

THE SEVEN GREAT
PROBLEMS OF
ASTROLOGY

CHARLES E. O. CARTER

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OF ASTROLOGY

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The Seven Great Problems of Astrology

by

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B.A.



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FOREWORD

IN a great darkness even a match may be of value.

It is in this spirit that I issue this little work, in which, after some seventeen years of Astrology, I have ventured to put forward a few tentative explanations of our problems and a few suggestions as the lines along which they might perhaps be successfully approached.

My excuse must be that until we have some working hypotheses we shall not only be unable to make any sort of case for the validity of the science, apart from the empirical, but we shall be liable to grave errors in practice through failing to have clear ideas as to the nature and scope of the forces we are professing to interpret. I do not think that other students have as yet made many attempts to deal with these problems in writing. Those students of theosophy (using that word in its widest sense) who have mentioned astrology have as a rule done so only casually and have not directly attacked its problems. Astrologers have done little more, and on many fundamental points we are not in agreement with each other. Yet the answers to all questions exist somewhere, and the human intellect is capable of ultimately solving all problems that lie within the scope of finitude.

CHARLES E. O. CARTER.

September 1927.

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PROBLEM ONE.—*As to whether the stellar influences should be understood as acting in a causal manner or whether they merely synchronise with terrestrial events.*

Orthodox science is founded upon the conception of a law of cause and effect, according to which, other things being equal, like cause always produces like effect.

Nevertheless, the theory has been mooted that this law does not hold good in Astrology, the coincidence of planetary configurations and mundane events being due to a simple law of synchronism.

This is not the same as the theory that Astrology is based on the Law of Correspondences. It is true that the specific character of each astrological factor (Sun, Moon, planets, signs, houses, and others) is due to the Law of Correspondences—that is to say, derives from higher principles by analogy. But the character of a planet or other factor is not the same as its action, although it determines it. A man's character determines what he says, but is not the means by which he speaks. If such a configuration as, e.g., Sun trine Jupiter falling on the meridian of the capital of a country, is followed by peace and prosperity in an unusual degree, we are justified in saying that the nature of Sun, Jupiter, and trine aspect is determined by a Law of Correspondences, which decrees, for instance, that for certain profound reasons everything based on the number three (such as the trine aspect) is fruitful of good. But this correspondence is not the actual operation of the configuration in causing prosperity and well-being in the country affected.

Why should we separate Astrology from other sciences by declaring that it does not rest on causation?

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We shall see that there are some reasons for doing so, although the facts of the science, probably in at least 90 per cent. of instances, do not present any appearance of infringing this principle. Celestial phenomena coincide narrowly in time with terrestrial events, and if the latter occasionally precede the former, this is usually within the limits covered by the doctrine of Orbs—a doctrine which does not in any way violate the accepted canons of scientific method, but which is in fact the natural astrological exemplification of the maxim that Nature does not act by leaps and bounds.

As a direction draws near to exactness, it appears that the strain of its action gradually increases, and a definite and appropriate event, clearly referable to the direction, may take place a little before the direction culminates. Often the coincidence in time is almost exact. Sometimes the event may follow the exact time of direction by a few weeks, probably because it has required time in which to work itself out to open manifestation.

All this agrees with a causational view of Astrology.

Further, if we attribute the coincidence of celestial and mundane phenomena to a simple fact of synchronism, surely we must seek a third overriding principle, which orders and arranges both. Is the existence or subsistence of such a principle demonstrable? We believe, doubtless, in a Prime Cause. This concept is, indeed, a necessary one, but we do not conceive of the Cause as operating directly upon both planets and human affairs *pari passu*. It would be as reasonable to say that when a man falls from a height and breaks his neck, the fall and the broken neck synchronise and are both separately and directly caused by a Prime Cause, but the fall does not cause the broken neck.

In favour of the second alternative, there are certain known facts of astrological practice, but it is probable, in my opinion, seeing that they are few and far between, that these are apparent exceptions only, which in the light of full knowledge would be recognisable as such and would leave the causational view of Astrology intact.

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For example, let us grant, provisionally, the existence of a case wherein a man whose Sun, let us suppose, has progressed into the VIIIth House and therein meets the trine of Uranus, suddenly inherits a sum of money. It may be argued that the direction can only indicate, and not cause, an occurrence which arises out of long-past events—let us suppose such events as the emigration of an uncle to Australia, as the result of another train of events, his finally happening upon a rich deposit of gold, the death of his own children in the War, itself the product of a thousand contributive causes, his altering his will in consequence, and so dying and leaving his money to his nephew, the native in question.

In reply it may be said that in this and similar cases the direction does *not* cause the event. This is caused, in an originative sense, by very many contributory factors. So far as anything in the astrological character of the legatee was operative in the matter, it would be a configuration in his radical horoscope, for it is a universally accepted principle of practical astrology that *directions do not exceed the promise of the Radix*. They merely indicate the times at which what is therein contained is likely to come to fruition.

The direction only helped to cause the events connected with the matter which occurred while it was within orbs. Even these were inherently provided for and comprised in the Radix.

What, then, of a very young child who similarly inherits money (or anything else) amassed long before its Radix was existent?

In such a case the child's radical configurations certainly do not act before birth to provide the necessary conditions for the inheritance. But, once the child is born, the stellar influence (the nature of which will be discussed in Problem II) sets to work to develop and manifest according to the special characteristics of the nativity using the environment which surrounds the child.

What, then, if a child, with a well-configured VIIIth

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House, were born into conditions which provided no chance of legacies ?

For the reasons to be explained when we discuss the doctrine of the nativity (Problem IV) this would not often happen. But, should it occur, then there are alternative modes of operation for every House ; and indeed every astrological position, while it denotes one principle, may actually manifest in one or more of several forms. If a child were born under conditions which forbade any actualisation of one of its horoscopic features (a possibility which can only be conceded for argument's sake), then the power of that radical feature would gradually work to make such conditions, until which the influence would not manifest.

One cannot expect to see each direction automatically produce a cut-and-dried result, any more than one can expect a view, or a speech, or a play to affect all alike.

