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Comte de ST. GERMAIN

The Most Holy Trinosophia

[Ms. # 2400, Bibliotheque de Troyes, France. Adapted from Manly P. HALL: *The Most Holy Trinosophia of the Comte de St. Germain* (Philosophical Research Society, 1963)]





SECTION ONE

It is in the retreat of criminals in the dungeons of the Inquisition that your friend writes these lines which are to serve for your instruction. At the thought of the inestimable advantages which this document of friendship will procure for you, the horrors of a long and little deserved captivity seem to be mitigated... It gives me pleasure to think that while surrounded by guards and encumbered by chains, a slave may still be able to raise his friend above the mighty, the monarchs who rule this place of exile.

My dear Philochatus, you are about to penetrate into the sanctuary of the sublime sciences; my hand is about to raise for you the impenetrable veil which hides from the eyes of common men the tabernacle, the sanctuary wherein the Eternal has lodged the secrets of nature, kept for a few that are privileged, the few Elect whom His omnipotence created that they may SEE, and seeing may soar after Him in the vast expanse of His Glory and deflect upon mankind one of the Rays that shine round about His golden Throne.

If your friend's example proves a salutary lesson for you, I shall bless the long years of tribulation which the wicked have made me suffer.

Two stumbling blocks equally dangerous will constantly present themselves to you. One of them would outrage the sacred rights of every individual. It is Misuse of the power which God will have entrusted to you; the other, which would bring ruin upon you, is Indiscretion... Both are born of the same mother, both owe their existence to pride. Human frailty nourishes them; they are blind; their mother leads them. With her aid these two Monsters carry their foul breath even into the hearts of the Lord's Elect. Woe unto him who misuses the gifts of heaven in order to serve his passions. The Almighty Hand that made the elements subject to him, would break him like a fragile reed. An eternity of torments could hardly expiate his crime. The Infernal Spirits would smile with contempt at the tears of one whose menacing voice had so often made them tremble in the bosom of their fiery depths.

It is not for you, Philocratus, that I sketch this dreadful picture. The friend of humanity will never become its persecutor... The precipice, my son, which I fear for you, is Indiscretion, the imperious craving to inspire astonishment and admiration. God leaves men the task of punishing the imprudent minister who permits the eye of the profane to look into the mysterious sanctuary. Oh Philocratus, may my sorrows be ever present in your mind. I, too have known happiness, was showered with the blessings of heaven and surrounded by power such as the human mind cannot conceive. Commanding the genii that guide the world, happy in the happiness that I created, I enjoyed within the bosom of an adored family the felicity which the Eternal accords to His beloved children. One moment destroyed everything. I spoke, and it all vanished like a cloud. O my son follow not in my steps... Let no vain desire to shine before men bring you, too, to disaster... Think of me, your friend, writing to you from this dungeon, my body broken by torture! Remember, Philochatus, that the hand which traces

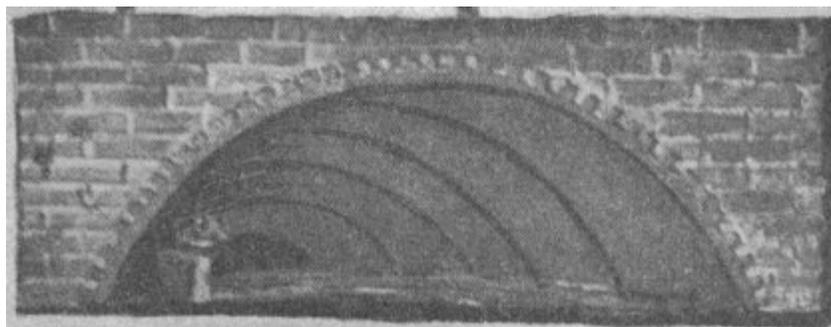
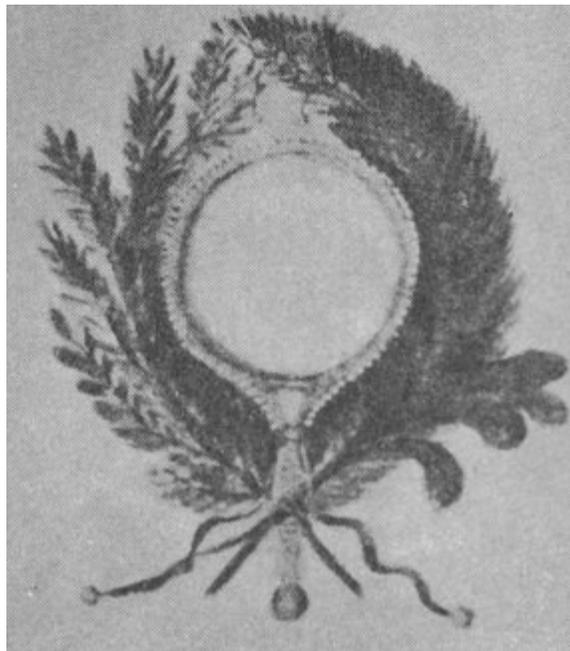
these characters bears the marks of the chains which weight it down. God has punished me, but what have I done to the cruel men that persecute me? What right have they to interrogate the minister of the Eternal? They ask me what are the proofs of my mission. My witnesses are prodigies, and my virtues are my defenders --- a clean life, a pure heart. But what am I saying? Have I still the right to complain? I spoke, and the Lord delivered me, deprived of strength and power, to the furies of greedy fanaticism. The arm which once could overthrow an army can today hardly lift the chains that weight it down.

I wander. I should give thanks to eternal Justice... The avenging God has pardoned His repentant child. An aerial spirit has entered through the walls which separate me from the world; he has shown himself to me resplendent with light and has determined the duration of my captivity. Within two years my sufferings will end, My torturers upon entering my cell will find it empty and, soon purified by the four elements, pure as the genius of fire, I shall resume the glorious station to which Divine goodness has raised me. But how distant as yet is this time! How long two years seem to one who spends them in suffering and humiliation. Not content with making me undergo the most horrible agony, my oppressors, to torture me further have devised still surer, still more revolting means. They have brought infamy on my head, have made my name a thing of disgrace. The children of men recoil in terror when by chance they approach the walls of my prison; they fear lest some deadly vapour escape through the narrow slit that reluctantly admits a ray of light to my cell. That, O Philocratus, is the cruelest of all blows that they could bear down upon me.

