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ROMANY MAGIC
CHARLES BOWNESS

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ROMANY MAGIC



CHARLES BOWNESS

THE AQUARIAN PRESS
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CHAPTER ONE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ROMANY MAGIC

SO LONG AGO now that no one knows when, the Romany people realized and understood the futility of needless possession. They know that permanent possession means an equivalent loss of freedom. They understand that ownership of too much is the real poverty which overtakes those who in yearning always for more lose the greatest possession of all.

To them the greatest treasure of all is freedom. Owning no country, any ground under their feet is land possession enough. The Romany language is universal to Romanies so that they can speak with the same tongue anywhere in the world. Romany music and feeling are likewise international.

Gift of Inner Perception

Amongst a people who have successfully overcome material limitations for centuries, it is not surprising to find that some of them have also instinctively overcome time limitations. The 'deep' Romany has an ability to frequently see things in a simultaneous manner, so that instead of always being confined to past and present, such a person is able to 'see' a whole firmament of past, present, and future, instead of merely observing the individual star.

It is as though rather than hearing only a single instrument, one were able to hear the full symphony of life. Such inner perception is vouchsafed to people of great wisdom through experience, to mystics by dedication, and to natural philosophers as many Romanies are.

Call it second sight, clairvoyance, or what you will, such a faculty is an intangible possession given only to those whose minds are free.

In the same way in which he has acquired freedom to roam

the highways and byways of the world, the 'deep' Romany has acquired the facility of mental movement. Usually uncluttered by processes of formal learning, the wisdom of the Romany is instinctive and therefore natural in origin, tempered as is all wisdom by environment and experience.

Both magic and science have attracted the attention of those in search of knowledge, and both have appeared to be bound up with an attempt at sovereignty over nature and its laws. In both the succession of natural events has been assumed to be determined by laws which, if observed and studied, could lead the observer to calculate and foresee either events or results. The temptation for such observers has been to seek apparently boundless possibilities for expression and activity through an applied knowledge of the causes of things.

Error and failure in the attempted practice of magic is due to precisely the same reasons for error and failure in scientific pursuit; a lack of sufficient understanding of the laws of nature or its materials.

To the Romany as indeed to most people, magic is an art, not a science. He does not analyse the philosophy of the subject, but merely its materials, incantations, applications, and results. He is not a conscious mystic but a purveyor of a traditional knowledge, even when the sources of that knowledge may be obscure.

Two Kinds of Magic

His magic is of two kinds, the magic of similarity or sympathy, and the magic of contact or contagion. On occasion these two forms are combined for particular purposes. His positive magic consists of charms, verbal or otherwise, to produce results. His negative magic consists of taboos, to avoid results.

The Romanies brought few material possessions with them in their migrations from India, but they did bring other things. Astrology and other methods of divination had long been practised in the land of their origin and these the Romanies could transport. Innovations and embellishments have been added in the course of their travels.

Occult Power

Because of their interminable wanderings and their inherent traditional knowledge, the Romanies have probably done more than any other race to disseminate a belief in fortune-telling, sympathetic and herbal cures, and other matters pertaining to what is popularly known as magic. They have possessed, and pretended to possess, occult powers since prehistoric times. By the use of their wits many of them have acquired the art of reading character and thought.

Though frequently allied to deceit, their exercises have often produced genuine ability. Indeed, imposture and deception alone could not have sustained the Romany system for so many centuries. Within the ramifications of their structure of sorcery lie certain natural truths which they have discovered and utilized. One instance of such discovery in herbal lore may suffice as an example. The Romanies have always known of the heart-sustaining properties of the foxglove. It was many years before the orthodox medical profession began to prescribe digitalis for heart complaints and dropsy.

For a long time now the Romany has served as the humble priest of folk-lore to the poorer classes of people in many parts of the world. There are occasions when the wise doctor has to produce practical results or be forever discountenanced.

Living Relics

What are often regarded as superstitions are the living relics of beliefs and ways of thought much older than our own, and of beliefs once firmly held but now largely discredited and forgotten. In their time most of them had serious foundations and the fragmented remains are slender links with a history of forgotten ritualistic faiths. In addition to being interesting in themselves, a study of these fragments can help us to understand thought processes of the past and thus illuminate in part the history of man. To 'touch wood' or throw salt over our shoulders is to acknowledge our pagan origins.

Primitive thought has often anticipated modern scientific theory, and superstition has often been described as the poetry of popular belief. Modern science was born of ancient

blood for magical purposes extends to the old idea that to enable her victim to recover from the effects of her curse, it was necessary for that victim to draw blood from the witch responsible. It was enough to do this by merely scratching with the finger nails. The practice of 'blooding' at fox hunts is to initiate the tyro to a new experience, and may possibly have a pagan connection of taking power from the animal killed, or protecting oneself from its spirit.

The Romanies have the following method for bringing about retribution against a thief and possibly recovering the stolen property. A black hen must be procured, and made to fast on nine consecutive Fridays. The thief will then either return the stolen property or die. It is claimed that black fowl have an affinity with witches and can thus be used in the service of witchcraft. To appease the Devil a black cock can be sacrificed.

To see a frog the first thing in the morning is lucky, but to see a hare tumbling over and over in the road is the sign of a death to come. It is considered unlucky to kill spiders.

Inanimate Objects

With regard to inanimate objects it is regarded as lucky to see a falling star, but unlucky to see a tree falling. In the latter case the hands should be placed over the ears to avoid hearing the screams of the dying tree spirit. Bread or flour should never be burnt, as this induces poverty, and although green is the colour of fertility, green elder boughs should never be burnt for similar reasons, the elder being used for many purposes such as the making of driving whips and wagon seat frames.

To find a broken flower on the road and to pick it up means that news of the sickness of a relative will be received. The Romanies pick young nettles until May Day for cooking and eating. After that time the nettles are no longer tender and have lost their flavour, because the Devil starts collecting them for spinning his shirts. In a somewhat similar manner the Devil spoils blackberries after the First of October by spitting on them!

The Bay tree is a particularly useful tree since it gives

protection from the Devil, evil spirits, destructive beasts and elements, as well as from fire, lightning, and serpents. Rosemary is often carried as a protection against witches. Other such protective herbs are Dill, Vervain, or common wild Verbena. Branches of Rowan or Mountain Ash are a protection, or the red berries of the tree. Many a walking stick or riding whip is made from the Rowan for this reason. To find a stick floating on water means that an enemy will be beaten. The last made peg of a batch of clothes pegs is sometimes considered to be lucky if given away to a friend, and I possess several such '*kushto fiz*'. Carvings on Romany wagons often combine a love of decoration with good luck symbols, horses heads, flowers, grapes, and so on. Frequently these carvings have a family connection with personal symbols of luck in the past. Sundials are unlucky to be seen, presumably because they utilize the power of the sun in a manner not intended.

