

JOHN DEE AND EDWARD KELLEY

by

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PREFACE

After I had finished the biography of Thomas Charnock I naively thought it would be interesting to write a similar short piece on John Dee, the 16th century scholar and mystic. I soon found that there was not only a wealth of contemporary biographical detail available but also a plethora of learned publications dealing with all aspects of his life together with a number of other biographies available written in recent years. I make no pretense to have carried out any original research in compiling this book but have brought together information from a number of sources which are listed at the end. I would like to think that I have identified a few issues and raised some questions which previous authors have neglected.

It became apparent that while Dee had certainly dabbled in alchemy he could not strictly be labeled as an alchemist unlike his colleague Edward Kelly with whom his life became enmeshed and who was to lead him on an adventure across the European Continent. Indeed it is not possible to give a valid account of Dee without at the same time according the same treatment to Kelly. It would I suppose have been easy to provide an emasculated summary of their lives but their story is too full of human interest for this to have been a worthwhile project. If I have provided too much detail for the casual reader then I apologise, but I would hope that they might persevere and find the subject matter set, against the history of Tudor England and embracing the birth of modern science, studies of the occult, conversations with angels, trust and betrayal, ambition and disappointment, achievement and rejection, elation and despair, evangelism and the sulphurous whiff of dealings with the devil to be as fascinating as I have.

NOTES

I have as far as is possible retained the spelling and punctuation of original documents except where a degree of modernisation has been required as an aid to understanding. Where appropriate 'v' replaces 'u' and 'j' is used instead of 'i'. The medieval long 's' has been updated.

Present day place names have been used where appropriate.

Coinage of the Tudor period was based on a pound or sovereign (£, written in contemporary documents as lb) consisting of twenty shillings (s) each of twelve pence (d). Together with the pound, other high value coins such as the Ryal (10s) and the Angel (6s 8d) were minted in gold while lower denominations such as the groat (4d), half-groat and penny were issued in silver. The coinage was much debased by Henry VIII, silver being added to the gold and copper to the silver. In an attempt to prevent the drain of gold to continental Europe the value of English gold was increased by 10%, the sovereign to 22s and the Angel to 7s 4d and two new coins were issued, the Crown worth 5s and the Noble which replaced the Angel at 6s 8d. The succeeding Tudor monarchs did much to improve the standard, recalling the debased coins and issuing ones made from purer metals. It is difficult to give a really meaningful idea of their value in modern day purchasing power without reference to such things as contemporary wages and costs but as an approximation, at the time of Dee's birth a pound was the equivalent of £320 in present day money while by the 1580's its value had dropped to about £150.

On the continent coins of commerce were the silver Thaler or "dollar" an abbreviation of "Joachimsthaler", issued at Joachimsthal in Bohemia first minted in 1518 together with the gold Ducat initially from Venice but subsequently minted throughout most of the continent as was the Italian Florin. Throughout the period the exchange rates of these coins varied considerably as fortunes of individual countries rose and ebbed, especially as the influx of precious metals from South America undermined the value of existing gold and silver.

INTRODUCTION

All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players;
William Shakespear, *As You Like It*, Act II, Scene VII.

To label Dee as an alchemist is to belittle his considerable contribution to the development of natural history, geography, mathematics, navigation and learning in general in the Tudor period. His interest in this area, at least initially, was more in hermeticism, the theoretical aspect of self improvement, rather than the practical application of transmutation. Recognised as an intellectual by his early twenties he was made use of by the movers and shakers of Tudor England who consulted him on their various endeavors, ranging from astrological prediction to practical advice on voyages of exploration and commercial enterprises. He was engaged to tutor many of the children of the nobility who would then become his patrons in later life. Although highly intelligent he was unfortunately politically perhaps somewhat naive and out of his depth in the factional infighting which was a daily occupation of the Tudor Court. His aspirations to Royal recognition and reward were perhaps rather cynically encouraged but generally fell well short of his expectations. Dogged by ill health in his later years, most of his patrons having pre-deceased him, he died in relative poverty.

Attempts have been made to portray him as an intelligence agent for Elizabeth's spymasters, William Cecil (Lord Burghley) and Francis Walsingham, but there is little evidence that this was the case although no doubt along with many in his position who travelled abroad he was expected to pass back any items of interest that came his way.