I know not whether I shall be able to get this document into your hands... I judge the difficulty I shall have in contriving for it a way out of this place of torture by those I have had in order to write it. Deprived of all help, I myself have composed the agents I needed. The flame of my lamp, some coins, and a few chemical substances overlooked by the scrutinizing eyes of my tormentors have yielded the colors which adorn this fruit of a prisoner's leisure.

Profit by the instructions of you unhappy friend! They are so clear that danger exists for them to fall into hands other than yours... Remember only that all of it is to serve you... an obscure line, an omitted character would prevent your lifting the veil which the hand of the Creator has placed over the Sphinx.

Adieu, Philochatus! Do not mourn me. The clemency of the Eternal equals his justice. At the first mysterious assembly you will see your friend again. I salute you in the name of God. Soon I shall give the kiss of peace to my brother.



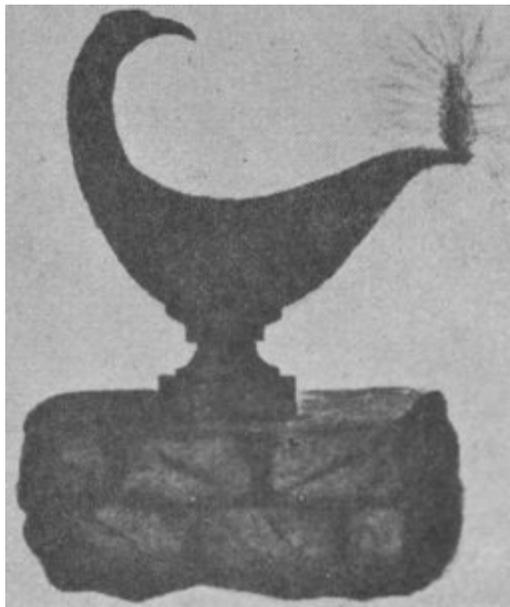
SECTION TWO

It was night. The moon, veiled by dark clouds, cast but an uncertain light on the crags of lava that hemmed in the Solfatara. My head covered with the linen veil, holding in my hands the golden bough, I advanced without fear toward the spot where I had been ordered to pass the night. I was groping over hot sand which I felt give way under my every step. The clouds gathered overhead. Lightning flashed through the night and gave to the flames of the volcano a bloodlike appearance. At last I arrived and found an iron altar where I placed the mysterious bough... I pronounce the formidable words... instantly the earth trembles under my feet, thunder peals... Vesuvius roars in answer to the repeated strokes; its fires join the fires of lightning... The choirs of the genii rise into the air and make the echoes repeat the praises of the Creator... The hallowed bough which I had placed on the triangular altar suddenly is ablaze. A thick smoke envelops me. I cease to see. Wrapped in darkness. I seemed to descend into an abyss. I know not how long I remained in that situation. When I opened my eyes I vainly looked for the objects which had surrounded me a little time ago. The altar, Vesuvius, the country round Naples had vanished from my sight. I was in a cast cavern, alone, far away from the whole world... near by me lay a long, white robe; its loosely woven tissue seemed to me to be of linen. On a granite boulder stood a copper lamp upon a black table covered with Greek words indicating the way I was to follow. I took the lamp, and after having put on the robe I entered a narrow passage the walls of which were covered with black marble... It was three miles long and my steps resounded fearfully under its silent vault. At last I found a door that opened on a flight of steps which I descended. After having walked a long time I seemed to see a wandering light before me. I hid my lamp and fixed my eyes on the object which I beheld. It dissipated, vanishing like a shadow.

Without the reproach of the past, without fear of the future, I went on. The way became increasingly difficult... always confined within galleries composed of black stone blocks... I did not dare to guess at the length of my underground travel. At last, after a long, long march I came to a square chamber. A door in the middle of each of its four sides opened; they were of different colors, and each door was placed at one of the four cardinal points. I entered through the north door which was black; the opposite was red; the door to the east was blue and the one facing it was of dazzling white... In the middle of this chamber was a square mass; on its center shone a crystal star. On the north side was a painting representing a woman naked to the waist; a black drapery fell over her knees and two silver bands adorned her garment. In her hand was a rod which she placed against the forehead of a man facing her across a table which stood on a single support and bore a cup and a lance-head. A sudden flame rose from the ground and seemed to turn toward the man. An inscription explained this picture; another indicated the means I was to employ in order to leave this chamber.

After having contemplated the picture and the star I was about to pass through the red door when, turning on its hinges with terrific noise, it closed before me. I made the same attempt with the door of sky-blue color; it did not close but a sudden noise induced me to turn my head. I saw the star flicker, rise from its place, revolve, then dart rapidly through the opening of the white door. I followed it at once.