When we see a thousand diverse causes leading up to the precise time a direction falls due and closely corresponding to the nature of that direction, we are apt to think that it is always so, and that we have a wonderful example of the all-co-ordinating unity of Nature. For instance, a man has Sun trine Neptune in the IXth, and goes on a long sea voyage because he has been specially selected by his firm to attend personally to a problem that has gradually developed, possibly during many years.

But we must remember, to begin with, that directions do not always work out in this marvellous way ; sometimes we have to admit that events occur without appropriate directions, or, on the other hand, directions fail to act, or act at the wrong time or in the wrong manner or with more or less power than astrological rules would lead one to anticipate. Very many systems have been advocated and fresh ones still appear from time to time, but it is doubtful if any approaches perfection. The reason lies in the infinite complexity of life, not only with respect to the individual, but in his endless relationships

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with others. Amidst all this the post-natal and pre-natal transits work their way out as best they can to their full development as directions. To expect perfection of any directional system is manifestly over-sanguine. Especially is this the case when many persons are affected by one event: if an employer dies and numerous employees are affected, are all to have appropriate directions to their M.C. at the same time? If this were so, then the perfection of Astrology would mean the enmeshment of man in a rigid mathematically exact machine.

A powerful radical position sets to work to mould circumstances to its fulfilment, a transit soon after birth reinforces this, and finally appears again as a direction to witness the completion of the work. So we may get an instance such as the above of wonderful astrological action. But we must not pretend that such cases are the invariable rule.

Other phenomena have been put forward as arguments against the causational view. For instance, I have myself often quoted the fact, to me an unquestionable one, that Lunations (to say nothing of Eclipses) often produce results three or four days before they are exact—that is to say, before the Moon is within orbs of the conjunction of the Sun. The Sun, however, will be within orbs of the point in the horoscope by exciting which results are aroused, and this may explain the matter so far as Lunations are concerned. If it is a fact, as it sometimes seems to be, that Eclipses produce results long before they happen astronomically, then we are driven to suppose that there may be such a thing as an "orb in time" as well as in space. But I question the fact.

In sum, it seems to me that astrological forces operate (subject to certain peculiarities to be mentioned in the discussion of the next Problem) much as do other known forces, and that there is too little evidence in the facts of Astrology, as I understand and know them, to justify us in rejecting the theory of causative planetary action, thereby setting Astrology apart from the main body of scientific thought.

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PROBLEM II.—*As to the nature and modus operandi of the stellar influence.*

Do the stellar influences act directly upon our mind, feelings, emotions, instinctive and subconscious impulses, and circumstances, affecting each of these severally?

Or do they affect one of these, and through this the others?

If the latter supposition is correct, which is the one through which they operate?

These questions are difficult, but of vital importance.

We may, I think, safely suggest the elimination of part of the first alternative. It is, indeed, difficult to believe that the configurations, natal or progressed, in an individual's horoscope can *directly* affect his circumstances. Can it be thought that Earl Roberts' Sun trine Mars operated from his map, as it were, directly on those responsible for the wars in which he distinguished himself, or brought together the knot of fighting soldiers which gave him an opportunity to win his Victoria Cross? It seems more reasonable and easy to believe that these conditions and his contact with them arose as the result of his character (mirrored in his nativity), and by the action of directions which operated on him and through him to attract to his vicinity circumstances appropriate to their nature.

The idea is common in some circles that our thoughts are omnipotent and directly cause our circumstances; so that, from this point of view, it might be held that the stars affect our thoughts and, through these, our conditions. But the nativity does not lose its validity when the native is an idiot. Hence, while admitting that there is a great deal that is true in this view, we cannot agree that it covers the whole field of enquiry. We might say that the doctrine of the nativity appears to have at least *some* validity when the native is inanimate or abstract.

It cannot be questioned that the unconscious is a realm wherein the stellar forces are tremendously potent, since there is in this region of the soul nothing to check

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them. But it is doubtful if *all* the phenomena of natal astrology could be explained in terms of the unconscious, unless, indeed, we were to endow that mysterious factor with even more wondrous powers than some psychologists, seeking a *deus ex machina* to solve their problems, have already given to it.

It is suggested as a working hypothesis that the action of the stars is mainly or entirely received in the *aura*, or individual field for the operations of occult forces, and that from thence it affects all the rest of the human constitution, including mind and soul, which, however, by virtue of its self-vital and self-motive properties, reacts upon the *aura* and is by no means passively subjected to these effects.

We may, therefore, think of the forces as charging us from birth onwards, and radiating out from us in streams of attraction, thus bringing within our environment conditions similar in nature to themselves.

Furthermore, because the stellar forces affect the mind, emotions, and other elements of the human *psyche*, through these and so to speak at second hand, they work upon our environment. This secondary mode of operation would appear to be wholly or almost wholly within our control.

Considering now the peculiar characteristics of astrological forces, we may say that they appear to be—

(a) Largely superior to spatial limitations, for events which affect us apparently in conformity with our directions may occur at great distances from us.

(b) Very penetrative, since no physical means has been found for screening their action.

(c) Extraordinary in their subtlety, as in the manner, already referred to, in which they frequently work out according to their specific characters.

(d) Capable of differentiation in respect of their natures, upon which differentiation Astrology depends.

(e) Capable of differentiation in respect of their power in a manner analogous to gradations of physical forces, this being also a subject of astrological study.

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(f) Capable of great duration, as, for instance, the forces depicted in the nativity endure through life, sometimes active and sometimes latent, being in the latter case always capable of excitation by direction and transit.

(g) Possessed of great breadth of action, inasmuch as they affect, directly or indirectly, man's mind, passions, emotions, body, and circumstances, as well as probably the corresponding elements of animal and plant life, where these exist, and also to some extent things inanimate and even things possessing only abstract existence. *See Problem III.*

The operation of the stellar influence may perhaps be viewed in the light of the *Law of Attraction of Similar*s, a principle which seems universal in nature. Thus, if we are "charged" with Jupiter by the fact that he is prominent in our nativity, all things of a Jovian nature seem automatically to come to us, in favourable guise if he is strong and the reverse if he is afflicted. If he is not prominent, but obscure, then his forces in us are weak, and those things which he "rules" play but a small part in our life, yet still appear beneficent or malefic according to whether he is (apart from being obscurely placed) strong or afflicted by sign and aspect.

