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978-1-108-05260-3 - Isis Unveiled: A Master-Key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology: Volume 2: Theology

H.P. Blavatsky

Excerpt

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ISIS UNVEILED.

PART TWO.—RELIGION.

CHAPTER I.

“Yea, the time cometh, that whomsoever killeth you, will think that he doeth God service.”—*Gospel according to John*, xvi. 2.

“Let him be ANATHEMA . . . who shall say that human Sciences ought to be pursued in such a spirit of freedom that one may be allowed to hold as true their assertions even when opposed to revealed doctrines.”—*Œcumenical Council of 1870*.

“GLOUC.—The Church! Where is it?”—*King Henry VI.*, Act i., Sc. 1.

IN the United States of America, sixty thousand (60,428) men are paid salaries to teach the Science of God and His relations to His creatures.

These men contract to impart to us the knowledge which treats of the existence, character, and attributes of our Creator; His laws and government; the doctrines we are to believe and the duties we are to practice. Five thousand (5,141) of them,* with the prospect of 1273 theological students to help them in time, teach this science according to a formula prescribed by the Bishop of Rome, to five million people. Fifty-five thousand (55,287) local and travelling ministers, representing fifteen different denominations, † each contradicting the other upon more or less vital theological questions, instruct, in their respective doctrines, thirty-three million (33,500,000) other persons. Many of these teach according to the canons of the cis-Atlantic branch of an establishment which acknowledges a daughter of the late Duke of Kent as its spiritual

* These figures are copied from the “Religious Statistics of the United States for the year 1871.”

† These are: The *Baptists*, *Congregationalists*, *Episcopalians*, *Northern Methodists*, *Southern Methodists*, *Methodists various*, *Northern Presbyterians*, *Southern Presbyterians*, *United Presbyterians*, *United Brethren*, *Brethren in Christ*, *Reformed Dutch*, *Reformed German*, *Reformed Presbyterians*, *Cumberland Presbyterians*.

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head. There are many hundred thousand Jews; some thousands of Orientals of all kinds; and a very few who belong to the Greek Church. A man at Salt Lake City, with nineteen wives and more than one hundred children and grandchildren, is the supreme, spiritual ruler over ninety thousand people, who believe that he is in frequent intercourse with the gods—for the Mormons are Polytheists as well as Polygamists, and their chief god is represented as living in a planet they call Colob.

The God of the Unitarians is a bachelor; the Deity of the Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists, and the other orthodox Protestant sects a spouseless Father with one Son, who is identical with Himself. In the attempt to outvie each other in the erection of their sixty-two thousand and odd churches, prayer-houses, and meeting-halls, in which to teach these conflicting theological doctrines, \$354, 485, 581 have been spent. The value of the Protestant parsonages alone, in which are sheltered the disputants and their families, is roughly calculated to approximate \$54,115,297. Sixteen million (16,179,387) dollars, are, moreover, contributed every year for current expenses of the Protestant denominations only. One Presbyterian church in New York cost a round million; a Catholic altar alone, one-fourth as much!

We will not mention the multitude of smaller sects, communities, and extravagantly original little heresies in this country which spring up one year to die out the next, like so many spores of fungi after a rainy day. We will not even stop to consider the alleged millions of Spiritualists; for the majority lack the courage to break away from their respective religious denominations. These are the back-door Nicodemuses.

And now, with Pilate, let us inquire, What is truth? Where is it to be searched for amid this multitude of warring sects? Each claims to be based upon divine revelation, and each to have the keys of the celestial gates. Is either in possession of this rare truth? Or, must we exclaim with the Buddhist philosopher, "There is but one truth on earth, and it is unchangeable: and this is—that there is *no* truth on it!"

