

Two Tracts on Cartomancy

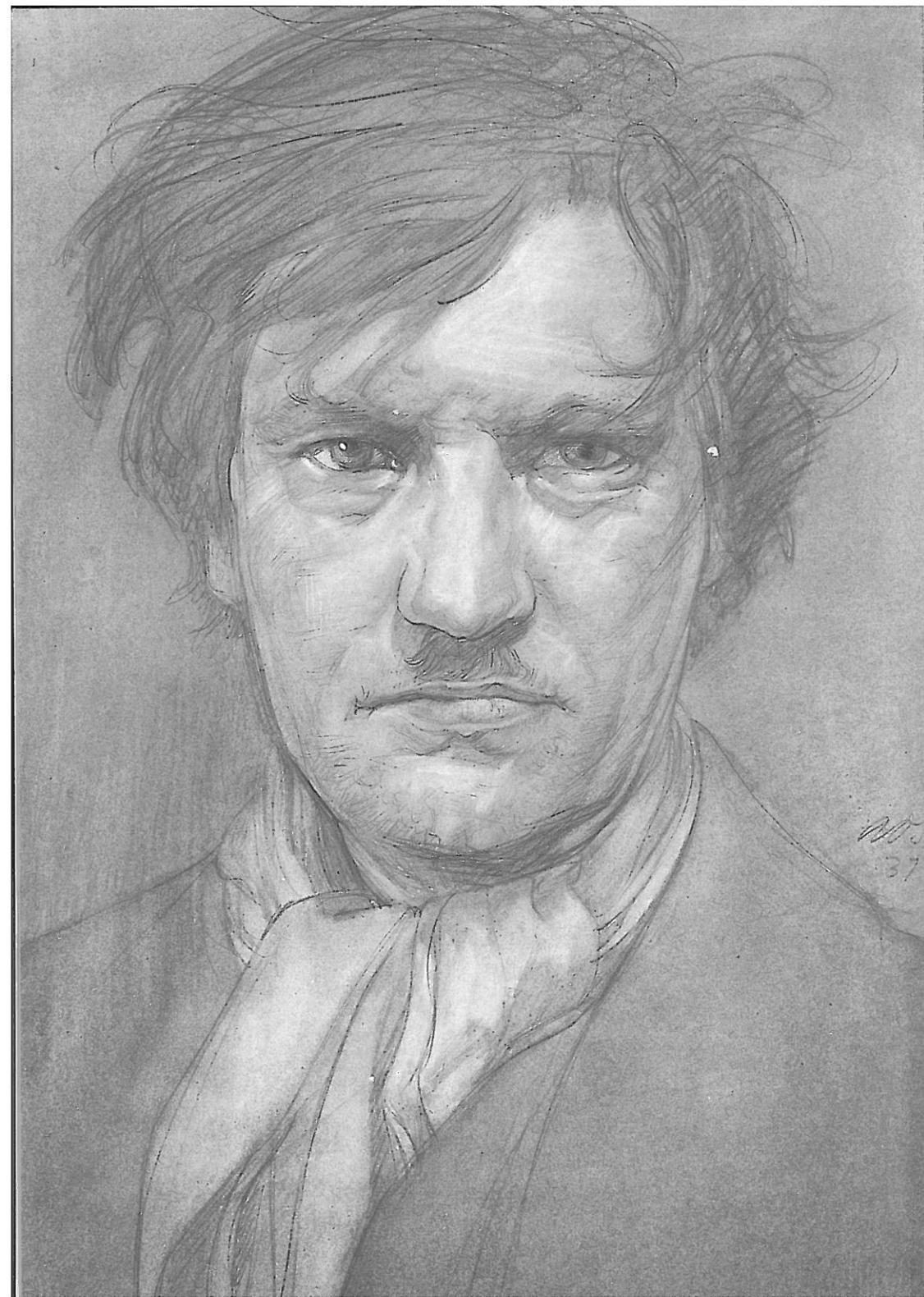
by Austin Osman Spare



With an Introductory Essay by Gavin W. Semple

FULGUR LIMITED

MCMXCVII



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with an introduction by Gavin W. Semple

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To the memory of Alan Pulleyn-Holden

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A FEW LEAVES FROM THE DEVIL'S PICTURE-BOOK

by Gavin W. Semple

Part I Spades and Hearts

For Austin Spare the nineteen-twenties proved to be a decade of biting poverty. The Great War and its social aftermath had all but terminated his burgeoning career, and after the capitulation in 1924 of *The Golden Hind* – the third and last arts periodical on which he had staked his hopes – the artist was reduced to eking out a precarious living from the manufacture of prototype radio sets in one of the two small rooms of his tenement flat at 52, Becket House in Southwark. Without any chance of mounting a West End exhibition, living in virtual creative isolation amongst London's poorest – "a swine with swine", as he told Grace Rogers – Spare devoted his energies to perfecting his technique of automatic drawing, and, through dreaming and magical experiment, made deep incursions into the psychic realms.

From childhood, AOS had retained an abiding fascination for cartomancy, an art which he had not only developed along lines of his own, but had evolved into a unique method of theurgy tailored to the patterns of his sorcery. Although he was generally reticent about the more esoteric aspects of his occult proclivities, in the barren mid-twenties the necessity of keeping body and soul together led Spare to 'go public' with the results of his continued researches, and he began to produce sets of divination cards for sale. His first major show since the War, at the St George's Gallery, Hanover Square, London, in March, 1927, generated sufficient impetus and capital to undertake the publication of *Anathema of Zos*, an intense self-interrogation framed as a castigation of 'the hypocrites', but, written in the months following the collapse of *The Golden Hind*, actually reflecting Spare's bitter frustration and crisis of confidence at that time. Among the works advertised for sale at the back of the book appears the intriguing title 'Arena of Anon (Fortune-Telling Cards)'; of these complete packs do not appear to have survived, but at least seven original cards of the type are extant – hand-drawn, numbered and embellished with daemonic heads in the familiar calligraphic style. Lacking pictorial elaboration and attribution by suit or element, these cards are not simply a reiteration of the Marseilles or gaming deck, but exemplify the system which Spare had developed for magical evocation.