Some of the characteristics above mentioned may incline us to think that the stellar force is at any rate in some respects different from those physical forces which are studied by orthodox science, although, of course, there are analogies between them. With those who would argue that the *whole* of man, including

. . . this intellectual being,

Those thoughts that wander through eternity,

is the product of the physical action of the heavenly bodies, I cannot see eye to eye. *Res ipsa loquitur*—the thing speaks for itself. That the planets exert a physical action only, affecting us in some such ways as we have mentioned, is much more easy to believe. But even thus we have to account for a purely physical influence emanating from the signs and houses, where no physical

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entities are, so far as we know. The whole Doctrine of the Nativity (i.e. the peculiar importance in astrology of the moment of birth of a thing) seems hard to explain in terms of physics ; at least, I find it so.

Personally, I put forward the view that the stellar *forces* largely, if not exclusively, belong, not to the realm of Nature which is the field of ordinary scientific research, but to that infra-natural order which we call occult, psychic, or cryptic—the realm of those subtle astral and etheric forces which scientists, as a body, ignore, but whose actuality is really unquestionable by anyone who has troubled to study them. In some respects they do not follow the laws of physical science, and hence in part the hostility between Astrology and modern Science. Psychic phenomena are not always and entirely susceptible to examination by the criteria of physics ; hence the scientist suspects and resents what may seem to him to be attempts at eluding legitimate tests.

However, though astrological *forces* may be psychic, our chief factors, the Sun, Moon, and planets, are physical existences, and the signs and houses are determined mathematically and have geometrical reality. *Hence we can and must use scientific methods*, though not always those of physics ; for we deal largely with living beings who think and feel, so that the psychological element must be taken into constant consideration.

We can see that Astrology contains within its field very mixed elements. It is, indeed, too "psychic" for the scientist and too scientific for the psychic, whose astrology is seldom very sound. Indeed, many astrologers will not be pleased at my suggestion that astrology has anything to do with psychic matters. But these forces are none the less real because fools and knaves concern themselves with them. They have also been studied by men of outstanding mental capacities, who would, however, have used their talents to better advantage had they turned them to Astrology instead of seeking to prove the immortality of the soul by the study of phenomena, and even imagining that they had done so !

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Among types of modern thought it is to the psychologist and the artist that Astrology makes the readiest appeal, for modern psychology is progressive and receptive of fresh ideas, as well as ready to seek truth in old ones, and the true artist is, and always has been, open to grand and beautiful conceptions.

Our suggestion that the forces of Astrology belong largely to the psychic realm must by no means be taken to imply that the science is concerned with nothing else. Some astrological phenomena, such 'as those connected with earthquakes and the weather, seem to point to a purely physical aspect of stellar action, which, of course, might easily exist together with an action on the psychic plane. On the other hand, all the factors of Astrology refer back to spiritual and universal principles, whence arises a truly elevative and philosophical aspect of the science. It is from these that the specific *characters* of the planetary forces are derived, as, indeed, the entire corporeal and manifested Universe is but a reflection of a spiritual and unmanifested Universe, which alone is endowed with real being.

Furthermore, the hypothesis that the stellar influence is native to the psychic order does not imply that its effects are necessarily limited to the lowest, or even lower, aspects of the human constitution. It is a common observation that beautiful flowers may spring from manure. It is also known to all astrologers that under appropriate directions we may experience not only good fortune and happiness, but rare inspirations, artistic or intellectual, and periods of exalted and ennobling thought. These are not so much *caused* by the directions, as they are what should be normal states of consciousness, which are, nevertheless, abnormal to most of us in our mundane condition, but are restored to us temporarily by favourable planetary conditions. The mists are momentarily lifted—the mists which rise from the welter of our lower nature and obscure the higher faculties. Certain planets, because of their analogical correspondence to spiritual Principles, have this dispulsive power. So likewise all the “good”

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aspects, being based upon the Three, are harmonising and corrective.

A consideration of the nature of the Soul shows us, however, the stark absurdity of supposing that it is incapable of rising above these emanations of mortality except when appropriate directions enable it to do so ; it has only to will to do so in order to surpass them at any time or at any place.

This is not to say that it can, at once and by a mere effort of volition, or by any supposedly mystic, esoteric, or occult process, immediately change the conditions and surroundings of the body, which are the result of its own (lower) nature, brought to it by the Attraction of Similar. The lives of the best and wisest of men demonstrate that they are subject to stellar influences, although there is a wide gulf between *their* response to them and the responses of the uninformed and undisciplined. The enlightened will transmute the worst afflictions to blessings by extracting from them the lessons which they can invariably teach, using his utmost endeavours to mitigate them (especially if they afflict others as well as himself), and thereafter bearing what cannot be overcome in a spirit of cheerful resignation.

It is sometimes said that Astrology is valid as regards the "ordinary man," but not of the self-controlled and enlightened. This is hardly true. Of the very bad or very good it is comparatively easy to foretell the future, for their motives are constant, and in the case of the latter, their principles of action are clear and ~~im~~mutable. It is the man whose views and motives change and fluctuate with passing moods that baffles the prophet.

Before leaving this Problem we must mention an attribute which some ascribe to stellar influence, namely, inevitability. That is to say, without necessarily believing that the *exact* action of each influence is preordained, they appear to think that every influence must work out *somehow*. They admit that the native may be able to deflect it from one to another field. He may, for

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instance, change the action of Moon square Sun from a cold in the head (say, by steady doses of quinine) to a burst hot water-pipe or some other domestic trouble such as this direction loves. But in any case it must discharge its bolt in *some* form. A well-known astrologer shut himself in his room to avoid mischances, and a large piece of plaster fell from the ceiling on to him. Varley, the artist, adopted similar measures to forestall a direction, and was suddenly called out by a cry of fire, stumbled over a pail, and injured himself severely.

It is clear that this theory, though technically different from pure fatalism, is almost equally deadly as regards any belief in the use of Astrology, for it would be the sheerest waste of time to calculate future influences if they were incapable of alleviation by human action. Happily, it seems to have little rational basis. The stellar influence is admittedly subtle in the extreme, but we have no strong reasons for supposing that it is impossible to mitigate its action. At one time nothing might have seemed more hopeless than an attempt to ward off the lightning, yet now lightning conductors are common-places. We should endeavour to attain such knowledge as will permit of our determining much more exactly the *nature* and probable *time of discharge* of astrological influences, which will give us much more power to cope with them. Further, we must study ways of *directly opposing* their operation when likely to be inimical and *assisting* it when benefic.

