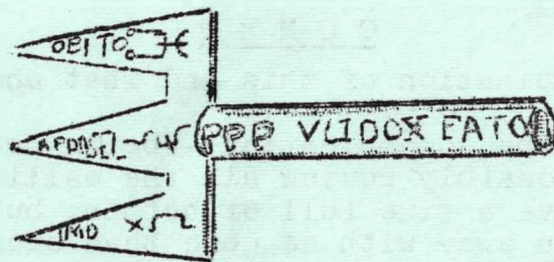


# VAGARY 19



## THE TRIDENT OF PARACELSPUS

JUNE 1964

VAGARY 19. Issued for the 40th Mailing of the Off-Trail Magazine Publishing Association. Written and edited by Roberta Gray, 14 Bennington St., Cheltenham, Glos. June 1964.

C O N T E N T S

COMBO -----	Page 2
TALKING POINT -----	Page 3
STARLIGHT, STAR-BRIGHT.....	Page 30
CHARTS .....	Page 39, 40, 41.

Cover copied from diagram in "Transcendental Magic" by Eliphas Levi.

\*\*\*\*\*

C O M B O

(Being a combination of this and That and Countdown).

It will have to be a combination - being now four mailings behind, I couldn't possibly review all the mailings separately, otherwise I would have a zine full of nothing but mailing comments, which have ran away with me more than once in the past.

I think in the last issue that I said I was really going to make Vagary live up to the Off Trail part of the Association. In this issue I have tried just that. In fact, I am not sure whether some parts of the zine should be retitled Essays in Obscurantism.

I am sorry I have been silent for so long, but I really did have to get my head down and do some hard studying. The first year's exams were last February and much to my surprise I passed. I say to my surprise as at the time I wasn't feeling all that well and did the exams with a raging cold. I did better than I expected to and discovered that when the results came through I just been pipped by someone to the scholarship for the second year's course. Nark! Nark! Nark! I now have the Certificate, but it means that after this issue of Vagary I shall have to get my head down to some hard studying for the Diploma next February. And this time it will be fifteen hours of exams, not nine.

As for the mailings, I can only make brief mention of them, but what can one say about Ethel, Fred Hunter, John Roles and Archie Mercer, who go from strength to strength. Mind you, I do

Cont'd on P. 42

## TALKING POINT

The problem - where to begin? So much has happened since I last put an issue in the mailing that it is difficult to know where to start.

Newspapers? I could start with those, I suppose. I think I have mentioned before that I read the "Daily Telegraph." Not because of its politics, but because I can get the news in a straightforward, non-hysterical way. At the end of the Profumo affair - that is, Ward's suicide, we were staying with some friends and just about every Sunday newspaper printed was about somewhere in the house. Going through them steadily, I reached the "News of the World" and then "The People." I had quite a nasty shock. Each paper had, of course, articles on Christine Keeler and Stephen Ward - so did the others - but the style shook me. I have been reading the "Telegraph" type of paper for so long that the near hysteria, the high drama and the disgusting prying into a private life by these other papers flabbergasted me. One of the papers had sunk low enough to have an article by the girl's butler - "she only had one bath every other day". Perhaps if the paper had cared to carry out a poll among its own regular readers it may have discovered that a few of them considered two baths a year was keeping pretty clean.

That affair stunk from beginning to end, though. Frankly, I couldn't have cared less about how many mistresses Profumo had - although I thought it was a pity he could not have been more discriminating in his choice - but to stand up and tell a stupid lie in Parliament (and over a publicity mad little bint who wasn't even worth protecting) that was what appalled me. I could understand members of all parties getting enraged over that, but how I wished Hugh Gaitskell had not died. I did not agree with his politics, but I don't think he would have made the botch up of the affair that Wilson did. The latter couldn't leave things alone. He had every right to raise hell in Parliament about the lie, but he unfortunately gave the impression (perhaps unintentionally) that all members on the Government benches had suspect morals and all members of the opposition were models of rectitude. This may have cost him a few votes, as I imagine the last thing this country wants at present is to be ruled by another set of Puritans, with another Cromwell at their head. Once was enough.



Altogether, it was a very nasty thing to see a man and a woman trying to save their own skin by inventing ridiculous security risk stories, and no doubt calculating that the more publicity they got the more likely it was that a Sunday newspaper would pay them an enormous sum for their life stories. It is rather sad to think that a young girl who has kept a sense of values is rewarded with sneers because she doesn't hop into bed with every man she meets, yet another girl whose life is a sordid mess gets paid £23,000 to brag about it. And another sex kitten naively asks "Will the papers pay me for my life story?" As far as the British papers were concerned she got into the act too late. But if Christine Keeler set out to be a femme fatale she has certainly succeeded. Two men jailed (one had his conviction quashed), two men with ruined careers (Ivanov may have been reinstated, but I bet promotion always passes him by) and one man dead. In the end, Ward could not face it. He talked about the "vultures", but what was he. Did he not think of himself as a modern Pygmalion or Svengali? The man was a good artist and a good osteopath, yet he preferred to bury his talents for the sake of a snobbery that in the end brought about his death.

And talking of suicide, has anyone noticed how this death by fire is spreading? It started with the Buddhist monks and nuns in the East setting fire to themselves as a protest, but it seems to have spread westward. So far there have been four cases in this country. At least, four that I have read about (the second of which one of the gutter papers tried to suggest was part of a black magic ritual). There may have been more, of course<sup>1</sup> The most puzzling thing about this is the fact that generally suicides like to be as comfortable as possible when they shuffle off this mortal coil. And they usually prefer a painless death. Yet fire is such a horrible way to die. Could it be that the martyr complex is cropping up again? Since the Messiah complex is getting a grip, perhaps the martyr complex is complementary to it. But it is a nasty trend. How long is it before some of our hooligans decide that if people won't set light to themselves, they will set light to them for "kicks." After all, they are going to get bored eventually with wrecking seaside towns, especially as before long the seaside towns will be ready for them.

However, these hooligans do not exist only in this country. When our lot smashed up Clacton, another lot were doing the same sort of thing in Brisbane on the other side of the world, and the Iron Curtain countries had trouble, too. Apropos of nothing in particular, there was a full moon that weekend. A month later, one of the parks in this town was wrecked, but the lot who did it were even more cowardly than the lot who went to Clacton. It was done during the night. All the plants were pulled up, the

potting sheds smashed up, the flower beds wrecked, and the gardening sheds and tools destroyed. Last year, they also killed the birds. This year they did not, but it was the night of a full moon. Then there was the so-called "dress rehearsal"- a punch-up at Whipps Cross lido on the outskirts of London - for a Clacton-type do at Whitsun at another seaside resort. The week before that, Waterloo station was invaded and there was an attempt to wreck a buffet room. Not the full moon, this time, but the nearest weekend to Walpurgis night.

Some have said that it is all this hysteria over the Beatles, but I don't think so. At least, not on the part of the kids who did scream their heads off at these rock - or is it beat? - shows. Which reminds me - a funny thing happened to me on the way out of the cinema a few months ago. It was a Sunday night and as we came into the foyer, I noticed a number of youngsters sitting on the ground outside the doors. I stopped dead and Bill muttered "Oh, God, here we go again." At first I thought it was the CMD and Bill swears that whenever that group is mentioned or I see it around, my nails turn into talons, my teeth are suddenly fangs, horns grow out of my head, and that he's convinced that once or twice he has seen a forked tail swishing about behind me. However, I strolled over to these youngsters, and stopped short. Not a badge, not a banner in sight - and there I was all set to start an argument. Then I noticed the travelling rugs, the sleeping bags and the flasks, so I asked one of the youngsters what the queue was in aid of. He told me the Beatles; of course I had never heard of them, but I didn't intend to show my ignorance and muttered out of the side of my mouth to Bill, "What the hell are they doing here if they are interested in beetles?" He pointed to a poster, and I discovered what the Beatles were.

As we were turning away a middle-aged woman remarked to no-one in particular "Ridiculous! What are the kids doing these days?" Well, who could let that pass? So I said fairly loudly, "How much do we really change? When I was a kid the teenage girls swooned and got hysterical all over the place when Sinatra came to this country. In my mother's day it was Rudolph Valentino, and great grandmother went potty over Paganini. Besides, the kids were not doing any harm, but just sitting there willing to wait until the box office opened the next morning. What about the people of all ages who queue all night for a ticket to the ballet or opera? The kids were doing the same thing for the type of music they preferred. In an case, what right had that woman to criticise them? What about the women of her age and more who queue all night before a sale? to get something that is often sub-standard and reserved for sales.



I don't know what the Beatles sound like, as although we did see a newsreel about them, I never heard a sound from them as the audience was making such a racket. Mind you, I think the film makers deliberately showed the oddest looking kids among the audience. There was one shot of a girl chewing the white silk lining of her purse - the next shot they showed of her she had eaten the lining and started on the cover. There was another girl who was standing up clutching her hair with a look of pure ecstasy on her face. Suddenly the ecstasy was replaced by a look of sheer horror. I think the poor child had allowed herself to get just a little too excited and nature had dampened her ardour quite literally. But as I have said, I think the film makers did deliberately pick on certain sections of the audience. When we saw the newsreel a number of youngsters sitting down the front of the cinema had a reaction of some sort. They didn't yell or shout, but one could feel the horror creeping up, almost as though they were thinking, "My God! Did we look like that when the Beatles were here?"

But I should imagine the beat groups will have a short entertainment life - as audiences of that nature can be very fickle. A singer who decides to go in for opera usually has a fairly steady job once he or she has managed to make the grade, but where will all these beat groups be in ten, or even five, years time? However, they have done good in one way. Wherever this craze for groups has got a grip on the kids, the juvenile delinquency has dropped. Is it because they are not just sitting and watching, but are actually doing something - and something which is all their own? In other words, are they proving that they can do something for themselves, and because it stems from within themselves they are not bored?

To go on to something else, has anyone noticed the difficulty people have these days in calling a spade a spade? It's either a ----- shovel, or it is an implement for turning the soil, but it's never a spade. Once upon a time a ratcatcher was a ratcatcher, then he was a rodent operator, now he is a pest control officer. Now the dustmen do not want to be called dustmen, but waste reclamation officers. Always the word officer in the title, you will notice - never private. When it comes to out and out snobbery the working class takes a lot of beating. If these people are ashamed to be called ratcatchers or dustmen, why did they take such a job in the first place?

Now we have Southbank religion, whatever that may be and I suspect that the Bishop of Southwark isn't sure, either. For a time it seemed to be condonation of immoralities that the Church was once firmly against. One must be careful here, though, as some of these clergymen were probably quoted out of context.

And talking of morality, what about this so-called "new morality?" Of course, the people of the previous generation have been called hypocrites because of their attitude to morality, but at least they are aware that the "new" morality has been with us since man first discovered the difference and raised Cain, except that the "hypocrites" of the previous generation were at least honest enough to call the "new" morality by its right name - immorality. Mind you, the avant garde who thought up all this are, as usual, about fifty years behind the times. Each generation has always had a residue of layabouts with mediocre talents who have managed to convince people (especially incompetent critics who don't like to admit they know nothing of art or literature, so praise something that actually makes them sick to the stomach) that they are overlooked geniuses.

Talking of critics, I have worked out a system by which I can avoid reading the modern so-called great literature. A study of the dust jacket blurb and the reviews in the papers have helped me to evolve this system. If the critics start whining and don't use any of the following expressions I know the book is worth reading as it is usually about quite normal people and how they deal with situations in which they manage to get involved. However, the following is how I translate the critics, especially the critics of the intellectual papers.

Significant. A book in which homosexuals are normal, white girls have coloured boy friends and vicky vacky, a dwelling with more than loving care on the indoor plumbing (it has always struck me as a rather unhealthy gloating), coffee bars where the hopheads gather and, of course, the anti-hero nit who is a misunderstood genius.

Realistic. Plotless, formless, no beginning or end, a string of four letter words used either because the writer is too idle to use his imagination or because he hasn't got any, loveless sex under the kitchen sink, vicious young thugs of both sexes, and, of course, the anti-hero. Has the world really got so gutless that it has reached the pitch where we praise our cowards.

Challenging. In effect, the critic is saying "I don't know what the hell this writer is talking about and I don't think he does, either." There is also, of course, the anti-hero and the inevitable homosexual.