The most powerful witches have long straight hair which curls up at the ends, and whose eyes turn up at the corners. Green-eyed witches are the most dangerous of all.

A particularly maleficent charm bringing financial ruin and destruction of peace of mind to its victim, is the one in which a lemon is used. This should be green. Thirteen black pins are stuck into the green lemon and it is then secreted in the house or belongings of the enemy. When the lemon has turned black and become hard the evil effect has been produced.

Holy-stones

Stones with holes through them are lucky, being a protection against fire, lightning, hunger, and disease. They should be natural stones, not deliberately drilled, and they can be made more potent if they are exposed to the light of the full moon on three consecutive nights. They then increase the mental and physical powers of the wearer.

When such a holy-stone has been found, these words should be said:

'I have found

This stone on the ground,

I thank the spirit who left it for me,
It will for me lucky be,
And bring me good fortune.'

Holy-stone in this context merely means a stone with a hole through it. The holy-stone used aboard ships was so called because it was only used for scrubbing decks on Sundays. Sailors had their own 'incantation' for this duty, which ran:

'Six days shalt thou labour
And do all that thou art able,
On the seventh thou shalt scrub the decks
And holy-stone the cable!'

Reverting to the lucky holy-stones, such stones should never be given away because although the receiver will get good luck, the giver will suffer some misfortune.

More will be given concerning the influences of stones, particularly precious and semi-precious stones, in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE EVIL EYE

AS THE EYES are so obviously a medium of human emotive expression, it is hardly surprising that an evil glance of hatred can be construed as having the power to bewitch. Eyes can express love, fear, pain, anger, and pleasure. They can also express malice.

Whether they can emit a ray or wave-force literally is contentious. What is certain is that the eyes can hold wonderful powers of fascination. The 'beam of light-wave theory' is held by many to be used in bewitching. Protagonists of the theory are apt to make pseudo-scientific comparisons with lightning, radio, telegraphy, radar, television and photography.

Possession of a readily available source of power against enemies has been the desire of perhaps almost everyone at some time or other. If the power could be applied 'naturally' so that no evidence could be held against the wielder of such a power, then so much the better. The evil eye exactly fits such requirements.

It has long been supposed that the evil eyes could be acquired by the wicked, and also that some possessed it unintentionally, in which latter case it has been regarded as an unfortunate affliction. Belief in the evil eye has been world-wide, and may be connected to the fearful closing of the eyes to avoid having to see something of dread. The ostrich myth of burying the head in sand is concomitant with the human feeling of psychical influence being exerted by a look. The loved one's eyes may bewitch in the romantic sense, but the dread of someone upon seeing a corpse is to fear haunting thoughts. In Chapter Three I quoted the Romany woman's fear of the peacock. Being a bird of the devil it has, along with its other propensities, the evil eye marked on its feathers.

Effects of 'Overlooking'

Illness usually follows from being 'overlooked' by the evil eye, and as an illustration of the fact that we still unwittingly use the idea of evil spirits causing sickness we may consider the etymology of the word 'bug'. Many people unable to specify a mysterious illness, are likely to dismiss it as 'some bug that is going around'.

Now the word 'bug' can mean a verminous insect, but also has its base in words like boggart, bogle and bogeyman, all descriptions of ghosts, goblins and other supernatural visitants. 'Boo' or 'boh' is supposed to be the first word uttered by the hobgoblin to frighten a human on meeting. 'Bo' or 'boh' is used in friendly fashion to surprise small children. 'Peep-bo' also expresses that which was hidden. Race memory has by no means eradicated its spectres of humbug, bogeymen, and bugbears.

In Chapter One of Part Two of *The Zincoli*, George Borrow relates an astonishing anecdote concerning the death of his servant Francisco, overlooked by the evil gypsy Chaleco. Having been beaten in a fight with Francisco, the gypsy tells him that he will be dead the next day. This horrible prophecy was fulfilled, and had been witnessed by two others besides Borrow.

Romany women are still employed in Turkey to cure those who have been overlooked in this manner, and Turkish Romanies can be identified by the light blue beads they wear against the evil eye, and with which they also decorate their animals. Necklaces of shells, cowries or even simple snail shells are considered to be useful protections against the evil eye too.

Photography and the Evil Eye

Some Romanies will flatly refuse to be photographed, and this is directly concerned with fear of the evil eye. A part of the 'self' may be captured by the camera, and may be used to the detriment of the subject. Not such an irrational belief as it may at first sound, since photos can be used as evidence against one on certain occasions. Other Romanies will consent to be photographed if they are given a shoe lace. This

is to ally an ancient superstition with modern invention, because the shoe lace is related to the loosing and binding of ill luck. Long ago shoes were filled with corn or rice and thrown after newly-weds, and in Hebrew times accompanied by the cry of '*Peru urphu*', (Increase and multiply). The rudiments of this act can be recognized at weddings today.

Homoeopathic magic is the principle of regarding personal properties to be transmissible, and however crude or primitive we might think such ideas to be, yet in terms of language we consciously express the principle when we speak of a 'contaminating influence'. People can speak of their minds being poisoned by something read, seen, felt, or become acquainted with through some evil influence. The idea of sacred bread and wine has certain similarities with this primitive magic of properties.

Dangerous Words

Akin to the evil glance is the evil or dangerous word or words. When the Romany says it is unlucky to speak the personal name of a dead friend or relative, he is not merely prompted by the feelings of grief such recollection can bring. The name of an individual in magical terms contains some essence of his personality. Likewise, to the literate the written word can convey any emotion through associative means. Advertisers are constantly practising this particular form for commercial ends. Through repetition words can lose efficacy, or they can create subliminal suggestion.

The use of sound such as speech or song for incantations, or of music to suit or excite certain moods, is one of the oldest of the 'magical' discoveries of mankind. Some highly clairvoyant priests of Ancient Egypt could establish an occult connection simply by calling on the god '*Ra*', as definite as our connection with a radio broadcast when we turn on the set.

The Laws of Vibration

Priests throughout the ages have always employed a deliberate and effective use of sound. Every object and every

person has a key-note, which means that the sum of their individual vibrations respond to one particular note or chord. Each one of us is intensely affected by sound waves all the time. Everybody knows of the singer who can discover the note which will shatter the wine glass. The story of the fall of the walls of Jericho is often attributed to a knowledge of the laws of vibration. People who like to get the best out of life avoid if possible inharmonious noises and superfluous chatter.

The Romanies are merely following the tradition of the Zen mystics and the Mantra Yogis when they assert that sound alone, if connected to a specific person or object, can produce disturbing results to one side or the other. Many of the doggerel rhymes used by children at play are survivals of old magical incantation, especially counting-out rhymes, these being connected with sortilege or divination by lot. 'Eeny-meeny-miny-mo' and 'Hickory-dickory-dock' and 'Out you must go like a dirty dish cloth turned in-side-out' are very old formulae indeed.