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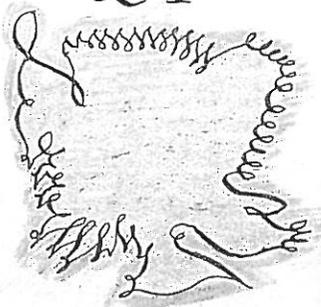
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Just prior to the St George's Gallery show, Spare had observed to journalist friend, Hannen Swaffer: "Prophecy and revelation are as possible today as they ever were. They can operate, if only you induce the conditions. What the conditions are we must discover. The prophets and seers were hermits. Because of circumstances I have lived for months a hermit's life. Poverty has made me live alone. It has been partly choice, partly compulsion. The result has been psychic development." Swaff, as he was known to two generations of tabloid readers, noted: "He talks of the occult as frankly as that, saying, for instance, how, trying to master unseen forces, he has sought to produce rain."¹

Though poor, Spare was not starved of friendship, and those few who were accepted into his small and fiercely guarded domain found him an immensely likeable companion; one such was the young artist and designer Edward Carrick, who made periodic excursions into Southwark to visit Spare and admire his drawings. On this occasion Carrick pressed the electric door-buzzer of number 52 as usual, to be confronted, after several minutes delay, by a sickly and dishevelled Spare who offered, "Ah, it's you - I'm bloody well DYING!" before collapsing back onto the bed from which he had dragged himself. Inside, the two chatted for a while, and Spare brightened. Looking around at the sea of clutter in the small room, Carrick suggested he might help out by tidying a little, a kindness which Spare gratefully accepted. Having first rescued a loaf of bread from its imminent precipitation into the piss-pot, itself cheek-by-jowl with the saucepan, Carrick soon discovered that a number of curiously illustrated cards were strewn amongst the chaos, which he presumed must be some sort of Tarot. "What's this one then?" he asked, holding a card up to the light, "Turn it 'round so I can see," said Spare, "Oh - that brings on thunderstorms..." Carrick was still musing on this a few minutes later, when a sudden and magnificent clap of thunder rattled the ironwork balconies of Becket House, and rain began to lash against the grimy windows.

After eleven years at the Boro', and two in similarly cramped quarters, in 1936 the artist took up residence at 56A Walworth Road, SE1, a conducive abode on one of London's main thoroughfares, with the bustle of market traffic outside. Here he experienced something of a renaissance and began to host large annual exhibitions at home. The flat had been obtained through the kind agency of a friend from his younger days, Ada Millicent Pain, and the new location enabled them to renew their friendship and contact. Spare had at least one interest in common with Miss Pain; a penchant for gambling on the horse races. At that time

¹ *Adventures with Inspiration* by Hannen Swaffer (Morley & Mitchell Kennerly, September 1929).

betting was illegal except at the racecourse Tote, a regulation which gave birth to a shadowy army of illicit bookmakers who plied their trade in public houses, posting their 'runners' at factory gates and on convenient street corners. Inspired by the friendship, Spare lost no time in applying his magical insight to devise a system of card divination that would – in theory – allow the two to conspire in making the proverbial killing. His ideas and instructions flowed in a stream of letters to Miss Pain: "On enquiry – the only 'bookie' so far is about as undesirable as possible – hangs about different pubs and I should have to trail him about. So you had better get the address of the one you know in the London Road. So today I cannot get on... The system shows a very interesting collection I must say – any of them are possible. 'Tankerton' tells me he will win but has forgotten which race & meeting!!" "I do strongly advise you to keep to about three horses at most a day (drop every donkey that you have on your list) and adopt system and only class horses for following..." "I notice that the system was very sound yesterday – very unlucky... Actually it gave 2 winners 'Quashed' and 'Swift Arrow'. I left out the latter because it was a dropped card. I've settled on my system of napping². Simply this – after working the system and seeing what comes up – I just use common sense – and any horse I see over 4-1 given by a good paper and the system – that's the horse to back..."

While Spare and Miss Pain were doing their utmost to break the bookies' hearts, a strange light dawning from Paris was about to break over the heads of an unsuspecting public. The International Surrealist Exhibition was opened by André Breton in London on June 11th, 1936, and 'Surrealism' was abruptly catapulted into vogue, drawing ten thousand visitors flocking to the show in a month. On July 11th Salvador Dali captured his own headlines, lecturing – and nearly suffocating – in a diving-suit and helmet before a rapt audience of 'bright young things' at Burlington Gardens. Amidst all the hyperbole, the Englishman who had singlehandedly invented Surrealism by his application of psychic automatism to art, and published a pioneering thesis in *The Book of Pleasure* – anticipating the First Surrealist Manifesto of 1924 by eleven years – was left *en passant*³. With an exhibition of new works at the Walworth Road studio in October, 1936, Spare set out to redress the balance; the very term 'Surrealism' which Breton had appropriated from Apollinaire was now assumed – with calculated irony – by Spare as his own. He was aided in his effort by Oswald Blakeston, poet, critic, film-maker and enthusiast of the new style, who, in his introduction to Spare's catalogue, hailed the artist as "Surrealist in Surrealism", adding, "How many 'movements' he has originated the near future will

show, even as modern psychology is developing lines suggested by Spare's outstanding mystical writings". The last item in the catalogue, listed as number 176, was "OBEAH CARDS – for forecasting racing results" priced at three guineas for a hand drawn pack, and five shillings for the commercially printed edition. These were presented in an envelope stamped "Surrealist Racing Forecast Cards – Read instructions carefully"; the accompanying instructions gave a popular condensation of his doctrine of Will, Desire, Belief and their relation to subconscious inspiration – which he had set forth in *The Book of Pleasure* in 1913. A further reference to his earlier book was the printed 'spirit face', a revision of the image used in 'Realization of Karma'⁴ with the addition (or elucidation) of a stylised horse's head. The printed cards were numbered from twenty-five to fifty, and it might be asked why Spare did this; a likely answer is so that the actual race numbers carried by the runners should not suggest an order at the finishing line. The card numbers would be divided randomly amongst the list of horses, and the selection made from these, so avoiding any preconceived ideas about the result. Starting from number twenty-five would therefore make the cards practical for even large races such as the Grand National or Derby.