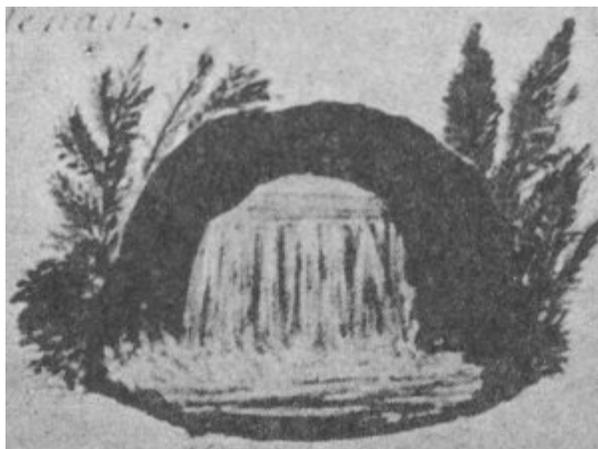


SECTION THREE

A strong wind arose and I had difficulty in keeping my lamp alight. At last I saw a white marble platform to which I mounted by nine steps. Arrived at the last one I beheld a vast expanse of water. To my right I heard the impetuous tumbling of torrents; to my left a cold rain mixed with masses of ail fell near me. I was contemplating this majestic scene when the star which had guided me to the platform and which was slowly swinging overhead, plunged into the gulf. Believing that I was reading the commands of the Most High, I threw myself into the midst of the waves. An invisible hand seized my lamp and placed it on the crown of my head. I breasted the foamy wave and struggle to reach the side opposite the one which I had left. At last I saw on the horizon a feeble gleam and hastened forward. Perspiration streamed down my face and I exhausted myself in vain efforts. The shore which I could scarcely discern seemed to recede to the degree I advanced. My strength was ebbing. I feared not to die, but to die without illumination... I lost courage, and lifting to the vault my tear-streaming ayes I cried out: 'Judica Judicium meum et redime me, propter eloquium tuum vivifica me' (Judge thou my judgment and redeem me, by thy eloquence make me live). I could hardly move my tired limbs and was sinking more and more when near me I saw a boat. A richly dressed man guided it. I noticed that the prow was turned toward the shore which I had left. He drew near. A golden crown shone on his forehead. 'Vade me cum', said he, 'mecum principium in terries, intruam te in via hac qua gradueris' (Come with me, with me, the foremost in the world; I will show thee the way thou must follow). I instantly answered him: 'Bonum est sperare in Domino quam considerare in principibus' (It is better to trust in the Lord than to sit among the mighty). Whereupon the boat sank and the monarch with it. Fresh energy coursed through my veins and I gained the goal of my efforts. I found myself on a shore covered with green sand. A silver wall was before me inlaid with two panels of red marble. Approaching I noticed on one of them a sacred script, the other being engraved with a

line of Greek letters; between the two plates was an iron circle. Two lions, one red and the other black, rested on clouds and appeared to guard a golden crown above them. Also near the circle were to be seen a bow and two arrows. I read several characters written on the flanks of one of the lions. I had barely observed these different emblems when they vanished together with the wall which contained them.





SECTION FOUR

In its place a lake of fire presented itself to my sight. Sulphur and bitumen rolled in flaming waves. I trembled. A loud voice commanded me to pass through the flames. I obeyed, and the flames seemed to have lost their power. For a long time I walked within the conflagration. Arrived at a circular space I contemplated the gorgeous spectacle which by the grace of heaven it was given me to enjoy.

Forty columns of fire ornamented the hall in which found myself. One side of the columns shone with a white and vivid fire, the other side seemed to be in shadow; a blackish flame covered it. In the center of this place stood an altar in the form of a serpent. A greenish gold embellished its diapered scales in which the surrounding flames were reflected. Its eyes looked like rubies. A silvery inscription was placed near it and a rich sword had been driven into the ground near the serpent, on whose head rested a cup... I heard the choir of the celestial spirits and a voice said to me: 'The end of thy labours draws near. Take the sword and smite the serpent'.

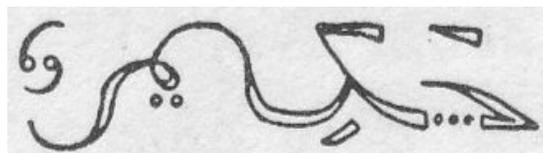
I drew the sword from its sheath and approaching the altar I took the cup with one hand and with the other I struck a terrific blow upon the neck of the serpent. The sword rebounded and the blow re-echoed as if I had struck on a bass bell. No sooner had I obeyed the voice than the altar disappeared and the columns vanished in boundless space. The sound which I had heard when striking the altar repeated itself as if a thousand blows had been struck at the same time. A hand seized me by the hair and lifted me toward the vault which opened to let me through. Shadowy phantoms appeared before me --- Hydras, Lamias and serpents surrounded me. The sight of the sword in my hand scattered the foul throng even as the first rays of light dissipate the frail dream-children of the night. After mounting straight upward through the layers that composed the walls of the globe, I saw again the light of day.



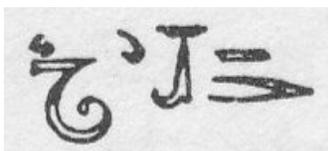


SECTION FIVE

Scarcely had I risen to the surface of the earth, when my unseen guide led me still more swiftly. The velocity with which we sped through space can be compared with naught but itself. In an instant I had lost sight of the plains below. I noticed with astonishment that I had emerged from the bowels of the earth far from the country about Naples. A desert and some triangular masses were the only objects I could see. Soon, in spite of the trials which I had undergone, a new terror assailed me. The earth seemed to me only a vague cloud. I had been lifted to a tremendous height. My invisible guide left me and I descended again. For quite a long time I rolled through space; already the earth spread out before my confused vision... I could estimate how many minutes would pass until I would be crushed on the rocks. But quick as thought my guide darts down beside me, takes hold of me, lifts me up again, and again lets me fall. Finally he raises me with him to an immeasurable distance. I saw globes revolve around me and earths gravitate at my feet. Suddenly the genius who bore me touched my eyes and I swooned. I know not how long I remained in this condition. When I awoke I was lying on a luxurious cushion; the air I breathed was saturated with the fragrance of flowers... A blue robe spangled with golden stars had replaced my linen garment. A yellow altar stood opposite me from which a pure flame ascended having no other substance for its alimentation than the altar itself. Letters in black were engraved at the base of the altar. A lighted torch stood beside it, shining like the sun; hovering above it was a bird with black feet, silvery body, a red head, black wings and a golden neck. It was in constant motion without however using its wings. It could only fly when in the midst of the flames. In its beak was a green branch; its name is



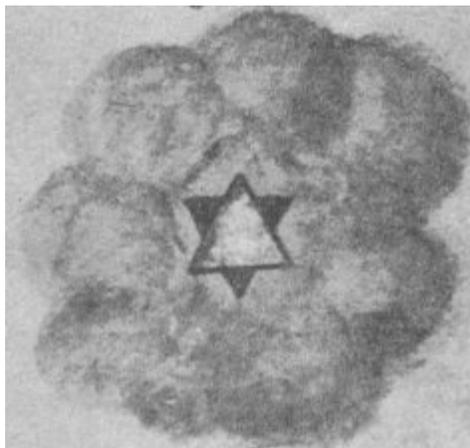
The name of the altar is



Altar, bird and torch are the symbol of all things. Nothing can be done without them. They themselves are all that is good and great. The name of the torch is



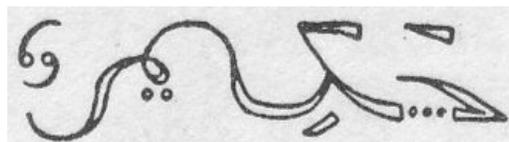
Four inscriptions surrounded these different emblems.