His reputation was blackened both in his own lifetime and afterwards by his attempts to communicate with angels, compounded by his use of Edward Kelley as the medium through which he tried to achieve this. In order to understand why this should be the case it is necessary to understand the contemporary beliefs in cosmology and astrology. What Dee was attempting had no relationship to our modern view of seances held in darkened rooms with dubious spirit guides. The accepted philosophical view of creation was that Nous, the Word of God, had descended from the heavenly realm forming seven powers in seven spheres holding the planets which encircled and governed the sensory world of man below. At birth the soul descends from heaven and is moulded by those planetary influences which hold sway at the time of its passage. In the same way there are ongoing emanations falling on the earth from heaven which changed according to the particular configuration of the planets at any given time. Thus not only could an understanding of Astrology predict a man's character but it could also be used to determine the most auspicious times for him to carry out any proposed activities. Dee was in much demand to for advice in these matters but he crossed the boundary of what was acceptable by attempting direct communication with the guiding angels. Divine revelations were the prerogative of the church (of whatever

persuasion) and at a time when the provision of the bible and church services in the common English tongue was seen as undermining ecclesiastical authority the possibility of direct discussion with God's angels (and perhaps even God himself) was complete anathema. Not only that but there was a strong possibility that the communication was not with angels but with devils and demons - this at a time when witchcraft was about to become a national hysteria. Added to this, his employment of Edward Kelley as his intermediary, a man who already had a notorious reputation as a cheat, forger, confidence trickster and necromancer was a decidedly unwise step.

Dee was valued amongst the well-educated both for his scientific knowledge and for his astrological expertise, particularly at a time when exploration and enterprise were burgeoning and thus they were prepared to some extent to turn a blind eye. However his activities, combined with the suspicion of alchemical experimentation were considered by the common folk as tantamount to sorcery of the worst sort. Throughout his lifetime Dee was plagued by slanderous accusations, sometimes politically motivated, and found it necessary to resort to the influence of friends at court and even legal action to stop this and clear his name.

Subsequent biographers concentrated on the more dubious aspects of his life to his great detraction, many basing their views on a work published by Meric Casaubon 50 years after Dee's death entitled *A True and Faithful Relation of what passed for many years between Dr John Dee and some Spirits*. (London, 1659). In the preface Casaubon alleged that Dee had been fooled by malicious evil spirits pretending to be angels. His opening paragraph begins:

"What is here presented unto thee (Christian Reader) being a True and Faithful Relation (as the Title beareth, and will be further cleared by this Preface) though by the carriage of it, in some respects, and by the Nature at it too, it might be deemed and termed, A Work of Darknesse."

Casaubon was however attacked by a contemporary John Webster in his book *The Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft*, (London, 1677) who accounted Dee as "the greatest and ablest Philosopher, Mathematician, and Chymist that his Age (or it may be ever since) produced" while acknowledging that he "could not evade the censure of the Monster headed multitude, but even in his life time was accounted a Conjuror" and goes on to say "It is manifest, that he (Casaubon) hath not published this merely as a true relation of the matter of fact, and so to leave it to others to judge of; but that designedly he hath laboured to represent Dee as a most infamous and wicked person, as may be plainly seen in the whole drift of his

tedious Preface" and suggests that this was a ploy by Casaubon who at the time was trying to deflect ecclesiastical opprobrium from himself.

John Aubrey in his work *The Natural History and Antiquities of the County of Surrey* (vol I, p82, London, 1719) describes him as "the learned Mr John Dee, who was one of the ornaments of his Age, but mistaken by the Ignorant for a Conjuror."

With the passage of time historians moderated their views, for instance Isaac D'Israeli the Victorian essayist and father of the future Prime Minister devoted a chapter to him in his *Amenities of Literature* (1864). He says: "Dr. Dee was a Theurgist, a sort of magician, who imagined that they held communication with angelic spirits, of which he has left us a memorable evidence. His personal history may serve as a canvas for the picture of an occult philosopher - his reveries, his ambition, and his calamity..... the early bent of his mind was somewhat fanciful; an inextinguishable ambition to fix the admiration of the world worked on a restless temperament and a long vagrant course of life;" He ascribes to his character as follows: " The imagination of Dee often predominated over his science; while both were mingling in his intellectual habits, each seemed to him to confirm the other. Prone to the mystical lore of what was termed the occult sciences, (which in reality are no sciences at all, since whatever remains occult ceases to be science,) Dee lost his better genius."