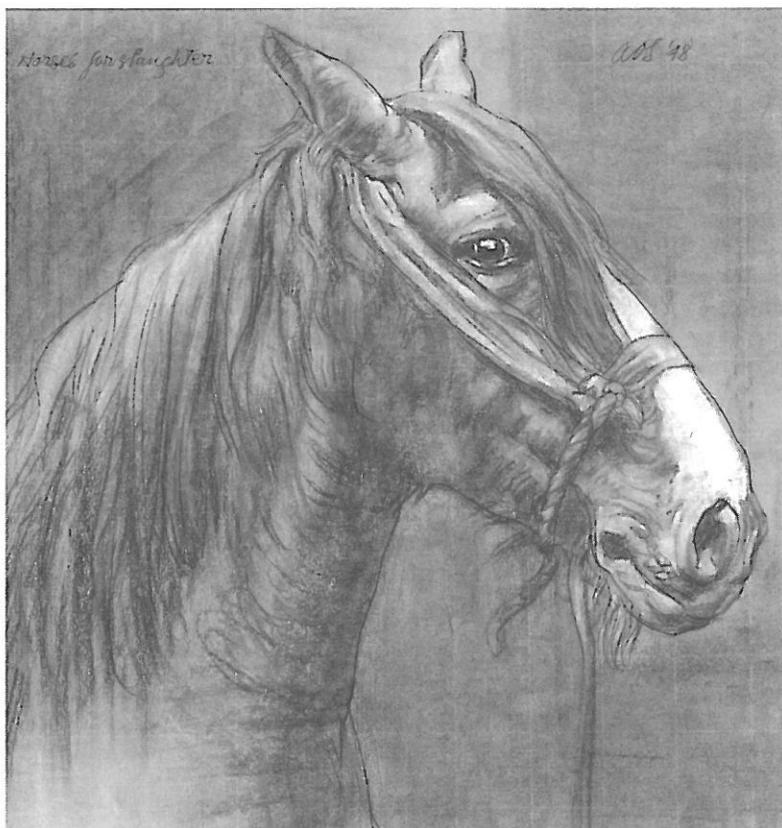
At Christmas and on her birthday Ada Pain received affectionate cards from "Your Surrealist – Austin O. Spare". After his Autumn show he had been left with a number of printed card packs on his hands, so, the following March, journalist friend Dennis Bardens attempted to muster sales by inserting an advert in the weekly advertisement paper *The Exchange & Mart*⁵. In the 'Miscellaneous' section, at the head of two columns of adverts for racing tips ("A regular income of £10 to £50" etc. etc.) appeared a box headed "UNLUCKY AT GAMBLING?" and offering the prospective punter a chance to "conduct an interesting and perhaps profitable experiment with luck" using the cards "designed by a famous mystic artist and author", price five shillings, with a money back guarantee in case of dissatisfaction. Packs were sold to Spare's drinking pals – to the displeasure of the Elephant and Castle bookies who feared for their own profits – but there were other takers, and some cards even travelled as far as the United States.

² 'Nap' – a racing tip that professes to be a certainty.

³ Although in fact automatic drawing only flourished amongst the Paris group for a few months of 1920, after which emphasis shifted to automatic writing.

⁴ *The Book of Pleasure*, page 42.

⁵ Issues from March 25th to April 15th, 1937.



The Walworth Road flat was destroyed in the Blitz of 10-11th May 1941, and Spare only narrowly escaped the blast, moving between a number of temporary addresses before eventually installing himself in the basement of Miss Pain's home at 5 Wynne Road, SW9, in May of 1943. After the War he began to exhibit again, and, following the success of the Archer Gallery show in 1947, held his first pub show at the Temple Bar, Walworth Road, in October 1949. Here, the catalogue included three portraits of horses, the proceeds from which Spare donated to the Dumb Friends League, noting "Horses are now worth more dead than alive". One of the show's admiring visitors was Michael Hall,

editor of *The London Mystery Magazine*, a new journal devoted to thriller and ghost stories. Hall lost no time in inviting AOS to contribute illustrations, and numerous vignettes appeared during the magazine's first year⁶. The fifth issue carried an article by Hannen Swaffer which introduced readers to the life and work of the weird artist, and, aided and abetted by Kenneth Grant, Spare attempted to introduce articles of his own into the magazine. Much wrangling ensued over these texts, which were passed back and forth, rejected and rewritten, while Spare grew increasingly impatient. The draft of 'Mind to Mind – and How' published here was edited and typed from manuscript by Frank Letchford in March 1951, and on the 16th Spare wrote to his friend; "I agree with all your corrections – so please make them when you retype... The Editor hates any criticism of articles that appear in 'The Mystery Mag.' – otherwise I would have carved up the preceding articles – so I've had to keep mine as a sequence – and presume people know what I'm talking about. I've added an odd sentence to help..." Discussions between Spare and Michael Hall were usually held in crowded, rowdy bars, shouting above the hubbub, and in these circumstances the artist, being slightly hard of hearing, was wont to misconstrue the editor's remarks. Confusions proliferated until, finally, Spare withdrew the article, and made no further contributions to the magazine. After his death in 1956 an unfinished design for two fortune-telling cards, which was to have accompanied the magazine text, came into the hands of a collector. Their attributions seem to epitomize the close bond between AOS and the cards, from his boyhood until the very end of his days.

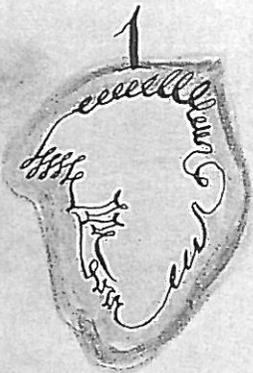
When Miss Pain died in 1968 the old house at Wynne Road was left derelict, until finally the row was pulled down to make way for a block of council flats. Publisher and bibliophile, the late Ian Kenyur-Hodgkins, visited the site during demolition, when the roof had already gone, and noticed a few of Spare's hand-drawn cards scattered here and there about the floor. He did not retrieve them, and they were left amongst the remains of Spare's last home, torn and mouldering, like leaves turned only by the hands of the wind⁷.

⁶ *The London Mystery Magazine* Vol. 1, Nos. 1, 5, 6, 7, & 12 (1950-1)

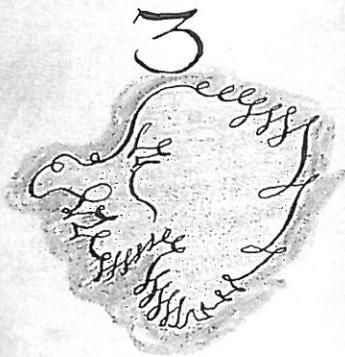
⁷ This detail courtesy of Dr William Wallace in correspondence 20th March, 1997.