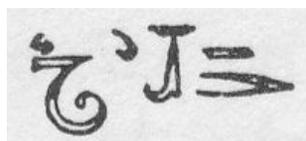


SECTION SIX

I turned aside and noticed an immense palace the base of which rested on clouds. Its mass was composed of marble and its form was triangular. Four tiers of columns were raised one above the other. A golden ball topped the edifice. The first tier of columns was white, the second black, the third green and the last one a brilliant red. I intended, after having admired this work of immortal artists, to return to the palace of the altar, the bird and the torch; I desired to study them further. They had disappeared and with my eyes I was searching for them when the doors of the palace opened. A venerable old man came forth clad in a robe like mine, except that a golden sun shone on his breast. His right hand held a green branch, the other upheld a censer. A wooden chain was about his neck and a pointed tiara like that of Zoroaster covered his white head. He came toward me, a benevolent smile on his lips. 'Adore God', he said to me in Persian. 'It is He who sustained thee in thy trials; His spirit was with thee. My son, thou hast let slip the opportunity. Thou couldst have seized instantly the bird,



the torch



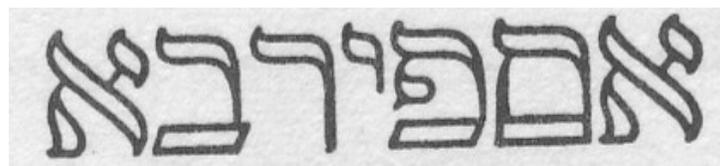
and the altar



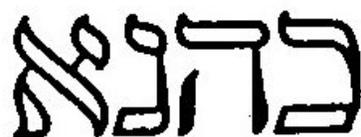
Thou wouldst have become the altar, bird and torch at one and the same time. Now, in order to arrive at the most secret place of the Palace of sublime science, it will be necessary for thee to pass through all by-ways. Come... I must first of all present thee to my brothers'. He took me by the hand and led me into a vast hall.

The eyes of the vulgar cannot conceive the form and richness of the ornaments which

embellished it. Three hundred and sixty columns enclosed it on all sides. Suspended from a golden ring in the ceiling was a cross of red, white, blue and black. In the center of the hall was a triangular altar composed of the four elements; on its three points were placed the bird, the altar and the torch. 'Their names are now changed', said my guide. Here the bird is called



the altar



and the torch



The hall is called



and the triangular altar



Around the altar were placed eighty-one thrones, to each of which one mounted by nine steps of unequal height, the treads being covered with red carpets.

While I was examining the thrones, a trumpet sounded whereupon the doors of the hall

swung on their hinges to let pass seventy-nine persons, all attired like my guide. Slowly they came near and seated themselves on the thrones while my guide stood beside me. An old man, distinguished from his brothers by a purple mantle the hem of which was covered with embroidered characters, arose, and my guide, addressing them in the sacred tongue, said: 'Behold one of our children whom it is the will of God to make as great as his fathers'. 'May the will of the Lord be done', responded the old man, and turning to me he added: 'My son, the time of thy physical trial is now ended... There remain long journeys for thee to undertake. Henceforth thy name shall be

Before thou visit this edifice, each of my eight brothers and myself will present thee with a gift'. He walked up to me and with the kiss of peace gave me a cube of grey earth called

the second gave me three cylinders of black stone called

the third a small piece of rounded crystal called

the fourth a crest of blue plumes named

the fifth added a silver vase which carried the name of

בֵּשֶׁם

the sixth gave me a cluster of grapes known by the sages under the name of

בְּנוֹחַ רֵשֶׁת

the seventh presented me with the figure of a bird similar in its form to

הַזָּהִי

but it had not its brilliant hues; it was of silver. 'It has the same name', he said to me; 'it is for thee to give it the same virtues'. The eighth gave me a small altar, resembling the altar