A couple of pages back I mentioned the hooliganism which has spread like an infection. Perhaps I should also have said that Whitsun weekend was the nearest to Old Mayday. The members may be wondering why I seem to be harping on the nearest



weekend, but - what is the fashion these days? Witchcraft is the fashion, and when something becomes the fashion, what do you get? Dabblers! The fools who read a little of the old grimoires or the Aleister Crowley rituals (all of which are loaded) and think it clever to try the rituals out. But a force of some kind is needed for these rituals. Any genuine occultist will tell you that there is such a thing as a group elemental - or a mob elemental - the latter usually gathering wherever mass hysteria takes place. The force usually dissipates immediately afterwards, but if a fool of a dabbler is trying something out that force may be attracted and a lot of unwitting damage done. The witting damage is done by a person who knows full well what he is doing and uses that force for his own nasty ends. Let's not kid ourselves that there aren't people on this earth who consider they have a divine right to rule the world and are ready to use very curious means to get their way. The easiest people to influence are those under about twenty five, although these people may be quite unaware of it. After twenty five the surplus energy is used usually in the keeping of a wife and family. Even undue publicity is, in its way, a form of magic.

There are genuine witches - they are the people one never hears anything about. But for every genuine witch, psychic, mystic, or occultist, there are god knows how many dabblers - and they are the people who go round talking, practically claiming they have a private telephone line to God. I can give an example of this. A week or two ago I gave a lecture to a local group of people, the subject of the lecture being Arthur in myth, legend, and history. Halfway through the talk, a corpse walked in - in fact, I wondered why she had bothered to change out of her winding sheet into a dress. Whenever there is a talk there is an inevitable latecomer, who usually apologises, but this horror film prop didn't. In fact, I heard her either repeating my words after I had said them or disagreeing. However, my voice was the more powerful (yes, Archie, it really was) and I pressed on. When I had finished the talk I prepared to do battle, but before I had a chance to start on the undead an old-young lady from the next street rose from her seat and said that what I had said was absolutely right; that she never dreamed there was someone living so close who knew as much, if not more than she did, about Arthur, and she ought to know as she had won a bardic chair on the subject. She had, too. It was a very a nice compliment, but not only did it take the wind out of the corpse's sails, it took the wind out of mine. My battle had been ~~one~~ before I'd even had a chance to start it.

However, I digress. The female who came in late really did look corpse like, but - it wasn't a physical thing. Have you ever looked at something and felt sick inside and felt the



hair rise on the nape of your neck? That's just how she affected me. It wasn't so much that she looked physically unhealthy - she looked "spiritually" unhealthy. It is difficult to explain, but during the talk I mentioned Merlin and pointed out that he was a man who had a great knowledge of what we call magic, but what is actually an understanding of, and the ability to use, natural laws, and I looked straight at the corpse when I said that, but I don't think she got the message. However, when we were talking in groups afterwards, I heard her say to someone, "Nobody can tell me anything about the occult. I've studied it since 1920 and I know all there is to know about it." Unfortunately, I was talking to a very nice old lady, or my immediate reply would have been, "Madam, if you think you know everything about the occult, you know nothing - you are not even on the first rung of the ladder." Bill never heard her, either, or he would have something to say. The moment you hear someone say they know all there is to know about that sort of subject, you know you are listening to a dabbler, who, if he experiments, is one of the most dangerous people on earth. But this woman calmly claimed to know everything about the occult - which may have explained the queer sort of "spiritual" - or psychic - unhealthiness. Any practical occultist will tell you that it takes several lives to have a great knowledge of the occult, and even then you won't know it all.

I realise, of course, that some of the members who are reading this will be wondering if I have gone off my nut, but I don't think so. Neither do I claim to be an occultist. I do not belong to any group and have no intention of joining one - at least I don't at the moment, but one never knows what may crop up in the future or, at least, I should say one does not know, but trends can be observed. However, the subject interests me and I make enquiries, but I don't probe - there is quite a difference.

Today, the meaning of the occult is given as "hidden". An occultist will tell you that it means hidden truths constantly revealed. In other words, there is no such thing as the supernatural; there are only natural laws for which we have not yet found the explanation. Everything is laying around for us to see if we look properly, but the great majority of us are too blind to see. And if we take a good, honest look at ourselves, isn't a good thing that most of us are too blind to see? How many of us would be altruistic enough to apply those laws properly if we understood them?

Which brings me to another thing. A lot of nonsense has been spouted in the popular press and many books about black and white magic. The power manipulated by occultists, witches,

psychics and mystics is completely neutral. It depends on how it is used before it can be classed as "black" or "white". In other words, the same occultist or witch can use the power for good or ill. The difference is that one way is self-less and the bad way is self-ish.

A modern occultist has pointed out that whereas the Church should be the spiritual leader of the people, the occult fraternities should cater for the specialists. Priests, occult or church, are born, not made, and a fraternity cannot carry passengers because of the nature of its work. As this occultist said, occultism attracts many Walter Mittys, but they seldom last the pace.

The same occultist has also pointed out that the so-called Black Magic is basically the control of another against his will for selfish ends, so it can therefore be learnt in advertising schools, or from drug peddlers, or from a political propaganda source, or certain newspapers for that matter, and we get the admass robots, political prisoners, psychopaths - and the nits who wreck seaside resorts.

The last hundred years or so has seen the birth of a great many occult, so-called occult, psychic and spiritual societies. Spiritualism, in some form or other has always existed, but Spiritualism with a capital S, the kind we hear about today, started just over a hundred years ago. A few months ago, someone offered me a spiritualist newspaper which I didn't want, but she was a nice old dear and I didn't want to offend her so I took it. I shouldn't have done, because I immediately went up the wall. It was getting all excited about the "founders" of modern spiritualism, the Fox sisters. The self-confessed frauds! Still, I wonder how many groups have started with a fraud and then discovered to their surprise that they have got something, after all?

I am not saying that I disbelieve in spiritualism - there are many genuine mediums - but I don't believe in calling back the dead. I think after death we either live in our created heaven or we go on after having plucked up the courage to meet the most terrible judge - our other self - and it is unfair to keep a link open which should be snapped. If they want to come back of their own accord that is a different matter, or if what is called a discarnate entity wants to speak through the medium well, all right, but unless they come back voluntarily to give a message I think the dead should be left alone. Again, even a medium cannot keep up a psychic state forever, yet if sittings are offered the spiritualists who go to the medium complain like hell if they don't get the full hour. One or two of the



mediums have admitted that some of the selfish old women (of both sexes) are so insistent that, when the medium's psychic flashes cease, he or she has to invent, because the client is quite likely to complain to the spiritualist church headquarters who proceed to mark at the medium. Which only seems to prove that the committee types who have inched to the top haven't the slightest knowledge of how psychism is likely to work.

Theosophy also burgeoned in the last century, founded by Helena Blavatsky. Now there is no doubt that she did have genuine gifts, but when one really gets worked up over something, how much is genuine and how much is wishful thinking from the subconscious? These great masters of hers, for instance, who were they really? Some of the Mahatma letters made me want to explode in about six different directions. I am not saying that some of her messages weren't genuine, but I am saying that quite a lot of the stuff came from a prejudiced subconscious. The great master, for instance, spouted a lot of anti-British stuff. I am not objecting because I happen to be British but, in my opinion, anything from the other side or plane, that can be so damned parochial is neither great nor a master. Incidentally, now that China has overrun Tibet, what the hell has happened to all these so-called great masters who lurked in the Himalayan fastnesses? And even George Adamski has pointed that he has packed up taking an interest in ufos, because ever since the first excitement about them hit the newspapers, the spiritualists have deserted their Red Indian and Chinese guides in droves and now have spacemen guides. Because I have not seen a flying saucer I am not going to deny that they exist - I am keeping an open mind on the subject, but when I hear the drivel spouted about divine beings visiting this planet in the ufos, I feel like spitting. If these beings are so divine what the hell do they need a machine for?

But to get back to Theosophy, it started off with some very vigorous people running it. H.P. Blavatsky herself was very down to earth, and she would probably turn in her grave if she could see the "wool" that has attached itself to her particular school of philosophy and is busy making a hash of running it. All the silly old bitches talk about is "vibrations". For instance, Blavatsky could swear like a trooper and she smoked like a chimney. The theosophists in this town have the usual large framed photograph of her in their meeting place. The group whose talks I go to rent the room on Fridays, which is how I came to see it. The lower part of the photograph is carefully trimmed so that her home made cigarette no longer shows. When the group I am friendly with first started using the hall the leader told me that the theosophists had asked her to request people not to smoke because "it upset the vibrations."



I thereupon proceeded to upset the vibrations all over the place, pointing out that their founder was a chain smoker who would have recoiled if she had heard anything said like that. It has been suggested to me since that the theosophists are afraid of fire as it is an old building, but my reaction to that was why couldn't they have said so in the first place. Woolly minded lot! Despite what has been said about Blavatsky, she had the sense to keep her feet on the ground, and your genuine mystic is always practical.

However, on the credit side, the theosophists have done some very good work. They were about the first group, for instance, to publish books on occultism and allied subjects at a price which ordinary people interested in the subject could afford. They also re-awakened an interest in astrology. Mind you, they fitted their own theories into it but, nevertheless, they did lift the subject from the gutter to which it had been kicked and many astrologers today have reason to be grateful to those earlier, more vigorous theosophists who started teaching the ancient art again. Now, many modern astrologers have dropped the theosophical ideas, but they should never forget that it was the work of men like Alan Leo and Charles Carter who lifted their art out of the rut.

But Blavatsky must have foreseen what would happen when the vigorous types died off. She even remarked herself, just before she died, "I'm afraid they are going to make a bloody god of me." She wasn't far wrong.

I know a theosophist who calmly stated to me that Einstein's Theory of Relativity was nonsense. My immediate answer to that was "Prove it is." Then the battle started. After an hour he admitted that the theory is nonsense because his particular school of philosophy said it is so. And that was the only explanation he could put forward. I have also read letters from theosophists in occult and predictive magazines and quite honestly, I think poor Blavatsky and Annie Besant would shed tears of blood if they could read them. Far from being a good advertisement for anyone who is interested in becoming a theosophist, the reaction would probably be to think that the group is a clearing house for nuts.

By the way, if any of the members are really interested in the occult and would like to know more about it, the books by Dion Fortune, Gareth Knight and W.E. Butler would help. But not Crowley's books. They are all carefully designed to be loaded, and the unsuspecting practitioner will be worshipping Crowley himself, or the rituals will backfire on him in a very unpleasant way. Crowley was a gifted man, but he misused his

gifts, hoping to achieve a nasty kind of immortality and, up to a point, he has succeeded.

While we are on the subject of books, if any of you are contemplating buying an anthology called "A Treasury of Witchcraft" don't bother. It is a hotch-potch of quotations taken out of context and the introductory essays to each chapter are up the pole anyway. In other words, it is nothing but sensational journalism. For instance, the writer states that seventy thousand witches were executed in England alone and probably a hundred thousand in Scotland. Poppycock! Under a thousand supposed witches were executed in England during the persecution mania and although the figure was about four times higher for Scotland, which was very much influenced by the Continent, it was nowhere near a hundred thousand. In actual fact, only one genuine witch was executed in England - the others were medicine men or women, or ordinary people, who had the misfortune to fall foul of the neighbours or some spiteful little brat. That one genuine witch was burned - not hanged - because she had done in her husband, which counted as petty treason, and for which the penalty was burning alive. This law was not repealed until about 1790, but the executioner often sneaked up under cover of the smoke and strangled them. By the way, I got the information about the one witch who was caught from a "born" witch.

Many of today's witches claim that they follow the old religion, but what many of them actually mean is that they are pagans, which does not necessarily mean witches at all. I am not saying that those who claim to be white witches are not genuine - many of them are - but a lot of knowledge was lost over the centuries, especially during the witchcraft persecution, when many records were destroyed for safety's sake. In any case, I think that only the high priestess, the master of the coven, and the maid of the coven are witches. The others are just members of the congregation. The trouble is that many of the modern so-called witches are following the medieval church's idea of a witch - and no such animal ever existed.

Some months ago, Rossell Hope Robbins was over here to give a talk to the Folklore Society, and I am rather sorry that I couldn't get to it. This writer claims there was no such thing as witchcraft - that it was an invention of the medieval church - and he is both right and wrong. The witchcraft he is thinking of was an invention of the church but, nevertheless, genuine witchcraft did - and does - exist.