The fear of being either overlooked or ill-wished is akin to that feeling people often get when things seem to be going too well.

Protection Against Evil Eye

Fortunately there are several simple methods by which such evil influence can be avoided. In the case of the evil eye it is sufficient to hold down the middle two fingers with the thumb, leaving the first and last fingers extended. This produces the horned sign used all over the world. Care should be exercised, as this is an ill-wishing sign as well as a protective one. The four fingers enclosed over the thumb is also helpful, and it is curious to see how many people unconsciously adopt this gesture when they are nervous. The thumb-to-nose gesture of the cheeky urchin is a variant of a sign of defiance against the evil eye of the witch, as is the 'victory' sign. Another protective gesture is that of holding the thumb of the right hand in the left hand, and the left thumb in the right hand at the same time. A reference to the evil eye is made in the Bible, Proverbs 23:6.

Small stags' horns tipped with silver and attached round the neck by means of horsehair braided from a black mare's tail will absorb the influences of the evil eye. Fear of the eye is common in Oriental countries, where many Jews, Moors and Romanies wear talismans of paper covered with magical hieroglyphs in a sealed bag around the neck.

I once saw a Romany witch perform a ritual to obviate the effects of the evil eye upon a child. The father of the child feared that she had been overlooked, and took her to the witch at once.

She told him to collect seven bits of coal, seven ears of wheat, and seven cloves of garlic. She then filled a small iron cauldron with running water, emphasizing to me that it must be filled with the current, not against it. The aforementioned ingredients were put into the water and the cauldron placed on the fire. When the water started to boil, she stirred the mixture with a three-pronged twig, while saying:

'Evil eyes, look at me,
Closed then, they soon will be,
With the power of my mind
I will make them quickly blind.
They will burn, they will burn,
Evil eyes, as they turn.'

Students of the occult will realize that the coal symbolizes the blackness to descend upon the evil eyes, and that the wheat and garlic represent the striking of lightning having a blinding effect, as does the three-pronged twig. This trident is the staff of Siva, as well as of Neptune. Garlic is a well known magical ingredient used as a power against poison as well as sorcery, and akin to the Welsh leek in its connections with Druidism. The three-pointed twig was an important part of this particular witch's arcanum, and she kept it hung up in her wagon.

Fear of the evil eye has engendered many charms and incantations to redress its dreaded influence.

PROTECTIVE AND HEALING MAGIC

MODERN CIVILIZATION IS supposed to be a rational process, the lives of the sophisticated being lived in accordance with science, reason, philosophy and law. City dwellers are presumed to have precise knowledge instead of blind chance to rule their existence.

Lost in the darkness of a forest at midnight, a man might be forgiven for coming to know, or at any rate to believe, that there are mysterious forces in the universe which can protect or harm him and that it would be foolish to defy them. He would become what we call superstitious.

It has been estimated that well over a thousand million pounds are spent in Britain and America each year on raffles, lucky draws, sweeps, and other forms of betting. Whether on the level of the street corner betting shop or the luxury roulette club, the principle is the same, a belief in good and bad luck.

Superstition is Instinctive

Despite avowed scepticism, it would be difficult to find a scoffer willing to spend a night alone in a 'haunted house'. With all the consummate skill of modern rationalization, the popular arrogance of the 'scientific age', disbelief propounded in well-lit rooms in company, it is yet easy to find weak links. One recent and personal example will suffice. Whilst in the process of writing this book I was visited by a highly intelligent lady possessing remarkable academic qualifications. She enlarged upon her monistic beliefs, professed atheism, declared superstition to be all nonsense and the supernatural to be simply an outcome of primitive hysteria.

About to leave, she knocked over her handbag which she had placed on the floor by her armchair. From it fell a comb,

a few coins, and a small image of a black cat. Quickly retrieving the image with the words, 'Oh, I must not lose that', the lady replaced her possessions.

I made no comment on her inconsistency, and she left the house. Had I offered any remarks about her 'lucky black cat' I would have been assured that it had been given to her by her mother, that it was therefore of some sentimental value, and that she carried it merely from habit.

An unfair example of woman's illogicality? Perhaps. Such glib rationalization is a feature in the character of many people today, often partly through the fear of being laughed at for their secret fears and beliefs in this materialistic age. Men are equally as subject to such inconsistencies as that displayed by the friend I have quoted above.

So in spite of civilization and the 'march of progress' there seems to be something in the human temperament unable or unwilling to eradicate beliefs known as superstitious. This particularly applies to the belief that ornaments, charms, and other objects can guard their possessors from real or imaginary evils. The 'dolly-hanger' motorists are a good modern example. However much they like to think that their suspended mascots are merely there for a bit of fun, they feel compelled to keep them. It might be argued that such mascots dangling from front or rear windows or both, constitute a danger rather than any protection. Obscuring vision when driving, however slightly, and having a swinging, often colourful distraction before the eyes, can hardly be best for safety.

Now that real horseshoes are difficult to obtain, enterprising manufacturers of novelties will readily supply plastic imitations. The superstitious in all classes of society carry or possess all kinds of lucky charms, ranging from stones, rabbits' feet, wishbones, piskeys, dogs, elephants, monkeys and what not, to gold ornaments studded with diamonds.

Amulets

The earliest known amulets were carried on the person or worn as a sympathetical magic preservative against sickness. Such talismans and charms have never lost their popularity

and their use was extended to afford protection against all manner of evil forces. Modern versions include such things as copper rings or bracelets against rheumatism, as well as the array of good luck symbols carried by so many, the bit of heather, the lucky coin, the baby's first tooth, and so on. Then there are the 'charm' bracelets which can hold an astonishing variety of miniature objects.

The established religions have not been behind in the matter, having a whole host of sacred objects ranging from the Jewish *mezuroth* to the Christian pectoral cross.

I do not know of any Romanies in Britain who make up special amulets for others. These can still be fairly readily obtained in the Middle and Far East from Oriental gypsies.

There is however a thriving interest amongst British Romanies in finger rings and earrings. The matter of finger rings is fascinating. Originally two kinds were recognized, those conferring power and authority, and those signifying a vow or some form of service. The meanings were gradually elaborated and extended according to the properties possessed by stones and gems which could be worn on the hands. Here are some of them with their meanings.