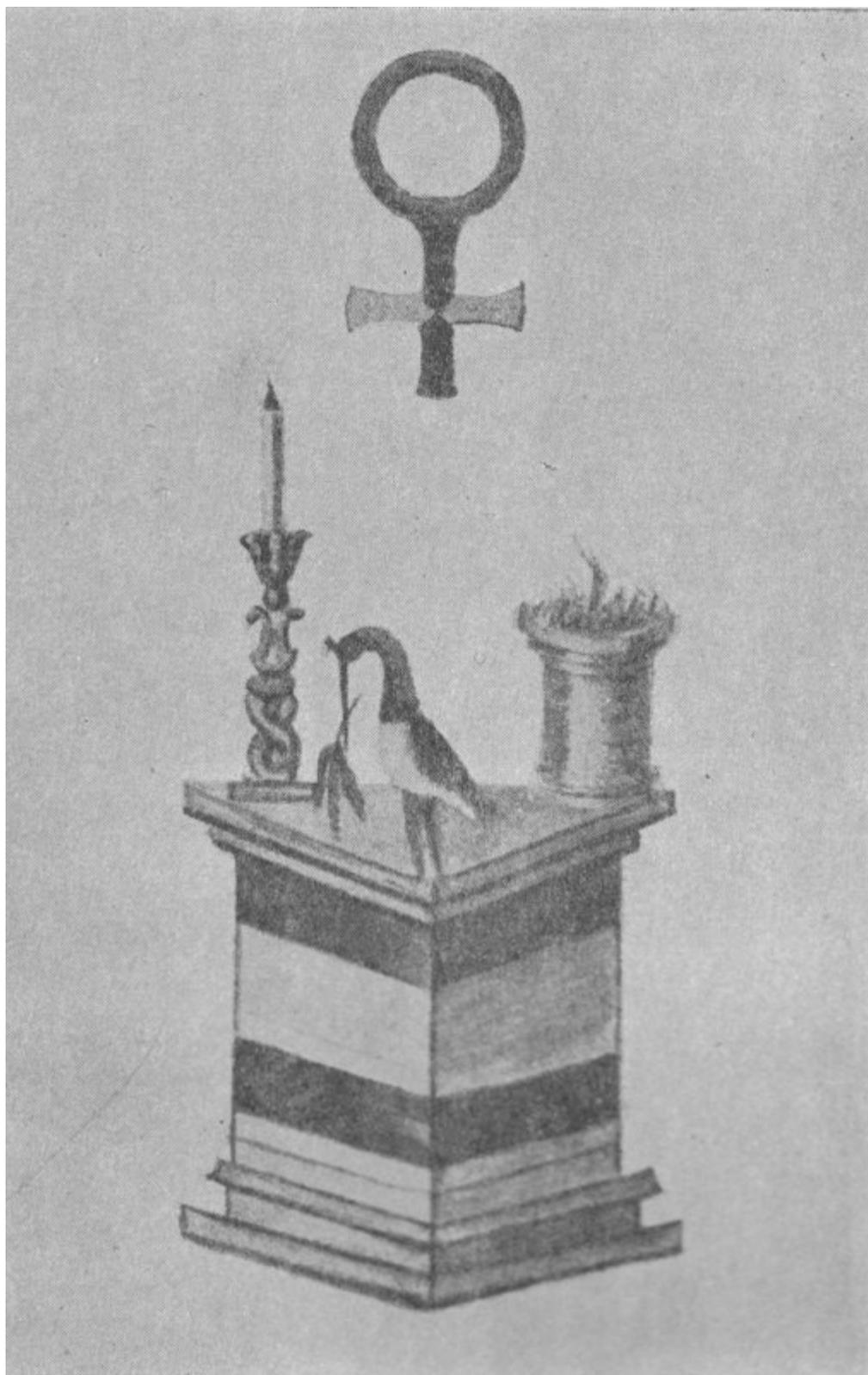
זַבְרִיחַ

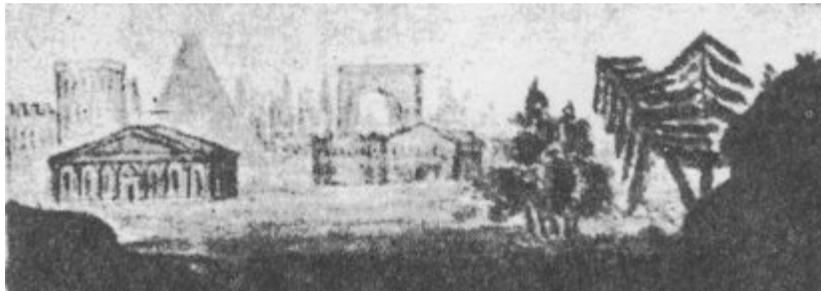
Finally my guide placed in my hand a torch composed, like

פְּרֵה

of brilliant particles; however, it was not lighted. 'It is for thee', he added, 'like those that have preceded it to give it the same virtues'. 'Reflect on these gifts' then said the chief sage. 'They all lead equally to perfection, but none of them is perfect in itself. It is from their admixture that the divine product must come. Know also that all of them are null if thou employ them not in the order in which thou hast received them. The second, which serves for the use of the first, remains merely crude matter without warmth and without usefulness unless in its turn it is aided by that which comes after it. Guard carefully the gifts thou hast received and set out upon thy journeys after thou hast drunk from the cup of life'. Hereupon he handed me in a crystal cup a shining liquor of saffron hue; its taste was delicious and it emitted an exquisite aroma. I was about to hand the cup back to him after moistening my lips in the liquor, when the old man said: 'Drink it all; it will be thy only nourishment during thy journeys'. I obeyed and felt a divine fire course through all the fibers of my body. I was stronger, braver; even my intellectual powers seemed doubled.

I hastened to give the greeting of the wise men to the august assembly I was about to leave, and at my guide's command I entered a long gallery on my right hand.





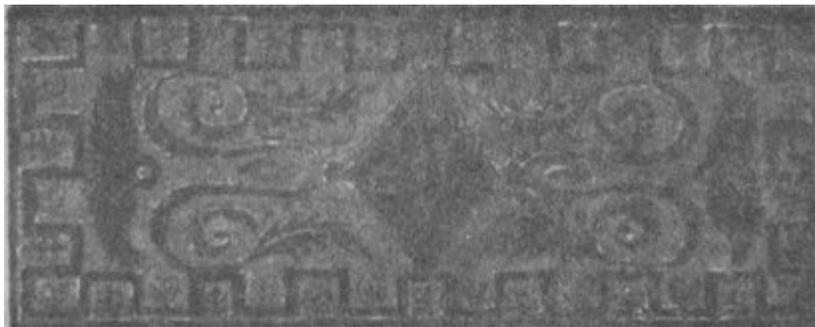
SECTION SEVEN

At the entrance of this gallery stood an oval steel vessel which upon my approach filled with crystal-clear water, purified by fine white sand. The vessel rested on three brass feet. A black panel had engraved on it several characters on the side facing the door. Near the vessel was a linen veil and above the vessel two green marble columns supported a round marble plaque. One saw there, surrounded by two inscriptions, the figure of the sacred seal formed of a cross in four colours, attached to a golden crosspiece which upheld two other concentric circles, the larger one being black, the other red. To one of the columns was attached a silver ax with a blue handle; it is called

קלקנתרם

After reading the inscriptions I went up to the vessel and washed, first my hands, but finished by plunging in bodily. I stayed there three days, and on coming out of the water I saw that it had lost its transparency. Its sand had become grayish and rust-coloured particles stirred in the fluid. I tried to dry myself with the linen veil but fresh drops of water kept taking the place of those the linen absorbed. I gave up trying to dry myself with the veil and, keeping in the shade, I remained motionless for six whole days. At the end of this time the source of these waters was exhausted. I found that I was dry and lighter though my strength seemed to be increased. After walking about for a little while I returned to the vessel. The water which had been in it was gone. In its place was a reddish liquid; the sand was gray and metallic. I again bathed in it, being careful however to remain there only a few moments. When stepping out of it I noticed that I had absorbed part of the liquid. This time I did not try to dry myself with the cloth, for the liquor with which I was saturated was so strong and corrosive that it would have instantly destroyed the fabric. I found myself at the other end of the gallery stretched out on a bed of warm sand where I spent seven days. After this time I returned to the vessel. The water was as it had first appeared. Once more I plunged into it and after having washed myself carefully, came out. This time I had no difficulty in drying myself. Finally, after having purified myself according to the instructions I had received, I prepared to leave this gallery in which I had spent sixteen days.





