

THE CAMEL

A DISCUSSION OF THE VALUE OF "INTERIOR CERTAINTY"

By ALEISTER CROWLEY

THEN Hassan ben Brahim, the camel-driver, lifted up his voice and said: "The sun is hot."

This statement gave me considerable food for reflection.

In the first place, Hassan is a number one liar. Had he not said that he was afraid to cross the desert with only one camel, and having thus induced me to pay for two, brought one of them so antique and infirm that he had to send it back to Bou Saada?

In the second place, Hassan was a fool. Had he not started on a long desert journey without money, food, or water? Had he not shivered all one cloudy night in fear that the flood would carry us away?

Clearly, no reliance could be placed upon Hassan!

So, before assenting to his proposition, I looked about for corroboration of some kind.

"By 'the sun' you mean, I take it (said I to Hassan), that glorious and beneficent luminary which is apparently a small disk in the heavens above us, but in reality a vast globe, the centre and father of our system, in diameter so many miles, in distance so many miles"—I gave him the exact figures—"around which this planet revolves in 365 days, 4 hours, 37 minutes and 28·0387541 seconds."

"No!" said the churl; "I mean that." And he pointed to the orb in question.

One could not reason with the clod! But his appeal to the evidence of my sight was far from convincing me of his integrity or of the accuracy of his observation; for he had said (in his haste), "The sun is hot," and heat, as such (I reflected at leisure), is not truly appreciable by the eye.

And then it dawned upon me! This camel-driver was a mystic! He was asserting a relation between two senses. A relation in what? In something that was certainly not either of those two senses; in something that must be a reconciler between them, a court of appeal, a . . . yes! a soul.