It is not until recent times that the value of his contributions to natural history, science, mathematics, geography and navigation became recognised and his dabbling with the occult became much less of an issue. In the introduction to her biography of Dee Charlotte Fell Smith says "There is perhaps no learned author in history who has been so persistently misjudged, nay, even slandered, by his posterity, and not a voice in all three centuries uplifted even to claim for him a fair hearing.....this universal condemnation.... [may]...be found to exist mainly in the fact that he was too far advanced in speculative thought for his own age to understand."

There is a great deal of biographical material available to chart the course of Dee's life, most of which is available on the internet. Two autobiographical works are of particular help, one being his *Private Diary* and the other his petition to Queen Elizabeth entitled *The Compendious Rehearsal*, although it must be remembered that the latter was written by Dee in 1592 when he was attempting to make as good a case as possible for recognition of his services to Her Majesty and when his memory may well have been clouded by time. In addition to these is the work by Casaubon based on Dee's notes of his attempts to communicate with angels, already mentioned. The *Diary* was published by the Camden Society in 1842 but like Casaubon's work unhappily contains mistakes and typographical

errors. These were combined in a corrected and authoritative edition as *The Diaries Of John Dee* by Edward Fenton in 1998, who referred back to the original manuscripts. There are also more recent biographies of Dee such as those by Charlotte Fell Smith, Peter J. French and Benjamin Woolley and a number of learned papers by, for instance I. R. F. Calder, C. H. Josten, Glynn Parry and his students and C. L. Whitby (see sources).

A RISING STAR. 1527-1553

When infancy and childhood are past, the choice of a future way of life begins to present itself to young men as a problem.

John Dee - *Monas Hieroglyphica*.

John Dee, the son of Roland Dee and Johanna Wild, was born on the 13th July 1527, the same year in which Henry VIII embarked on a course which was to lead to his annulment of his marriage to Catherine of Aragon and the divorce of England from the Catholic Church. Marginal inscriptions by Dee in some of his books gives the date of his mother's birth as 1508/9 and of his parent's marriage as 1524 when Johanna would have been only about 15. On the basis of a latitude given in his horoscope his birthplace would have been somewhere in north London. John Aubrey had it in his *Brief Lives* that he was told by Elias Ashmole (who had it from Dee's grandson, also called Rowland) that Dee's father was a vintner although this may well have been a misunderstanding. Aubrey adds that he was told by a Meredith Lloyd that Roland was a Radnorshire gentleman who claimed descent from Rees, Prince of South Wales. Other sources give him as the son of Bedo Dee who had been the Standard-Bearer to Edward de Ferrers, knighted by Henry VIII after the siege of Tournai during the Battle of the Spurs in 1513. It appears he was subsequently appointed as a Gentleman Sewer to the king (cupbearers, carvers and sewers – possibly a corruption of server - were offices accorded to Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber whose duties were to serve the king when he dined in public and to supervise the Royal pages). According to R. Julian Roberts Rowland Dee was later a merchant and became admitted to the Mercers' Company of London in 1536. This is substantiated by references quoted by I.R.F. Calder that Henry VIII made a grant to him in May 1544 appointing him as one of two "packers" supervising the packing of all goods being exported through London and thereby extracting appropriate fees. There was a further grant later that year to a consortium of Dee and thirty five others of lands formerly belonging to the monastery of St James at Northampton. In 1550 he was given a grant by Edward VI for "services to the King and Henry VIII" regarding the

same properties along with twenty eight others, all but two of whom were designated as mercers. Subsequently Roland fell from grace during the reign of Queen Mary and was imprisoned in the Tower in 1553. It can be assumed that Dee's father financed his time at university and presumably his early foreign travels and so was reasonably affluent until at least the early 1550's.

Dee emphasised his Welsh background, no doubt hoping this would be favourable to the Tudors and the families who came with them after they had seen off Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth in 1457. He produced a family tree tracing his descent back to Rhodri ap Mawr (c.820 – 878), King of Gwynedd, thus claiming a distant kinship with the Royal family and drew up "My Hieroglyphical and Philosophical blason of the crest or cognisance, lawfully confirmed of my antient armes" which is headed "I shall not die, but live and declare the works of the Lord" above and "Truth Will Prevail" below. The shield is surrounded with the motto "With Jehovah my strength who should I fear." There is an interesting inscription to the right which reads "Behold the lion of the tribe of Judah, root of David, to open the book and loose the seven seals thereof."