Occult Meanings of Gems

For health and physical strength amber or garnet are both useful. Anyone wanting intensified intellectual ability should wear jade, onyx, or lapis-lazuli. The latter also makes the wearer cheerful and fortunate. Amethysts prevent headaches, hangovers, and head pains generally as well as inducing peace and calmness. The red agate and the topaz have similar properties. It is also said that the topaz will help to reduce inflammations when touched. Rubies take away idle and foolish thoughts and make one cheerful, they revive the strength and are regarded as lovers' stones. Energy, courage and confidence come to the wearers of the black agate and the carbuncle. Coral and cornelian attract friendship and loyalty. So does the emerald, but it has the added attraction of resisting poisons, will refresh the sight, prevent dizziness and strengthen the memory. Bringers of happiness are chrysolite and jasper. The jasper will also help one to resist

fevers. Pearls and diamonds indicate truth and purity, and the diamond prevents madness and disturbances of the mind. The sapphire is the stone most suitable for children as a luck bringer, it enlivens the senses generally, preventing weariness and melancholy. For those who enjoy parties and gaiety, the sardonyx is the stone. Turquoise, beryl, and malachite are all counter charms against witchcraft, and the wearer of the turquoise should be successful. Jacinth improves the mentality, gives good sleep, and protects from pestilence. It is also said to strengthen the heart, and has been powdered and taken internally for this reason.

Gems and Birth Signs

In this question of individual stones personal inclination can be consulted, but a surer guide is the ruling of astrology corresponding to the birth planet.

Thus Arians should use the diamond, a sign of constancy. Taurus people should wear the emerald for luck, and Gemini people the agate. Those influenced by Cancer the Crab will find the ruby a safeguard against danger, and the people of Leo need the sardonyx. For Virgo subjects there is the chrysolite, and for Librans the opal, which is unlucky for others but not for them. Scorpions will be helped by the topaz, while the turquoise is for Sagittarians. For those born under Capricorn the garnet, standing for their qualities of faithfulness, is the stone. The amethyst, a sign of humanity, is for Aquarians. Sea-coloured aquamarines are best for Pisceans.

A Romany told me that in the matter of lucky mascots it was best to receive specific ones as gifts, and said that a little fish of silver was the best for a lover. For regular travellers either a miniature anchor or ship should be given. To those engaged in business deals the figure of a stag was the thing. For anyone of a reckless nature prone to taking gambles in affairs, the symbol of a tiger's claw should be given.

Bedevelopment Legends

According to all ancient belief every disease was caused by evil spirits entering the body, and these could only be driven

out by magic. Such beliefs in the bedevilment of man are difficult to eradicate. The wartime R.A.F. had its 'gremlins' to be blamed for aircraft upsets and major or minor disasters generally. The Merchant Navy has its 'Wizard of the North' legends and its 'man from Liverpool', its unlucky Finns, its whistling at sea, and its unfortunate sailing dates and a host of other beliefs to account for mishaps of one sort or another. There is hardly a job or profession which does not have its own pet superstitions, from the actor's fear of Macbeth to the nursing profession's dislike of red and white flowers in one bouquet.

Herbal Spells

In many of its forms allied to sympathetic magic, herbal lore has produced many respectable and acceptable cures, such as the salicin from willow bark being used in cases of rheumatic fever.

One old Romany remedy for severe headaches is to rub the head vigorously, then wash it with vinegar and warm water while repeating this charm:

'Pain in my head,
Go to the Devil your father.
You have hurt my head,
Now go away from me,
Home to the Devil.
Go to the Evil One.
Whoever treads on my shadow,
Let him have the pain.'

The incantation treatment for painful eyes is to make a wash of saffron mixed with spring water, and during the application to recite:

'Pain from my eyes
Go into the water,
Go into the saffron,
Go into the earth,
Go to the Earth Devil.
That is your home.'

The same process of transmission is used in this spell for curing a child of nose bleeding. Some of the blood is covered

with earth and these words are spoken:

'I give blood to you, Earth.
Take it quickly, for it is warm.
Give it to your child,
Take it from me, Earth.'

Should a child bump its head, then the resultant swelling is pressed upon with the blade of a knife and the following is recited three, seven, or nine times, depending on how serious the injury is:

'Become soft, become soft,
And very soon go away.
Go into the earth,
Never be seen again.
I stick you into the earth.'

The knife is then stuck into the ground the necessary three, seven, or nine times.

The carrying of three wild horse-chestnuts on the person is a strong charm against evil, as well as a protection against rheumatism and allied complaints. If three horse-chestnuts are hidden in the bed of a loved one without their knowledge and at full moon, the person will have good health. Three crosses should be 'drawn' on the bed before placing the chestnuts. By 'drawn' is meant simply making the signs with the finger, and the power of the spell is greatly increased if the bed is in a position in which the moonlight falls across it.

For cataract pick the blue flower of the speedwell and boil it in rain water that has fallen in May. Stir the mixture well and after bottling it strain it and drink a glassful cold, morning and night, and wash the eyes with it twice a day.

For arthritis one should cook stinging nettles and eat them, and drink the water in which they have boiled.

To be safe from all kinds of sorcery take a bunch of squilla and tie it to the main door of the house. It will protect all the inhabitants. Squilla is a plant of the lily family, with blue or purple bell-shaped flowers.

To keep witches away for a year at a time, take a twig from a rowan tree on the second of May, then wrap it in red cotton or thread wound round and round it, and keep it in the window until the next second of May when the same

If a woman has hands with strong palms, conical fingers, and a small thumb, she is drawn to rhetoric in love which explains, extols, and palliates. She likes brilliant men who can woo with oratory and persuasion, for she prefers this to cold logic and sound sense.

Delicate smooth-pointed fingers with a little thumb show the lazy-minded woman, governed much more by heart than by sense and spirit. Such women are usually too indolent to care much about the realities and duties of life. They may profess enthusiasms, but rarely activate them.

The Romanies say that although the hand types have much the same characteristics among women as among men, it takes much more confidence and tact to read the character of a woman in her hand than is required in reading that of a man.

Second Sight

It is an odd fact that many people will credit ancient prophets and prophecies but do not care to admit that any contemporary human being might possess similar gifts.

Yet the fact of second sight may not be gainsaid. Mention of it has been made in world literature from earliest times. The gift is not confined to any one race of people. All races have instances of it. Fear of it has caused its suppression by the prosaic at certain periods of history, those suspected of it being tortured and killed.

Prophetic vision is frequently found amongst people living close to nature, in desert and mountainous regions. The nomadic Romany is as constantly close to nature as it is possible to be. A well-authenticated case of prophecy was that of Urania Boswell mentioned in Chapter One, who foretold the coming of the aeroplane, the submarine and radio among many other things. These particular prophecies were uttered by Urania in 1897. She also said that she would live to see them come to pass. As always she was correct, for she died in the nineteen-thirties.

Some may perhaps find it puzzling that the phenomenon of astrology persists almost obtrusively in the twentieth-century. Its origins are supposed to be Babylonian, but like

much speculation concerning the past, this merely means as far as we can discover. Popular belief in astrology became fashionable in Europe at the end of the seventeenth-century.

The astrology column well known to newspaper readers has become so commonplace that its singularity has been obscured. How odd that such publications are perpetuating the survival of beliefs which are pre-Christian in origin, stretching back certainly to Ancient Babylon, and possibly to an era before that.

