



(Continued from the last issue.)

Now to more amusing facts of my career. The first thing I learnt was to travel in the astral body. This seems to have been a natural gift with me; in half-a-dozen experiments I was already master of the "Astral Plane." I could go where I would, see what I would, hear what I would. At that time I did not know of those higher planes to which initiation is the only key.

The next step to going out on the Astral Plane is to get it to return the visit; in other words, evocation of spirits to material appearance. It was just as I started on this that I found Allan Bennett. The occasion was an initiation into the order of which we were both members; but he had not been present since I joined it. After the ceremony I was led trembling before the great man, and of course, could say not a word. However, in the ante-room, an hour later, he came directly to me and began: "So, little brother, you have been meddling with the Goetia." I protested myself unworthy even to pronounce the word! But he had spotted me as a promising colt, and when, using my opportunity, I made myself even as his familiar spirit, he consented to take me as a pupil. Before long we were working together day and night, and a devil of a time we had!

In my chambers in Chancery Lane I fitted up a temple, the walls covered by six vast mirrors, so as to throw back the force of the invocations. There were circle and triangle on the floor, and an altar in the midst of the circle.

I constructed all my magical weapons with my own hands, except the wand, which cannot be made, but must be transmitted. This, a shaft of almond cut with a single blow of the Magick Knife at sunrise on Easter morn, was transmitted to me by Frater Volo Noscere.

The effect of all this was pretty sultry.

I was attacked by a black magician in the very early days—the story is told at length and with perfect accuracy of detail in my tale, "At the Fork of the Roads"; it is too long to cite here. I will only say that a woman was sent by the Black Lodge to get a drop of my blood, that she succeeded, that for ten nights following I was assailed by a succubus which I killed with my hands every time, that with the help of my master I put her out of business by sending a plague of cats to her house, and that when she came to try for more blood I punished her by sending her into my black temple—a tiny closet where I kept a skeleton which I fed on mice and

birds with the idea of creating a material and living demon servant—where she was rent in pieces by the evil things she had invoked. She went to the devil, and her master fled the country.

Not bad, all this, for one's first year of magick? One of our great exploits was the saving of the life of my master. Absolutely unselfish, he would never stir to help himself, and he was a permanent invalid from spasmodic asthma, with complications. Frater V. N. and I determined, in the name and for the sake of the Order, to save him. We evoked the spirit Buer to visible appearance. This was not wholly successful; at that time we wanted things to happen as they did in books—for we were young. But we got the right leg and the foot and ankle of the left as solid as need be; and the head, helmeted, was dimly visible through the incense smoke. In those days we were too pious to use blood, or we might have done better. However, the purpose of the work succeeded. The Master recovered, and is alive to this day—fifteen years later.

Curious how dull good is, how amusing evil! Much keener in memory is one night when Frater V. N. and I were alone together working on the talismans and other necessities for some operation or other, I entirely forget what. We went out to dinner, and before leaving the room, I noticed that the temple door was slightly open. It was locked by a Yale key of which there was but one, which had never left my possession. In those days my chief alarm was that some one would get into my magical affairs. (Nowadays I callously let them in; if they blow their heads off, that's their affair, not mine!) So I sedulously slammed and tested the door, and out we went to dinner. On the stairs was a black cat—not a real cat, either. Back we came from a perfectly temperate meal, found the outer door secure as we had left it, entered, found the temple door wide open, though with no sign of violence, and the altar overthrown, and its furniture tossed in all directions.—And then the fun began!

Round and round the big library tramped the devils all the evening, an endless procession; 316 of them we counted, described, named, and put down in a book. It was the most awesome and ghastly experience I had known.

Strange how they love to open doors! In the East of my big temple in Scotland was a secret shrine, on to which folding doors opened. These I would lock, padlock, seal, nail down, fasten (in short) by every