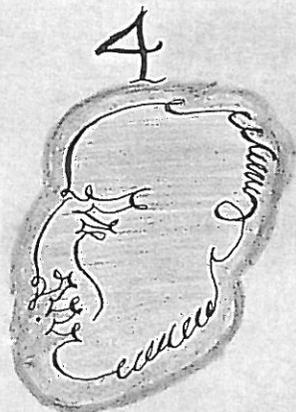
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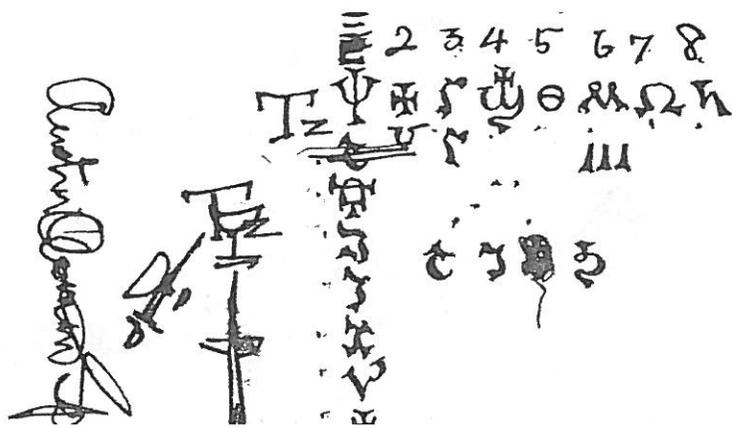
Part II Diamonds and Clubs

'Mind to Mind – and How' offers a bridge between the 'lowest denominator' of magic – fortune-telling – and the more recondite aspects of applied sorcery, and in addition gives insight into the methods by which Spare gained his flair for both. As a child, he was introduced to the art of cartomancy by a friend of the family, an elderly lady who, he claimed, not only convinced him of the reality of her clairvoyant powers, but also taught him how to tell fortunes by 'reading the cards'⁸. The old seeress' skill nurtured in Spare a fascination for the magic of the cards which remained throughout his life, and formed a basis for the methods by which he accomplished much of his craft. Over fifty years later he recalled, "She was so accurate and so detailed in her forecast of future events that everybody was very impressed with her... She told me all the major events of my life. When I've told a fortune, I have always wanted to go to sleep for about four hours. The old lady could do hundreds without getting tired."⁹

With his predilection for obscure and occult knowledge, the young artist progressed from basic divination by playing-cards to constructing packs for specific magical purposes. Several authorities agree that his continued experiments with the cards is indicated by comments in an enigmatic letter to Crowley, dated (incongruously) 31st April 1909. Spare refers to one of the requirements for beginning his probationary year in the *Argentum Astrum*: "I cannot afford the Robe (have nothing) and it's kind of you to pay off on the work: Do you order it or I?", then continues with a guarded discussion of the magical project in which he was engaged: "About that other matter – to be certain – we must wait till we meet... Had a try today... all too chaotic though. So tomorrow I make a special [here AOS has drawn a sketch resembling a stack of cards] – anyway there will be no doubt when we meet..." Crowley's usual method of assessing students' psychic abilities was to write the name of some entity or power on a card, which he concealed while the subject investigated astrally the nature of the summoned force. When successful, the pupil's vision would accord with the name on the card, which was then shown to him or her. It seems likely that he would have tested Spare in just this manner. During this

⁸ Identified by Kenneth Grant as 'Witch Paterson'. See *Images & Oracles of Austin Osman Spare* (Frederick Muller, 1975).

⁹ See 'The Mystery of an Artist' in *The London Mystery Magazine*, No. 5, August-September, 1950. Spare also spoke of his mentor to the surrealist and occultist Ithell Colquhoun in 1955.



period another member of the Crowley clique, the Hon. Everard Feilding, set a similar challenge to which Spare responded successfully, using sigils drawn on cards¹⁰. While Crowley was grooming the young artist for entry into his newly-founded magical Order, the Argentum Astrum, Spare was already engaged in gathering the elements which he needed in order to formulate his own method of theurgy and its metaphysical underpinning, the doctrine of the Kiā. In July of 1909, Spare was planning his masterwork *The Book of Pleasure*, which by the following Spring he conceived as a series of thirty-two pictorial allegories conveying the 'Psychology of Ecstasy' by magical art. This numeration, following his contact with Crowley, and with the work of Eliphas Levi and MacGregor Mathers, could have been modelled after the Sephiroth and Paths of the Qabalistic Tree of Life. It was Levi who first connected the twenty-two Tarot Major Arcana with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, thereby unifying the pictorial and letter arcana, and this attribution was taught in Mathers' Order of the Golden Dawn, and continued by Crowley¹¹. Spare had already demonstrated his command of pictorial allegory in the *Earth Inferno* of 1904, and carried this approach into social critique with *A Book of Satyrs*; a natural step for the artist would be to design his own Tarot, and this revived Qabalistic pack offered a viable template. However, Spare was not about to swallow anyone else's gnosis wholesale – the challenge for him was to formulate a symbolic arcanum which would elucidate the most abstract principles of magic in terms uniquely his own.

It appears that at this time Spare's familiarity with the playing cards provided a vital medium for the evolution of his concept of the 'Sacred Alphabet', and the techniques of sigil sorcery. An early influence on his youthful mysticism had been Madame Blavatsky's Theosophy, reflected by the appearance of terms such as 'Ikkah' and 'Sikah' in the *Earth Inferno* of 1904¹². However, by the time of writing *The Book of Pleasure* he had acquainted himself with the classical works on ceremonial magic, such as *The Goetia*, *The Greater Key of Solomon*, *Grimorium Verum* and the *Enchiridion*, and their magical seals supplied a key inspiration for the cryptic letter-forms and devices of *The Book of Pleasure*¹³. One hitherto unacknowledged influence was Cornelius Agrippa, whom Spare virtually paraphrases in his writings on sigils. Agrippa's *De Occulta Philosophia* suggests the construction of magical sigils from Greek, Latin and Arabic letters, and advises the formation of a 'sacred alphabet', using the Hebrew as a model. He asserts that: "There are, therefore, two and twenty letters, which are the foundation of the world, and of creatures that are, and are named in it... He, therefore, that would find them out, must by each joining together of the letters so long examine them, until the voice of God is manifest, and the framing of the most sacred letters be opened and discovered..."¹⁴ This may have sown the seeds of Spare's highly personalized technique, and his familiarity with the book is suggested by a page of sketches for *The Book of Pleasure* vignettes, dating from around 1910. Here, amongst letter-forms from several arcane alphabets, Spare has transcribed two signs from Agrippa.

Whilst the grimoires dictate the use of specific magical seals for the binding and control of spirits, and demand a high degree of faith (i.e. consciously formulated belief) in their efficacy, and in the theurgic system of which they form a part, Spare realized that any symbols must be effective provided that they are congruent with the patterns of the operator's innate beliefs and personal aesthetic. This is certain to be the case if they are drawn from his or her own subconsciousness. He

¹⁰ See *The Magical Revival* by Kenneth Grant (Frederick Muller, 1972).