This, indeed, is the main work of practical Astrology—its *magnum opus* and its supreme problem. But it is one which I do not by any means now feel capable of attacking. One great difficulty arises from the fact that, whatever may be the result of some prophylactic measure, it is almost always open to the person advocating it to argue that, but for its having been employed, things might have been much worse. Again, if we use a method to fortify good influences, the critic can always maintain that results would have been equally satisfactory without any such practices.

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PROBLEM THREE.—*As to the scope of stellar influences.*

It is perhaps open to question whether astrologers have not, in their enthusiasm for their neglected science, claimed too much on its behalf, and thereby sometimes led ultimately to its losing rather than winning credit.

It is difficult to see how Astrology could ever have fallen into disrepute had even a few students been able to produce results such as are recorded in William Lilly's great work, for humanity does not easily forget that which is of appreciable practical value. Lilly was a great astrologer, but one cannot help thinking that, like most artists, he has chosen to be remembered by his best work, leaving his failures to be forgotten.

If astrologers claim precise results they must abandon free-will, frankly and finally; if they admit free-will, they must with equal candour confess that their results are but approximate and contingent.

We must likewise admit that our science, like others, is but partially understood, and fresh discoveries, either astronomical or astrological, may make it seem remarkable that we do as well as we do. For, when all is acknowledged, it remains true that a good astrologer, who has technical knowledge, sense, and judgment, can produce results that will appear to the uninformed nothing short of miraculous.

It is well, however, to try to determine just how far Astrology may be expected to carry us. This problem may be approached under three heads.

(a) In regard to mankind.

It is agreed that the stars produce effects, either directly or indirectly, upon the body, passions, feelings, thoughts, and circumstances of mankind. The rational faculties and all that may truly be called spiritual, being above time and space and the bodies contained therein, are exempt from planetary influence, except that we may more easily rise above our lower nature to the spiritual when the heavenly bodies are favourable.

From a practical point of view nothing is more difficult

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than the correct determination of the special sphere, if any, in which a given configuration will operate. All such attempts tend to collapse on the fact of the unity of the human soul, and only general rules can be given, while the number of factors involved in most aspects makes it easy to interpret them in almost any direction. Thus we may say that the planets relate to spirit, signs to soul, and houses to body. But this is of little practical use. Mars in Pisces will give tired feet as surely as Mars in the XIIth House. The Sun and the more positive elements in the map seem to affect action, and the Moon and the more negative, character. I have noticed, too, that applying aspects relate to character and separating to destiny. But the problem is in the last degree complicated, although experience and natural judgment will enable a student to attain pretty considerable accuracy, and the future may reveal better criteria.

(b) In regard to animals, plants, and inanimate things.

We possess little real evidence that these are affected astrologically, but, on the other hand, there is none, so far as I know, in a contrary sense. *Prima facie* there seems no reason why they should not be within the limits in each instance of the subject's powers of response. But it is clear that in this case the stellar influence will not be able to achieve such complete manifestation, because animal and plant life provides far less scope.

It is customary to erect horoscopes for ships, houses, and other objects, the time chosen for such maps being the laying of the keel or cutting of the first turf, or the launching, or the moment of first occupation. If such maps are valid (as they are believed to be) we reach a region of thought which is, I think, beyond the range of physical science. We must defer discussion of this matter until we treat of the Doctrine of the Nativity, in the next Problem, but may add at this point that it is open to doubt as to whether these figures are equally valid with those of human beings. House and ship alike are, in respect of intrinsic worth, less than man, for whose usage they exist, and it is proposed that the

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nativity of captain, owner, passenger, tenant, and so forth would exercise a very powerful modifying influence upon the maps of vessel and house. However, a cryptic influence does inhere in inanimate things and does make them capable of receiving and radiating stellar forces.

(c) In regard to things possessing only abstract being—such as societies and associations of all kinds; trading corporations and companies, which are collective in nature but possess legal entity; contracts of all sorts; undertakings of all kinds, for the commencement of which figures are cast, and horary figures cast for the time that a question is asked, or the time when one is concerned about a matter and feels impelled to cast a figure.

It is difficult to believe that these figures are valid to the same extent as human nativities, although they do sometimes yield extraordinary results and are free from the practical difficulty of inexactitude of data that so often assails the student of genethliology.

But it seems difficult or even impossible to make reliable directions from them, and it is not unnatural to suppose that they must be overridden by the nativities of the principal parties concerned. Our mundane astrologers prefer to direct from the map of the President of the United States rather than from the horoscope of the Declaration of Independence, although this is accurately known; and on the whole the nativity of the president of a society is a better guide to its destinies (if he is really interested in its welfare) than are directions made from the charter of incorporation. Again and again the whole fate and fortune of a business changes with the appointment of a fresh manager; it becomes, in effect, another business, although its horoscope is the same.

If maps for the commencement of undertakings were indeed infallible and in no degree subject to the predominant influence of the human beings concerned, then it would be possible to back any horse or buy any shares and never make a mistake, provided a proper time were

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ected for beginning the transaction. But although I believe some astrologers possess both the knowledge and desire to do this, we do not see them to be more than ordinarily opulent! An *argumentum ad hominem*, if you like, but not altogether without force.

Apart from deliberate intention, on a busy day dozens of simultaneous transactions occur on the London Stock Exchange, but, although there may be lucky and unlucky days, these transactions do not all follow the same course because they are made at identical times. They are modified very considerably by the nativities of the parties to them. The merely abstract entity called a contract or undertaking cannot receive or radiate stellar forces as can a human being, and, owing to the law by which things subserve things higher than themselves in the scale of dignity and worth, the horoscopes of the creators of the contract, enterprise, association, or other abstraction, necessarily prevail over the horoscopes of their creatures. On this fact come to ruin all the hopes of those who believe that they can readily amass fortunes by speculation directed astrologically. Astrology is, indeed, so important a help to the business-man that none who has experience of its uses will forgo its assistance. But a wide difference exists between the intelligent and honourable use of Astrology and its cultivation as a mean and stupid superstition. I have remarked with some wonder that those who talk most vehemently in derision of the "mystical" in Astrology and in favour of its strictly scientific treatment sometimes employ it themselves in a way which seems not untinged with superstition, not always of a very excusable kind. It seems at least equally rational to believe that "The Heavens declare the glory of God," as to believe that they declare the winners of races; and if some of us find the former declaration more interesting (without necessarily denying the truth of the latter), I think that we are entitled to our belief and are less likely to be considered superstitious on that account by the impartial than the astrological "sportsman."