Although most people regard such items as a form of popular entertainment, it cannot be denied that they have provoked many to infer vaguely, if no more, that the stars influence human destiny. It would seem that there are few people who do not at least know their own zodiacal sign, and there are others who have some idea of the attributes of such signs.

To the astrologer the 'Sun-sign', though basic to the principle of casting a horoscope, is by no means the only factor required. This Sun-sign is that one of the twelve star constellations through which the Sun was passing at the time of birth. The twelve signs of the Zodiac are traditionally grouped in threes, and each set of three corresponds to one of the four elements, earth, air, fire and water.

The Earth signs are Taurus, Virgo and Capricorn. Those corresponding to Air are Aquarius, Gemini and Libra, while those of Fire are Aries, Leo and Sagittarius. Representing Water are Pisces, Cancer and Scorpio.

Qualities possessed by those of Earth signs are depth, solidity, reliability. Air signs give us human qualities of a truly civilized nature, hard working, yet often regarded as airy-fairy, head-in-the-cloud types. The fire signs give characteristics of a fiery, spirited nature given to impulsive extroversion. People possessing Water signs are inclined to be thinkers and intellectuals.

The above general basis is further qualified by the fact that each sign of the Zodiac is in turn governed by one of the seven planets, these being Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Mercury, the Moon, and the Sun, the last two being regarded as planets in astrology. Some astrologers use Uranus,

Neptune, Pluto and Earth as well.

There are many further subdivisions and ramifications which have to be considered in the case of each individual, but the foregoing is an indication of the initial theory. Obviously, since there are many more than twelve kinds of people in the world, very few are 'pure' Zodiac types. Most so-called astrologers of the popular kind deal only with the basic type of reading for mass consumption. This is why you may sometimes find that your newspaper horoscope is somewhat wide of the mark.

There are in Britain Romanies who are practising astrologers, but certain parts of eastern Europe and the Middle and Far East are where Romany astrologers may be found in any numbers.

Divination by Dreams

Oneiromancy, or divination by dreams has been much practised by Romanies. But before describing their methods in this field it is necessary to say that not all dreams are predictive.

We obviously realize that excess of food or drink can result in bodily upsets which can cause a restless night of 'dreams'. In fact most dreams may be regarded as being of physical origin. In order to distinguish between these and the truly prophetic dream, the following process of elimination might be helpful.

Apart from those dreams brought on by stomachic derangement there are also those occasioned by some bodily excitation due to a previous pleasant or unpleasant experience. Another cause is tension owing to brooding over some problem or fear of a future event.

To categorize further, dreams of terror can be due to a slight and temporary disorder of the heart. Similarly, a defect in the lungs can be responsible for a dream of bloodshed. To experience some enormous difficulty in a dream, such as hacking a way through a jungle, or trying to penetrate a wall indicates disorder of the liver. Dreaming of sharp pains, knife stabs in the back and the like, is because of kidney disorder. If a dream contains some element of hypnotic regularity such

as the swinging of a pendulum, then there may well be a tendency to anaemia.

This is by no means a complete list of the physical causes of dreams, but it will suffice as a general guide.

How then do we tell if a dream is of the prophetic variety? According to Romany lore such a dream should be devoid of physical cause, experienced while the body is in regular health, and furthermore should be so vivid and well remembered as to seem to us like a warning or invocation. On waking and remembering, its impact should be so great that we find it impossible to shake off the recollection for a considerable time, and who has not experienced forebodings and presentiments at times too strong to be doubted?

Interpreting a Prophetic Dream

Having assured ourselves that a dream really is significant, we come to the question of interpretation. Since many people express an interest in such interpretation and a dream is so personal that it arouses natural curiosity I propose to give a fairly comprehensive list of definitions which can readily be used.

Dreams about Birth, Babies and Infants are good auguries. To dream of a birth means great good fortune, as does any dream about a baby or babies. A baptism signifies that some long held wish is about to be fulfilled, and a cradle or a child's bed also means the hopes will be realized. To dream of dolls, fairies, or of pregnant women means the same.

Marriage dreams which include altars, bells, cake, pleasant music or an actual wedding all indicate relief from trouble and good news. A bouquet means a slight disappointment, and kisses should put you on guard against deception, while horseshoes or processions mean lucky journeys. A veil means betrayal of a secret, and a ring, though it can mean an engagement can also mean the patching up of a quarrel.

To dream of the symbols of death may not seem very pleasant, yet the Romanies aver that not all of these things show ill-fortune. For instance to dream of burial means being close to marriage, a coffin means great happiness in store, whilst death itself indicates a period of good health and

well-being. Macabre dreams of gallows and ghosts and hanged persons, of hearses, as well as slaughter-houses all show good health and good fortune coming shortly. Curiously enough, to dream of a tomb is to have a long and happy life ahead. A drowned person means unhappiness followed by great good fortune, while a cemetery does indeed indicate news of a death. To see a hangman is to receive bad news, and a dream vision of hell is to have danger of disputes and quarrels. Murder means that you will witness some kind of crime, and shipwreck means hesitancy and disappointment in one's affairs.

Women as the main subject of a dream are likewise mixed blessings. A queen or other such exalted female means pride before a downfall, although a nun brings peace of mind. A witch spells difficulties ahead and a group of women humiliation. Actresses denote deception, but a fair woman brings happiness. Servant women inflict boredom from the arrival of an unwelcome visitor.

The male sex can be equally unhelpful for sailors, beggars, lawyers, tailors, doctors and thieves bring respectively difficulties, disappointments, financial losses, betrayal, illness and deception. To prove that not all men are bad, the male friend will bring happiness, while the dream postman will, logically enough, bring long-awaited happy news. The policeman provides safety for your actions, as do the workman and the horseman.

To dream about intimate friends of either sex is to gain help from them or to give help to them.

Dreams About Animals

Most of the dreams about the animal world and insect life seem to bear straightforward connections with the creatures involved. For example a herd of animals means material prosperity, while ants denote hard work followed by reward. Bees, as might be expected, provide prosperity, and so does the cow. A lean cow however, means disappointment. Eagles, elephants, foxes, white horses, lions, larks, lambs, peacocks, sheep and bulls all spell good fortune either in terms of finance or personal success. The main harbingers of dis-

appointments are black horses; grey horses mean uncertainty, and brown ones much delay in affairs. Cats and rats spell treachery, particularly from friends, and dogs indicate malicious gossip about you, though a barking dog denotes introduction to a pleasant stranger. To see a bat in a dream is to meet shortly some unsuspected danger, a bear shows disagreement with a friend, and a camel shows future difficulties. Partridges, pheasants, and rabbits denote social gain, pleasant surprises, and new and valuable friendship, in that order.

Dreams are not necessarily confined to imagery of humans or animals of course, and may well be centred around inanimate objects. Of the three hundred objects given to me by Romanies as having precognitive significance, the few following must suffice.

