

CARD - READING

By Baron Leopold Glaser

A PRACTICAL GUIDE

By MINETTA

WITH INTRODUCTION BY "SEPHARIAL"

WITH FOUR PLATES AND NUMEROUS DIAGRAMS

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CHAPTER XVII

THE ANCIENT TAROT

As I have previously mentioned the Tarot cards, it will perhaps be opportune if in this place I make some short study of them. The pack to which I shall refer the reader, and which I shall use in the following exposition, is that containing the new designs executed by Miss Pamela Colman Smith.* They vary somewhat in detail from the oldest forms, but are true to the traditional descriptions in all essential points.

The Tarot pack consists of seventy-eight cards, divided into—

22 Major Keys,
56 Minor Keys.

The cards are called "Keys," or "Arcana," indiscriminately.

The Major Keys are divided into sets of ten, seven, and three, corresponding with the steps of initiation into the Mysteries, and these three stages of ten,

* William Rider and Son, Ltd., Cathedral House, Paternoster Row, London, E.C. Price 6s.

seven, and three steps respectively culminate in two others, one to the right, the other to the left, and are called "the Crown of the Magi" and "Folly" respectively. Thus there are in all twenty-two Major Arcana, and these are represented to have been engraved on golden tablets by Hermes the Thrice Great as the veritable system of true initiation.

The fifty-six Minor Arcana are divided into four suits, like the ordinary pack of playing-cards, to which they correspond; but in addition to the Knave of each suit there is also in the Tarot pack a Knight of each suit, thus making four suits of fourteen cards each, or fifty-six in all.

We may consider first of all—

THE MAJOR ARCANA.

There are many reasons, chiefly graphic ones, for referring the origin of the Major Arcana to the land of Egypt. But philological reasons also exist, and for these the reader is referred to "The Pictorial Key to the Tarot" (pp. 45, 46), by A. E. Waite.*

The various meanings attached to the cards will depend entirely on the view-point of the exponent and the purpose to which one is disposed to apply them; and as in this place I am merely regarding them as a means of divination I shall content myself

* William Rider and Son, Ltd., Cathedral House, Paternoster Row, London, E.C. Price 5s. net.

with a recital of their conventional values. Those who wish to study their inner meanings and the mystical or hermetic interpretations will find the whole matter lucidly set forth in the work already cited.

The values of the twenty-two Major cards are as follows:

1. *The Magician*.—Stands for the power of the will and imagination. It signifies the conquest and use of circumstance by innate faculty. Success by effort.

2. *The High Priestess*.—Stands for initiation. She carries the symbols of Sun and Moon, of Spirit and Matter, celestial and terrestrial forces. On her left hand is the pillar of the Gateway called "Jachin," on her right that called "Boaz." It signifies understanding and mastery, the power of creation, of mental conception. It is an indication of successful plans, new enterprises, projects, and schemes.

3. *The Empress*.—The goddess Isis-Urania is represented as seated on a throne, holding in her right hand the symbol of earthly power—the globe. It signifies perfection of action, fruitfulness, and plenitude. It is an exceedingly fortunate card.

4. *The Emperor*.—He carries the *crux ansata*—the symbol of authority—and is seated on the Cubic Stone. It signifies accomplishment, realization, and is accounted a fortunate card, especially in material things.

5. *The Hierophant*.—He holds the triple cross, and

wears a mitre. It signifies a benefit bestowed, assistance to one's projects, intervention, good counsel.

6. *The Lovers*.— Sometimes called "The Two Paths." This card shows youth in man and maid set between temptation and aspiration, between vice and virtue. It signifies union, combination of forces, alliances and partnerships, contracts, agreements.

7. *The Chariot*.—The Charioteer is represented in a chariot drawn by two Sphinxes, one black and the other white. He carries on his armour two symbols, showing the moon increscent and decrescent. He wears a crown of three pentagrams. It signifies completion, victory, strength, triumph. It is a symbol of success.

8. *Justice*.—She is seated on a throne with the balance and sword in her hands, and has the right priestly ornaments on her vesture. It signifies responsibility, results of past action, change, undoing, and retribution.

9. *The Hermit*.—Veiled Prudence is shown with staff and lamp, carefully treading the uncertain path. It signifies mystery, secrecy, discretion, protection, and sagacity.

