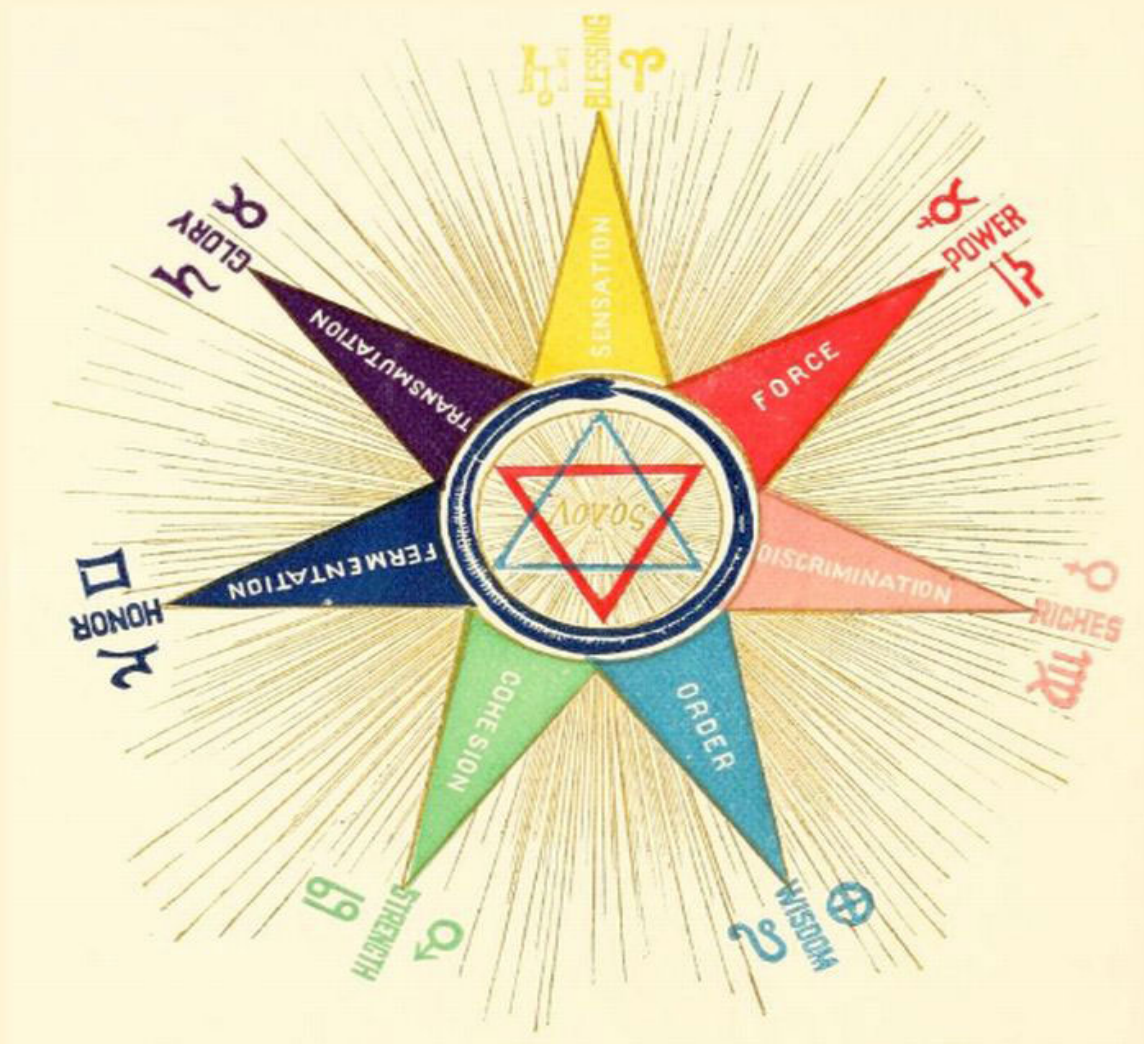


HIRAM E. BUTLER



THE SEVEN CREATIVE PRINCIPLES

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The Seven Creative Principles, H. E. Butler

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CONTENTS:

PREFACE.

FIRST LECTURE. THE IDEA OF GOD.

SECOND LECTURE. FORCE.

THIRD LECTURE. DISCRIMINATION.

FOURTH LECTURE. ORDER.

FIFTH LECTURE. COHESION.