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Perhaps the same arguments do not apply to Horary Astrology as to the Inceptional Maps, except, indeed, that this art also would speedily lead to great wealth and power in the hands of those who used it to such ends, were everything true that has been claimed for it. However, judicious writers have always been prepared to allow that the personal element and the possession or otherwise of that almost eerie faculty of right judgment which some have and others not, enter largely into horary astrology. I have found horary astrology almost inestimably valuable in practical affairs, but I have not found it infallible, nor can it be, unless we accept fatalism. Moreover, it has limitations, the exact extent of which we do not as yet understand. I take it that these figures show us the psychic forces and symbolic aspects of the solar system at the moment for which they are cast. Hence, if at that time a new idea enters the mind, we can tell *to the extent to which it is psychically induced* what its nature is, and, from its nature, what its future is likely to be. If we cast a figure for the moment when we are greatly concerned about the solution of a matter, then I do not see on what hypothesis (other than that of specific inspiration) we can explain the validity of the figure. It should portray our state of mind, and no more.

Hence such figures must either be dismissed as not really reliable, which certainly contradicts a long-sustained tradition, or we must accept inspiration, or leave the matter with a frank avowal of ignorance.

PROBLEM IV.—*As to the Doctrine of the Nativity.*

Throughout all Astrology runs the belief that an altogether peculiar importance attaches to the *beginning* of anything. The nativity is the beginning of the child, or at any rate of its present life on earth; mundane figures are the beginnings of cycles, figures are cast (such as we have just discussed) for the inception of all sorts of projects, launchings, voyages, buildings. Horary questions are said to be figures for "the birth of an idea," and so forth. It is taught that these figures retain their

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validity until a fresh period begins, with a fresh horoscope.

This important doctrine, of the truth of which no astrologer has the slightest doubt, seems to admit of two methods of explanation.

(a) It is sometimes said that at the moment of birth (and there is much doubt as to exactly what moment is to be taken as that of birth in an astrological sense) the tender constitution of the babe, be it physical, etheric, astral, or mental, or all of them, receives a sort of stellar imprint of so decided a kind that it lasts till death, as a permanent diathesis.

Against this we may argue on the grounds (1) that there is no particular or evident reason why the stellar influence should impress the infant more durably at the moment of birth than at any other time, and (2) that it is hard to imagine even the admittedly mysterious stellar forces finding anything at the birth of an abstraction, such as a limited company, upon which they could make any impression whatever.

(b) Assuming the Law of Attraction of Similars to be a true principle, then it is not hard to believe that its action would operate to call continually into manifestation at appropriate times things similar to the conditions prevailing at those times. Hence the discarnate soul would irresistibly, and one might say almost automatically, seek a body for its use at the moment when a sufficiently powerful relation of similarity existed between it and the heavens. Not, however, that this need be the *only* determining factor or that other factors may not co-operate with the astrological, but it is this with which at the moment we are concerned.

In this connection we may quote the great Plotinus :

All things are arranged by one reason with reference to the ascent and descent of souls and every other particular. The symphony of souls with the order of the Universe, which nevertheless are not suspended from (dependent upon, ordered by ?) the universe but co-adapt themselves in their descent and make one accord with the mundane circulation,

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is testified by this, that their fortunes, lives, and deliberate elections are signified by the figures of the stars.

The translation is somewhat obscure, yet the meaning is not hard to perceive.

If this doctrine be true, then it follows that :

1. The nativity does not make the child to be like itself, but the child acquires an appropriate nativity by a universal law. It selects its own fate in the light of its own conditions.
2. The child develops according to its own nature and the nature of its horoscope, which resemble one another.
3. The same theory holds good with reference to animals, inanimate things, and abstractions.

If for any reason, in violation of the clear and unobstructed operation of the Law of Attraction of Similars (as, for instance, if the parents' horoscopes, being radically different, violently interfered with its action with regard to the child), the child is *not* born under an appropriate configuration of the heavens, it is reasonable to suppose that severe inharmonies will result and the child may suffer in many directions.

It may be objected that if the Doctrine of the Lunar Epoch is correct, the moment of birth is determined before the configurations which will be the child's nativity have formed or can operate. This, however, refers to the child's body, whereas there is no need to suppose that the identity of the incarnating soul is decided at the epoch, or in fact at any time prior to actual birth.

If, on the authority of certain occultists, it is asserted that such identity *is* determined long before birth, then it is only necessary to state that such determination is carried out by other than stellar agents, and therefore does not invalidate the astrological thesis at all.

This explanation of the Doctrine of the Nativity does not, of course, affect the validity of epochal maps, of which several have been recommended by different writers

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in recent years. This must be established or otherwise by experiment. They would derive their psychological value, as does the nativity, from the fact that they correspond in character more or less completely to the soul, or some aspect or vehicle of the soul—are passing reflections of the soul, so to speak, as it goes on its way.

The view that the child is, soul and body, the product of its nativity, or at any rate of elements (such as heredity) which are included in the horoscope, is open to the practical objection that all the evidence we possess points to there being a strong resemblance of destiny and character between people born at the same time and place, but does not by any means indicate anything approaching identity in any sense whatever. No one would fail to detect in such cases the existence of two separate individuals.

The view is also unphilosophical, in that it assumes that the lesser (that is, the psychic or physical action of the planets) could produce the greater (that is, the intellectual and spiritual man).

If it were said that man is not the product of the planets in their physical aspects, but of those spiritual Beings which are by some identified with the planets, then it may be answered that tradition has always allotted to these Beings dominion over the operations of Nature, together with freedom to help mankind, but it has never declared them to be the creators of man's soul.