SECTION EIGHT

I left the gallery by a low and narrow door and entered a circular apartment the paneling of which was made of ash and sandal wood. At the further end of the apartment on a pedestal composed of the trunk of a vine lay a mass of white and shining salt. Above was a picture showing a crowned white lion and a cluster of grapes; both rested on a salver suspended in the air by the smoke of a lighted brazier. To my right and left two doors opened, one giving unto an arid plain. A dry and scorching wind blew over it continually. The other door opened on a lake at the extreme end of which a black marble façade could be seen.

I approached the altar and took into my hands some of the white and shining salt which the sages call



and rubbed my entire body with it. I impregnated myself with it, and after having read the hieroglyphics accompanying the picture I prepared to leave this hall. My first intention was to leave by the door opening upon the plain, but there issued therefrom a hot vapor and I preferred the opposite path. I had the freedom of choice with the condition, however, not to leave the once chosen... I decided to cross the lake; its waters were somber and sleeping. At a certain distance I clearly noticed a bridge called



To reach it I would have been obliged to follow the windings of a shore covered with rocks, and I preferred to cross the lake. I entered the water which was as thick as cement. I noticed that it was useless for me to swim since my feet touched bottom everywhere. I walked in the lake for thirteen days. At last I came to the other shore.





SECTION NINE

The earth was as dark as the water through which I had come. A hardly perceptible slope led me to the base of the building which I had seen from afar. On its long square front several characters were engraved like those used by the priests of ancient Persia. The entire building was made of rough black basalt; the doors, of cypress wood, opened to let me pass. A warm, moist wind arose suddenly and pushed me rapidly to the middle of the chamber at the same time closing the doors upon me... I was in darkness, but gradually my eyes grew accustomed to the meager light which reigned in this enclosure and I was able to discern the surrounding objects. The vaulting, the walls and the floor of the chamber were as black as ebony. Two mural painting arrested by attention; one represented a horse such as our poets describe as having caused the downfall of Troy. From its gaping flanks a human corpse protruded. The other image showed a man long dead. Vile insects bred by putrefaction swarmed over his face and devoured the substance which had given them birth. One of the arms of the dead man, stripped of its flesh, already showed the bones. A man, dressed I red, standing by the corpse, endeavoured to lift it. A star shone on his forehead; his legs were enclosed in black buskins. Above, between and below the picture were three black panels bearing silver characters. I read them and then occupied the time by making the rounds of the hall where I was to spend nine days.

In a dark corner I found a pile of black earth which was fat and saturated with animal particles. I was about to take some of it when a thundering voice, like the sound of a trumpet, forbade me to do so, saying: 'This earth has lain in this hall only eighty-seven years; when thirteen more years have elapsed, thou and the other children of God may use it'. The voice fell silent, but its last ringing sounds continued to vibrate a long time in that temple of silence and death. After remaining in it the time prescribed, I departed by the door opposite to the one through which I had entered. I again saw the light, but it was not so strong around the black hall as to tire my eyes habituated to darkness.

I saw with surprise that in order to reach the other buildings I should have to cross a wider lake than the first one. For eighteen days I walked in the water. I recalled that when crossing

the first lake its waters became darker and thicker as I advanced. The waters of this lake, on the contrary, became ever clearer the closer I approached the shore. My robe, which had in the palace become as black as the walls, seemed to me to be of a grayish hue; gradually it resumed its colors; however, it did not become entirely blue but was nearer to a beautiful green.

After eighteen days I ascended the embankment by means of a white marble platform. The name of the hall is

צחן

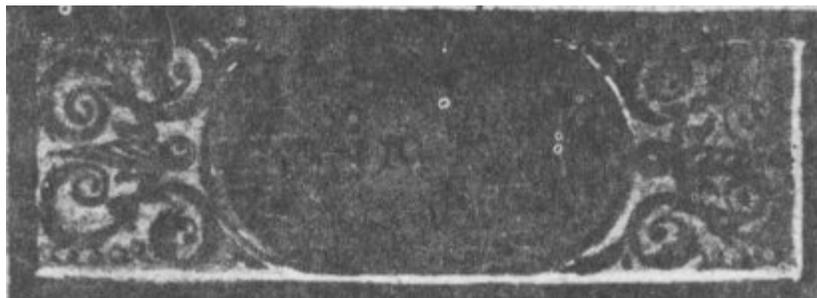
the first lake

צחן ראש

the second

צחן אחריה





SECTION TEN

At some distance from the shore a sumptuous palace raised aloft its alabaster columns; its different parts were joined by porticos of flame color. The entire edifice was of a light and airy architecture. As I approached the portals, I saw that the front was decorated with the figure of a butterfly. The doors stood open... I entered. The entire palace consisted of a single hall... surrounded by a triple colonnade, each rank composed of twenty-seven alabaster columns. In the middle of the building stood the figure of a man issuing from a tomb; his hand, holding up a lance, struck the stone which previously confined him. His loins were girt about with a green garment; gold gleamed from its hem. On his breast was a square tablet bearing several letters. Above this figure hung a golden crown and the figure seemed to lift itself into the air in order to seize the crown. Above it was a yellow stone tablet bearing several emblems which I explained by means of the inscription I saw on the tomb and by the one I had seen on the breast of the man.

I stayed in that hall which is called

الكهنة

the time needful for contemplating all its aisles, and soon I left it with the intention of crossing a vast plain in order to reach a tower that I had perceived at quite some distance.





SECTION ELEVEN

No sooner had I quited the steps of the palace when I saw fluttering in front of me a bird similar to

אםפירכא

this one, however, having two tings like a butterfly's besides its own. A voice issuing from a cloud commanded me to seize and to affix it and I darted forth after it. It did not fly but used its wings in order to run with the greatest rapidity. I pursued it; it fled before me and made me cover the entire plain several times. I followed it without pause. Finally, after pursuing it for nine days, I forced it to enter the tower which I had seen in the distance as I was leaving

אדון

The walls of this edifice were of iron. Thirty-six columns of the same metal supported it. The interior was of the same material, incrusted with shining steel. The foundations of the tower were so constructed as to be twice as deep in the earth as they were high above ground. The bird had barely entered this enclosure when an icy cold seemed to overcome it. In vain ti tried to move its number wings. It still fluttered, trying to flee, but so feebly that I reached it with the greatest ease.