10. *The Wheel of Fortune*.—Compounded of the four elements or states of matter, the four letters of the Holy Name, and the four fixed signs of the Zodiac—the Bull, Lion, Eagle, and Man—and surmounted by a Sphinx holding a sword, this card signifies totality of things, perfection, good fortune, success, and abundance.

11. *The Muzzled Lion*.—A woman closes the mouth of a lion by the force of her grace. It signifies power, dignity, authority, bravery.

12. *The Victim*.—A man suspended by one foot from a cross-tree, his head being surrounded by a solar disc. It signifies misrepresentation, undoing, scandal, injustice, sacrifice, endurance. It is the symbol of tribulation followed by victory and a great reward.

13. *Death*.—A skeleton rider upon a white steed, carrying a scythe. On all sides of him are fallen victims. It signifies change, undoing, loss, reversal of fortune, sometimes death. It is an unfortunate card.

14. *Temperance*.—An angel is shown pouring water of life from one urn or ewer to another. It signifies probity, economy, social intercourse, friendship, combination of forces, circulation, good news.

15. *Typhon*.—Baphomet is seated on a cube, to which are chained a she-devil and a satan. Underneath are the fires of hell. It signifies deception, trouble, loss of virtue, lying, sedition, and temptation. The card is presented as a warning.

16. *The Blasted Tower*.—The edifice is seen in flames, and from its capitol a crown is seen to be falling, and also two men, one of whom is crowned. A lightning flash completes the picture of destruction. It signifies catastrophe, accidents, reversal of position, loss and total undoing, defeat, chastisement.

17. *The Star of the Magi*.—A blazing star sur-

rounded by seven lesser stars in a clear vault, beneath which a virgin is pouring fire and water upon the earth from two urns. It denotes peace, attainment, clearness of vision, intelligence, conquest by love and devotion, reward of well-doing, promotion, happiness.

18. *The Moon*.—From a radiant moon a shower of blood-red dew is falling to the earth. Beneath it are figures of a dog, a wolf, and a crab. It signifies the dissipation of psychic force, insanity, sickness, treachery, deception, uncertainty, error, and false friends.

19. *The Sun*.—A naked child on a white charger unfurls a scarlet banner, while above him shines a brilliant sun. It denotes achievement, subjugation of material to intellectual interests, power, victory, understanding, success by the use of the faculties, good fortune, a rising destiny.

20. *The Judgment*.—An angel blowing a trumpet to which is attached the banner of the Red Cross, while from below there rise up man, woman, and child from their graves. It signifies the effort to overcome difficulties, the desire for success, aspiration, duty, response to conscience, exaltation, new enterprises, and a change in the sphere of life and work.

21. *The World*.—A woman swathed in a scarf, holding a distaff or wand in either hand. The four symbols of the universe are set at the four corners of the card, while the woman is encircled by a wreath

of green leaves. It signifies truth, honesty, virtue, advancement, elevation, honours, and success. It is the crown of the Magi, and the wreath is of laurel leaf, symbolic of perfect achievement.

22. *Folly*.—A blind man in fool's dress, carrying a bundle and holding a flower in one hand, followed by a fawning dog. His bundle contains errors and vanities; the flower is that of dalliance. His eyes are blinded by prejudice and ignorance, while his feet lead him to the verge of a precipice. It signifies illusion, folly, false judgment, limitation, restriction, and catastrophe.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE MINOR ARCANA

THE cards in these suits are of the same value as in the ordinary pack; but they are variously called *Wands* or Clubs, *Cups* or Hearts, *Swords* or Spades, and *Deniers* or Diamonds.

The Knights of these suits, not being included in the ordinary pack of fifty-two cards, may be separately described :

Knight of Wands.—A dark young man who is friendly ; change of projects ; a journey ; separation.

Knight of Cups.—A fair friend ; a lover ; a messenger or visitor ; a proposal ; an invitation.

Knight of Swords.—A bad message ; anger, destruction, ruin, strife.

Knight of Pentacles.—An officer ; service, deputation, agency.

The Significators in the Tarot are thus selected :

For *males*, a King signifies a married man, or one of mature years, from thirty-five years and upwards ; a Knight represents those under thirty-five.

For *females*, the Queen denotes such as are married or of thirty years and upwards ; while a Page (Knave) denotes those who are under that age and single.