¹¹ It could equally have derived directly from his cartomancy, as several traditional methods use thirty-two cards – from the sevens upwards plus Aces

¹² Sanskrit *Ichha* and *Sikkah* = 'Will' and 'Method'. Similarly the Sanskrit root *Khya* – 'to discriminate or number', suggests one derivation for his Kiā, the primal void which engenders all number and quality. As *Qia* it resumes the first of the Nine Chambers of Qabalistic exegesis known as 'Arq Bekar'.

¹³ For examples see *The Book of Ceremonial Magic* by A. E. Waite (Rider & Co., 1911)

¹⁴ See Agrippa's *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* (translated by Henry Morley, 1897) Book III, chapter 30, and Book I, chapter 74, compare *The Book of Pleasure* on 'Sigils and Sacred Letters', pp. 50, 56 et passim.

understood 'Karmas' to be those elements of past experience and desire which dwell unrecognized within the deep mind, periodically resurging into waking life in new, sometimes discomfiting guises. They seem autonomous, even demonic, because they elude conscious control; yet when isolated and given distinct forms through which to manifest – sigils – these 'Ids' become transformative potentials, their knowledge spoken forth in primal languages of desire. The Sacred Alphabet, as Spare describes it, consists of the root forms of these evocative sigils; it is the veritable script of the familiars thronging the magician's Circle, and epitomizes the mother tongue of that oblique dominion. Ultimately abstract and inscrutable, it articulates via aesthesis, and will consequently find direct expression through the individual's dominant creative ability – which may be dance, line, poetry, music, or indeed any artform. Spare, a draughtsman gifted with superb eidetic memory and hand-eye coordination, settled on a graphic form for his Alphabet, and found a perfect vehicle for his Sacred Letters in the cartomancy he had learned as a boy. The sorcery deck as a magical instrument has the virtue of being easily carried and concealed on the person, may be used discreetly at any time, and, when fully empowered by the sorcerer's belief, permits him or her to align and manipulate energies more adroitly than any elaborate ritual procedure. Hence, in the weaving of line upon line, the fall of card upon card, Spare's theurgy was accomplished.

The text of 'Mind to Mind...' exemplifies the prolific punning, alliteration and semantic chicanery at which Spare excelled – his application of the 'sacred inbetweenness.concepts' to writing, to express the inexpressible through paradox and suggestion. Here he sets out by reiterating several themes from *The Book of Pleasure*, and interweaves them with a Kantian thesis (derived from *Vaihinger*¹⁵) addressing the relationship between cause and effect as these are perceived by the individual consciousness. In accord with *Vaihinger*, Spare contends that our ordinary waking reality is fictive – a purely subjective and apparitional world. The *a priori* and *a posteriori* – in the present context 'past' and 'future' – represent dual polarities of pure consciousness, which, as 'thing in itself', or *Kiā*, ultimately transcends and begets both cause and consequence. His contention is that our apparent duality of mind is resolved in the moment of prophetic inspiration (medianimity) so that, as with the Death Posture, all past and future possibilities may be sensed directly as vivid and tactual impressions undistorted by discursive thought. The cards, and their attendant familiars, act as

catalysts for this all-prolific state of mind, opening the way to the Arena of Anon, wherein the unnamable 'I' may rove at will throughout the alphabet of its transformations.

To formulate your own system of cartomancy you will need only a pack of playing cards, a pen, some ability to doodle creatively, and a willingness to experiment. Spare suggests that a standard book on foretelling by cards be obtained; nowadays these are fairly thin on the ground, but a large number of manuals were published in Britain in the first half of the century – one of the best of the period, which Spare likely knew, is *Card Fortune Telling* by Charles Platt (Foulsham & Co., 1925). Such volumes offer a variety of traditional attributions for the cards, but Spare advises that the operator distributes meanings arbitrarily, along the general lines of the four suits – as with the personal sigil, this ensures that the attributions reflect the predominant concerns of the diviner's own magical sphere; the cartomante can easily make a list of concepts and events, tangibles and intangibles, which have personal significance, and transfer these to the cards. List as many as you can – experience will soon reveal which others must to be added. Then, some practice with shuffling and laying the cards out will give familiarity and reveal the most satisfying spread to use. The shuffle is itself a vital part of the procedure, diverting attention from the consciously formulated question or desire, and sending ripples through the pool of subconsciousness. Symbolically, while the cards are being shuffled the mental universe which they represent is temporarily dissolved; it is the hand of the diviner that breaks and remakes reality anew. Spending time with the cards, you might consider their individual attributions and the experiences which suggested them; no experience is entirely forgotten, and though the memories may become vague, all serve as media for the powers of the visionary mind. The next and key step for the purposes of sorcery, which Spare has emphasized in his text, is the process of changing the cards' meanings into 'sympathetic symbols' – sigils or geometric forms. My suggestion is that this inspiration had in 1909 paved the way for the genesis of the Sacred Alphabet, which Spare devised as an abecedary of symbols mediating the powers of the primal 'Ids' – to cohere and communicate, as does the Tarot, the spectrum of abstract knowledge emanating from the hither side of our mind.

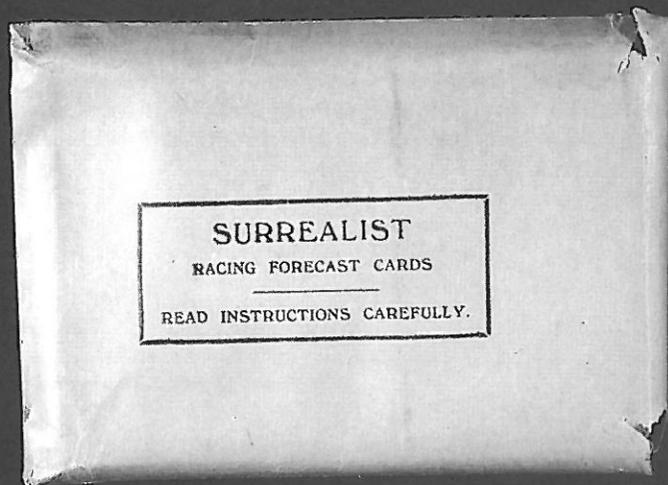
¹⁵ See *The Philosophy of 'As If'* by Hans Vaihinger (Kegan, Paul & Co., 1924). At the beginning of their friendship Kenneth Grant lent the book to Spare, who enthusiastically assimilated its themes.