PROBLEM V.—*As to the post-natal operation of stellar influences.*

Following the (hypothetical) conclusions which we have stated, we find the soul informing a body to which it has been called at a time which is, at least usually and approximately, appropriate to its own nature.

From that time on it receives into itself, according to the Law of Attraction, those stellar influences which resemble its own character, whilst those that have little or no similarity with it pass by with little or no effect,

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as, indeed, we notice continually as practical astrologers—X “hardly responds” to Venus, Y “always feels” a Uranian direction, and so on.

This reception of stellar influence affects the body cryptically, and through the body the passions, emotions, and mind are also influenced. Through these, the planets affect our affairs and conditions. But it is probable, if not sure, that we ourselves become, so to speak, little planets, radiating the cryptic forces that we have ourselves received. So it is that our nativities work out in ways which are sometimes only explicable cryptologically.

As a student once put it: “You have Moon square Mars and go out for a walk full of peace and loving-kindness, and some stranger rushes up and shakes his fist in your face!” An extreme and probably imaginary instance, but most of us can recall cases when an aspect has worked out in a way that cannot be explained by mental action or by any orthodox theory, although they are plain cases of planetary action. That is, the cryptic force has gone into us from the planets, and then, without perceptibly affecting our body, emotions, or mind, has gone straight out to attract Martian or other appropriate conditions.

The Radix (or nativity) always remains important, because it nearly, and within certain limits, represents the essential man—his character. Hence “transits” over “radical positions” or “directions” to them are considered of great importance, the reason being that these radical points bear a close individual relationship to the native, being symbolically related to great cosmic Principles to which he, too, is specially related. According to the view outlined herein, if a man, for example, be born with the Sun in 0° Aries, it is because this position is related to something in his character, and anything that thereafter affects that ecliptical position will affect him. So also with other positions.

Transits require no special explanation.

Directions, by which we understand the effects produced

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by transits occurring just before and after birth, which are projected forwards according to certain time-measures, seem to depend upon what might be called a *Law of Repeated Action*.

Just as a man sees his shadow thrown on to a distant hillside and there greatly enlarged, so the effects of the transits, themselves of minor importance, recur according to definite time-measures and produce effects altogether more important than the transits themselves, but limited always by the character of the Radix. In this way what is promised by the Radix is brought to fruition, provided always that the attitude of the native is not one of inert anticipation but of energetic and intelligent co-operation. It is evident that the stellar forces, if left entirely to themselves to operate on the cryptic plane, may effect very little. But when reinforced and directed by the innate energies of the soul, they may accomplish much, and Astrology enables us to foresee and direct the course that they are likely to take.

Apart from the special values that each planet has in each map, and apart from the known laws governing the relative strength of aspects, the power of an aspect, either natal, transitual, or directional, varies inversely with the speed with which it forms and dissolves. Hence, for instance, solar directions are far more powerful than (secondary) lunars. There is no reason to discuss this law, which has analogies in physical science and appears eminently natural.

The principle behind the Law of Repeated Action, so far as this affects directions, seems to be that all circles are analogically related to each other. Hence the circle of the day (during which the Earth completes a circular movement on its axis) has its correspondence in the circle of the year. The passage of one degree of right ascension over the Mid-heaven, which equals a year according to the Ptolemean directional system, is to the day as the day is to the year (nearly) ; hence the validity of the one infers the validity of the other, which, of course, is amply demonstrable in practice.

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Then again, the anniversaries of our birthday analogically correspond with it, and so solar revolutions have some validity, being so to speak secondary birth-maps. Much importance has been claimed for the solar revolutionary map one year before birth, the discoverer, Mr. W. H. Sampson, regarding it as equally important with the nativity. If the solar returns are valid at all it is easy to see that the one governing the period during which conception occurs might have a special value, and, so far as directions are concerned, I believe it has.

All through life we see the process at work by which, in accordance with many hidden affinities not generally known or recognised, the stellar forces work themselves out to their conclusions, attracting like to like. In infancy the child is largely dominated by the nativities of its parents or others with whom it is in close contact. It has been stated, I think correctly, that infant deaths are usually shown more clearly in the parents' maps than in the child's. Some astrologers appear to hold a rather extreme view that what is in the horoscope must actualise, but it seems more natural and more agreeable to experience that conflicting influences will modify each other mutually, although they seldom cancel right out, in the way that an ounce weight in one scale will balance an ounce weight in the other. This is because the stellar influences are so various and complex that two forces rarely or never exactly coincide in time and in valency.

As adult life progresses, however, the soul acquires (or should acquire) stability and equilibrium, and although it may and nearly always does respond to planetary influence, yet a definite "character" is built up, oriented according to definite principles. Thus, whatever influences may come, we say "X would never tell a lie" or "Y would never take that risk" or "Z is always to be depended upon." On the other hand, some people never attain any sort of fixity.

It naturally follows that as we develop and acquire a certain degree of fixity of good character, the stellar forces no longer find any vent for their action in terms of the

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passional man. They seek other outlet, and hence it is notorious that an effort—especially a sudden effort—to redirect the character to better and higher interests, with repression of former passional tendencies, may result in disturbances of health and ill-fortune in worldly affairs, and sometimes even in mental and emotional unbalance.

PROBLEM VI.—*As to the bearing of Astrology upon the question of human freedom.*

This question resolves itself into two :

1. Whether man is determined in his choices by exterior forces ;
2. Whether he is self-determined, in the sense that, being possessed of definite characteristics, he must, of necessity, behave according to these and is thus limited by his own nature.

The first problem has assumed various forms, as, for instance, it has been held that man is definitively deprived of freedom by Divine preordination. And it has been very frequently believed that man's fate is determined by the stars, considered either as physical forces or as ministers of God, as by the Muhammedans. To demonstrate this it would be necessary to prove that the results of astrological action are invariable and ineluctable, not only sometimes but always. The mere demonstration that they are *sometimes* irresistible proves nothing, for this applies to many things. For instance, given certain predispositions, a damp bed may irresistibly cause an attack of rheumatic fever.