Though we have no disposition whatever to trench upon the ground that has been so exhaustively gleaned by those learned scholars who have shown that every Christian dogma has its origin in a heathen rite, still the facts which they have exhumed, since the enfranchisement of science, will lose nothing by repetition. Besides, we propose to examine these facts from a different and perhaps rather novel point of view: that of the old philosophies as esoterically understood. These we have barely glanced at in our first volume. We will use them as the standard by which to compare Christian dogmas and miracles with the doctrines and phenomena of ancient magic, and the modern "New Dispensation," as Spiritualism is called by its votaries. Since the materialists deny the phenom-

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"THE CHURCH! WHERE IS IT?"

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ena without investigation, and since the theologians in admitting them offer us the poor choice of two palpable absurdities—the Devil and miracles—we can lose little by applying to the theurgists, and they may actually help us to throw a great light upon a very dark subject.

Professor A. Butlerof, of the Imperial University of St. Petersburg, remarks in a recent pamphlet, entitled *Mediumistic Manifestations*, as follows: "Let the facts (of modern spiritualism) belong if you will to the number of those which were more or less known by the ancients; let them be identical with those which in the dark ages gave importance to the office of Egyptian priest or Roman augur; let them even furnish the basis of the sorcery of our Siberian Shaman; . . . let them be all these, and, if they are *real facts*, it is no business of ours. All the facts in nature *belong to science*, and every addition to the store of science enriches instead of impoverishing her. If humanity has once admitted a truth, and then in the blindness of self-conceit denied it, to return to its realization is a step forward and not backward."

Since the day that modern science gave what may be considered the death-blow to dogmatic theology, by assuming the ground that religion was full of mystery, and mystery is unscientific, the mental state of the educated class has presented a curious aspect. Society seems from that time to have been ever balancing itself upon one leg, on an unseen tight-rope stretched from our visible universe into the invisible one; uncertain whether the end hooked on faith in the latter might not suddenly break, and hurl it into final annihilation.

The great body of nominal Christians may be divided into three unequal portions: materialists, spiritualists, and Christians proper. The materialists and spiritualists make common cause against the hierarchical pretensions of the clergy; who, in retaliation, denounce both with equal acerbity. The materialists are as little in harmony as the Christian sects themselves—the Comtists, or, as they call themselves, the positivists, being despised and hated to the last degree by the schools of thinkers, one of which Maudsley honorably represents in England. Positivism, be it remembered, is that "religion" of the future about whose founder even Huxley has made himself wrathful in his famous lecture, *The Physical Basis of Life*; and Maudsley felt obliged, in behalf of modern science, to express himself thus: "It is no wonder that scientific men should be anxious to disclaim Comte as their law-giver, and to protest against such a king being set up to reign over them. Not conscious of any personal obligation to his writings—conscious how much, in some respects, he has misrepresented the spirit and pretensions of science—they repudiate the allegiance which his enthusiastic disciples would force upon them, and which popular opinion is fast coming to think a natural one. They do

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well in thus making a timely assertion of independence ; for if it be not done soon, it will soon be too late to be done well." * When a materialistic doctrine is repudiated so strongly by two such materialists as Huxley and Maudsley, then we must think indeed that it is absurdity itself.

Among Christians there is nothing but dissension. Their various churches represent every degree of religious belief, from the omnivorous credulity of blind faith to a condescending and high-toned deference to the Deity which thinly masks an evident conviction of their own deific wisdom. All these sects believe more or less in the immortality of the soul. Some admit the intercourse between the two worlds as a fact ; some entertain the opinion as a sentiment ; some positively deny it ; and only a few maintain an attitude of attention and expectancy.

Impatient of restraint, longing for the return of the dark ages, the Romish Church frowns at the *diabolical* manifestations, and indicates what she would do to their champions had she but the power of old. Were it not for the self-evident fact that she herself is placed by science on trial, and that she is handcuffed, she would be ready at a moment's notice to repeat in the nineteenth century the revolting scenes of former days. As to the Protestant clergy, so furious is their common hatred toward spiritualism, that as a secular paper very truly remarks : "They seem willing to undermine the public faith in all the spiritual phenomena of the past, as recorded in the *Bible*, if they can only see the pestilent modern heresy stabbed to the heart." †

Summoning back the long-forgotten memories of the Mosaic laws, the Romish Church claims the monopoly of miracles, and of the right to sit in judgment over them, as being the sole heir thereto by direct inheritance. The *Old Testament*, exiled by Colenso, his predecessors and contemporaries, is recalled from its banishment. The prophets, whom his Holiness the Pope condescends at last to place, if not on the same level with himself, at least at a less respectful distance, ‡ are dusted and cleaned. The memory of all the diabolical abracadabra is evoked anew. The blasphemous *horrors* perpetrated by Paganism, its

* H. Maudsley : "Body and Mind."