Robbins, however, is a very careful scholar, and his book



"The Encyclopædia of Witchcraft is well worth reading - if you have a strong stomach. Man's inhumanity to man makes horrifying reading, and what is the most horrifying of all is that this persecution started in the warped, diseased minds, sexually perverted and twisted minds of churchmen whose enforced celibacy had shrivelled their very soul. Oh, yes, the fanatics were celibate - no doubt they got their sexual satisfaction from watching their victims writhe under the terrible tortures. Even worse than the sexual enjoyment derived from watching the poor tortured wretches was the greed. On the Continent any person found guilty of being a witch had his or her goods and money confiscated, which meant that many rich people found themselves beheaded and burned. Any one accused of being a witch had to admit their guilt of their "own free will." How much free will did a man have if he were tortured until he did admit it - and knowing that if he didn't he would not have the mercy of being strangled before burning. Of course, if he died under the torture it was said that the devil he worshipped had broken his neck. These "confessions" extorted under duress were worthless. Many people recanted when the torture ceased - and were immediately tortured again. The main thing the priests or magistrates was after was to get the accused to name their accomplices and since half the time the tormented wretches did not realise what the idea was the names were put in their mouths by the magistrates or priests. Most of the names, of course, had money which the church or state could confiscate. This, of course, was on the Continent. Torture was illegal in England and the "witch's" property was rarely confiscated.

Occasionally, the Continental witch judges executed the odd penniless person or two just to prove they weren't doing it for the money - a third of which went to the prosecutors. Also, it left the door wide open for people bearing malice to inform on their neighbours and, as the accused was not allowed witnesses in his own defence or confrontation with the informers, he did not really stand a chance. Sometimes, however, the malice rebounded on the informers. If the accused suspected who was at the bottom of his being arrested and tortured he was quite likely to name the informer as an accomplice. Some of them went even further - they named some of their tormentors as accomplices and they in their turn suffered what they had been inflicting on innocent people.

Even age did not save the poor wretches who had been accused. There is a case on record of a ninety year old woman being tortured to admit she was a witch. Incredibly, she lived through it to be executed. There are also cases on record in Germany of children down to nine years of age being executed for witchcraft. One little girl of seven was found guilty, but



in view of her tender years she was ordered to be flogged and handed over to her father. Even England hanged Alison Device, an eleven year old girl.

Wurzburg and Bamberg were the worst places in Germany. The Prince-Bishop of Bamberg even had his own heir executed as a witch. The vilest things were done to the people accused, but what stopped it for a while was the invasion of the Swedish Army during the Thirty Years War. Unfortunately, the refugees from Bamberg went to Cologne, a place which had been relatively free of the witch mania, but which suddenly became a veritable storm centre. A bishop writing to his friend described how when he visited Cologne the country round the city presented a desolate appearance because for miles he could see nothing but stakes to which the poor creatures had been chained and burned. It is probable that the relatives of the victims were so horrified by this inhumanity that the one thing they lived for was revenge, and what better revenge than to hunt up a genuine witch and see what could be done to the men who persecuted in the name of the church or the law? Thus it came about that the priests and magistrates encouraged the very thing that they were pretending to stamp out. Grief can cause a person to do strange things, so it would not be surprising if those who were left searched until they found a genuine witch and they certainly would not want a white witch for what they had in mind.

These wild accusations of witchcraft or lycanthropy or vampirism were also a beautiful let-out for murderers and adulterers who wanted to get rid of the legal partner. There was a case in France of a man who claimed he was out in the woods with his scythe when he was suddenly confronted by a witch who, before his very eyes, changed into a wolf. This brave man immediately struck it to the heart with the scythe and rushed off home. Imagine to his horror finding his mother dead with a wound in the heart. Telling his story to the magistrates he said he had no idea that his mother was a witch who could change into a werewolf. If his mother had been a genuine witch he would have known all right, as witchcraft is very much of a family affair. But he was believed. It makes one wonder how much money his poor old mother had stacked away somewhere.

There were similar cases in Italy. One story concerned a man who was found in someone's wine cellar. He claimed that his wife had bewitched him to get him out of the house in order that coven could meet there. He was believed and his wife was burned alive. The other story concerned a young girl who was found naked in the bed of a nobleman, and her excuse was that her mother had rubbed her with witch ointment and she found herself suddenly transported to this bed and could they please

tell her where she was. She, too, was believed and her mother was found guilty of witchcraft and burned alive.

The laws in England concerning witchcraft were at first surprisingly lenient. The penalty for witchcraft was not execution - unless it involved murder - but maybe a fine and an admonition from the judge not to do it again. Sometimes they were forced to walk about with a paper on their heads describing what they were. A law was passed against witches in the reign of Henry VIIIth, but even that did not prescribe the death penalty and the law was repealed in the reign of Edward VIth. A more severe law was passed in Elizabeth's reign, partly because of some fool of a bishop who had been in exile on the Continent and got infected with the witch mania, and partly because the queen found out that a couple of astrologers had been paid to cast her horoscope to see how long she had to live and she got dead narked. The first time a person was charged with witchcraft, if he or she were found guilty it meant a year's imprisonment, which automatically carried with it four appearances in the pillory. However, if a murder was involved the "witch" was hanged. Hanging was the penalty for murder by witchcraft in this country - burning alive was the penalty women paid for treason, and husband poisoning counted as petty treason. The witch, Marjorie Jourdain, was burned, but not for witchcraft - she had already been fined once or twice for that - but for treason because she had been involved in a plot against the king's life. If it were a plot and not a frame up by Cardinal Beaufort against Duke Humphrey of Gloucester and his wife.

I have said that torture was illegal in England, but the accusers had other ways of extracting a confession and the physical indignities that the victims underwent were a nasty form of mental torture. To be walked for days on end and not to be allowed any sleep could force a confession. Furthermore, apart from blistered feet, it did not leave marks. Another trick was to strip the victim in public to look for witch's or devil's marks. One can imagine the shame that would be caused to a respectable man or woman who had undergo this ordeal, especially as the search for the marks entailed shaving the body as well as the head.

The law became worse when King James Ist and VIth came to the throne. He rather fancied himself as an authority on witchcraft and demonology and had written a second rate book about it - a book which, unfortunately, had no little influence. However, since there was a certain amount of scepticism in England it did Jamie good. By the end of his reign his views had changed completely and he was responsible on one or two occasions of proving that accusing children were impostors who were accusing



innocent people of witchcraft so the little beast could be the centre of attraction. Unluckily, in one of the cases James' investigated he arrived on the scene too late to save nine of the people under sentence. It was a pity that James was not brought up in England instead of by that nasty pansy, George Buchanan. It would have saved a number of innocent lives in Scotland, whose laws concerning witches were much more vicious than those of England. Also, torture was allowed in Scotland. In England, people did stand a chance of being acquitted, whereas in Scotland and on the Continent one only stood the chance of acquittal on the plea of insanity or "possession."

The accusing children of this country claimed to be possessed. In some cases, it was epilepsy; in most cases it was hysteria or exhibitionism, the desire to be the centre of attraction. A few physicians who knew their business openly said it was hysteria or the "mother" as it was then called, but more ignorant physicians, if they could not cure their patients, said the cause of the illness was bewitchment. These children caused the deaths of a number of innocent people. The Throgmorton children were responsible for the death of old Mother Samuel, her husband, and her daughter. It was suggested to the daughter, who had steadfastly denied being a witch, that if she pleaded pregnancy her execution would be delayed. Her reply was, "Nay, gentlemen, I will not have it said that I was a whore as well as a witch."

Although the law specified that no witness under the age of fourteen would be allowed to testify, Jennet Device was only nine when she testified against her mother in the Lancashire witch trials. It was ironic that some years later she herself was accused of being a witch by an hysterical child. The English judges were not always fooled by these children. One spotted how one girl achieved the trick of spitting pins and showed the court how. However, when King James took it upon himself to investigate some of these children's stories, fewer of the brats were believed.

Today our one great fear is what happens if someone presses the panic button and the nuclear weapons are let loose. Yet it also recognises that nuclear energy can be utilised for peaceful purposes. In the fifteenth century, the discover of the printing press must have had the same impact on the people as the splitting of the atom had on the twentieth century. Books were a two edged weapon. They could spread learning, certainly, but they could also spread heresy and the witch doctrine invented by the church. The Inquisitors, before the Reformation, had worked the witchcraft theory down to a fine art. By twisting



the Canon Episcopi, which more or less said that witchcraft was a disease of the imagination and that to believe in such nonsense was a heresy, and with the aid of a few Bulls from superstitious popes, they let loose a terrible mania on Europe, and because by that time printing had been discovered the word could spread much faster. The Malleus Maleficarum became the handbook of the persecutors. The so-called witch theory in it was the outcome of the nasty diseased minds of priests, whose enforced celibacy had turned sour on them - and the fanatic usually was celibate. The "confessions" of their victims were put into their mouths by the priests. The question would not have been "Did you do so-and-so?" , but "You did so-an-so, didn't you?" "Such and such happened it, didn't it?" The victims agreed if only to get a surcease from pain. The priests turned witchcraft into a blasphemous mockery of the Christian church and then added a few nasty details of their own.

If anyone has read reports of witch trials probably the first thing that struck him was the unhealthy and detailed interest in the sexual perversions which were said to have taken place at these so-called Sabbats, especially the descriptions of the "devil's" sex organs and his supposed prowess among the witches. One will find that this sort of thing is concentrated on and gets a full report in trials. The priests, of course, carefully point out how the witches claimed that intercourse with demons was always painful and uncomfortable.

In the meantime, more books on demonology and witchcraft poured from the presses and the hysteria spread as people read about what was supposed to be in their midst. On the credit side, some writers did publish books claiming it was all nonsense, but this was a dangerous thing to do on the Continent, as the author was running the risk of being accused as a witch lover. This made him guilty of witchcraft by association, and therefore deserving of the stake. The same thing happened to any judges or priests who protested at the insanity of the persecutions. Dietrich Flade, a German judge, protested and was accused, tortured and burned himself.

Owing to the Reformation there was one thing that England did not suffer from, but which had the most terrible results on the Continent, and that was the possessed nuns and young girls in convents. Again, sex was at the bottom of it. Many of these young nuns had not had a "call" to the religious life. Their parents had put them there either because they couldn't marry them off or because they didn't know what else to do with them. There was, of course, the type of adolescent girl who joined a convent because she fancied herself as a saint or a martyr, and she could

be just as dangerous as the nuns who had not really had the "call". The result was that a number of healthy young females with normal sex appetites were shut up in convents out of reach of all men except for their confessors. . . Eventually, of course, the continued frustration of normal desires bore bitter fruit.

There were many cases of Lesbianism, but the real trouble started when highly sexed young women became hysterical with frustration. Of course they acted as if they were possessed! A woman with normal desires who is left in a continuous state of frustration will either do the craziest things or go completely crazy. Even today, a check of the hospitals, mental homes and prisons would probably reveal that a high proportion of women who are there arrived there because the root cause of their going off the rails was frustration. The sensible ones, of course, not able to achieve a satisfactory state of affairs legally, have had the wits to go elsewhere. However, I digress. Not all the young girls in these convents were balked of a sex life. In one convent, the priests found out that the nuns kept dogs, and suddenly an edict came out forbidding the keeping of dogs as pets. I don't think I need to go into an explanation. At another convent, a young nun one morning told the rest of the inmates that she had been visited by a demon who had taken on the likeness of a certain confessor and had had intercourse with her. The confessor in question, when he heard about this, was quick witted enough to say that she was possessed and solemnly exorcised the demon from her. I bet the next time he chose a woman who had the sense to keep her mouth shut.

