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**MAGIC IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.
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The Christian Church, as it now exists, divides itself into two sections, when regarded not only from the standpoint of theological doctrine, but from that of practical life considered in its most essential features. This division is into Catholic and Protestant, and if we take these terms in their broader sense, leaving on one side all questions of detailed belief, we shall see that it is due to the fact that Catholic Christianity has as its basis the Sacramental Principle, whereas in the Protestant Churches this principle is not found. It is true that the latter have two sacraments, Holy Communion and Baptism, but the one is but the outward expression of admission to membership, and the other merely a commemoration; whereas in the Catholic Church the sacraments act *ex opera operato*, *i.e.*, by their own inherent virtue, or, in other words, the rites themselves, when performed by duly authorized persons, and with right intention, are sufficient to bring about the desired sacramental change in a man's nature.

We can, for our present purpose, consider the "Catholic Church" to be represented by the Roman, Greek, and Anglican Churches. The title "Catholic" is only claimed by a section of the Anglicans, the so-called High Church—and this claim is repudiated by the Roman Church; but in a consideration of the Sacramental Principle such disputes do not concern us. Further, we shall find that it is most convenient to take the Roman Catholic Church as representing "Catholicism," for the Greek Church only differs in matters of detail and in questions of jurisdiction, and the "higher" the Anglican Church, the nearer it approaches to the Latin. The word Catholic, then, as here used, is applied to the principles underlying the above Churches, but as exemplified in the Roman Catholic Church, and this apart from any of the vexed questions existing among the Churches themselves.

The Sacramental Principle dividing the Churches is said by Occultists to be but one of the manifestations of what is called

Magic; and this, in fact, has been brought forward in disparagement of the occult view, it being claimed that to hold such an opinion is to reduce the Christian sacraments "to the level of heathen magic."

Such a statement, however, is due to a misunderstanding of the term Magic, and it will be well to consider some definitions of the word. It is derived from a Greek root which meant science and religion of the Magi, or Priests of Zoroaster; but this has become changed, and according to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* it is "the general term for the practice and power of wonder-working as depending upon the employment of supposed supernatural agencies". Let us now look at some occult and esoteric meanings. Eliphas Levi tells us that "Magic is the traditional science of the secrets of nature which has been transmitted to us from the Magi". Mrs. Annie Besant states that "Magic is the use of the will to guide the powers of external nature, and is truly, as its name implies, the great science". A most helpful account of its nature and value has been given by a modern Magician, **Frazer Perdurabo**; he is speaking of the Mystic Path and its Goal, and says:

The Infinite is always present but veiled by the thoughts of the mind. . . . To attain knowledge of That it is only necessary to still all thoughts. . . . to attain perfect vigilance and attention of the mind, uninterrupted by the rise of thoughts. . . . Before concentrating the mind, the lower principle, one must concentrate the higher principle, the Will. . . . there are methods of training the will by which it is easy to check one's progress. The whole question has been threshed out and organized by wise men of old, they have made a science of life, complete and perfect, and they have given it the name Magic.

It is due to the failure to understand Magic in this sense, as the Great Science, that such objections as above stated have been made; and it is to avoid such misunderstandings and to distinguish true Magic from so-called Black Magic, Fortune-telling, Witchcraft, and the like, from sleight-of-hand etc., that Frazer Perdurabo has recently proposed to adopt the old form of the word—"Magick".

From the above explanations and definitions we see that Magic consists in the use and the development of the will. In considering its connection with the Catholic Church we shall be concerned mainly with the former aspect, the use of the will to guide the powers of external nature, although its other form is

also involved. The division of Magic into White and Black, depending upon the unselfishness or selfishness of the Magician, is well known and need not detain us; but we also have a division into Natural Magic and Ceremonial Magic, the one working directly by the force of the will, and the other, as its name implies, using rites and ceremonies to assist and strengthen the will. It is probable that to a highly developed man ceremonies are unnecessary in bringing about the desired magical results, although it would seem that to work directly must involve a far greater expenditure of energy than would be necessary if Ceremonial Magic were employed; and for the large majority, at any rate, ceremonies are essential, enabling results to be produced that would be otherwise unobtainable.

In Ceremonial Magic the will is assisted by an intense concentration of the mind, brought about by the nature of the ceremony itself, which is so arranged that every faculty and every sense is brought into play, and every impression made upon the mind repeats and recalls the one thing desired. Eliphas Levi tells us that "all faculties and all senses must share in the work, nothing has the right to remain idle; intelligence must be formulated by signs and characters and summed by pentacles, will must be determined by words and must fulfil words by deeds, the magical idea must be rendered into light for the eyes, harmony for the ears, perfumes for the sense of smell, savours for the palate, objects for the touch; the Operator must become a magnet to attract the desired thing". The effect of this has been very well illustrated by **a Brother of the A.:A.:** as follows:

The will of the Magician may be compared to a lamp burning in a very dark and dirty room; first he sets to work to clean the room out, then he places a brightly polished mirror along one wall to reflect one sense, and then another to reflect another, and so on, until, whichever way he turns, up or down, to right or left, behind or before, there he sees his will shining, and ultimately so dazzling become the innumerable reflections that he can see but one flame which obscures everything else.

To turn now to the Catholic Church. If we look back over its history we shall find this sacramental or magical principle existing from the earliest times. It is impossible to trace at all clearly the development of its rites, as there is very little evidence upon the subject, and even the documents which exist are silent to a very considerable extent with regard to the Sacraments and the most sacred doctrines and teachings. Altogether

apart from any question of esoteric tradition, it is known that there existed what was called a "Discipline," which aimed at preventing sacred subjects from being profaned by those who were outside the Church; we find this, for instance, discussed by Cardinal Newman in his *Essay upon the Development of Christian Doctrine*. As an example we have the Mass divided into two parts and after the first part the catechumans, unbaptised persons, and children were dismissed.

There seems good evidence for believing that in the early days Christian Mysteries existed, similar to . . .

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