In 1542, at the age of 15 (five years after the birth of Edward VI in 1537) he was sent by his father to St John's College at the University of Cambridge "There to begin with logick and so to proceede in the learning of good artes and sciences," having received schooling in Latin at Chelmsford and London. St John's was a college where academic excellence had been fostered by Bishop John Fisher as a bulwark of Catholic orthodoxy but which, after his execution in 1535, was becoming a bridgehead of the English reformation. At the time of Dee's enrolment the student body numbered only some thirty or so undergraduates. Here he was tutored by John Cheke (1514-1557) who had the Chair of Greek and also taught philosophy and the liberal sciences. His other pupils included William Cecil, later to become Lord Burghley and who was to marry Cheke's sister Mary. Both Cecil and Cheke (who may have encouraged Dee's interests in mathematics) were to become patrons of Dee in later years. He was an avid student saying that from 1543 to 1545 he was so intent upon his studies that he slept for only four hours each night and allowed only two hours for refreshment, the other eighteen hours being devoted to study with the exception of time spent at religious devotion.

He subsequently gained a BA degree and in May 1547 determined to go abroad to broaden his education, spending some time in the Low Countries (modern Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg) which at the time was not only a rich center of commerce but also a focus for new ideas and learning and a hot bed of dissent between Protestant

intellectuals and the Catholicism of the authorities. Discussion was rife following the publication of Copernicus's *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* in 1543 setting out his heliocentric cosmology. Dee recalls that he met "chiefly mathematicians." These included Gemma Frisius, Professor of Medicine and Mathematics and his pupil and collaborator Gerardus Mercator, influential mathematicians, cartographers and instrument makers. Mercator had produced his map of the world in 1538 and had only recently been released from imprisonment on a charge of heresy on account of his Protestant sympathies. At the time of Dee's visit Mercator was working on charting the discoveries made by explorers in the 'New World' and this may have sparked Dee's involvement with Elizabethan maritime adventures in later years. The two remained lifelong friends and correspondents. On his return Dee brought with him two of Mercator's globes, an astronomer's staff and other novel instruments. At Cambridge he was elected a Fellow of the newly founded Trinity College and assigned as under-reader in Greek, probably on the recommendation of John Cheke (made tutor to the future Edward VI in 1544). Dee recalls in his *Rehearsal* that while there he devised a mechanism by which an actor had been made to fly across the stage to the amazement the audience, a feat of youthful exuberance which was to come back to haunt him in later years when it added to his reputation as a conjuror and magician. While at the College he developed his interest in astrology and astronomy and relates that starting in 1547 he began to make a long series of astronomical observations with the aim of understanding the "heavenly influences and operations actuall in this elementall portion of the world." This was the year in which Henry VIII died and his son Edward VI, six months short of his ninth birthday, ascended the throne.

He gained an MA in 1548 and again left to go abroad. He says that he never again studied at Cambridge (or Oxford, despite inducements in 1554) and appears to have developed an aversion to them. Peter J. French in his biography of Dee suggests that at this time, following on from the reforms of Edward VI, "the old philosophical and scientific traditions came to be regarded as papistical and therefore evil..... mathematics being particularly suspect." Something which was clearly contrary to Dee's inclinations.

He made his way back to the Low Countries, enrolling at the University of Louvain and staying there until the summer of 1550. He recounts that while there he was visited by a great many noblemen and others from Spain, Italy, Bohemia and Denmark "to have some prooffe of me by their owne judgements" and lists among these representatives of the court of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V at Brussels a few hours journey away together with the dukes of Mantua and Medina, the Danish king's mathematician, Mathias Hacus and his

physician, Joannes Capito. He claimed that “Beyond the seas, far and nere, was a good opinion conceived of my studies philosophicall and mathematicall.”