Translating the rational meanings of the cards into cryptic symbols will give a series of glyphs which constitute the 'signatures' of elemental automata, and, by their chance alignments and juxtapositions in the spread, these familiars will reveal their positions as connective media in the causal chain of events. At this point the mundane benefits of foretelling recede somewhat, and the practitioner is now in a position to interact directly with events yet in embryo; by inducing the familiars to influence the situation in question, to avert or potentiate events as desired. In fact, Spare used the cards in just this way in the course of a reading for Kenneth Grant in the 1950s. After shuffling and cutting the 'Arena of Anon', but before laying out the spread, he asked Mr Grant to draw a card, and to gaze at it intently, *without* concentrating¹⁶. This method of evocation by silent fascination is a characteristic element of Spare's technique. Vivified by the presence of the spirits, the card oracle will accurately reflect the transit of elemental forces behind the screens of day-to-day reality. Once placed in contact with the presiding familiar, the questioner becomes an active participant in the unfolding of future events from the latent seeds of past and forgotten experience. Hence, from the lowest denominator we may arrive at the highest, and in that fractional moment of fore-seeing realize the subjective nature of both past and future – which are ever susceptible to the subtle theurgy of Will.

Seen in the context of Spare's lifelong experience of the art, 'Mind to Mind...' encapsulates one of the essential techniques by which he manifested the potent mystique of Zos: it could be considered a key to his oblique teachings, except – what use is a key when the door has never been locked, and will open at the merest touch? Through his work he has exemplified the individualistic and eccentric striving for vision that is the essence of the truly magical art, for, as *The Book of Pleasure* reminds us: "In a labyrinth of metaphor and word, intuition is lost, therefore without their effort must be learned the truth about one's self from him who alone knows the truth.... yourself."

¹⁶ Personal correspondence 19th November, 1996.





SURREALIST RACING FORECAST CARDS

Please read instructions carefully

GENERAL

Everyone can be successful with these cards. But, naturally, one man may be more successful than another, owing to his own "luck" and aptitude to chance. Those with "natural ability" or "gambling facility" will be shrewd enough to draw special conclusions.

But remember:—

Do not fool about with the cards.

Get the system firmly and clearly in your mind – so that it can be worked automatically.

Any muddleheadedness is a form of fear: where there is fear there is failure.

Courage is the criterion of belief. To back one horse and fancy another means willing one thing and believing another. Magic (faith) is simply a means of unifying Desire and Belief. The subconscious mind is employed to create your belief and unite it to a real desire. The cards will not confirm what is already known!

Believe in the cards. For the only requirements are a real desire to win, and a mind free of preconceived ideas. Accept the system suggested by the use of the cards. A superficial attitude or insincerity is a definite bias.

It is not necessary to be a so-called "psychic". We all have subconscious minds, whose powers we can employ. A mind disturbed or worried by other things – state of health, etc., – does not necessarily negate the system. This is the conscious mind. But try to concentrate on the desire to know.

Do not work the system twice for one race.

Try not to have preconceived ideas about horses.

An approximately accurate list of runners is essential. Big races such as the Derby can, therefore, be worked out some days ahead. It is not necessary to choose two selections for one race. But it is necessary to predetermine whether you want two selections or

UNLUCKY AT GAMBLING ?

If so why not experiment by buying a pack of **Surrealist Forecast Cards**? Designed by a famous mystic artist and author, they were originally intended as a joke, but he found that they picked the winners in his case, and in many others. Can be used for any race, anywhere, any year, and the same pack will last for years. These cards are not guaranteed, as they re-act differently in the case of each individual, but they do enable you to conduct an interesting and perhaps profitable experiment with luck. Obviously, if they were infallible we should be so rich that we wouldn't need to advertise them. So we make this very fair offer. Buy a pack with full instructions, for 5/-. If you find them to be of no use to you your money will be refunded without question or argument.

SURREALIST FORECAST CARDS,
261, Lauderdale Mansions, London, W.9

not. What is predetermined becomes law for the subconscious mind, and must be rigidly kept as law.

It is fatal to tell. If you talk to others about your system, you will dissipate the powers of the subconscious.

Keep careful records of your bets, and you will notice that certain factors are persistent. Your records may give you useful pointers – such as the cycles of your luck.

OMENS may be pointers, too, with regard to cycles of luck. If small things go wrong at the beginning of a day, it may be taken that the day is unlucky.

Omens may be used to confirm the system. But do not become omen conscious. Omens must be "presented", never searched for or forced. It is a question of being quick-witted enough to spot an omen when it is presented,

Dreams are utterly useless as regards racing.

METHOD OF OPERATING

Glance through (read mentally) the list of runners for the race to be worked.

While you are reading, shuffle the cards.

Always shuffle the cards slowly and carefully.

Now, while still shuffling the cards, desire to know the winner of the race.

Say mentally: "I wish to know the winning horse of the – race at – today."

When your wish has been clearly expressed, and not before, stop shuffling.

Do not cut the cards.

Look at the top card which is the selection.

The bottom card is the "next best" if needed.

(After memorising the portion written in pencil, please obliterate.)¹⁷

¹⁷ Unfortunately the original owner of the typescript has obliged Spare fully in this respect.



REVERSE. Phenomenon, strange, new, abnormality,
 illegal -



MIND TO MIND AND HOW

By a Sorcerer.

(Rendered in an idiom other than for scientists.)

Consistent with other directions of abstract knowledge, the threshold of the occult is the market-place for the charlatan. Coinage is sometimes different – lies have a strange longevity and fecundity – truth becomes buried. Abstracts such as 'mind', 'thought', 'intellect' naturally have no exact definitions – to agree at all, we have had to resort to the Classics. Should I, as a God, fall into this cesspit of inexactitude? I too revert and rely on 'Delphic' means for my answers – there are as yet no final conclusions. But I assert that the most positive and exact evidence it is possible to repeat to others reposes in that lowest, most common denominator of occultism – 'fortune-telling'. Be patient awhile for you will be enlightened by what follows.

The means used and the way it happens are simple, the inverse of scientific. I use a traditional formula, created by instinctive guess and *arbitrarily* formed, not evolved by hypothesis and experiment. The law of sorcery is its own law, using sympathetic symbols. This *logomachy* was subsequently deduced from actual practice, using cards like an 'oracle', with the exponent as interpreter.

Thought may be looked on as a dynamic, ever-present like the Ether – we are inescapably in and of it. It is neither a work incomplete nor completing though always changing the shape and degree of our consciousness. Man is a vehicle of thought, and thought governs the world. Scientists constantly mistake the 'means' for the cause: brain, nerves, body etc., are the media of thought, and when thought itself is dynamic in them we say it is 'the mind', which, in itself may have some queer relationship with *The Mind* behind it all. If mind has any 'seat' it is in the whole body, rather than a part. Because thought is a subsequent impression of feeling (all things cohabiting all the time) – *identity is by identifying* and the price is suffering (and much more thought).

So, identity is an obsession, a composite of personalities, all counterfeiting... a faveolated ego: a resurging catacomb where the phantom-like demiurguses seek *in us* their reality.