No one has ever proved, or come within any measurable distance of proving, that the astrological influence exerts a constantly predominant effect on human choice. Nevertheless, no slander upon astrology has ever been more widely disseminated and believed or done more harm to the science. The ground for supposing that the astrological influence is determinative with regard to human

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volition lies in the fact that it so often appears not to be an additional cause, acting *pari passu* with other causes, but to be a preoperative cause underlying them all. To revert to the hypothetical example just given, the astrologer would probably not say that the rheumatic fever was caused by the damp bed, the rheumatic constitution of the sufferer, failure to take adequate precautions the next morning, *and* the fact that the native's Sun had just reached the square of his Saturn. Rather he would express himself that the square had caused the native to be given a damp bed and to be careless about his health, and that, since his Radix was indicative of illness of that kind, he had developed the fever. That is to say, we generally think of the stellar influence as a sort of prime cause, which marshals all other causes in its service. And, to a considerable degree, this view is correct beyond question. We might almost risk an aphorism that *Other causes subserve the astrological.*

But while granting all this, we must reiterate the view that man retains freedom of choice, although his *action* is, of course, limited by all sorts of considerations, generically denoted in astrological philosophy by Saturn.

Horary Astrology is perhaps more fatalistic in its implications than is that part of the science which deals with the nativity. The horary student does undertake to give a definite answer to a definite question, usually concerning the future, and he generally couches his answer in terms which imply that the affair is predestined to a certain course.

But I deny the infallibility of horary astrology and believe that many mistaken predictions are made just because these figures are treated as if there were no human freedom.

It is true that the study of this branch of the science demonstrates that in a measure our very thoughts are influenced by the planets. Thus, a student tells me that he arranged with his wife that she should think of something, or rather, record what she found herself thinking of, at a definite moment two hours later. He then cast

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a map for that time and wrote down his judgment. When the time came his fellow-experimenter announced that she was thinking of the very matter he had noted down. This, however, interesting though it is in the highest degree, really only demonstrates that our thoughts are subject to psychic influences and that these, in turn, emanate from or are directed by the heavenly bodies and other astrological factors.

Our rational faculties are, of course, entirely immune, in themselves, from stellar effects ; the most that astrological influences can do is to interfere, *via* the bodily and other lower conditions, with their free exercise. A certain amount of training, however, readily frees the higher part of us from such invasions.

We are not called upon to discuss whether human freedom is inhibited by exterior forces other than the astrological.

Nor are we called on to discuss, except astrologically, the abstract problem of self-determination, as set out under para. 2 above, or whether such self-determination *is* really determinism.

If we grant that character determines action and choice, and that character is determined by the nativity, which is determined fortuitously or by some arbitrary fiat, then human freedom vanishes. But we should join issue with respect to two assumptions in this chain of argument : firstly, we do not agree that character *is* determined by the nativity ; secondly, we do not believe that the nativity is fortuitously or arbitrarily allotted to the native.

It is possible to delineate character from the nativity with considerable accuracy up to a certain point. Mannerisms, temperament, outlook, habits, health, may all be more or less completely described by a competent astrologer. When we come to intellectual, moral, and æsthetic powers, all that makes a man conspicuous as a thinker, hero, or artist, we are on much less certain ground ; we seem driven to say : " This is the condition of the tools : what use he will make of them I cannot state."

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Persons born with very similar horoscopes are physically and temperamentally similar, though their blood be far removed from any suspicion of kinship. Yet, however near the horoscopes may be, no one would ever fail to recognise two different persons. Every genius ever born since great cities have existed must have had several astrological doubles, who nevertheless were not geniuses. Geniuses seem, indeed, to require certain characteristic aspects, at any rate if their gifts are to manifest. But many thousands are born with like configurations but no genius.

Coming to the second point, the view has been expressed that the soul is attracted to its nativity because of an essential likeness ; so, from this standpoint, it determines its nativity and it is not the nativity which determines it.

So we may grant that the astrological influences subsist all other environmental forces and so to speak array them both for and against man. Although lowest of the Orders the Psychic is still, because of that very fact, very powerful, and furthermore it is Protean in its shapes and methods. Indeed, Proteus typifies in Greek legend the Psychic Order, which, again, is analogically related to Neptune and Pisces—as the reader may have already perceived.

To these influences the soul reacts, maintaining its essentially exempt character, although the stellar forces may succeed in insinuating themselves almost into its innermost recesses, obtaining, perhaps, a temporary apparent mastery.

The view that the soul is dominated entirely by the planets implies the subjection of the higher to the lower, and like any other form of fatalism, is rejected by the healthy vigour of a normal mind. It is well that astrologers should be very chary of using terms that seem to ally the science with fatalistic conceptions.

On the other hand, those teachings that proclaim the dignity and independence of the soul are quickly found, by those who assimilate them, to be invigorating, vitalising, and fortifying.

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Now it may be argued that these effects do not prove the validity of the views that engender them.

But Astrology, if it teaches nothing else, does teach that *good, and evil likewise, are one and the same in essence on all the planes.*

For example, Mercury square Mars may cause lying, and it may be held that lying is only conventionally an evil. But when the same aspect produces neuralgia your materialistic philosopher will be hard put to it to argue that it is only conventionally painful. Moon conjunction Jupiter may show an opulent home, or a rich and generous heart, or full and abundant sympathies, or large physical stature, or a "big" personality. Under many shapes the same principle. Some configurations tend to affect more especially the body, others run to mental characteristics, others to the emotions.

Hence we are able clearly to see that the obvious and undeniable good of the physical plane corresponds with certain goodnesses of the mental and emotional planes, and one cannot be denied without denying the other.

Hence an invigorating belief is certainly a true one—I do not, of course, mean by invigorating merely stimulating or intoxicating—and if, on the other hand, we find a belief to be debilitating in its effects, we must conclude that it is evil on this and on other planes, including the mental, whereon "evil" is interpreted as "false."

We may therefore assume, without fear of error and with every certainty of immediate benefit, that nothing in Astrology disproves the theory of human freedom of choice. A contrary belief is in every way hostile to the individual and lowers Astrology in the minds of those who hear it expressed and accept it to be the teaching of the science.

Ultimately man may surmount every difficulty that can possibly confront him and achieve every right ambition that he can possibly conceive. It is a question of energising the faculties of the soul—not, perhaps, as difficult a task as most people imagine, provided that the right system of training is adopted and conscientiously followed.