Interpreting Dream Objects

Symbolizing dangers physical or financial, or temporary worries, either to oneself or to someone close, are these dream objects; walls, tunnels or caves, pits, rocks, knives, blood, an evening sky, and oddly enough, beans.

To presage good fortune, any of these objects may appear in a dream; standing trees, wheels, bottles, crowns, bridges, ditches, buttons, bushes, cheese, hay, rainbows, bread, a clear daytime sky, a fire, although a fireplace means the departure of someone close.

For good health, symbols such as cottages, barley, clear water, and apricots are fortunate. Help from friends is indicated by belts, fir trees, ivy, axes, whilst a basket shows a forthcoming welcome invitation.

Quarrels and disloyalties show in broken bottles, cages, clouds, currants, nettles, and muddy water.

There are many other dream subjects and types of dreams such as those of adventure, battle punishments, calamities, and other conditions. According to Romany lore there is an interpretation to every kind of dream apart from those of physical origin, but the subject is so vast that it merits a whole book. Sufficient now to say that although some of the interpretations seem almost self-evident, such as an empty

purse meaning financial gain, there are many which do not admit of such easy definition. For instance, to dream of an amputation does not mean that it should be taken literally, but rather as an indication that slights and injustices are coming your way.

When considering dream states we should always remember how strange and unrelated to waking consciousness they seem to be. The dream is a subjective mental activity in which symbolism replaces the objective control of the waking mind. In the dream the subjective tries to express what you would like to do, or have done in reality. It is limited however to symbols which often appear totally unrelated to our conscious thoughts, because they are not normally associated in the rational mind with the purposes for which they are used in the dream.

Divination by Cards

Although I do not know how to play any card games, I do at least know enough to be aware that there are fifty-two cards in a pack and that each card has its number, colour, symbolic design, or a picture. This is quite enough to enable anyone to use them for divination, so long as the interpretations are known.

That card-reading is very ancient may be deduced from the popular phrases which have long been part of the English language. Phrases such as 'on the cards', meaning that something is likely to happen. To put your 'cards on the table' means to disclose your plans, while a 'house of cards' is often used for a visionary project which soon collapses.

The first method of cartomancy I was shown was a quite simple one. Given here is only a brief survey as space does not permit of dealing with all the possible permutations. There is enough information however to provide scope for private experiment.

Hearts Suit

Each card has its own meaning, and to deal with Hearts first we have Ace equalling happiness and gifts. King represents a fair man, a rich lover or a man connected with money. The

Queen of Hearts shows a fair woman and a friendly one. Jack of Hearts is a young man, frequently a lover. Ten indicates love or appreciation from someone important in the personal life. Nine means that someone at a distance is thinking of you, and also represents success, Eight that you should beware of jealousy, and can also mean a visit or a present, while Seven shows travel leading to romance or in romantic circumstances, it means in fact the loved one, or the one to whom one will eventually form an attachment. Six is for a special date leading to romance, Five indicates an invitation, while Four denotes a mundane improvement in the home. Three of Hearts gives a sign of advice or other help from a friend, and Two of a visit from an old friend.

Diamonds Suit

Taking Diamonds as the next suit, the Ace means good advice leading to gain, and also letters, usually concerning business. The King of Diamonds represents a strong man physically or mentally and also indicates an older man bringing help or advice, while the Queen can mean the same in a woman, but curiously enough can also mean a harmful woman, and the woman in any case is always a fair one. Jack of Diamonds is a man in uniform, a letter, or help from a stranger. Ten is a journey, or great gain if prompt action is taken. Nine gives a time right for speculative enterprise, Eight means a loan if wanted, or a trip into the country, Seven a gift or your success augmented by someone of influence, and Six means reward through creative work. Five and Four are similar in that the first shows spending for pleasure, and the second a possibility of extravagance. Three indicates that the subject is being undervalued in some way, and Two requires the subject to seek cooperation before spending.

Spades Suit

The Ace of Spades means law cases, but also proposals, though generally it indicates problems ahead. The King of Spades is considered to be symbolic of the lawyer, the solicitor, or someone involved in legal affairs in some way. This is not very flattering to the legal profession since it can

also mean that a trusted man turns out to be false. Queen of Spades may be a divorced woman, or a woman causing losses to the subject. Jack of Spades is a young but dominating man, and he is always dark. Ten is delay and worry, often through receipt of a letter. Nine is sorrow also often involving a written message, Eight too is sorrow, bad news, but can also be a sign that the subject should bide his time. Seven represents jealousy and anxiety. Six indicates minor mishaps, Five malicious gossip with possible detriment to the subject's romance, Four means care should be taken in sifting advice. Three means avoid quarrels, and Two that no risks should be taken.

Clubs Suit

There are two possible interpretations for the Ace of Clubs, either monetary success, or temporary delays in the affairs. The King of Clubs is a dark man, and also a man giving help in a time of difficulty. The Queen is also dark, and also helpful with womanly advice. Jack of Clubs, like the other three Jacks, is a young man. He is dark and may be a lover, or a man inviting the subject to travel. Ten means a lot of money coming, or an important discussion involving the future. Nine can indicate danger of losses or a theft, yet curiously enough can also mean marriage with financial benefit. Eight is a dark young woman, a small amount of money, or a sign to patiently bear troubles soon arising. Seven of Clubs can represent a dark child, the taking on of extra responsibility, or some money to come. Six indicates boredom with a dull routine, Five means danger through impulsive action, Four shows a time to concentrate on home affairs, Three means a change of mind about something, and Two means a worrying mistake.

You will see from the foregoing that each suit has its own predominant meaning. This may be summarized as follows.

Hearts are concerned with friendships, love affairs, and domestic matters.

Diamonds are to do with work or business, and associated correspondence and travel.

Spades deal with sorrows, treachery, infidelity and other

such difficulties.

Clubs are primarily concerned with money matters.

It may have occurred to the reader that the cards admitting of more than one interpretation are those higher in numerical order, from Seven to Ten and up to Jack, Queen, King, and including the Ace as the highest card. These are regarded as the principal cards by the Romanies, far more important and meaningful than those below Seven.

How to Give a Reading

As a conclusion to this matter of cards I will give some hints concerning these principal cards, but it is now time to explain the easiest method of giving a reading.

The pack should be well shuffled, then the subject should be asked to cut it seven times. The top seven cards, one from each cut, are then laid out to be read, using the basic meanings as given.

A short but typical exercise in fortune-telling by cards would go like this. Suppose that the subject had made his seven cuts, and we had laid out the seven top cards. Now suppose that these seven cards were in order from left to right as follows.

Six of Spades, Queen of Clubs, Ace of Diamonds, Jack of Clubs, Seven of Hearts, Five of Spades and King of Diamonds.