SIXTH LECTURE. FERMENTATION.

SEVENTH LECTURE. TRANSMUTATION.

EIGHTH LECTURE. SENSATION.

NINTH LECTURE. COLORS.

PREFACE.

These Lectures are published at the particular request of the members of the Society for Esoteric Culture, before which body they were delivered during the spring of 1887; an earnest desire having been unanimously expressed to possess the same in permanent form.

They will be found highly suggestive and valuable to thinking people, on account of the original views presented, and the novel and forcible analysis and treatment of the great subject of Creation.

They contain so many central thoughts that are new to the general public, that, in treating the several Principles, some repetition has been found necessary in the different lectures, on account of the mutual dependence and interrelation of the Seven; but not more than was deemed essential to fully impress and enforce the central facts and workings of Nature.

They are not submitted as labored and polished essays, but rather as gushing springs from the great fountain of natural Truth, to refresh the soul, strengthen the mind, and open the eyes of the spiritually inclined to possibilities of attainments not now thought of.

Editor.

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"I will be what I will to be."

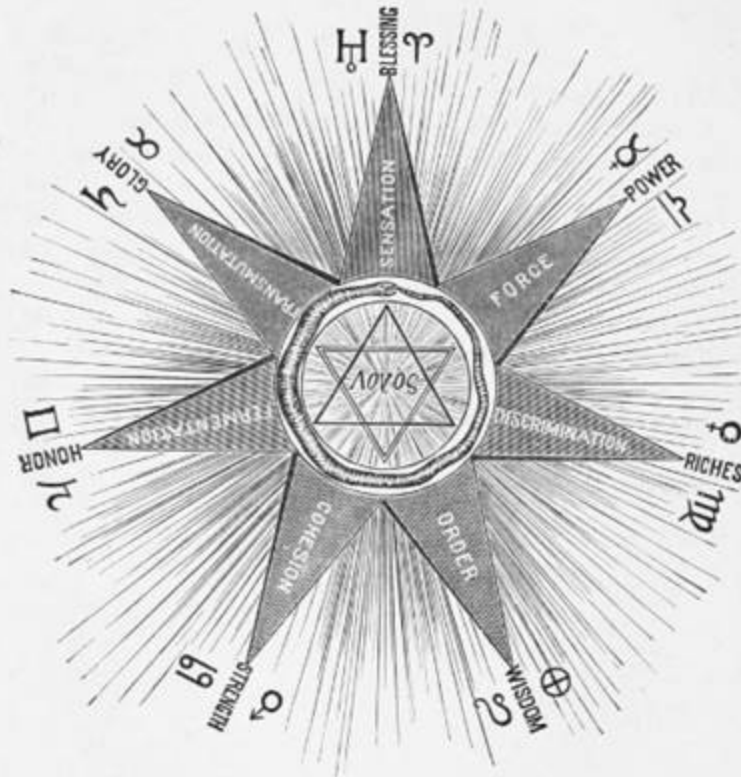


DIAGRAM OF CHART REFERRED TO IN THIS LECTURE.

FIRST LECTURE. THE IDEA OF GOD.

The subject selected for the lecture of this evening is the Idea of God. All religions and all systems of occult science, from the earliest history of the world to the present time, have been characterized entirely by that ideal of God which has been held by the people with whom these systems originated.

The word God in all languages of the world, with perchance the exception of the English, has carried with it the idea of power. In the Hebrew language, for instance, we find, as the expression of the idea, the word El or Elohim, which embodies and expresses the idea of power or almighty creative power; and in all the languages and religions of the world the word selected for the expression of a people's conception of a Supreme Being had for its principal signification the idea of power, — a power that was over and above all, and that was not only power in itself, but the cause and source from whence all manifestations of power emanated.

When scientists search for the prime cause of creative energy, they commence by examining the methods of nature. They observe the growing vegetation, they see the molecules of matter gathered together by the forces of the great mother earth; with the aid of the microscope they trace the formation of these molecules from a stage where atoms are too minute to be discerned, even by the magnifying lens, and arrive at the conclusion, that, from all that is revealed, the process of building matter into form is invariably the same, and that beyond the molecules and atoms that can be discerned there are myriads that are

imperceptible, and whose existence can be affirmed only by the unanswerable argument of analogy and logic. The creative force they have thus far been unable to discover, but the result of a creative force is fully manifest, — an interior power that builds and demonstrates, and from which orderly and harmonious structures arise, emblems of an interior and invisible order and harmony, be its source what it may, yet ever orderly and expressive of method and intelligence in its creative manifestations.