I seized the bird, and driving a steel nail

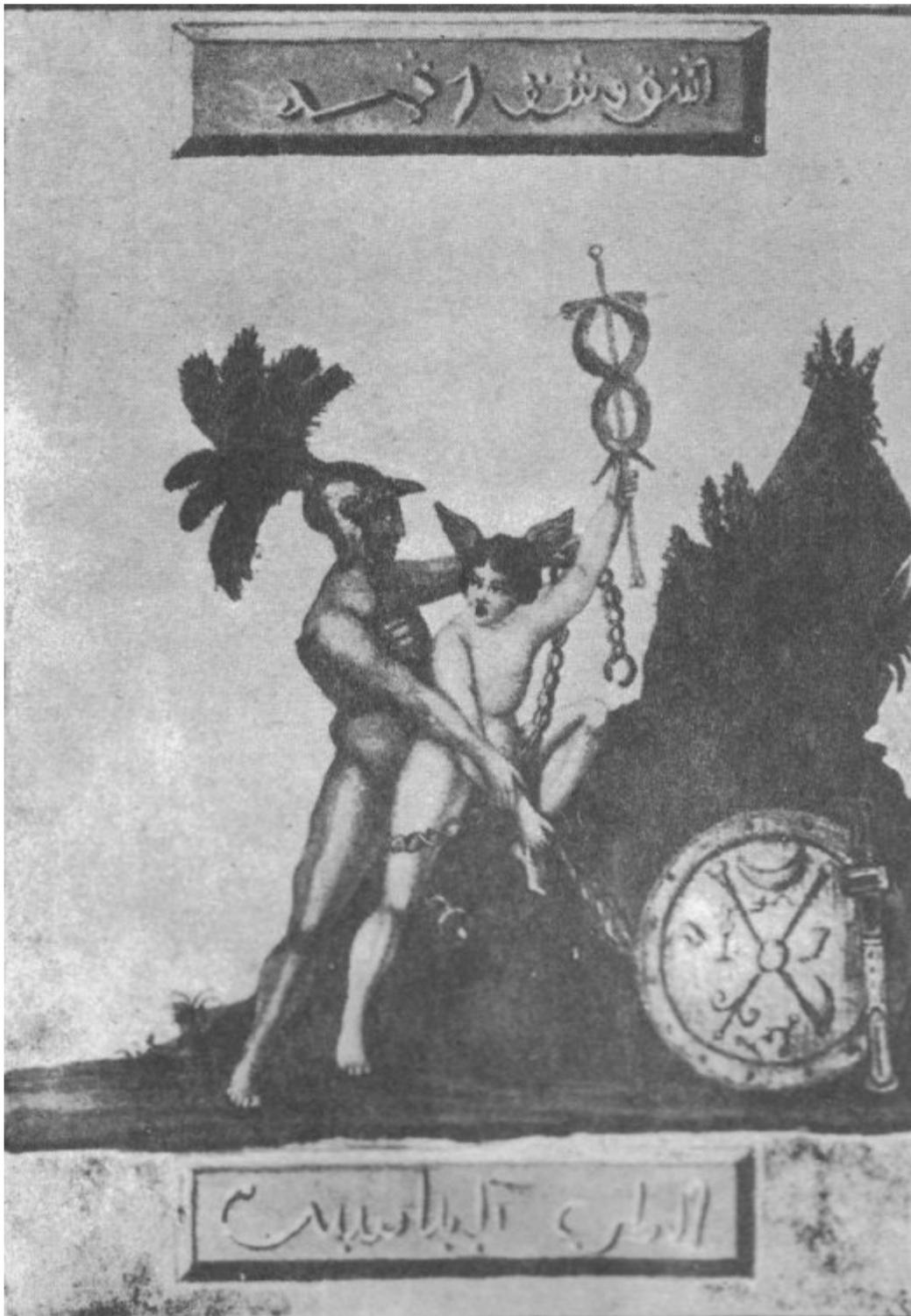
ברכה נחוש

through its wings, I affixed it to the floor of the tower with the aid of a hammer called

טבא

Hardly had I finished when the bird acquired new strength. It did not move, however, but its eyes began to shine like topaz. I was gazing at it when my attention was attracted by a group in the center of the hall. It showed a handsome man in the prime of life. In his hand he held a staff about which two serpents were interlaced. The young man was striving to escape a larger and more powerful man who wore a girdle and a helmet of iron surmounted by waving red plumes. Near him a sword lay on a buckler covered with hieroglyphs. The armed man held in his hand a heavy chain with which he shackled the feet and body of the youth who tried in vain to flee from his terrible adversary. Two red tablets bore certain characters.

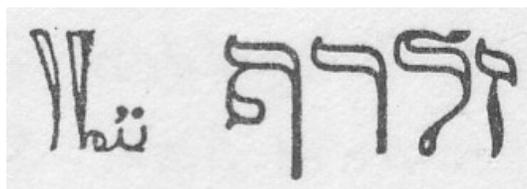
I departed from the tower, and opening a door between two pillars I found myself in a vast hall.





SECTION TWELVE

The hall into which I had just entered was perfectly round; it resembled the interior of a globe composed of hard and transparent matter, as crystal, so that the light entered from all sides. Its lower part rested upon a vast basin filled with red sand. A gentle and equable warmth reigned in this circular enclosure. The sages call this hall



The basin of sand sustaining it is called



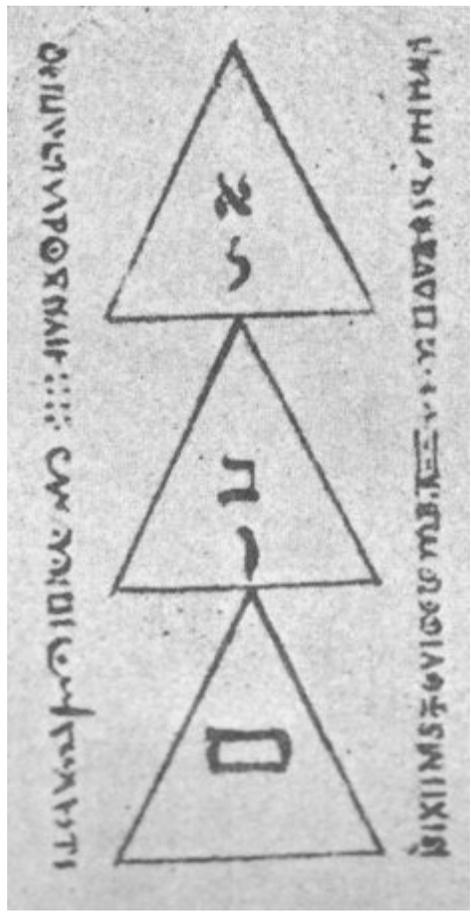
With astonishment I gazed around this crystal globe when a new phenomenon excited my admiration. From the floor of the hall ascended a gentle vapor, moist and saffron yellow. It enveloped me, raised me gently and within thirty-six days bore me up to the upper part of the globe. Thereafter the vapor thinned; little by little I descended and finally found myself again on the floor. My robe had changed its colour. It had been green when I entered the hall, but now changed to a brilliant red. A contrary effect had taken place in the sand on which the globe rested. Gradually its red colour had been transformed into black. After finishing my ascent I remained three more days in that hall.