† "Boston Sunday Herald," November 5, 1876.

‡ See the self-glorification of the present Pope in the work entitled, "Speeches of Pope Pius IX." by Don Pascale de Francis ; and the famous pamphlet of that name by the Rt. Hon. W. E. Gladstone. The latter quotes from the work named the following sentence pronounced by the Pope : "My wish is that all governments should know that I am speaking in this strain. . . . And I have *the right* to speak, *even more than Nathan the prophet* to David the king, *and a great deal more than St. Ambrose had to Theodosius ! !*"

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PAGAN PHALLISM IN CHRISTIAN SYMBOLS.

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phallic worship, thaumaturgical wonders wrought by Satan, human sacrifices, incantations, witchcraft, magic, and sorcery are recalled and DEMONISM is confronted with *spiritualism* for mutual recognition and identification. Our modern demonologists conveniently overlook a few insignificant details, among which is the undeniable presence of heathen phallism in the Christian symbols. A strong spiritual element of this worship may be easily demonstrated in the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mother of God; and a physical element equally proved in the fetish-worship of the holy *limbs* of Sts. Cosmo and Damiano, at Isernia, near Naples; a successful traffic in which *ex-voto* in wax was carried on by the clergy, annually, until barely a half century ago. *

We find it rather unwise on the part of Catholic writers to pour out their vials of wrath in such sentences as these: "In a multitude of pagodas, the phallic stone, ever and always assuming, like the Grecian *batylos*, the brutally indecent form of the *lingham* . . . the Maha Deva." † Before casting slurs on a symbol whose profound metaphysical meaning is too much for the modern champions of that religion of sensualism *par excellence*, Roman Catholicism, to grasp, they are in duty bound to destroy their oldest churches, and change the form of the cupolas of their own temples. The Mahody of Elephanta, the Round Tower of Bhangulpore, the minarets of Islam—either rounded or pointed—are the originals of the *Campanile* column of San Marco, at Venice, of the Rochester Cathedral, and of the modern Duomo of Milan. All of these steeples, turrets, domes, and Christian temples, are the reproductions of the primitive idea of the *lithos*, the upright phallus. "The western tower of St. Paul's Cathedral, London," says the author of *The Rosicrucians*, "is one of the double *lithoi* placed always in front of every temple, Christian as well as heathen." ‡ Moreover, in all Christian Churches, "particularly in Protestant churches, where they figure most conspicuously, the two tables of stone of the Mosaic Dispensation are placed over the altar, side by side, as a united stone, the tops of which are rounded. . . . The right stone is *masculine*, the left *feminine*." Therefore neither Catholics nor Protestants have a right to talk of the "indecent forms" of heathen monuments so long as they ornament their own churches with the symbols of the *Lingham* and *Yoni*, and even write the laws of their God upon them.

Another detail not redounding very particularly to the honor of the Christian clergy might be recalled in the word Inquisition. The torrents

* See King's "Gnostics," and other works.

† Des Mousseaux: "La Magie au XIXme Siècle," chap. i.

‡ Hargrave Jennings: "The Rosicrucians," pp. 228-241.

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of human blood shed by this *Christian* institution, and the number of its human sacrifices, are unparalleled in the annals of Paganism. Another still more prominent feature in which the clergy surpassed their masters, the "heathen," is *sorcery*. Certainly in no Pagan temple was black magic, in its real and true sense, more practiced than in the Vatican. While strongly supporting exorcism as an important source of revenue, they neglected magic as little as the ancient heathen. It is easy to prove that the *sortilegium*, or sorcery, was widely practiced among the clergy and monks so late as the last century, and is practiced occasionally even now.