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So long, however, as man believes that he is in any way fated or that there exist forces capable of thwarting his just aspirations he will either stand still, or, more probably, will rapidly retrograde.

It is worth noting that fatalistic astrology is self-defeating, in the sense that its perfection would mean its own undoing. For its goal is to foretell the future completely and exactly—a goal the attainment of which would be entirely valueless, since nothing could be more useless than precise knowledge of an inevitable future. This is entirely different from foretelling the nature of future influences which may be utilised and modified by informed human action. To consult Bradshaw does not imply a belief that one is fated to catch or lose one's train, or even to go to the station! Yet I have seen writings by apparently educated men in which astrology has been ridiculed as the result of equally absurd misreasoning.

PROBLEM VII.—*As to the right uses of Astrology.*

Because the study of Astrology may tend, when it is improperly understood, to promote a fatalistic attitude of mind and so work dire consequences, it is a matter of some interest to consider whether it should be studied by all and sundry, or, like medicine and law, should be in the main entrusted to a special class of people, trained by authorised bodies and licensed by the State or societies appointed or recognised by the State. It is quite certain that there are some, nay many, people to whom it would be almost criminal to introduce Astrology. Only people possessed of considerable moral courage should study their own maps, and only those endowed with more than the average common sense and sense of responsibility should study others'. Every atom of sensationalism should be banished from the attitude of the professional astrologer, but this ideal, I fear, is by no means always realised at present.

The nervous and fearful should leave astrology strictly alone, at any rate until they have overcome their weaknesses.

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On the other hand, I have known some who, in the vehement pursuit of philosophy, have thrown aside Astrology as something not worth while.

I believe this attitude is also hardly judicious, unless, indeed, one has abandoned all desire to achieve anything in the physical world. Waste of time and energy can be saved by timely attention to astrological laws. To rush into danger when the means of prevision are at hand is stupid rather than courageous, and may entail serious consequences to others as well as oneself.

I must indeed confess that the practical side of Astrology appears to me extremely important. The mystic may attain union with God ; the Good, the True, and Beautiful may be perceived and ensued ; all the treasures of Philosophy and Religion may be won and enjoyed to their fullest extent without Astrology, although it is undeniable that the contemplation of the sublilities of our science is extremely elevative in its effects. When, however, we come to practical matters we find that Astrology can give a unique kind of help that nothing else (to my knowledge) can afford. It can push beyond the domain which may be controlled by Prudence and can to a large extent defend us against those occurrences which are usually styled accidental. There is no reason to suppose that as our knowledge grows we shall not be able to use it far more effectually in this way than we now can.

From a practical point of view Astrology should be used at the very beginning of the life, or rather, before conception, for there can be no doubt that its eugenical value would be almost incalculable. Labouring as we now do to ensure that children should be born healthy and into a good environment, we still (even the most enlightened) give no heed to the astrological influences in force at conception or at birth. Yet a little attention to this aspect of Astrology would have far-reaching results and would rapidly raise the moral, physical, and mental condition of the population. In a sense all that we can do after this stage is secondary and only half-effective.

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If there be any so superstitious as to say that by acting in this manner we should thwart *karma* we can only say that *karma* will always find its own way. It would be as reasonable to leave our slums standing so that bad landlords should have appropriate environments for their incarnation, or, indeed, to neglect all efforts to help expectant mothers or to nurture and assist newly born infants, in case we should prevent karmic operation.

Then follows the obvious use of Astrology in education and in the choice of a career, and generally in helping those responsible for the child's training to understand it and its special temperament and difficulties.

In all practical affairs of life, such as marriage, business, the buying of a house and home, and in matters of health and diet, Astrology can be of the utmost value.

It is sometimes said that it should not be used for business, as if, because it is "occult," a special moral law applies to it. This seems irrational. The use of Astrology cannot justify a bad action or spoil a good one, and the guidance of the conscience may safely be relied upon in this as in all other matters to inform us as to the rightness or otherwise of a course of conduct.

It is equally irrational to declare that astrological work should not be charged for. The effect of such a rule would be to deprive us of all astrological help, except such as could be afforded by amateurs. Imagine the effect of such a rule in the medical world! We should be almost completely without doctors. On the contrary, astrological work should be much more handsomely recognised than it at present is, provided it be well done. But in an ideal State the services rendered by the astrologer (and for that matter by the physician also) would be rewarded by gifts that would be rather of the nature of honoraria than the discharge of a definite obligation. The work of an ideal astrologer would, in fact, be difficult to assess and might easily be of more value than could be compensated monetarily. He would, indeed, partake of the priestly function, since his object would be to help; and all true help must be based on spiritual reality.

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Leaving the practical aspects of Astrology (and they are fairly well known and understood) we may now glance at its great value as furnishing direct evidence as to the nature of the great Principles which subsist all manifestation. It is true that these may be understood and made clear without astrology by processes of pure reason, but some of us may be grateful that more material proofs are available in confirmation of philosophy.

The passing of Unity into Duality is plainly shown astrologically, for we find our signs divided into positive and negative, and indeed this fact of polarity is very important in Astrology and its reality cannot be questioned by any student. Trinity appears in the Three Quadruplicities, and the nature of that trinity is clearly shown by a consideration of what these triplicities are and mean. The Four is exemplified in the Quadruplicities or Elements, and the reality of the Sevenfold Manifestation is seen in the Sun, Moon, and Five Planets, Astrology demonstrating unmistakably that Uranus and Neptune are sharply divided from their companions. Again, we have the Twelve Signs, and we may refer in passing to the mystery comprehended in the Exaltations of the planets.

It would indeed be foolish to depreciate the value of Astrology from the point of view of the doctor and the practical psychologist, or to fail to point to its uses for the student of mythology, or to its worth as a source of inspiration in the expressive arts, such as dancing, music, or poetry.

But these seem, to me, inferior altogether to the great value of Astrology as a means by which we can travel from the consideration of phenomena which can be examined scientifically and proved statistically, *directly* to the apprehension of the great spiritual Principles that have just been mentioned—in a word, to the knowledge of the operations of the Gods, and through and beyond these, to the contemplation of THE ONE whose most frequent and least inadequate symbol is the noontide Sun.

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