The reading, in brief would be: 'You will meet a few minor difficulties over the next few days, but towards the end of that time you will find that a woman's advice will be helpful and she will give you a new confidence in yourself and help you to shake off your troubles. You will then be able to follow a new course which will lead to a little extra money. You will then get an invitation to take a journey. There is romance ahead and when you meet this, take no notice of gossip or adverse criticism because it could mar or destroy your pleasure. Altogether a fortunate reading because you will benefit from the sound advice of an older man who has your interests at heart'.

Interpretation of the Principal Cards

If you consider this short sample reading you will see that it corresponds to the card meaning given earlier. I previously stated that in conclusion I would give some hints concerning the principal cards. Here they are.

The following juxtapositions may occur when the seven cards selected are laid out. Regarding Aces, if four occur close together, great success is indicated. Three Aces close together also mean a measure of success along with kindness shown to the subject. If two Aces are close together, a marriage is in the offing.

Should there be four Kings close, success is certain. Three or two Kings close show lesser degrees of success.

Four Queens together shows that the subject will suffer through some scandal. Three means harsh words spoken of the subject. Two together means that the subject will attract minor gossip.

When four Jacks are together there will be bitter quarrels. Three gives an indication of at least one quarrel. Two Jacks close together show argument or discussion.

When four Tens are in close proximity a magnificent change will occur in the life of the subject. Three indicate money coming, as do two Tens.

Four Nines together bring much good fortune, three an unexpected stroke of luck, two Nines a measure of success.

Eights signify anxiety, family concerns, and possible anxiety, again in the order of the given formula.

Lastly, four Sevens means beware of more than one enemy. The Seven is of somewhat mixed significance because three of them close show a birth within the family of the subject, while two will mean a new lover appearing on the scene.

Here are a few more prognostications useful to the reader of cards.

Ace of Spades near the Seven of Diamonds suggests annoyance caused by someone. Ace of Spades near the Eight of Spades spells disappointment, while the same Ace near the Nine of Spades means a let-down.

The Ace of Diamonds near to the Nine of Spades indicates

illness, but with Seven of Diamonds it means a quarrel, and with Ten of Diamonds shows news from a distance.

Two indications of short journeys are when the Eight of Diamonds is near to either a Heart or a Club, but if the Seven of Diamonds is near a Club there will be some difficulty over money.

Divination by Dice

Prophecy by the cards is a fascinating matter but space does not permit of dealing with all of the possible permutations. An equally fascinating method of prophecy is that in which dice are used. I had not thought about it much as a Romany practice until I first saw it used at Brigg Horse Fair in Lincolnshire several years ago.

It was a fairly simple procedure. The three ordinary dice were shaken in a small box held in the left hand then tipped out on to a table. On the table was a chalk circle some seven or eight inches in diameter. Interpretations were always made by adding together the number of dots showing uppermost on the dice. There was also a code relating to those dice falling outside the circle, which will be given later.

First, here is the method of interpretation for dice in the circle. Beginning with the maximum possible total of eighteen dots, it was like this. Eighteen dots meant almost immediate good fortune for the subject. Seventeen dots also indicated benefit from some matter shortly to be concluded. Sixteen dots showed a journey terminating in happiness. Fifteen showed trouble coming as a result of some action taken by the subject, and he was told to be cautious. A total of Fourteen dots meant help forthcoming from a friend, while Thirteen was sorrow if the subject were to proceed with some matter already in hand, and he was urged not to go ahead on any account. Twelve was more cheerful as it meant a letter or message bringing a solution to a problem or at least relief of mind. Eleven indicated a parting from a loved one. For a man Ten dots showed that some new approach to a problem would be revealed, but for a woman it meant a birth connected with the subject.

Nine dots indicated a marriage affecting the subject, and

Eight suggested reproach and criticism if the subject persisted in pursuing some matter in mind. If the throw resulted in a total of Seven dots then there would be difficulties, Six showed a loss in affairs, Five meant help from an unexpected quarter, while a total of Four indicated some unpleasantness, probably a quarrel, and Three some surprising developments almost immediately.

With regard to dice rolling out of the circle. One outside meant that regardless of the overall total, there would be some difficulty. Two dice outside the circle brought a quarrel, and if all three dice fell outside the circle then the subject would get his or her wish but the matter would ultimately turn out badly.

The Romany practitioner assured me that the results of such dice consultations always happened within the following nine days, and so the method was only useful for short term prophecy.

Divination by Dominoes

The same man showed me how to read fortunes with the aid of dominoes. Two methods were used, the first for events which should follow at once, and the second method to give a general, wider indication of affairs in life. To begin with all the dominoes were shuffled around the table, and then the subject or client drew one out with his left hand. The practitioner interpreted in the following manner.

Double-Six, money coming. Six-Five showed a party or attendance at a function. Six-Four, legal trouble. Six-Three travel. Six-Two, gifts or new purchases. Six-One, help from a friend. Six-Blank, care should be taken.

A Double-Five meant removal to another house or district. Five-Four gave good fortune through speculation. Five-Three showed a visitor, and Five-Two a party celebration. Five-One meant a romance, but Five-Blank was sorrow, though not necessarily in the subject's home.

When a Double-Four is drawn there will be jollity, though Four-Three brings home troubles. Four-Two suggests loss through theft. Four-One trouble over debt, and Four-Blank an annoyance through a communication such as a letter or a bill.

Double-Three is a marriage symbol. Three-Two is a gamble and a loss thereby, Three-One is a surprise and Three-Blank a surprise with a child involved.

The Double-Two signifies jealousy. Two-One signifies need. Two-Blank other difficulties. Double-One a discovery. One-Blank news, and Double-Blank some unexpected trouble.

A Second Method

Now to come to the second method of fortune-telling by dominoes. The subject selects twelve dominoes with the left hand, turning them face upwards and placing them in a row, left to right. As each domino is placed it should be noticed if it is the right way up or reversed. 'Reversed' means when the smallest number of spots on the domino are furthest away from the subject, as for example if Six-Three was turned up, the Three half of the domino being at the top and the Six spots being nearest to the subject. Obviously, this cannot apply to the Double dominoes. If a 'reverse' occurs it has the effect of halving the good effects in the reading.

It is from the total number of spots on each domino that the answers are given, as below.

Twelve spots (Double-Six), good fortune. Eleven spots (Six-Five), a parting. Ten spots (Six-Four or Double-Five), a change coming with happy results. Nine spots (Six-Three or Five-Four), prospects good. Eight spots (Six-Two, Five-Three or Double-Four), great difficulties ahead. Seven spots (Six-One, Five-Two or Four-Three), difficulties again, with gossip. Six spots (Six-Blank, Five-One or Four-Two or Double-Three), trouble involving losses.

Five spots (Five-Blank, Four-One, Three-Two), the subject's life will be affected by relationships. Four spots (Four-Blank, Three-One or Double-Two), an unpleasant experience ahead. Three spots (Three-Blank, Two-One), surprises in store. Two spots (Two-Blank or Double-One), some difficulty but ending well. One spot only (the One-Blank), means hardships and difficulty. The Double-Blank signifies much misfortune.