There are abstract 'Ids', *symbols that are cognizances of the mind*: inveterate, interpreted by some kind of metaphor. Our actions and beliefs being liars to each other, our usual language is useless for mystic communion. *The nexus between cause and effect is medianimity.*

There is a Grimorium of graphic symbology and vague phonic nuances that conjoin all thought and is the language of the psychic world. Mind is a continuant and all concepts are relatable to perceptions and contact, therefore real; the continuum of all aspects of memory and learning is consciousness – the past again becoming explicit, more or less.

Our whole mentation is cognising our cognition: I do know not only that I know, but how little I know of my own omniscience.

The conjugation of 'a priori' and 'a posteriori' create the anoëtic. A little knowledge is necessary common sense, much is dangerous, as the motive is a form of greed. One aspect of Knowledge not only discloses another but a whole series of fresh problems.

Invariably inspiration is the only mechanism science has for the disclosure of new facts and such a form of *guessing* is a casual process of 'mind to mind' recollection and transference.

Our very existence establishes a previous history (thought, mind, body), *so all subsequences are differentiated derivatives of the 'a priori'.*

If there is a 'primacy of practical reason' then judging by results – in man – it has become its own laughing poltergeist. We are worse in prospect than in retrospect; and nothing seems to exceed its own archaism. *Wisdom appears a stasis*, while Knowledge is ever forming – never complete. Whether within or without, nothing is fully explicit; Nature reveals slowly her techniques and media while of her motives we know *nothing*, but only guess at them from our own wishes. The tactual quality of relating is by a sentiment – the latent memory identifies and gives knowledge. Our truth: the

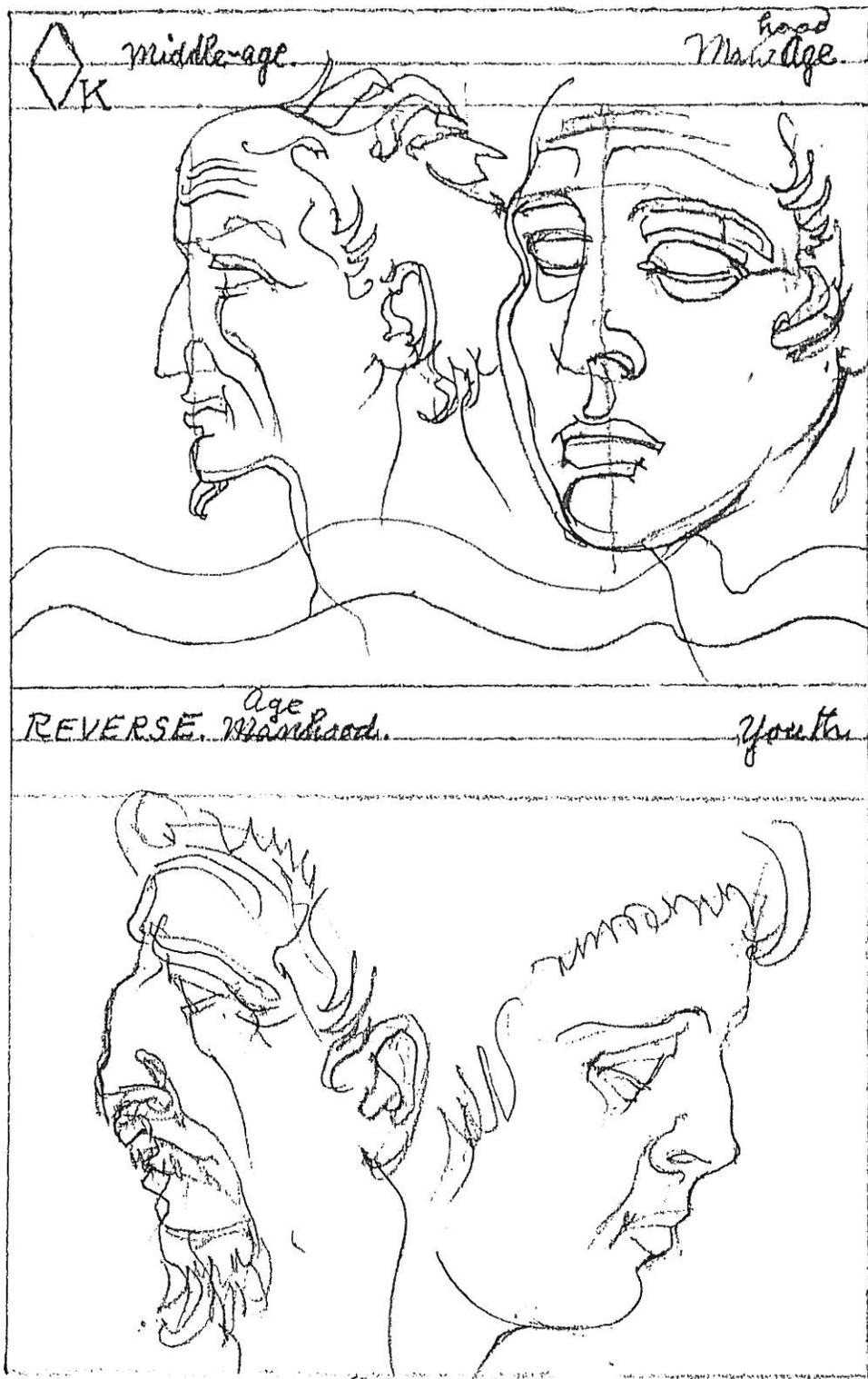
totality of impressions from affections when confirmed by our atavism. All we know for certain are the great uncertainties and *unknown commitments of ourselves*. Our lives are spent in finding the solution, a reciprocity of para-rational creativity? We are only fitted to co-relate our own level whether by inspiration or by any other means.

Certain directions of Knowledge should be arrested, they give little without great costingness: we have always had a plethora of means of destruction. Laws of Art and Logic are limited rules of patterning and nothing is deduced, except variations from them. There is no technique of spontaneity and inspiration.

Science, like Logic and Psychology, is its own bogey and as neurotic as its own creed; its fear of deviation from its arbitrary standards and categories confirms all the definitions of the psychopathic... Science also has to await its rare artist – to make an audacious guess for enlightenment or mutation. For me, the inexplicable of beauty, the undivulged of things gives them their enchantment, not their known meanings.