One of the most terrible cases was that of Urbain Grandier, the parish priest, who, it must be admitted, was rather a lad with the ladies. He was also rather tactless and had had a lot to say about the monks, none of it very pleasant. Since he had also annoyed Richelieu, the monks found it easy to frame him. The inmates of the convent to which he was confessor were bribed to swear that he had caused them to be possessed and that he was in league with the devil. They did, although at his trial the mother prioress came in with a rope round her neck, screaming that she had borne false witness against an innocent man. Whatever Father Grandier may have been, it cannot be denied that he was a man of high courage. The mother prioress didn't save him, as they threw her out and proceeded with the trial, which meant, of course, torture. Even under the most terrible torments Father Grandier would not admit his guilt. They even gave him the third degree of torture, squassation, and he survived that, which was unusual. In the meantime, Richelieu, who could have saved him, never stirred a finger to help. Father Grandier went to the stake, and although he was supposed to



have had the mercy of garotting before he was burned, the monks who hated him so took care that the knot on the garotte would not tighten. They also managed to hit him in the mouth with their heavy crucifixes on the way to the execution. Of the men who encompassed his death, at least four were dead within a year. Two died raving mad, and two died of very painful diseases. One was exiled and died five years later, completely off his head.

The nuns who had helped to accuse him did not appear to get rid of their demons after his death, which was against the rules of witchcraft described by the church. Those who had testified against him were still acting up very badly and Richelieu awarded them a pension. Their possession became a sight to see, and the people used to loaf along to the convent garden to watch their rather nasty antics. One of them screamed and writhed for the benefit of the crowd, abusing herself until she reached a climax and then flinging herself on the ground, shouting "----- moi!" Suddenly Richelieu tired of handing out pensions to these nuns and stopped the money. By the strangest coincidence the nuns' "possessions" had stopped within a month of the pension being withdrawn. Unfortunately, it was cases of this sort that paved the way for silly fables like Maria Monk.

These hysterical young people, both inside and outside convents had, of course, by now read other cases of possessed youngsters and it was simple to imitate the symptoms, which all too soon passed into real hysteria.

In England, although we did not have the possessed nuns and young priests of the Continent, there was no lack of hysterical children. It may be that some of them could not read, but children are far more observant than we think and have an uncanny habit of overhearing conversations which the adults don't want them to hear. From that it was but a step for a thoroughly nasty child - and don't let us kid ourselves that there is no such thing as a nasty child - to accuse some old man or woman whom he disliked (probably because they had told the little beast a few home-truths) and not bat an eyelid when the innocent victim died on the scaffold.

England did not have the Inquisition, but it had the Calvinists and the Presbyterians - far worse than Cromwell's Independents - and as these Puritans gained more and more of a grip on the land, particularly London and the Home Counties, so did the witch persecution grow worse. And the Puritans also went after the white witches, sometimes known as the cunning men and women, taking the attitude that they were as dangerous as the supposed witches they "fingered" and who were guilty of nothing more than falling foul of spiteful neighbours. Among the Cunning - or



Kenning - people could be found the genuine witches, but even then those white "witches" who did end up on the gallows were not true witches, but people with some herbal lore who had set themselves up as healers and who, if their herbs and charms did not work, promptly told the clients they had been bewitched. So there is no need to waste any sympathy on them. The "whites" could be as cruel as the "blacks". One of their rather nasty cures for bewitchment was to tell the "bewitched" person to burn alive the "witch's" imps, which was usually the poor old woman's pet cat or dog. And they were still suggesting this burning alive less than a hundred years ago, as the following story will show.

Essex has always had a great reputation for witches and in the middle of last century, at a place called Thorpe-le-Soken, there lived a witch called Goody Gardner. As she was believed to have bewitched a flock of geese some supposed white magic was used to counteract the spell. It consisted of roasting a goose alive and almost immediately screams were heard coming from Goody Gardner's cottage, from where she ran, covered with great burns, and from which she soon died. I could quote more instances, but I think one sickening incident is enough.

However, to get back to the Puritans - it was incredible how these bigots could so often pick on the most innocent of people. To me, it is even more incredible that men of education could believe such nonsense as was brought forward in evidence at the trials. What the Puritans did do was to flood the country with pamphlets and tracts, denouncing witchcraft and Popery. Then, as now, there were many people credulous enough to believe that whatever was printed was true. From not worrying overmuch about witches, the populace suddenly became riddled with fear of the menace in their midst. With the spread of the printed word came the spread of learning and also the spread of "yellow" journalism - in other words, the pamphlets issued by the Puritans and which finally spread such terror in the 1640s.

Also, and here is where the church's invention rebounded on itself, the demonologies which had been so popular on the Continent and which had caused so many innocent deaths were translated into English. The irony of that was that many would-be witches leapt to the conclusion that they had not been working their witchcraft properly for years, and the figments of the diseased minds of Inquisitors were actually tried out - with the result that churchmen began to get very bad-tempered about what they called the "new" religion, and what many ignorant people believed was the "old" religion.

The Calvinists, those narrow-minded, religiously intolerant bigots, set about getting rid of the "old" and "new" witchcraft root and branch. The climax of the witch trials came in 1645, when Matthew Hopkins, self-appointed witchfinder general, was responsible for the execution of upwards of 200 innocent people and-possibly - one guilty one. In the end, even the people had had enough of Hopkins and they threatened that if he came near them they would "swim" him for a witch test. So Hopkins retired and died of T.B. the following year. Unfortunately, there is no truth in the apocryphal story that he was "swum" as a witch, failed the test, and was executed.

There is also the story concerning a group of Ironsides in a wood. While they were resting they saw a woman walking upon water and claimed to have discovered a witch. As a matter of fact, she was standing with one foot on a half submerged plank and dabbling the other foot in the water. However, the soldiers, since she was a witch, used her for target practice, claiming that she caught their bullets in her hands (they probably were rotten shots) until one of them shot her beneath the ear. The woman has come down in history as the witch of Newbury. However, my own opinion of this incident is that it is an unsavoury fable. My view of what may have happened is that the soldiers came upon the woman unexpectedly while she was bathing and promptly proceeded to rape the poor wretch. Despite of being raped by them all, she disobligingly refused to die and, as the army laws concerning rape were very stringent, the soldiers dreamed up the story she was a witch in order to save their own skins. A dead woman could not testify against them.

But the tide was turning and in 1735 the act was passed that stoppeð the legal persecution of witches - the mob just carried on as usual. Now only people pretending to be witches were brought to trial. Not that it stoppeð mob "justice", as by now the printed word had been inflaming them too long. Another act concerning pretended witches and rogues and vagabonds was enacted in 1828 and both were repealed in 1951 to be replaced by the Fraudulent Mediums Act, which has certainly stopped a lot of the charlatans who made money out of gullible spiritualists.

However, witchcraft existed long before the witch persecution mania, it survived through it, and it still exists today. The white witches have now got themselves organised (with entry forms in some cases!) in covens, something new in English witchcraft, as it was originally the Continental church's idea - the inversion of the Christian convent. The modern white witch would be shocked and horrified at the thought of hurting any poor little innocent pet, by burning alive or otherwise, but in many cases

the modern "whites" aren't really on the beam at all. True, many of them are Green Jack's children, but I should say they were more pagan than true witches. The old pagan religion was not necessarily witchcraft at all, although there has been some intermingling since, and the "Man in Black", or the masked leader, was in actual fact the priest of the congregation and the Maid was the seer - of the congregation or of a witch "coven". The Maid really was a maiden - she had to be as it was believed that a "seer" had to be absolutely pure - so the stories of sexual orgies concerning her can be discounted. God help any man who took it into his head to deflower the maid!

Green Jack went under many names and many forms, which is why what is called witchcraft can differ from county to county. Side by side in the old days with Green Jack's children were the Druids, the keepers of the highest magic, the men so feared by the Romans that the latter did their best to stamp them out. The Druids, starting with a bloodstained history - as did every religion - eventually purged itself of such nonsense, and quite an amount of Western occultism practised today derives from the Druids. But the Druids were neither Green Jack's children nor the sons of Hecate - the latter being the "trueborn" witch, and who is still around today, but who does not advertise his presence. Or her presence, as the case may be.

For it is Hecate's children who are the inheritors of the genuine witchcraft. True, they sagged badly at one time and the bumblewitted so-called witch of the late middle ages arose; but at about the time that witchcraft was degenerating into what was solemnly claimed as witchcraft later, Islam spread itself. In the twelfth century or thereabouts, there arrived in this country many refugees from Islam, who were children of Hecate and who had not only kept their knowledge intact, but had improved it with time. These refugees were astounded at the state that witchcraft had got into and set about retraining those who had not degenerated too badly, and leaving those who were beyond training proceed with what they still thought was genuine witchcraft. This was not the only country to which they came, of course, and perhaps a few genuine witches were caught on the Continent.

As I have already mentioned, the power which some people have the ability to manipulate is neutral, and only the method in which it is used makes it "black" or "white". In any case, the witchcraft of Hecate's children did not necessarily take place on this plane of existence at all. If it did, they had the ability to call power from another plane, and don't believe they couldn't do it. Even now, they sometimes refer to the power they call upon as Jack, which does not necessarily mean



Green Jack. The house that Jack built is an alarming edifice to the uninitiated, as it can stem from raw psychic force, known also as the "Pan" force, which, out of control is extremely dangerous, as Aleister Crowley found to his cost.

Earlier on, I said that Rossell Hope Robbins was both right and wrong concerning witchcraft. He quoted a case of witchcraft which occurred in Italy, in which witnesses saw a couple of people rub the witch "flying" ointment into their skin. These witnesses swore that the witches just passed out, but that when they awoke they had wild stories to tell of how they had flown to a meeting of witches. Therefore, the witnesses concluded, the people concerned were imagining things - not that it stopped the Inquisition executing them as witches.

Crazy as it may seem, the witch did not imagine things. Have you ever heard of astral projections or, as it is sometimes called, bi-location? This is the projection of the "astral" or "etheric" double from the physical body, and there are many cases on record, attested by reliable witnesses. A modern example is Padre Pia, the living saint of Italy. An expert can project without the aid of drugs, but sometimes a man or woman could not do it without drugs - hence the witch ointment. They flew all right, but not in their physical body, and this explains some of the instances quoted in the historical cases of the person being seen in two places at once. Much nonsense has been written about this ointment, and no doubt some of the nastier types of "witch" in the late Middle and early modern age really believed that the fat of a newborn unbaptised child was necessary to blend it. Any fat would have done the job.

Reginald Scot, the sceptic who had the honour of having his book burned by that superstitious fool, James Ist and VIth, gave one or two recipes in his "Discoverie of the World of Witches." Other writers also gave recipes, which mainly consisted of wild flights of fancy on the part of the writers. However, when one considers that some of the ingredients consisted of belladonna, aconitine, water hemlock, mandragora, castor and poppy, the resultant visions or astral projection is not really surprising. When one also considers how ignorant some of the people were who mixed this and rubbed it on themselves, it is surprising that far more deaths were not reported. However, to those who had the wits to use it properly was given the ability to slip out of their physical body and for their etheric doubles to meet like minded gentry. The danger there, of course, was if some well-meaning friend came upon the body in deep trance and promptly screeched havoc and battered it, trying to awaken the "sleeper". This was the sort of shock which could "snap" the "cord" and kill the person who had "gone" elsewhere.

There was also a "killing" ointment, used by poisoners and which was much spoken of during the Chambre D'Argent affair in France, and in which the Black Mass was really first publicised. The Black Mass grew out of a harmless amatatory mass, was given impetus by the priests who insisted that witchcraft was a heresy, and tortured their innocent victims into admitting that what they had been practising was an inversion of the Mass, was publicised further by the Chambre D'Argent affair, and reached its final form in one of De Sade's filthy stories. In other words, it was part priest - part literary invention, but was responsible for the rise of what today we call the Satanists, who have nothing whatsoever to do with genuine witchcraft. But the slow poisoners were not necessarily witches, although they were usually accused of being such.

Side by side with witchcraft were the charms and incantations against ill-health and bewitchment, and here faith played its part as some of these charms, when translated, were rather astonishing and not without a certain amount of humour. There is a story told of Sir John Holt who, to his eternal credit, was a judge who did his best to stop the witchcraft persecution, as he knew only too well that often the accused was only some poor ugly, half starved old woman who had fallen foul of her neighbours. In his student days, Sir John stayed at an inn with some friends, each of whom thought the other had the money to pay the bill. None of them had, but Sir John, hearing that the innkeeper's daughter was suffering from ague, hit on the idea of making a charm. He gathered up some herbs, rolled them in parchment, on which he wrote in Greek, and said that the charm should be suspended round the neck of the sufferer. This was done and, to his own astonishment, the ague subsided, and a grateful landlord did not charge them. Many years later, a woman was brought before Sir John, accused of pretending to cure disease by witchcraft and magic. She said that she had in her possession a ball of herbs wrapped in parchment, and which she had been using for the cure of ague and fever. When the charm was produced the judge immediately recognised it as the one he had written long before. He told the court the story and acquitted the woman.