Anathematizing every manifestation of occult nature outside the precincts of the Church, the clergy—notwithstanding proofs to the contrary—call it "the work of Satan," "the snares of the fallen angels," who "rush in and out from the bottomless pit," mentioned by John in his kabalistic *Revelation*, "from whence arises a smoke as the smoke of a great furnace." "*Intoxicated by its fumes, around this pit are daily gathering millions of Spiritualists, to worship at "the Abyss of Baal."*"*

More than ever arrogant, stubborn, and despotic, now that she has been nearly upset by modern research, not daring to interfere with the powerful champions of science, the Latin Church revenges herself upon the unpopular phenomena. A despot without a victim, is a word void of sense; a power which neglects to assert itself through outward, well-calculated effects, risks being doubted in the end. The Church has no intention to fall into the oblivion of the ancient myths, or to suffer her authority to be too closely questioned. Hence she pursues, as well as the times permit, her traditional policy. Lamenting the enforced extinction of her ally, the Holy Inquisition, she makes a virtue of necessity. The only victims now within reach are the Spiritists of France. Recent events have shown that the meek spouse of Christ never disdains to retaliate on helpless victims.

Having successfully performed her part of *Deus-ex-Machina* from behind the French Bench, which has not scrupled to disgrace itself for her, the Church of Rome sets to work and shows in the year 1876 what she can do. From the whirling tables and dancing pencils of profane Spiritualism, the Christian world is warned to turn to the divine "miracles" of Lourdes. Meanwhile, the ecclesiastical authorities utilize their time in arranging for other more easy triumphs, calculated to scare the superstitious out of their senses. So, acting under orders, the clergy hurl dramatic, if not very impressive anathemas from every Catholic diocese; threaten right and left; excommunicate and curse. Per-

* Des Mousseaux : "Hauts Phénomènes de la Magie."

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EXAMPLES OF PAPAL VITUPERATION.

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ceiving, finally, that her thunderbolts directed even against crowned heads fall about as harmlessly as the Jupitorean lightnings of Offenbach's *Calchas*, Rome turns about in powerless fury against the victimized *protégés* of the Emperor of Russia—the unfortunate Bulgarians and Serbians. Undisturbed by evidence and sarcasm, un baffled by proof, “the lamb of the Vatican” impartially divides his wrath between the liberals of Italy, “the impious whose breath has the stench of the sepulchre,”* the “schismatic Russian *Sarmates*,” and the heretics and spiritualists, “who worship at the bottomless pit where the great Dragon lies in wait.”

Mr. Gladstone went to the trouble of making a catalogue of what he terms the “flowers of speech,” disseminated through these Papal discourses. Let us cull a few of the chosen terms used by this vicegerent of Him who said that, “whosoever shall say *Thou fool*, shall be in danger of hell-fire.” They are selected from authentic discourses. Those who oppose the Pope are “wolves, Pharisees, thieves, liars, hypocrites, dropsical children of Satan, sons of perdition, of sin, and corruption, satellites of Satan in human flesh, monsters of hell, demons incarnate, stinking corpses, men issued from the pits of hell, traitors and Judases led by the spirit of hell; children of the deepest pits of hell,” etc., etc; the whole piously collected and published by Don Pasquale di Franciscis, whom Gladstone has, with perfect propriety, termed, “an accomplished professor of *flunkeyism* in things spiritual.” †

Since his Holiness the Pope has such a rich vocabulary of invectives at his command, why wonder that the Bishop of Toulouse did not scruple to utter the most undignified falsehoods about the Protestants and Spiritualists of America—people doubly odious to a Catholic—in his address to his diocese: “Nothing,” he remarks, “is more common in an era of unbelief than to see a *false revelation substitute itself for the true one*, and minds neglect the teachings of the Holy Church, to devote themselves to the study of divination and the occult sciences.” With a fine episcopal contempt for statistics, and strangely confounding in his memory the audiences of the revivalists, Moody and Sankey, and the patrons of darkened seance-rooms, he utters the unwarranted and fallacious assertion that “it has been proven that Spiritualism, in the United States, has caused one-sixth of all the cases of suicide and insanity.” He says that it is not possible that the spirits “teach either an exact science, because they are lying demons, or a useful science, because the character

* Don Pasquale di Franciscis: “Discorsi del Sommo Pontefice Pio IX.,” Part i., p. 340.