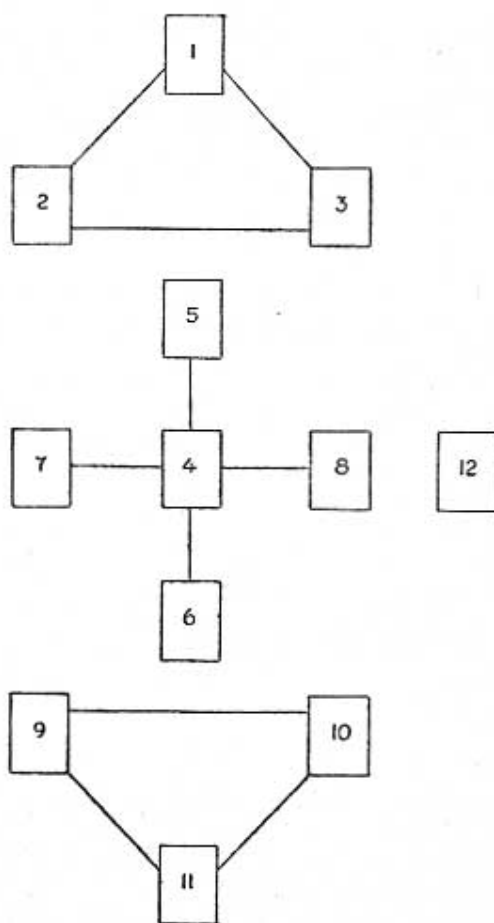
The Significator must be of the same complexion or colouring as the Consultant, as already described in the earlier part of this book. Thus *Swords* are very dark; *Wands* moderately dark; *Cups* moderately fair; *Deniers* very fair.

We may now consider a method of divining by the Tarot cards.

METHOD.

Extract the Significator and place it face upwards on the table.

Having shuffled the pack of seventy-eight cards, hold them face downwards in the left hand, and deal with the right as follows :



Note that the fourth card falls on the Significator, and is to be read in connection with the twelfth card, as signifying such events as will be surely realized.

The cards 1, 2, 3 denote projects, and 9, 10, 11 the results of such projects. Cards 2 and 9 denote obstacles, hindrances, and impediments. Cards 3 and 10 show favouring circumstances. Card 11 is read in connection with card 1, as showing the final issue of the project or matter about which consultation is made.

Now deal with the cards 5, 6, 7, 8, and read 5 as events of the near future, 6 the immediate past, 7 the enemy, 8 the friend. Finally read 4 and 12 together for the events of immediate happening, or that which is crossing the path. The twelfth card is the arbiter or final decision, and shows whether present events are favouring or opposing the projects.

Let us take an example and suppose that the cards have been shuffled and are dealt as shown in the diagram on Tarot cards (Plate IV.).

The Queen of Wands is the Significator (a lady of medium dark colouring being the Consultant).

The twelve top cards fall in the following order and are dealt as explained above: 6 Wands, 7 Wands, Ace of Cups, Page of Swords, 9 Pentacles, 10 Pentacles, the Lovers (VI), the World (XXI), 2 Swords, Hierophant (V), the Ace of Swords, and the Magician.

The Roman numbers in brackets refer to the Major Arcana.

The first three cards are 6 Wands, 7 Wands, Ace of Cups, and they relate to the projects of the Consultant. Here we have thoughts of a gift, some expectations (6 Wands); financial projects which are difficult (7 Wands being on the obstacle side); Ace of Cups, something concerning a house or establishment is fortunate. The projects, therefore, are hindered on account of financial affairs, the lady hopes for assistance in this direction, and there is probably a project connected with a house. I therefore say: You have ideas of buying or taking a house or setting up some establishment. Lack of money stands in the way, but you are hoping to get assistance in this direction.

I now miss card number 4, which lies on the Significator, and proceed to consider cards 5, 6, 7, 8. These are: 9 Pentacles (speedy money), 10 Pentacles (success), the Lovers (Arcanum VI), denoting obstacles or enemies in connection with the affections, the World (Arcanum XXI), indicating honours and accomplishment near at hand. I therefore affirm that the lady will experience some trouble in regard to her affections, she will receive some speedy news concerning money, has just met with some success, and will eventually find her projects to be altogether successful, attainment and honours being in store for her.