There were other charms like that, usually originating when some humourist decided to pull the leg of a credulous person. In Devonshire, an old woman carried a charm on parchment for the cure of St. Vitus Dance. The characters on the parchment were difficult to read, but eventually a scholar managed to decipher the meaning, which was as follows: "Shake her, good devil, / Shake her once well, / Then shake her no more / Till you shake her in hell." A Chelsea woman carried a charm in a sealed packet, which was supposed to cure toothache. One day, the woman's priest persuaded her to open it and she read the



words: "Good devil, come here/ And take her for your pains."

Among all the books concerning off-trail subjects that are scattered around this house, there are a number of charms, and if members are interested I can put them in another issue. Sometimes the charms were used in conjunction with herbs that were efficacious, but the patient was often cured as much by faith in the charm as by the genuine herbs. Of course, it was all right to get medicine from a "white" witch, but the only medicine received from a "black" witch was never asked for by the victim. The following concoction may interest the members.

"Blood, Fat, Bile, Bones, Claws, Teeth, Hoofs, Horns, Eggs of Insects, Scorpions, Feathers, Hair, Isinglass, Placenta, Bone Marrow, Cocks-combs, Cuttlefish, Spider-webb, Cast-off-smakes-skin, Saliva from a Fasting Man, and Bones from the Skull of a Criminal."

A witch-spell? Good gracious me, no! It's a cure for various ills, taken from the London Pharmacopœia of 1618.

I have not mentioned the wizards, some of whom achieved great fame. For the most part they were clever astrologers, although Dr. Dee, "Queen Elizabeth's Merlin" had a very deep knowledge of the occult for his time, although it didn't stop him being gulled by Edward Kelly. William Lilly was regarded as a wizard, although in actual fact he was a brilliant astrologer who made some very accurate forecasts. Dr. Lambe was in the pay of the first Duke of Buckingham but, unlike Dr. Dee, he did not die a natural death. He was stoned to death by a mob in the City of London, for which little pleasantry Charles I st fined the City £600.

These men, though very much a product of their time, with all its faults and fancies, did at least add a little more to occult knowledge or, if not adding to it, at least they left records of some of what was already known, which may otherwise have been lost. These highly intelligent men usually escaped the gallows, probably because they were mostly in the pay of a high ranking noble. Where they did run a risk, of course, was being caught plotting against the throne.

I have not mentioned many names while I have been rambling down the byways, nor have I quoted trials in full as some of them have been written about so many times that I suspect the members are already familiar with them. I can enlarge on the Chambre D'Argent affair if the members are interested, or if they would like to know about any particular trial I can put an article in another issue, but I can't promise when it will be out.



Looking back over the past, it seems to me that the Church ceased to have a great deal of "inward" power when it first started executing people for heresy, and then for witchcraft. It is a sad thing that as early as the ninth century, Pope St. Nicholas I condemned judicial torture, yet in 1252, when we should have been far more advanced and humane, Pope Innocent IV revoked this ruling and made torture legal; not that the Dominicans had not used it already in their determination to wipe out the Albigensi.

Yet the Church was wise to start with. When the missionaries first started converting the pagans they craftily incorporated some of the pagan festivals into the church calendar, as well as one or two of the pagan rituals from different religions. Of course, they assigned these feasts, etc. to a saint and in the course of time the nominal Christian (which was the bulk of the people in this country - Christianity became a sophisticated religion for the nobility) accepted this state of affairs. The genuine wicca were not fooled, of course, but they went quietly underground and stayed there until the repeal of the Witchcraft Act in 1951. Very few genuine ones let on to anyone as to what they were, hence the reason why they were so rarely caught.

Some of you may have read that in this country some of the poor old crones pleaded guilty, and came out with the most weird and wonderful stories of their larking about. Quite a few of the poor old things were pestered into admitting their guilt, or else they were "waked and watched". However, a few of them who were not subjected to this torment claimed that they were guilty and when one justice tried to persuade an old woman not to plead guilty, so convinced was he of her innocence, he got the following reply: She had not confessed because she was guilty, but that being a poor woman who wrought for her living and, being defamed for a witch, she knew she would starve, for no person hereafter would give her food or lodging, and that all men would beat her and hound dogs at her, and that therefore she desired to be out of the world." Thereupon she wept most bitterly, and upon her knees called God to witness what she had said.

One of the vile professions that grew out of witch hunting in England and Scotland was that of the witch pricker, who was expert at finding innocent people guilty. This was not surprising as most of the supposed witch pricking needles were false and made like a stage dagger. One Scottish witch pricker was eventually caught by the law and before he ended his life on the gallows confessed that during his lifetime he had been guilty of sending upwards of two hundred people to their death in England and Scotland. It was a pity that so few of his

profession did not suffer the same fate. The following story, from the Wardlaw MS, is the tale of Paterson the Pricker.

"There came then to Inverness one Mr. Paterson, who had run over the kingdom for the trials of witches, and was ordinarily called the Pricker, because his way of trial was with a long brass pin. Stripping them naked, he alleged that the spell spot was seen and discovered. After rubbing the whole body with his palms, he slipt in the pin, and, it seems, with shame and fear being dasht, they felt it not, but he left it in the flesh, deep to the head, and desired them to find and take it out. It is sure some witches were discovered, but many honest men and women were blotted and broke by this trick. In Elgin there were two killed; in Forres two; and one Margot Duff, a rank witch, burnt in Inverness. This Paterson came up to the Church of Wardlaw, and within the pricked 14 women and one man brought thither by the Chisholm of Commer, and four brought by Andrew Fraser, the chamberlain of Ferrintosh. He first polled all their heads and amassed the heap of hair together, hid in the stone dick, and so proceeded to pricking. Several of these died in prison never brought to confession. This villain gained a great deal of money, having two servants; at last was discovered to be a woman disguised in man's clothes. Such cruelty and rigour was sustained by a vile varlet imposture."

Nasty, isn't it? But members have probably observed that this pricker left the pin in and invited the victims to remove it themselves. In other words, they had not felt it, which proved they were witches. But I think I have spotted the trick. This Paterson always rubbed the victims body with the palms of her hands. If she were concealing a preparation with an aconite base, the aconite would have the quality of rendering a person insensible to pain, hence the victims did not feel the pin. Taken internally, aconite dried up the tear ducts, hence the belief that a witch could not weep. However, the victims who may have been aware what this concoction could do, perhaps secreted some of it about their person, in order to face their tormentors calmly.

This was the sort of thing encouraged for over three hundred years by the church, Roman or otherwise. The Reformed Church in this country more or less dropped Roman Catholicism because they claimed there was too much paganism, with the result that more of the ancient pre-Christian mysteries may be observed in a Roman Catholic or very high Anglican service. Some of the mysteries have survived in one way or another, partly in the church, partly in masonry, but the people who kept to the old mysteries were not necessarily witches. They were just pagans who preferred their nature worship and a god who was close to them, instead of a supreme being lurking in rarefied atmospheres of theology and

sophistication, and who would probably kick them to one side as fast as the local squire may have done at one time.

I have rambled on mainly about the not-witch in this ramble, and have only touched very, very lightly on genuine witchcraft. Not because I know nothing about it, but I don't intend to blurt out what I have been told in confidence. This is not a get out. Any member who also has knowledge of genuine witchcraft will spot immediately the code, or glaring clue, whichever you like to call it, that I have slipped in.

Finally, it may puzzle many people why witchcraft should be in the news and causing great interest in a technological age. The answer may be that in any age of great changes the people revert to a more primitive way of thinking. Maybe they are seeking for a God much closer to themselves than the rarefied one that the theologians are always talking about. Except that modern witchcraft is not as primitive as one might think.

Some of the members who are still with me may be reaching for a pen at this point to say that I have talked in this vague sort of article on the very things that I am always complaining about in modern literature. Well, history does not exactly repeat itself, but usually one can draw a parallel. This century has seen a bigger witch hunt than was ever held in the middle ages, only we didn't call them witches. We called them Jews, or Communists or Fascists. Three centuries ago people were murdered in their thousands. This century they have been murdered in their millions. In those days, torturing men and women into admitting sexual orgies that never were was one way of obtaining pornography. But it was done in the name of the law or religion so it was legal. These days the pornography is significant, or challenging, or realistic and critics, to be in the swim, call it great literature. In other words, we are just as bloody dishonest as the medieval churchmen and lawyers. They could not admit that pornography was pornography, and neither can we. There is also another reason for the way things are today, but that will be in a separate article, which I hope I shall have time to do, but time is running very short. I should not have said reason in the previous sentence, but possible theory.

Well, that's talking Point for this time round and I am rather surprised to find I have made it.



## STARLIGHT, STAR BRIGHT

As this is being composed straight on the stencil, I think I had better get the apologies out of the way first. I have tried to get through the zine with as few errors as possible, but time is getting extremely short, so please accept my apologies for any botch up in this article.

Members who were with us a couple of years ago may recall the correspondence we had with William Wray and also that Bill cast a star chart for him, which, to my surprise, was fairly accurate. And now you can guess what this article is about.

I may have mentioned that my late mother in law was an astrologer and I thought that she got it mainly through clairvoyance, but I have now discovered that it is sheer hard work.

For the members who have not thrown the zine down in disgust I will say right now if you think what stars foretell in the papers is astrology you are on the wrong track. This is oversimplification and is merely the way the transitting moon affects the sign the sun is in. Again, you may read what you should be like according to what sign the sun is in. It is not as simple as that.

But to proceed with why I am writing about this particular subject. Early last year, having wondered for some time how Bill had managed to be so accurate, I started reading my mother in law's astrological books, mainly by Alan Leo and Charles Carter, but she also had a copy of William Lilly's book. I discovered that not only was it a fascinating subject, but there is far more in it than people would suppose. Firstly, everyone born has an individual map, so to divide the world into just twelve different types of personalities is wrong. Secondly, the sun sign may give the vitality and the way one expresses oneself, but the Ascendant is usually a good pointer to appearance and personality. Thirdly, the planets in the signs and the houses and how they are aspecting each other decides the complete person and what he or she is likely to turn out like. Fourthly, human beings have been given free will and a bad aspect in a chart, if it is known about, can be softened down very considerably. One of the main astrological sayings is "The stars impel, they do not compel."

To get a precise chart the exact moment of birth should be known and where the birth took place. This is necessary for the longitude and latitude. The birth time must be added or subtracted from the Greenwich mean time at noon, if zone time is involved that must be added or subtracted, and if summer time is

in force an hour must be subtracted. The ten second per hour must also be taken into account and after all that, you should have the correct local sidereal time. By the aid of logarithms one can find out exactly where the planets were at that particular time. The next thing is check the latitude and find the degree of the ascendant from a table of houses. The ascendant is the degree of the sign rising over the eastern horizon at birth. The M.C. or the Midheaven is the degree at which the planets culminate in the south.

Each planet will show its principle according to the sign and house it is in. For instance, the sun is vitality and self-expression, the moon is response and fluctuation, Mercury is physical and mental communication, Venus harmony and unison, Mars heat, **energy**, activation, Jupiter preservation and expansion, Saturn limitation and cold, Uranus change (revolutionary and dictatorial) Neptune intangibility and Pluto elimination, regeneration and renewal. Aries is pioneering and assertive, Taurus is possessive, Gemini communicative, either by teaching or writing or selling, Cancer sensitive and protective, Leo is creative and joyful, Virgo is critical, analytical and detailed, Libra likes harmony and unison, Scorpio is passionate, secretive and penetrating, Sagittarius likes to be deep and wide ranging, Capricorn is prudent, cautious and aspiring, Aquarius is detached and scientific, unusual and Pisces is intangible and quite often confused.

The moon is in Aquarius for instance, would probably show a quick response to scientific matters, or what is considered unusual. Need I say which sign my moon is in? But it is also in the sixth house, which stands for work and service. I also have Uranus in the sixth which should mean a quick response to the unusual where work is concerned.