The materialistic scientist has usually arrived at the conclusion that matter has in itself the requisite potency to build orderly structures, beyond which he cannot go, and thus is empty of adequate or satisfactory solution of the great problem of life.

In our effort to present to your minds our ideal of God, we shall endeavor to enable you to conceive of a Supreme Being who has attributes much broader and greater than has heretofore been generally accepted. We do this because we believe that in order to attain to the knowledge of grand truths and states of unfoldment one's conception of a great, all-pervading divine essence must embrace the grandest and most ennobling ideal of which human nature is capable. It is only necessary to look into the history of the world to see how closely the character of the nations has been moulded by their ideals of God. The nations which have believed in one or many gods — gods whose principal endowments were those of the worst attributes of human nature; who were vindictive, jealous, constantly warring with each other or with their subjects — modeled their lives in conformity with their belief, justifying their desire for revenge and domination by force, — the strong oppressing the weak by the power of their own might, — thus honoring and imitating the overbearing, unsympathetic ideal gods of their imagination. Thus we find in all history that according to their ideal of God such has been the character of the people.

Man is of necessity a religious being. The idea of a God has possessed all nations and classes. A people so low down in the scale of unfoldment, who have not had an idea of God — calling it " The Great Spirit," as did the American Indians, or by some other significant name — has never yet been found. Why this should be would be a difficult question to answer, were it not that at the foundation of all being there is a something oftentimes vague and indefinite, but that nevertheless gives a consciousness of an infinite, an over-power, upon which man in his necessities may rely, unto which he may pray or offer sacrifice, propitiate by destroying his enemies, or anger by neglect or scorn of its power.

Scientists tell us that we cannot understand or even think of anything of which we have not some correspondent within ourselves. Thus far we bear them company; but when they state that we can know nothing but that of which the five senses take cognizance, we take issue, for this is far from true. When we speak of cause, which of the material senses perceives or comprehends it? Not one of them can do it! They cannot perceive the commonest principle in nature, which is force! To what does such a materialistic assumption lead? Let us consider. You may feel the weight of the stone that falls upon your hand or person, but do you feel the impelling force? No! Gravity was there before and after the fall of the stone, but you were unconscious of its presence; but when this power takes possession of the inanimate stone and brings it down upon your person, you feel the result of the action, but that which caused the stone to fall you cannot feel. You may see the train of cars whirling along, but that subtle something that has been brought into play by the expansive action of heat, producing the energy which so forcibly propels them, you cannot see: it is beyond the scope of the five senses. Thus you may go over the entire catalogue of moving forms, and you will find that the material senses cannot

take cognizance of anything that belongs to cause. This makes it necessary that we should reason from the facts of our observation and experience, and accept the deductions logically resultant therefrom as the obvious truth. Philosophy began, and has expanded, with the effort to determine what is life; and to-night the same problem is before us for consideration, and we still ask, What is life? We see the manifestations of life in the animal world; we observe it in the vegetable domain; we find that even the earth, the rocks, and every existing thing is filled with life, and that all are constantly undergoing change through the unceasing effort of this something we call life. If we endeavor to look beyond this realm of matter, how much can we see? what can we thus learn of life through the agency of the five senses? We turn and investigate the human body; this is the starting-point of the ancient philosophers. They began with the body, and sought inward and upward for the cause, unlike the modern scientist who, commencing with man, traces down and out until he is lost in the intricacies of nature. Let us in our investigations return to the methods of the ancient philosophers, beginning with the highest attribute of man, — the will.

It is by the power of will that we are enabled to move a hand. If a more powerful will takes control of ours, — psychologize us, as we say, — it can prevent us from moving even that, notwithstanding our own will may desire so to do. We know that we cannot move a muscle without the consent of the will. We talk about the involuntary action of the system, but such action is nothing more or less than the movement by the will in accordance with an established habit of being. Every possible action of our organization may, by the effort of our own will, be suspended; and investigation has proved that there are those who are capable of suspending every action or function of the system, even bringing the involuntary activities under control of the will. Thus habit, being induced through the

operation either of one's own will or of that of the parent organism, may again be dominated by the same agency. Continued practice causes the hand of the mechanic or musician to act in as regular and systematic manner as do any of the apparently involuntary muscles. I have seen men execute the most intricate mechanical work, that which required the utmost nicety and exercise of fine artistic sense, such as could be attained only by long and untiring application, without any apparent thought or attention. Therefore, we see that the will not only establishes but corrects and controls habits, and is the dominant power and ruler of all.