The results of this second method of reading take place

within a month, with the exception of the reading for the first domino selected, as this can take place at an almost indefinite period of time.

Divination by Tea Leaves

Reading tea leaves is an old-established Romany practice, and of course is by no means confined to the dark race. Here is the Romany method of determining fate from tea cups, along with their interpretations.

The traditional ritual to be observed is for the person to hold the cup in the left hand, drink all but about a thimbleful of the tea, then swirl the cup around three times before inverting it on to the saucer. After counting to seven the cup is then handed to the reader.

The reader then turns the cup the right way up with the handle towards the subject and the reading begins from the symbolism of the shape the tea leaves have taken.

Happiness and prosperity are indicated by the Acorn, a Duck, an Egg, Lightning, a Sunshade or Umbrella, an Urn, a Waterfall, while a Castle means marriage with good monetary prospects, and a Wheel means a legacy, and a Moon means love and riches.

Quarrels, jealousy, and disputes are shown by a Snake, a Butterfly, a Cat, Clouds, a Cross, a Dagger, a Goose, a Knife, a Lion, a figure Two, a Parrot, Scales, a Spade, a Sword, a Woman, an X, a Yoke, a Wasp, a Finger, and a Nail.

An Anchor is a good sign. Near to the rim of the cup it means romance involving a journey, in the middle of the cup it means a journey involving money. An Arch and a Circle both show marriage either involving the subject or someone in his or her group. A Square indicates there will be no marriage in the immediate future. Lucky love affairs are promised by a Feather, a Fish, a Heart and a Ring.

Changes in life generally are predicted by an Ace, a Gate (leading to happiness), a Hat, a Key, Lines, a figure Eight, a Pipe, a Purse, a Spider, and a Steeple.

The Steeple shows change through promotion, and other success, and general good luck signs are a Bee, a Bell, a Bouquet, a Clock, a Cup, a Crown, an Elephant, an Eye, a

Fan, a bunch of Fruit, a Harp, a Hive with Bees, a Horseshoe, a Jug, a Ladder, a Lamp, a Necklace, figures Three, Four, Seven and Nine, a Pig, a Spoon, a Star, a Swan, a Tree, a Triangle, a Cart or Wagon, and a Window, which means happiness centred around the home.

A Basket means a new arrival in the family, while friendship is shown by a Candle, a Dog, an Ivy leaf, and a Table.

Danger signals of difficulties ahead are given if these symbols appear. An Axe, a Fork, a Glove or Hand, a Gun, a Hammer, a Question Mark, a Loop or Noose, a Mountain, a Mouse, an Owl, a Rabbit, a Tower, or a Volcano. The Gallows means good fortune and prosperity, but at the same time a warning not to be hasty or impulsive. Letters of the alphabet are the beginnings of surnames of people relevant to the affairs of the subject.

Tea cup reading is one of the simplest forms of fortune-telling and any shape of cup can be used. Those with inside patterns should be avoided as the pattern may obscure the reading.

Although science has found, or may claim to have found, explanations for many of nature's mysteries, there are matters which still defy logical explanation.

Water-divining

Water-divining or dowsing as it is often called, is one such matter. Visitors to my home almost invariably ask me about a hazel-twig divining rod hanging on a wall. The query is, does water-divining work?

It certainly does, and so much so that local authorities in Britain have successfully employed dowsers for municipal purposes. Authorities in Australia and elsewhere have also sought their services.

The origin of water-divining is lost in antiquity, and some commentators believe that the incident described in the Old Testament, Numbers: 20, is an example of it.

It was an old Romany who gave me the 'rod of Moses' now in my possession, and he had used it efficiently over many years. This is not to suggest that dowsing is peculiar to the

Gypsy race, but it is one of those gifts which Romanies frequently possess, although there is little call for them to practise it much today. Before the war they were often asked to trace sources of underground streams causing flooding or waterlogging of agricultural land.

Their usual method was to walk diagonally from corner to corner of the field, then to gradually break up the area by covering it in sections, rather like tracing the pattern of the Union Jack. In this way the most powerful agitations of the divining rod are eventually tracked down to a particular spot, the source of the water. This process of elimination is a most valuable exercise to the farmer or landowner, because he can then ascertain how best the ground can be drained.

The instrument generally employed by the Romanies is the simple forked hazel-twig, formed as near to the shape of the capital letter 'Y' as may be obtained. This is considered best for the divining of water as well as of silver objects. For the tracing of copper, a twig of ash is preferred. Pitch pine is regarded as best for tin, lead, and iron.

Another Romany friend used a rod of whalebone which he acquired many years ago in the old whaling port of Whitby. He told me he believed that about one person in twelve could develop the potential gift of water-divining.

A person may not necessarily believe that amber beads are a protection against witchcraft as well as being a preventative against asthma and dropsy, but in view of the material in the chapters of this book it might be well to restrain dogmatism until a vast knowledge has been gained of telepathy, hypnotism, and occult matters generally.

It does not follow that we should place reliance on all fortune-telling. At the same time we cannot deny that in implied powers of clairvoyance there are sometimes fundamental mysteries which we do not understand.

GLOSSARY OF ROMANY WORDS

ROMANY	ENGLISH
<i>Chovahonni.</i>	Witch.
<i>Dicklo.</i>	Properly 'cloth' but used to denote the neckerchief worn by Romanies.
<i>Gorgia.</i>	A non-Gypsy female.
<i>Gorgio.</i>	A non-Gypsy male.
<i>Gorgios.</i>	The plural for non-Gypsies.
<i>Kipsi.</i>	Basket. Hawking-basket, usually of white willow.
<i>Kushto-fiz.</i>	This is a compound word for a lucky clothes-peg. Kushto means good or lucky, fiz being an Anglo-Romany corruption of the word 'fuz', meaning willow stem.
<i>Lavengro.</i>	This word, used by Borrow as the title of one of his books, means word-master, the name given to Borrow by the Romanies.
<i>Leis-prala.</i>	The law of the brothers.
<i>Mochardi.</i>	Dirty, unclean.
<i>Te soves misto.</i>	As stated in text, 'May thou sleep well'.
<i>Zincali.</i>	A word used in Spain for the Romany people, and usually truncated to 'Calo'.

BIBLICAL REFERENCES IN ORDER OF QUOTATION

1. **Job:** 'If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness; And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand; This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above.'
2. **Judges:** 'And she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him.'
3. **Judges:** 'And the weight of the golden earrings that he requested was a thousand and seven hundred shekels of gold; beside ornaments, and collars, and purple raiment that was on the kings of Midian, and beside the chains that were about their camels' necks.'
4. **Proverbs:** 'Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats.'
5. **Numbers:** 'And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice; and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also.'

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