From the above evolves a suggestion: that the mind knows all, that thought, which permeates all things, is the conveyor and nexus, and that we become rapport and evocative by some cryptic symbolism which we must originate. Here is a clue: how do two fraudulent telepathists convey messages to each other? By a legerdemain, some subtle secret code. And the means of psychic correspondence, telepathy, premonition and prediction is by a like parallel. Merely to establish telepathy between two people by *known* things, means little outside of the proof, so we extend to the unknown, i.e. *prediction*, and by a simple form anyone may practise and prove for himself: the degree of success must necessarily relate to one's aptitude and ability.

First, obtain a book on 'fortune-telling' by playing-cards, this will give you the general idea towards the making of a far better pack for your purpose. Then procure a pack of ordinary playing-cards and mark them top and bottom (cards have a reverse). Do not rely on the book too much – only for general direction and method – all such being the traditional remnants



of a lost art; you must evolve your own meanings, symbols and methods. *That is vital.*

Here are the salient points to note. Individual cards are indicators not events, (at least, not the important ones), and thus we make separate cards mean the small commonplaces, emotions and abstracts – love, hate, fear etc., etc. People are represented by the Kings and Queens and children by two Knaves. The different ‘suits’ must symbolise the different kinds of events, emotions, etc. Thus SPADES would relate to sickness, mourning, death, disappointment, fear, hatred etc. HEARTS: Love, marriage, friendship, happiness, generosity etc. DIAMONDS: Money, success, fame, honour etc. CLUBS: business, officialism, law, power, knowledge, etc. Fifty-two cards are more than adequate to cover the small meanings. There are a number of meanings that do not fall under any one suit in particular, such as ‘speedy’, ‘accidental’, ‘journeys’ etc., and must be placed in any suit where there is room. Put similar meanings on *one* card such as ‘conclusion’ and ‘death’. The reverse of a card means the same thing but more intense or extended, thus, ‘slight sickness’ reversed would mean ‘real sickness’. Also, a special card is made which intensifies any other it falls against – reversed it means continuous or regular. It is the *combination* of certain cards that create the meanings of the more important events and episodes of life. Thus, this combination of Spades – ‘nine, ten and Ace’ when closely juxtaposed, would mean death fairly soon. And in combination with cards either meaning ‘accidental’, ‘sickness’, ‘hate’, or ‘self’ would mean death by accidents, sickness, murder or suicide, and so on, covering every event possible. The mathematical combinations from 52 cards are almost limitless for our purpose. Write your meanings and principal combinations on the cards, and when you have memorised them, change into symbols, even if your imagination cannot evolve more than simple geometric signs. *This change to symbols is very important.* To save overloading the cards with writing or symbols, write down in a small book the rarer combinations and meanings.

From books on fortune telling study the different methods of laying the cards for reading, and ultimately a method will evolve which suits you. My method is to lay them out in a line (or four lines of thirteen cards) and read from left to right, but it is difficult and only adepts succeed. Then I shuffle the cards while looking into the eyes of the inquirer. The pack is then passed to him with a request to shuffle, and think about his desires, whether relating to personal ambitions or otherwise. The cards are then laid out and read, special note being made of the juxtapositions of the combinations. When such are close together the event will be soon.

However many combinations you may have formed, there will always be those of unique and baffling meaning, and this is where the ability of the operator enters. Imaginative methods will help, for example: with one card meaning 'fear' and the other 'honour', this could be read as 'faint-hearted but has the necessary ability', as against 'fear for one's honour' – unless this seems to be implied by other factors. Remember, there is always a rational and true interpretation if you can find it.

Your belief in the subject should be as sincere as for any other Art or Science, and an open mind at all times is best. As to the attitude of the inquirers, their belief is immaterial, their willingness to be unprejudiced is essential, any facetiousness is fatal. I can assert (by the experiments of others) that any person of intelligence who carefully follows these suggestions, using his imagination, and with sufficient practice, will at length be able to accurately predict future events with sufficient detail and unambiguity. In about six months a satisfactory pack of cards can be created and another six months should be allowed to gain the necessary facility by actual practice. I have not only had persons accurately described but even their hidden marks revealed. Education has little to do with this faculty. The Witch who taught me was illiterate, with limited vocabulary and the usual Fortune-Teller's argot, yet she was able to define and explain the most complex and abstract things, much clearer than I could with an almost complete vocabulary. I have never yet witnessed any

occult phenomena where money was involved whether for expenses or anything else (I preclude the odd symbolic silver coin).

The chief difficulty in forecasting is this. In many lives nothing much happens except for perhaps an odd episode (for eight years this was true of myself, although previously I had had an overfull life). Thus, not everyone is a good 'subject' unless one catches them at the eventful period.

The best function of prediction is possibly in being able to warn people of their weaknesses and of events which may be prejudicial to them. I was telling a friend's fortune, and could 'see' that he would die within a few months. Naturally, I did not tell him so, but what I did advise him was to at once put his affairs in order and that in a few months there would be a very great change in his affairs, of which not much could be said. Meantime, there was great happiness for him, though he was to guard against accident. He was happy for the few months that he lived. I believe that forecasting is best used as I have used it, to gain wisdom and insight and not for monetary gain, and that by such experiments prove the possibilities of spiritual powers for a more humane world.

Finally, scientists will never solve or prove anything relating to foretelling the future; it is a work for 'artists'. Science may subsequently prove more fully what the artists have already discovered.

Note well: all the indications essential for the psychic Knowledge necessary to develop this particular ability are given in *The Logomachy*.

Illustrations

- P.4 Self-Portrait, 1937
- P.8 AOS at work in his studio flat at Becket House, 1927
- P.10 Four cards from the Arena of Anon, [n.d.]
- P.14 Horses For Slaughter, 1948
- P.16 AOS with the editors of *The London Mystery Magazine*, at the Mansion House tavern exhibition, Kennington Park Road, 1952
- P.18 Three cards from the Arena of Anon, [n.d.]
- P.20 Early magical manuscript fragment, [c.1910]. The signs from Agrippa may be found in the vertical column, centre.
- P.26 Surrealist Racing Forecast Cards, with original envelope, 1936
- P.28 Surrealist Racing Forecast Cards advertisement, 1937
- P.30 Forecasting card from a Sorcerer's pack [for *Mind to Mind and How*, c.1951]. For this and the following illustration, AOS has noted on the back of the design that "*for convenience, the reverse of the Card is given upright*".
- P.34 Forecasting card from a Sorcerer's pack [for *Mind to Mind and How*, c.1951].

This book was published by FULGUR Limited on October 31st 1997. Of this edition there are five copies bound in red morocco-backed boards and slipcase for private distribution, and forty-five numbered copies bound in black cloth and slipcase. These limited editions contain an original card from Spare's 1936 Surrealist Racing Forecast deck. Typesetting and production by Hayley Tong. Design by Robert Ansell – *Baselek vidivit*.