† “Speeches of Pius IX.,” p. 14. Am. Edition.

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of the word of Satan, like Satan himself, is sterile." He warns his dear *collaborateurs*, that "the writings in favor of Spiritualism are under the ban;" and he advises them to let it be known that "to frequent spiritual circles with the intention of accepting the doctrine, is to apostatize from the Holy Church, and assume the risk of excommunication;" finally, says he, "Publish the fact that the teaching of no spirit should prevail against that of the pulpit of Peter, which is the teaching of the Spirit of God Himself!!"

Aware of the many false teachings attributed by the Roman Church to the Creator, we prefer disbelieving the latter assertion. The famous Catholic theologian, Tillemont, assures us in his work that "all the illustrious Pagans are condemned to the eternal torments of hell, *because* they lived before the time of Jesus, and, therefore, could not be benefited by the redemption!!" He also assures us that the Virgin Mary personally testified to this truth over her own signature in a letter to a saint. Therefore, this is also a revelation—"the Spirit of God Himself" teaching such charitable doctrines.

We have also read with great advantage the topographical descriptions of *Hell and Purgatory* in the celebrated treatise under that name by a Jesuit, the Cardinal Bellarmin. A critic found that the author, who gives the description from a *divine* vision with which he was favored, "appears to possess all the knowledge of a land-measurer" about the secret tracts and formidable divisions of the "bottomless pit." Justin Martyr having actually committed to paper the heretical thought that after all Socrates might not be altogether fixed in hell, his Benedictine editor criticises this too benevolent father very severely. Whoever doubts the Christian charity of the Church of Rome in this direction is invited to peruse the *Censure* of the Sorbonne, on Marmontel's *Belisarius*. The *odium theologicum* blazes in it on the dark sky of orthodox theology like an aurora borealis—the precursor of God's wrath, according to the teaching of certain mediæval divines.

We have attempted in the first part of this work to show, by historical examples, how completely men of science have deserved the stinging sarcasm of the late Professor de Morgan, who remarked of them that "they wear the priest's cast-off garb, dyed to escape detection." The Christian clergy are, in like manner, attired in the cast-off garb of the *heathen* priesthood; acting diametrically in opposition to their *God's* moral precepts, but nevertheless, sitting in judgment over the whole world.

When dying on the cross, the martyred Man of Sorrows forgave his enemies. His last words were a prayer in their behalf. He taught his disciples to curse not, but to bless, even their foes. But the heirs of

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CATHOLIC BLASPHEMY AGAINST HEAVEN.

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St. Peter, the self constituted representatives on earth of that same meek Jesus, unhesitatingly curse whoever resists their despotic will. Besides, was not the "Son" long since crowded by them into the background? They make their obeisance only to the Dowager Mother, for—according to their teaching—again through "the direct Spirit of God," she alone acts as a mediatrix. The Œcumenical Council of 1870 embodied the teaching into a dogma, to disbelieve which is to be doomed forever to the 'bottomless pit.' The work of Don Pasquale di Francisicis is positive on that point; for he tells us that, as the Queen of Heaven owes to the present Pope "the finest gem in her coronet," since he has conferred on her the unexpected honor of becoming suddenly immaculate, there is nothing she cannot obtain from her Son for "her Church."*

