Hymn in G with a natural F Or the Stars and Stripes set to consecutive Fourths.” I am not a poet; I am a typewriter. A very complex machine, and one capable of self-adjustment and improvement; but I can’t dictate as much as a business letter. The machine needs the Operator before a single key can be pressed. If Bowley goes mad (the quartos have “madder”), or dies, our Superlatively Honoured Frater so and so has lost his machine and must find another; and that’s the view from Binah; but the view from Chesed is “Let me keep this machine in perfect order, in case our S.H. Frater wants to dictate.”

Bones. Just so; and if Brother Bowley goes on lying, our S.H. Frater will one day strike the A key and find a B on the paper. Then he will probably say: Damn the machine!—and do it.

Bowley. We are leaving exactitude and wallowing in analogy. We have run up and down the planes till we are less like Exempt Adepts than monkeys on sticks; we——

Bones. We had better go to bed.