In our search after God it becomes necessary to look within and beyond. We therefore proceed in accordance with this law in our analysis of the highest form of earthly organization; namely, man. When we have ascertained what man actually is, we begin to form a rational, in fact the highest possible, conception of how and from whence he originated. Let us turn our attention to the old cabalistic name Yahveh, which I have chosen to place on this chart (see diagram) as representing the cause of the seven creative principles, which we shall discuss in subsequent lectures. This (pointing to the chart) is the Hebrew word Yahveh. It occurs over sixty-four hundred times in the Hebrew Bible. It is translated, I think, in our version but four times, in three of which it is rendered as Jehovah, and in the fourth as Jah or Yah; and you will notice in the English translation of the Scriptures, that wherever the name of the Deity is used, when derived from Yahveh, it is invariably spelled with capital letters. This word Yahveh, the cabalistic name for GOD, means, " I will be what I will to be." You will see that this expresses supreme ability and indomitable potency. Who among the sons of men dare step forward and say, " I will be what I will to be "? Think of it! not merely implying, but asserting, that the ability to be whatever he wills to be exists in himself. Here we have a

foundation thought, and here I will say, that in this " I will be WHAT I will to be " we find the key to the whole Hebraic Scripture.

Now let us look and see what a subtle power the will is. We will, and we move; or the will may be excited, and we say that we are angry; and when the will is excited to anger, what a storm exists in the body! how the red blood mounts to the face! every nerve is strained to its utmost tension! what an abnormal strength is called into being to resist and overcome obstacles! And thus even the weakest organizations are by this power of the aroused will enabled to assert and maintain their right (or possibly wrong) at all hazard. Thus you see that the will is the absolute monarch, ruling every muscle and nerve, governing every thought; and that every other power in man is subservient to this king.

Let us look still further, and turn our attention to this planet, earth. It is relatively but a little ball revolving around the sun, its great centre of light. It has eight companions, — yes, more; there is a large family of worlds, each revolving around the same centre, each following in its own prescribed orbit. Here we must become conscious that there is a great power that causes these worlds to revolve around their common centre, each travelling in its defined orbit; and then we find that our centre, the sun, is but a planet of a greater and grander system, and is, with its family of worlds, revolving around another sun; and further still, that this third sun and its family of worlds, is travelling around another sun of a still greater and grander system, so great and grand that it is supposed by some that to complete one revolution consumes over twenty-two and a half million of our years. Here the telescopic deductions of man now cease. But do mathematics cease here? We think not. There are mathematical methods by which it can be proven that all these worlds are born from a great central sun; and that as they are farther and farther

removed from it, they become finer and more ethereal, are more fully developed by the same law of transmutation and change that we observe in our planet, the earth; which earth is but an immense electric machine, generating currents of electricity and magnetism which bind it to its sun. The material elements are being transmuted to finer essences of being, and in these worlds born from the central sun we find that they are getting finer and less physically strong in their currents; therefore they are drifting farther away from their centre. If we will investigate our planet, the earth, we shall find that it is becoming finer and less strong physically; that every generation of its inhabitants is becoming more refined than its predecessor. Look back for a few generations, and see what a different character they bore from the people of today; how much weaker are we in muscle, how much stronger in brain; how much greater flights of thought are being taken today than in years long ago. Thus thought and mental power are gaining, while physical energy is decreasing. Thought is the co-worker of the will; it is not the will, but is submissive to its power: we think, and consequently act. But there are powers that can overcome the mandates of our will: for instance, let us take electricity. Suppose you take hold of the poles of a strong electric battery, put your will to work and say you will hold it; let a strong current of electricity be turned on, and where is the will? The arms are drawn up, the muscles are contracted, and the will has no power whatever over them. Here is a power that acts like the will, but is much stronger. It is the solid and grosser materials of the decomposing elements of nature, potent with the Divine will, that are throwing off and emitting a current that is stronger than the will of man, and will dominate it in spite of his greatest exertion; if but the necessary mechanism and material is supplied. From the fundamental idea, then, that these worlds are born, grow, unfold, become more and