Starting with the Ascendant the houses go from one to twelve. The first six concern the person and the last six life outside the home and in contact with others. For many years now there have been arguments about the divisions of the houses and there are several different systems. The cusps of the houses are found by dividing along the equator or the prime vertical in the quadrant systems, by time taken to cover space in the Placidian system, and division along the ecliptic for the equal house system. For some reason or other the Placidian system is the most popular and although it may work extremely well in latitudes near the equator, where the house divisions would be more or less equal, the more northerly the latitudes the more inaccurate it gets as far as the houses are concerned. Since each sign is supposed to have an affinity with a house I think the Equal House system is the most logical, even though the MC may not be in the tenth house.



The houses are as follows, with the sign they have the most affinity with in brackets.

1st House, the person (Aries), 2nd house, possessions and feeling of the person (Taurus), 3rd house, short communications, routine travel, brethren (Gemini), 4th house home or base (Cancer), 5th house pleasures, hobbies, love making, children, risks, (Leo), 6th house health and service (Virgo), 7th house friends and (open) enemies, partnerships (business or marriage) (Libra), 8th house possessions and feelings of others, legacies, the life force, birth and death, regeneration (Scorpio), 9th house longer travels, longer communications, publishing, religion and philosophy (Sagittarius), 10th house career and life outside the home (Capricorn), 11th house acquaintances, hopes, wishes, clubs, societies and associations (Aquarius), 12th house retirement, sacrifice, escape, hidden life of the mind, institutes, i. e. prisons, asylums, hospitals, monasteries, convents (Pisces).

The 4th, 8th and 12th houses are also supposed to be connected with the occult. I can only quote my own chart as an example. I have Venus in the 8th and Jupiter and Saturn in the 12th. Although I have nothing in the 4th I do have four planets in Cancer, which has an affinity with the fourth house. In the old days the 8th house was called the house of death and the dream consciousness and the 12th the house of self undoing. In a difficult map this may be so, but if the planets in these houses are well aspected, it makes an entirely different picture. For instance, if a person has a number of planets in the 12th, it does not mean that he is bound to end up in prison, hospital or a mental home. What he or she may become is a nurse or doctor, a priest or nun, a warder or attendant in a mental home. Or they may be none of these things, but prefer working on their own and get as niggled as hell if they are interrupted. The last is the way my planets, which are well aspected, in the 12th affects me.

Each planet has two signs each (except the sun and moon, which are referred to as planets for the sake of easier working) and a sign of exaltation. Opposite their own sign they are said to be in their detriment and opposite the sign of exaltation in their fall. For instance, Saturn's signs are Capricorn and Aquarius (with Uranus) so the signs of its detriment are Cancer and Leo. It is exalted in Libra so it is in its fall in Aries. Saturn conjunct the M.C. is supposed to be bad, but if well aspected it usually means that success may come late in life. It is not so good if it is in its detriment or fall. For instance, the late President Kennedy had Saturn conjunct the Midheaven in Cancer and several planets in the 3rd house, which covered Gemini Taurus. At the time of his death, transiting Pluto was exactly



over his natal moon, and several planets were opposing his natal planets in the 8th. One of these natal planets was Mars, which rules the head. Mars, (fire, explosions, violence) was in the 8th in Taurus (throat). There were other factors involved, of course, but to explain them would run to several pages.

Members may recall the fuss in February, 1962, when there were not only seven planets in Aquarius, but an eclipse as well. At the time there was a lot of agitation in the East about the end of the world and some astrologers in the West (a few in California) who should have known better also spread alarm and despondency. Bill set up a map for the time of this stellium and he said that would happen would be freak weather, earthquakes and floods. Most of the professional astrologers in the West also drew this conclusion and they have been right about the weather at any rate.

I have referred to aspects several times in this article, so for members who don't know what the hell I am talking about I will explain. There are easy aspects and difficult aspects. The easy aspects are the trine ( $120^\circ$  apart) the sextile ( $60^\circ$  apart) and the semi-sextile ( $30^\circ$ ) apart, which was once regarded as weakly good but now is often referred to as meaning slight strain. The quintile and bi-quintile,  $72^\circ$  and  $144^\circ$  respectively are supposed to be weakly good. The aspects of stress and strain are as follows: Weakly stressful semi-square  $45^\circ$ , sesquiquadrate  $135^\circ$ , inconjunct or quincunx  $150^\circ$ , difficult is the square  $90^\circ$  and the opposition  $180^\circ$ .

Most people have a mixture of both in their charts. Too many good aspects, particularly the grand trine, can take away the energy to fight and make way. Everything comes so easily that a person with nothing but good aspects may be a parasite, albeit a charming parasite. It is the same with a map full of bad aspects - the stress is so great that it can act in two ways. A person with this sort of chart can either be the victim or he who does the victimising. Both may come to a sticky end. Therefore, a mixture of aspects in a chart is the best for balance.

I did not mention the conjunction among the aspects. This is when the planets are in the same degree or near each other. For the strong aspects, including the conjunction, an orb of  $8^\circ$  can be allowed, ( $10^\circ$  if one of the lights are involved) and two for the weaker aspects. The conjunction can vary according to what planets are aspecting each other. Mars and Saturn, for instance, are so dissimilar that it would not be good. Mars and the Sun conjuncting can make a person quick tempered and also have a blunt way of speech should the occasion arise.

Yes, in case those of you who know me are wondering, I have got a Sun-Mars conjunction. In fact I have triple conjunction of Sun-Mars-Pluto in my 10th house in Cancer, but all three are in trine with Uranus in Pisces. If Uranus had been squaring or opposing, possibly I would have a pretty vicious line in the words I am always complaining about. Another factor which helps to restrain this rather powerful conjunction is the fact that not only do I have Saturn (limitation) conjunct the Ascendant, but the Ascendant itself is in Virgo which, besides being the sign of the critic, the analyst, and the academician, is also the sign of hygiene and purity. Virgoans can sometimes be over-fastidious, but this, of course, depends on the rest of the chart. Usually, it would be no use telling a Virgoan a naughty story unless that story depends on subtlety and wit. If the story depends on nothing but crudity and coarseness, it is not likely to be appreciated.

I am sorry to have to keep mentioning my own chart, but it is the only way I can give examples and even that will only be understood by the members who know me personally.

The slowly moving planets, when in aspect, are likely to have a general affect on all people born during that time. What gives the chart its individuality, of course, is the more quickly moving planets and how they aspect the slower ones.

Some of you may have read about the coming conjunction of Pluto and Uranus in Virgo and I have no doubt that some astrologers who should know better are going to spread alarm and dependency, as happened in 1962. Perhaps, three or four hundred years ago, the effect may have been far more frightening, but environment and the changed conditions of the world must be taken into account. Today, for instance, aspects may be more psychological than physical. There is also another astrological saying, which states, "The stars indicate, they do not foretell."

But to get back to this conjunction, I am going to say a few words about it, but I must ask members to bear in mind that astrology is a life time study and reading about it for a couple of years does not make me an oracle.

At the moment, Uranus and Pluto are within "orbs" i.e. less than  $8^{\circ}$  from each other. Next year they will be in the same degree of longitude. Some time back Bill asked me what I thought the effect might be and I must stress that what I am going to say is entirely my own opinion and should not be taken as going to happen.

Firstly, each country has a different chart, which means that although this conjunction occurs in the sign of Virgo, it



means that in the various countries the conjunction will be in different houses and will therefore affect the country according to that house. Therefore, I can only give a general picture. I have already said that Pluto is regarded as the planet of elimination, regeneration and renewal and that Uranus is the planet of revolutionary, dictatorial and disruptive change. It also has an affinity with electricity and allied subjects and aviation. Both these planets are in the sign of health and service, but each sign rules some part of the body and Virgo rules the bowels. Pluto being the planet of elimination and Virgo ruling the bowels may explain the preoccupation of authors and playwrights with bodily functions and bathrooms for the past few years. My own opinion is that this conjunction is acting rather like a boil and is drawing the poison out of the world body. At the moment the poison is gathering and is having the most affect on those who have difficult charts anyway. There is a certain amount of alarm over the hooliganism that seems to be spreading, not only in this country but elsewhere. Virgo is ruled by Mercury, which is the planet of youth. However, one must bear in mind that these nits are only a minority and they are very much outnumbered by decent youngsters. But the poison is coming to the surface and at least we know where to look for it. All these young fools have done is make themselves marked men and women.

When the poison has gathered and the boil comes to a head it is lanced. And I think that will be the effect when this conjunction becomes exact. Which does not mean that everything in the garden will be lovely. While poison is pouring out it hurts and more than one lancing will take place, i.e. those planets, owing to apparent retrogradation and going direct, will be in exact conjunction more than once. The effect will last for a generation or more, particularly on the generation born in the sixties. Depending on how well or badly aspected individual maps are, this decade should see the birth of great saints, intellectuals, and great sinners, plus some extremely strange people are cannot exactly be called any of the foregoing.

Being in the sign of health, the conjunction may bring about some astonishing breakthroughs in medicine, particularly in the realm of the mind. There will be another side to this, of course, and with the planets of change and elimination in the sign that rules the bowels there may be pestilences which, in countries that are overcrowded, may have a terrible affect. Man may think that man is the most important thing in the world, but Nature may have an entirely different view. So if the world is overcrowded, start a process of elimination, and if man won't go to war and do it that way, cut him down to size in another. But this conjunction will have long-term affects and could be called

a process of purification. But the poison must be drawn first and I don't think we will particularly care for the way it is done. Many things may shock and appal us, but at least they will come out in the open and will therefore be dealt with.

Incidentally, Pluto also rules things underground, which includes human underground activities. Remember the gangsterism just before and after Pluto's discovery. The last time there was a Pluto-Uranus conjunction there was a gold rush in California and the face of not merely the United States, but nearly <sup>the</sup> whole world underwent a change. Sometime in the 1890s Neptune conjuncted Pluto and we had the Klondike gold rush. Also from the theories that were formed in that particular decade, Einstein came out with his theory of relativity in the early part of this century. Since the discovery of Pluto (whose name and principles and year of discovery was forecast by the French astrologer, Fomalhaut I think, in 1397) nuclear energy has become an increasingly important factor and Pluto is regarded as peculiarly the planet of nuclear energy.

Uranus under awkward aspects can be very "difficult". A lot depends on the planet with which it is in difficult aspect and other factors in a chart must be taken thoroughly into account, but if there is little mitigation, Uranus can be the planet of "peculiar" friendships. This, too, may account for some authors and playwrights concentrating more on perversions than normality.

In mundane matters, astrologers regard the conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn, which happens approximately every twenty years, as the most important. However, as this happens so frequently I cannot start quoting examples or I shall be typing away at Christmas. One thing about this conjunction that has been noticeable is that since 1840, every U.S. President who has been elected under this conjunction has either died in office or been assassinated.

One difficult aspect which has had long range affects was the opposition of Neptune and Uranus, which came within orbs in 1905 was exact several times, and did not start pulling apart for good until 1910. With Neptune the planet of the artist and also of travel, and Uranus being the planet of the unusual and the electrical, you had the rise of filmdom, aviation, new methods of transport and new (sometimes strange) ideas in the world of art. However, the aspect was an extremely stressful one and a great many people born during the time of that aspect have endured a life of strain. An opposition does not prevent success - in fact, it sometimes helps it as the person is given the determination to overcome obstacles, although there may be a great deal of strain first. Think of how many successful writers, artists, and stage and film actors and actresses who were born during that "artistic" opposition. Owing to other aspects that may have appeared in



individual charts, many people born while this opposition was going strong have suffered tremendous strain. When they were children there was the first World War and heaven knows how many children were left fatherless at the end of it. After the war came the mass employment, the beginnings of gangsterism, then the slump and the rise of dictators. Monarchies have toppled one after the other. Then, just as these people thought they were finally settling down, came the second World War for which they had to bear the brunt and, let's face it, they are the particular age group who have not reaped many of the benefits they made possible. Ask anyone between the age of fifty four and fifty nine if they consider that their life has been something of a strain and see what answer you get.

To get back to individual charts, but still on the subject of aspects, sometimes a stellium occurs in a chart. This is when several planets are very close to each other in sign and house. Matters affecting that sign and house will be very much their concern. Sometimes, the mixture is too much for the person concerned and they either snap or they never get really started. At other times a stellium can produce a brilliant intellect that often amounts to genius. It all depends on how comfortable the planets are in the signs and the houses. In a stellium, for instance, if Mars is involved, Saturn and Mercury are best elsewhere in the chart. On the other hand, if Neptune is involved a nearby Saturn may help to stop some of Neptune's weird ideas.