After that time I left it in order to enter a large place surrounded by colonnades and gilded porticos. In the center of the place stood a bronze pedestal supporting a group representing a large strong man whose majestic head was covered with a crowned helmet. A blue garment protruded through the meshes of his golden armor. In one hand he held a white staff bearing certain characters, the other hand he extended towards a beautiful woman. His companion wore no garment, but a sun radiated from her breast. Her right hand held three globes joined by golden rings; a coronet of red flowers confined her beautiful hair. She sprang into the air and seemed to lift with her the warrior who accompanied her; both were borne up by the clouds about the group. On the capitals of four white marble columns were set four bronze statues; they had wings and appeared to sound trumpets.

I crossed the place, and mounting on a marble platform which was before me, I noticed with astonishment that I had re-entered the Hall of Thrones (the first in which I had found myself when entering the Palace of Wisdom). The triangular altar was still in the center of this hall but the bird, the altar and the torch were joined and formed a single body. Near them was a golden sun. The sword which I had brought from the hall of fire lay a few paces distant on the

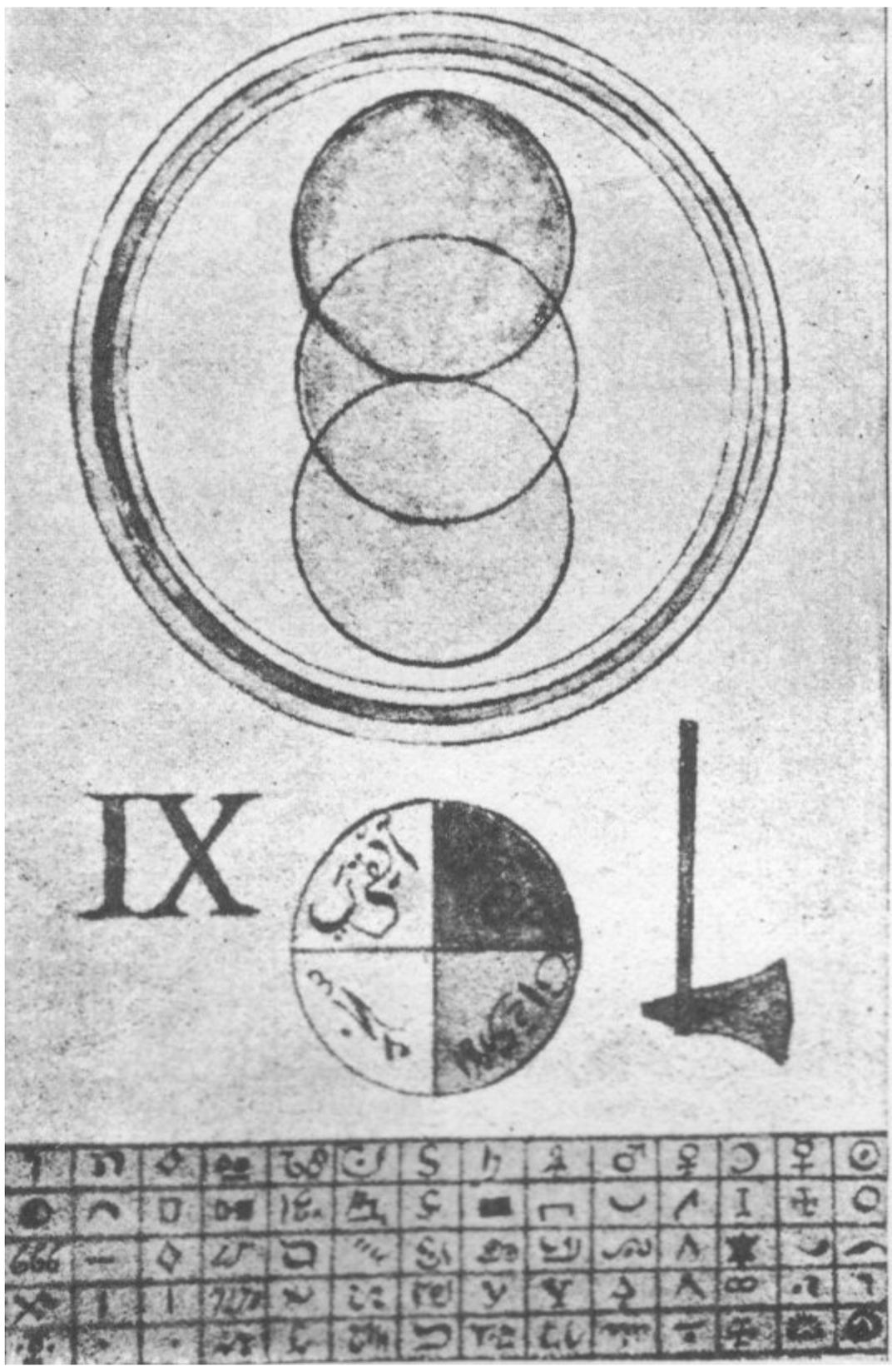
cushion of one of the thrones; I took up the sword and struck the sun, reducing it to dust. I then touched it and each molecule became a golden sun like the one I had broken. At that instant a loud and melodious voice exclaimed, 'The work is perfect!'. Hearing this, the children of light hastened to join me, the doors of immortality were opened to me, and the cloud which covers the eyes of mortals was dissipated. I SAW and the spirits which preside over the elements knew me for their master.













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