I now read cards 9, 10, 11, which are 2 Swords on

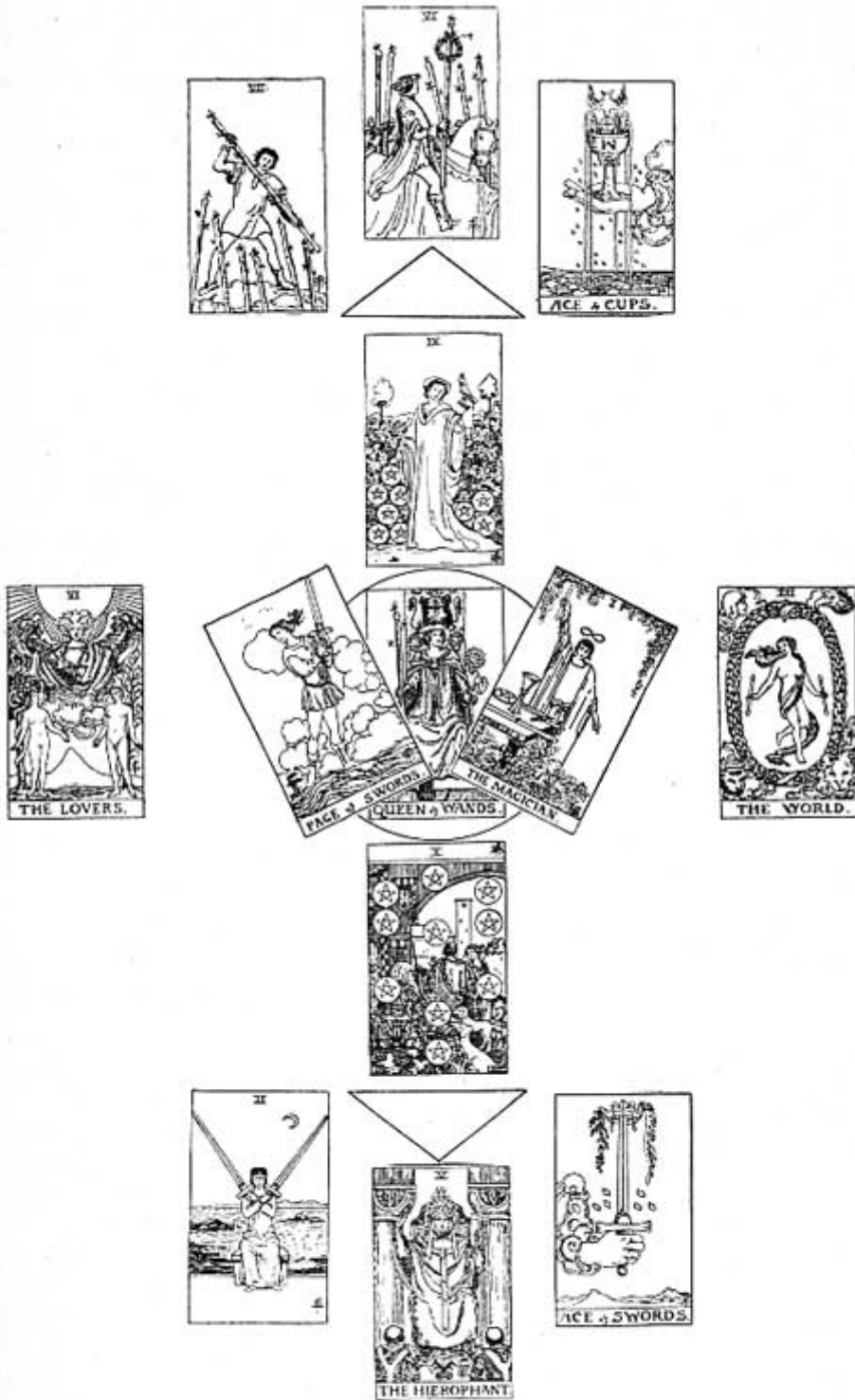


PLATE IV. (To face P. 96.)