Also, planets conjuncting or otherwise aspecting the Ascendant can affect a person. Saturn conjunct the Ascendant, for instance, can mean death at birth if it is in difficult aspect. I have Saturn on the Ascendant and the doctors were so convinced at my birth that I didn't have a chance they didn't bother with me, but concentrated on saving my mother. It was my grandmother who saved me. Saturn is the planet of age and in my chart it is well aspected - so here I am still. However, a planet on the Ascendant in opposition to one on the Descendant can have very strange, and often sad, results.

I think this is the point to say that if members now think that I have told them all about astrology, they could not be more wrong. I haven't even scratched the surface properly. Incidentally, Sir Isaac Newton not only studied this subject, but he wrote books about it. When Halley, a fellow member of the Royal Society, scoffed at him, Newton retorted, "Sir, I have studied the subject, you have not." Another famous man who firmly believed there was something in astrology was Jung. The following pages contain some example charts which members can study for themselves.

A few pages back, I mentioned that I started reading my late mother-in-law's books on astrology, but what really got me going on them was Bill's discovery of a notebook in which she had made some rough charts from data given in Alan Leo's "1001 Notable Nativities." I was struck by the curious resemblance some of the charts had to each other and suddenly the confirmed sceptic was searching through the textbooks to find out why. The six examples I have given are in groups of two. "A" and "B" have something in common, as does "C" and "D". "E" and "F" are for comparison, as "E" was mentally and morally defective and "F" was a genius. The numbers in the middle are taken from "Notable Nativities," as are the quotes below. "A" "B" "C" and "D" do have something in common.

"A" - 922. "Strangled at birth. Sex not stated, strangled by its unhappy mother (a girl of 23) presumably immediately after delivery." Four planets are squaring Uranus and Neptune. Saturn (restriction) in the fixed sign Taurus, opposing the stellium in air, and almost exactly opposing the sun.

"B" - 923. "Similar to foregoing; male, said by doctor to have had a separate existence and to have died from suffocation." Members will observe that Saturn is again opposing the stellium, now partly in water. In each case the moon is in a fire sign.

"C" - 921. "Malformation: male, born without posterior cranial development or brains, with merely a frontal mask, in fact!"

"D" - 294. This looks a slightly more fortunate map and the boy concerned was what is called "wellborn", and everything that could be done for him was done. He lived for about fifteen years and was practically an imbecile from birth to death.

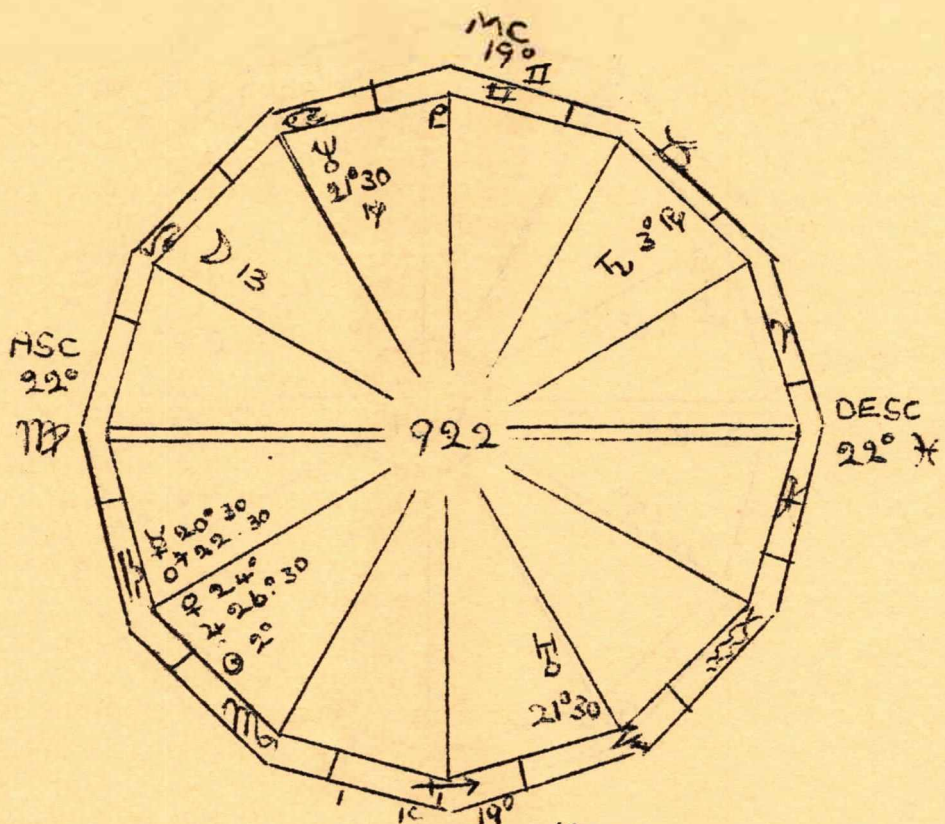
"E" - 408. "Mentally defective: lad of 13, no moral sense, coupled with religious mania almost; always attempting marvelous tricks which never succeeded, and then said: 'Well, I know how you do it, but can't make it go right.' (Query: was this an imperfect memory of magical performances in a past life?" The stellium in the 12th house should account for the religious mania and the interest in "magic" or the occult. This is a case where a nervous sign (Gemini) is overburdened.

"F" - 010. Thomas Edison. Note the planets in Aquarius and nearby, Aquarius being the sign of the unusual (i.e. inventions) and the planet which is now said to rule that sign, Uranus in the house of service. The stellium is mainly in the 4th house, which is home or base, and Edison's inventions transformed homes.

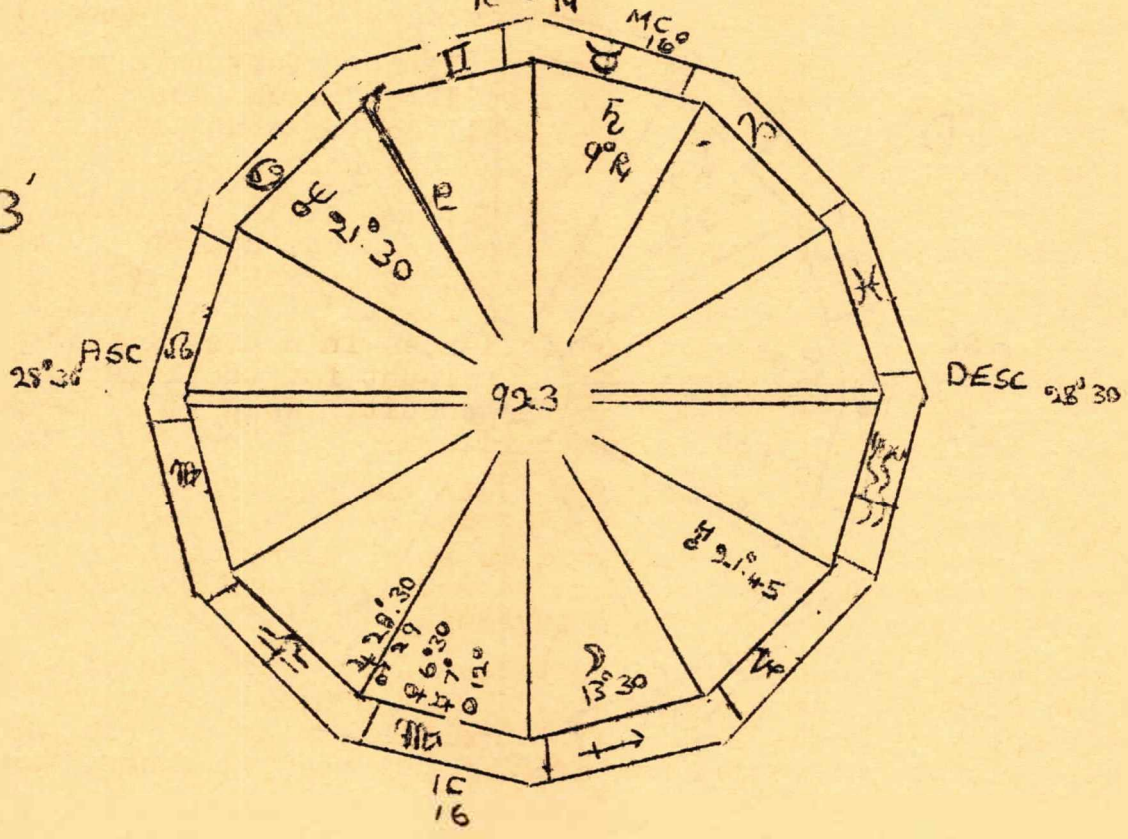
Finally, I don't know how these charts will run off, as I am not much good at transferring drawings or diagrams, but if they don't come out well, I will list the planets at the end of the zine, so that interested members may put them in themselves.