Some years ago, certain travellers saw in Barri, Italy, a statue of the Madonna, arrayed in a flounced pink skirt over a swelling *crinoline*! Pious pilgrims who may be anxious to examine the regulation wardrobe of their God's mother may do so by going to Southern Italy, Spain, and Catholic North and South America. The Madonna of Barri must still be there—between two vineyards and a *locanda* (gin-shop). When last seen, a half-successful attempt had been made to clothe the infant Jesus; they had covered his legs with a pair of dirty, scollop-edged pantaloons. An English traveller having presented the "Mediatrix" with a green silk parasol, the grateful population of the *contadini*, accompanied by the village-priest, went in procession to the spot. They managed to stick the sunshade, opened, between the infant's back and the arm of the Virgin which embraced him. The scene and ceremony were both solemn and highly refreshing to our religious feelings. For there stood the image of the goddess in its niche, surrounded with a row of ever-burning lamps, the flames of which, flickering in the breeze, infect God's pure air with an offensive smell of olive oil. The Mother and Son truly represent the two most conspicuous idols of *Monotheistic* Christianity!

For a companion to the idol of the poor *contadini* of Barri, go to the rich city of Rio Janeiro. In the Church of the Duomo del Candelaria, in a long hall running along one side of the church, there might be seen, a few years ago, another Madonna. Along the walls of the hall there is a line of saints, each standing on a contribution-box, which thus forms a fit pedestal. In the centre of this line, under a gorgeously rich canopy of blue silk, is exhibited the Virgin Mary leaning on the arm of Christ. "Our Lady" is arrayed in a very *décolleté* blue satin dress with short

* Vide "Speeches of Pope Pius IX.," by Don Pasq. di Francisicis; Gladstone's pamphlet on this book; Draper's "Conflict between Religion and Science," and others.

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sleeves, showing, to great advantage, a snow-white, exquisitely-moulded neck, shoulders, and arms. The skirt equally of blue satin with an over-skirt of rich lace and gauze puffs, is as short as that of a ballet-dancer; hardly reaching the knee, it exhibits a pair of finely-shaped legs covered with flesh colored silk tights, and blue satin French boots with very high red heels! The blonde hair of this "Mother of God" is arranged in the latest fashion, with a voluminous *chignon* and curls. As she leans on her Son's arm, her face is lovingly turned toward her Only-Begotten, whose dress and attitude are equally worthy of admiration. Christ wears an evening dress-coat, with swallow-tail, black trousers, and low cut white vest; varnished boots, and white kid gloves, *over one of which* sparkles a rich diamond ring, worth many thousands we must suppose—a precious Brazilian jewel. Above this body of a modern Portuguese dandy, is a head with the hair parted in the middle; a sad and solemn face, and eyes whose patient look seems to reflect all the bitterness of this last insult flung at the majesty of the Crucified. *

The Egyptian Isis was also represented as a Virgin Mother by her devotees, and as holding her infant son, Horus, in her arms. In some statues and *basso-relievos*, when she appears alone she is either completely nude or veiled from head to foot. But in the Mysteries, in common with nearly every other goddess, she is entirely veiled from head to foot, as a symbol of a mother's chastity. It would not do us any harm were we to borrow from the ancients some of the poetic sentiment in their religions, and the innate veneration they entertained for *their* symbols.

It is but fair to say at once that the last of the *true* Christians died with the last of the direct apostles. Max Müller forcibly asks: "How can a missionary in such circumstances meet the surprise and questions of his pupils, unless he may point to that seed, † and tell them what Christianity was meant to be? unless he may show that, like all other religions, Christianity too, has had its history; that the Christianity of the nineteenth century is not the Christianity of the middle ages, and that the Christianity of the middle ages was not that of the early Councils; that the Christianity of the early Councils was not that of the Apostles, and that what has been said by Christ, that alone was well said?" ‡

Thus we may infer that the only characteristic difference between modern Christianity and the old heathen faiths is the belief of the former in a personal devil and in hell. "The Aryan nations had no devil," says Max Müller. "Pluto, though of a sombre character, was a very

* The fact is given to us by an eye-witness who has visited the church several times; a Roman Catholic, who felt perfectly *horrified*, as he expressed it.

† Referring to the seed planted by Jesus and his Apostles.

‡ "Chips," vol. i., p. 26, Preface.