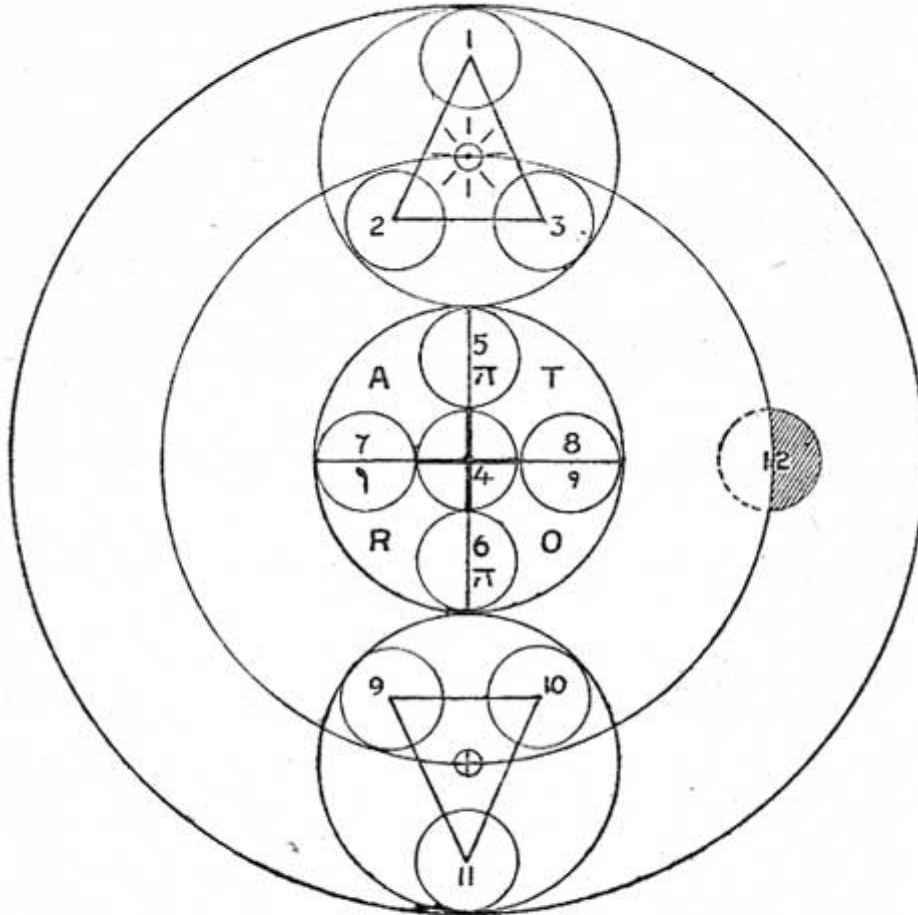
the obstacle side, indicating a defective friend; the Hierophant, which shows "benefit bestowed, assistance to one's projects, intervention, good counsel"; and the Ace of Swords (read in connection with card 1): the wish will be conferred. Hence I say that she will experience some disappointment through the defection of a friend on whom she relied for material aid, but will get all she requires, and good counsel thrown in with it, from a real friend, and will see her project through.

Finally, I read card 12 with card 4—namely, the Magician and the Page of Swords. These show success due to the skill and determination of the Consultant. In effect, therefore, the augury is quite good, but effort will be required. The Page of Swords on the Significator denotes a visit from the physician.

In this way all combinations of cards can be read with considerable precision and clearness, and I have found it a useful application of the Tarot cards, and far easier to grasp than many of the more complex methods in use. The reader will, however, find some that are equally effective in "The Key to the Tarot" already mentioned.

The scheme here presented shows the superior triangle of Ideas, the world of Causes; the lower triangle of Realization, the world of Effects; and the intermediate world of Cognition, represented by five cards, the number of the human, the Man-child, or the Man upon the Cross, related to both the superior

and inferior worlds by consciousness. The original design stands thus :



It will be seen that the diagram employs the symbol of the Sun or Spiritual Eye as synthetic of the World of Ideas, otherwise called "the World of Principles." The symbol of the Earth is used to represent the synthesis of the three-dimensional World of Reality, otherwise known as "the World of Effects." The symbol of the Five Spheres, the four united in the one, is used to express the World

of Causes, otherwise called "the Intermediary" or World of Cognition. The outside sphere having for its orbit a radius of the Sphere of Cognition, impinging upon both the Sun and the Earth, is called "the Sphere of Peregrinations," or the World of Changes, and appears to refer to the destiny as determined by the circumferential influence of the heavens. It may, however, equally denote the soul itself in process of evolution by descent into matter and re-ascent into spirit, denoted by the Earth and Sun respectively. But I leave such speculations to my readers, and conclude my work in the hope and belief that it will be found serviceable.