A

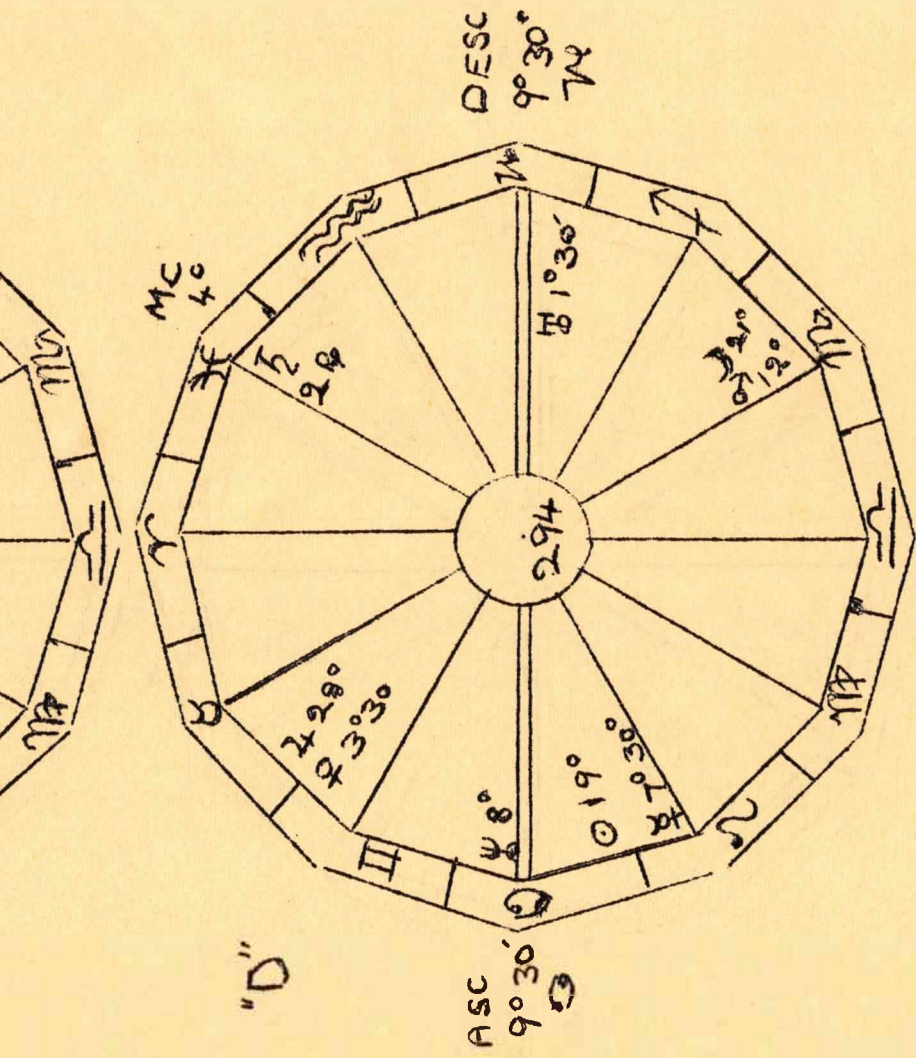


B



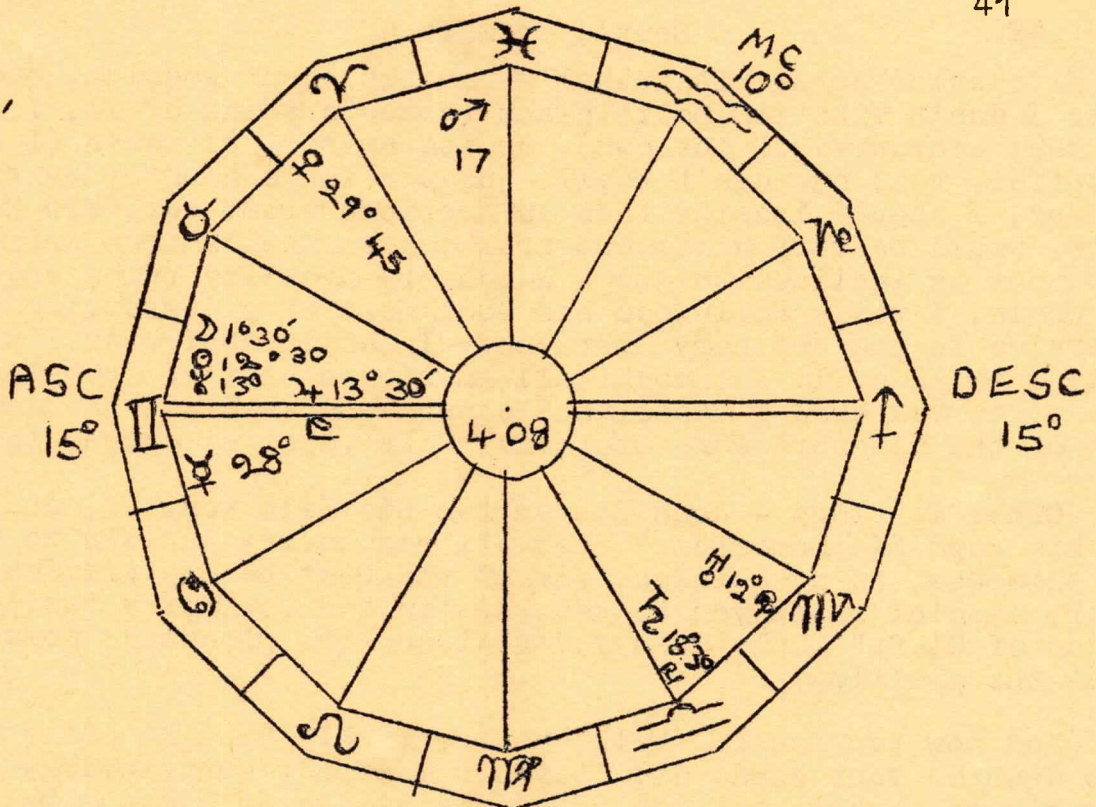




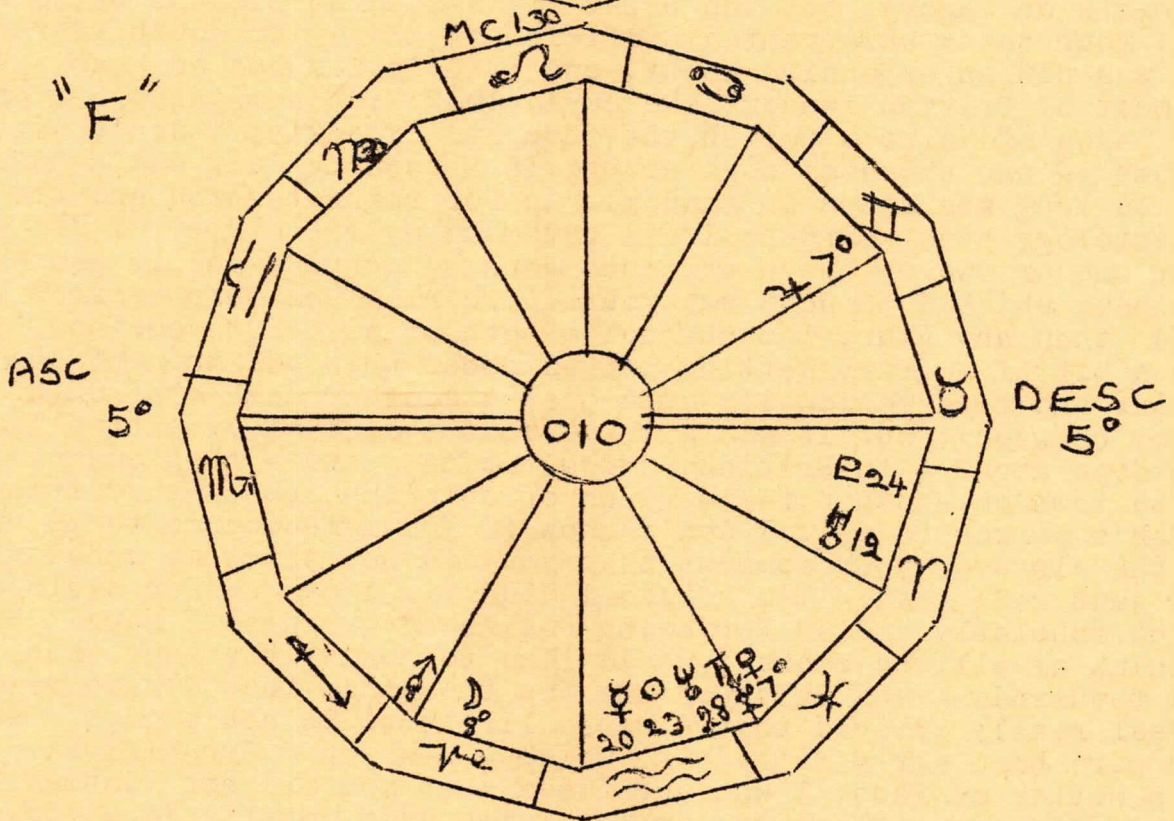


"D"

"E"



"F"





not altogether agree with Ethel's remarks about America, but because I don't like its politicians (come to think of it, I am not all that enamoured of our own), or its hysterical press (I know, we suffer, too) one can't really judge a whole country by that. Besides, I should imagine that an American from, say, New Hampshire, would be very different from one who hails from Arizona. Also, one is inclined to judge a country from its films and, on the whole, I think Hollywood has done more of a disservice than a service to the ordinary American. I recall that when I was quite a small child I thought all Americans east of the Missouri wore straw boaters, glasses, and chewed gum, and all Americans west of the Missouri wore Stetsons, Colt .45s and chewed tobacco.

Other mentions - John Baxter for his film reviews, and also for his poem "In Memoriam." Not all his poetry appeals to me, but this was, in my opinion, one of the best he has written. And a very special thank you to Ken Cheslin and Co. for a "Child's Garden of Olaf." Only when you re-issue it, please do something about the spelling.

And now for Bruce. Well, you certainly brought coals of fire down on your head, didn't you? I wasn't surprised at your comments on Vagary, but the brief side-swipe at Eleanor paled beside your quite unwarranted criticism of Ella. No doubt if fandom was not an expensive hobby, and if Ella was not so hospitable to most of British fandom, she could look like something out of the pages of Vogue - perish the thought! Frankly, I don't care a damn if she chooses to go around in a bathing suit and a bowler hat as long as she stays in fandom. As for reincarnation and the scientology book, perhaps I did not make myself clear. I did say that one or two of the experience sounded genuine and it was one of those which I thought was yours. Nothing was further from my mind than any slur, intentional or otherwise. But come now, it was a bit of a crust getting narked about what you thought was a slur and then personally criticising another member of OMPA. I may be wrong, but it seems to me that a sort of unwritten law has come about - in British fandom, at any rate - that one can go to town on another fan's views or opinions, but - to criticise a fan's person is out. I don't know if you intended me to go up in the air over your comment that you did not think me scholarly, but just well read; I'm afraid I didn't. I have never claimed to be scholarly and as for being well read - I wish I were. When I think of all the books I would like to read - the many thousands and thousands - and think of the few thousands that I have read, I feel really grieved that a whole life time is not enough. So you were born early September, which makes you a Sun-Virgoan. As a matter of fact, I was surprised that you did not mention the time of day you were born, as precision over details is a Virgoan



characteristic. But I am still trying to sort out your answer to me in your comments about the main contention between us - you seem to wind in and out and round about until you have made me dizzy. Which brings me to another point.

Your reply struck me as a sort of justification for your point of view. Don't go up in the air - read on. Now a person who has definitely done something wrong will, 99% of the time, attempt to justify the action. A person who has said or done something that he considers right will make no attempt at justification. In your case, it is not because you believe you are wrong, but just a doubt within you. You do the same with your fan fiction. You explain the why and wherefore afterward - a justification. It is not that you are too concerned whether other people are dissatisfied or not. It is probable that you are in some way dissatisfied. Virgo does aim for perfection, you know. I may consider your opinions wrong, but if you don't, there is no need to justify them. A sin or a crime would be different, but an opinion, the way you decide to live your life and achieve your ambitions is entirely your affair and need not be justified to others - it is your way, your idea and your own opinions. And before you start doing a haka (I meant to have said just before that that doubt is another Virgo characteristic) I'd better add that I have a Virgo Ascendant and have more traits of Virgo than I do of my sun-sign, Cancer. But more about that in another part of the magazine.

Just one minor quibble, Bruce. This may be a noisy, brawling planet, but what use is it to the youngsters if they can't face it without purple hearts, pep-pills and tranquillisers?

And while we are on the subject of Bruce, in the last mailing, one of the members whose name I can't recall at the moment, was rather indignant with Bruce about waiting until he got to the other side of the world before he went into the attack. That, I thought, was rather unfair, as I have no doubt that if Bruce had remained in this country, the remarks he made would have been unchanged.

One more thing before I stop. Those of you who were interested in the astrological article and would like to know more would perhaps like to know that the EUP have just published a book called "Teach Yourself Astrology" by Jeff Mayo. At 8s.6d. it is very good value and if you can't obtain it locally the author will probably provide you with a copy if you send an extra shilling for postage. His address is "Seaview", Falmer Avenue, Saltdean, Sussex. On the other side of this page I list the books that have had some connection with what I have written so that members may look up gen for themselves. And that's all.

POSTSCRIPTS. A friend has just shown me an issue of "LIFE" dated 18th May, 1964, which contains an article about the "witches" of Britain. The people the article discusses do claim to be witches, as we have heard plenty about them over here, but if that's witchcraft, I'm the Queen of Sheba. For a start a strip tease isn't necessary. Indoors, quaffing wine while sitting starkers on a living room carpet will have as much power as the 97-lb. weakling. Contact with earth is needed and if the feet are bare it should suffice in this climate. Any of these people who prance about in the buff while in the open in Britain will end up looking like the traditional picture of a witch; all bent up - with rheumatism. These people may have the book knowledge, but they have not got the "born" knowledge or wisdom. If they had the latter they would not gab to reporters. It really is incredible the way people think they can take up witchcraft like they take up knitting.

Members may be surprised that not once in this issue have I referred to the rival groups of youngsters by their popular name. This is because I refuse to subscribe to the modern trend of either calling something by an obscenity or a euphemism. So instead of calling them by the glamorous names they have invented for themselves, I have preferred to call them what they really are - cowards and hooligans.

The following is a list of books, some of them at any rate, that I have studied for the articles in this issue.

Encyclopædia of Witchcraft and Demonology.	Rossell Hope Robbins.
Witchcraft in England	Christina Hole
A Mirror of Witchcraft	Christina Hole
The God of the Witches	Margaret Murray
Witchcraft and the Black Art	J.J. Wickwar
History of Magic	Eliphas Levi
Transcendental Magic	Eliphas Levi
Where Witchcraft Lives	Doreen Valiente
Mahatma Letters	H.P. Blavatsky
Teach Yourself Astrology	Jeff Mayo. D.F.A.S
Modern Textbook of Astrology	Margaret Hone D.F.A.S.
Astrology and Common Sense	Ingrid Lind D.F.A.S.
Principles of Astrology	C.E.O. Carter D.F.A.S.
1001 Notable Nativities	Alan Leo
Astrology for all	Alan Leo
Manual of Astrology	"Sepharial".

For anyone who is interested in pursuing the subject further, an S.A.E. to Jeff Mayo will get them a list of current astrological publications.

And a final apology for the tautology, mixed tenses and split infinitives of which I have been guilty in this issue.