

manner of means; yet, every time I left the room, I expected to find them open. Too often to recount, I did so. I set all kinds of traps for the spirits; it was useless. As long as I was in the room nothing would happen; the moment I shut the outer doors behind me, the inner ones would open noiselessly. I ultimately had to perform a special ceremony to get rid of the annoyance. The demons who played this game were the 49 servitors of Beelzebub; when tamed they became exceedingly useful.

There is a manuscript in the Arsenal Library of Paris which has been translated and published under this title, "The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage." It is the best and the most dangerous book ever written. The translator, who lived at the other end of Paris, had to give up cycling to the library, so many were his accidents. Even afoot, he was in constant danger of his life. And he misused the book, fell from a very creditable degree of attainment as a magician to be a loafer, a dipsomaniac, a sponger, and a blackmailer; in the end he died insane.

The book is the address of one "Abraham the Jew" to his second son, Lamech, bestowing this magick upon him. The author records his research, his many travels and disappointments. At last he meets with one Abramelin in Egypt, goes with him into an oasis, and is there initiated by the bestowal of this Sacred Magick. He returns, achieves the task, and employs his powers to the glory of God and the benefit of his neighbor, "forcing even bishops to restore stolen property," winning battles for Electors by the timely creation of "artificial cavalry," healing the sick wholesale, and generally bestirring himself as a philanthropist.

The substance of the operation is as follows: Get a house in a quiet place, have a terrace opening to the North of your Oratory, have robes and a crown, a wand, and a few other not-too-Persian apparatus, and then get busy. Pray more and more every day to obtain the Knowledge and Conversation of your Holy Guardian Angel. After two months cut out all distractions and pray harder. After two months of that, pray harder still.

Then the climax. The Angel appears and instructs. Then and not till then summon the Four Great Princes of the Evil of the World and compel them to swear obedience on the wand, and order them to operate certain talismans. The next day call the Eight Sub-Princes, and the third day their servitors.

The book is written throughout in a serious and simple style. It is by far the most convincing mediaeval magical document in existence. The personality of Abraham himself is evidence.

And any person who doubts magick has only to get a copy of the book, and refuse to take it seriously. He will get proofs enough in standard time; place, the back of the neck!

But if you take it seriously and reverently, if you aspire with your whole will to this attainment, you are safe. The blows of the demon will fall only on those about you.

Yet every obstacle will be put in your way. For example, I had command of what was for all practical purposes unlimited money. I didn't care what I spent on this work. It took me eleven months to find a house.

In copying out on vellum the talismans, I used the breakfast-room of that house, a room chosen because

it was light and cheerful and caught the early morning sun. The weather was fine. Yet I had to do my copying by artificial light. The sun could not penetrate the murk that gathered about those talismans.

One day I returned from shooting on the hill to find a Catholic Priest in my drawing room. It was to ask my permission to do what he could for my gardener, a total abstainer of twenty years' standing who had gone raving drunk.

My housekeeper vanished, unable to bear the eeriness of the place.

An adept with whom I had arranged that he should stay to be a link between me and the outer world likewise fled in terror without a word of warning.

One of the workmen employed about the place went raving mad, and tried to kill me. Others again became dipsomaniacs. All my dogs died. My cook very nearly died, and was only saved by a talisman.

Such are just a few of many incidents which averted the tragedy of dullness from my daily life. And all this, mind you, at the mere threat to perform the Operation!

Time would fail me to tell of all the untoward events that happened to people who did not even go so far as this. Only to have that book on one's shelves is a more serious risk than drying dynamite on a stove!

The talismans work automatically. They are as easy to explode as Iodide of Nitrogen, and a sight more dangerous. My friend and editor, Captain J. F. C. Fuller, once marked his place in the book with his butcher's bill; a couple of days later the butcher was at work; his knife slipped, pierced his thigh and killed him. As Fuller observed at the time, "It may be only a coincidence, but it's just as bad for the butcher!"

"At my initiation I was taught to be cautious" is a note in one system; in another the neophyte is told "Fear is failure, and the forerunner of failure. Be thou therefore without fear, for in the heart of the coward virtue abideth not."

Keep these two precepts constantly in your mind, and you should go far and fast.

Now for the third class of magical operations! It deals no longer with the brain of the magician himself, as in the case of visions and evocations; it acts upon third parties directly. I refer to the arts of "fascination" in its proper sense—the word comes from the Latin "fascinum." Love is blind; and fascination includes all arts that have this effect. You transform yourself, like Zeus into swan or bull, like Lucius into an ass, like the Egyptian Magi into an hawk, swallow, or Ibis, or like the Syrian into a dove, and by this means compel the desired object to your arms. Or you become invisible—in the practical sense that you remain unseen by those whom you wish not to see you, and if you are playfully inclined, and hungry, you become a bat or a wolf and go afield for blood. These stories are not legends: they veil true powers. I only once tried vampirism, for examination purposes, and in about an hour I bled my victim white. I passed with honors and special mention.

Of course, the reason why one does not do these things is that in the trance Atmadarshana, on the threshold of masterpiece, one loses one's Ego for ever. Thenceforth the man exists only as a vehicle for an Impersonal Master; he lives his own life, and does his own duty, but the Master in him doesn't care what happens to him.

The other day a young lady came to consult me. I