While at Louvain Dee "for recreation" studied civil law, something which he found useful in dealing with the problems of his later life. He also found time to write *Mercurius coelestis* (Heavenly Mercury) a work of 24 sections, never published and now lost and for some time instructed Sir William Pickering in logic, rhetoric, arithmetic and astronomy. Pickering, like Dee had been tutored by John Cheke and was now the protégé of John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, later Earl of Northumberland and newly appointed by him as envoy to France. Pickering proved to be another useful contact in the years ahead. It was probably at Louvain that Dee's interest in the occult and alchemy blossomed, for the ideas of Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa, the famous German magician who had died there some fifteen years previously, were very much in vogue.

It would seem that in 1550 he made several short trips, to Antwerp in April to visit Abraham Ortelius another cartographer and friend of Mercator and then to the court of Charles V at Brussels in May. His self-confidence no doubt received a considerable boost when he was offered a post there, although he did not take up the offer. At this time he also made the acquaintance of Pedro Nunez the Portuguese mathematician and cosmographer who was making important contributions in the field of navigation. From Louvain he travelled on to Paris, arriving there in July where at the college of Rheims he gave a presentation of Euclid's *Elements* which was rapturously received. During his stay he claimed he was approached to take up a position as a Reader in mathematics at a stipend of 200 crowns annually which he refused together with other similar offers. In 1551 he travelled back to England, full of the new ideas which he had picked up from his conversations with his fellow savants in Europe, maintaining a correspondence with many of them for the rest of his life. He cites exchanges of letters with professors and doctors at the universities of Orleans, Cologne, Heidelberg, Strasburg, Verona, Padua, Ferrara, Bologna, Urbino, Rome, and many others.

On his return there was a new flavour to life. Edward VI, a fervent Protestant, was busy dismantling the icons of Catholicism and there was an appetite for more liberal and progressive ideas. Dee, filled with concepts at the cutting edge of learning was obviously of interest to English intellectuals. His old tutor John Cheke put in a good word for him with his son-in-law, William Cecil, who at that time was Secretary of State. Dee had sent Cheke, now Edward's tutor, two manuscript books on astronomy, *De Usi Globi Coelestis* and *De nubium, solis, lunae*, dedicated to the King, hoping that they might be useful in his lessons. As a

result Dee received a letter from Peter Osborne, the Remembrancer of the Exchequer, summoning him to see Cecil. Cecil in turn recommended him to Edward who was sufficiently pleased as to reward him with an annual pension of 100 crowns which was exchanged in May 1553 for the income of the rectory of Upton upon Severn to which Long Leadenham was added later in the year. Dee continued to receive the income from these livings (some £80 annually) for nearly thirty years thereafter.

In February 1552 he entered the services of William Herbert, newly appointed by Edward as the Earl of Pembroke, whose wife Anne, sister to Catherine Parr, Henry VIII's sixth wife, had just died. Possibly this was to act as tutor to their son, Henry, aged about 13. Herbert was described by John Aubrey in his *Brief Lives* as illiterate and "a mad fighting fellow." No doubt he felt that a degree of learning in the family would be befitting for his new status, especially so if it found favour with the King. Later in the same year Dee became associated with the household of John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, the Lord Protector and Chancellor of Cambridge University, whose children included Robert Dudley (who would have been in his early twenties at the time), the future Earl of Leicester and great favourite of Queen Elizabeth. In 1553 he produced works entitled *The True account (not vulgar) of Fluds and Ebbs* and *The Philosophicall and Politicall Original occasions of the Configurations, and names of the heavenly Asterismes* (constellations), both written at the request of Jane, the Duke's wife.

SETBACK AND RECOVERY. 1553-1558

Men more quickly forget the death of their father than the loss of their patrimony.
Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*.

The staunchly protestant Edward died in July 1553 to be succeeded by his devoutly Catholic half-sister Mary. Dee now hit a sticky patch in his relations with the court. Both of his patrons, Pembroke and John Dudley, Earl of Northumberland, had been involved in an abortive plot to put Lady Jane Grey (daughter of the Duke of Suffolk and a descendant of Henry VII) on the throne. While Edward lay on his death bed they had both persuaded him to make a will nominating her as his successor. Northumberland then lost no time in arranging the marriage of Jane to his son Guildford. Bride and groom were in their late teens, aged 17 or 18. The happy event was a double wedding with Henry Herbert, Pembroke's son marrying Jane's sister Catherine. Their plans fell in ruins when the Privy Council decided to

support Mary. Northampton, Guildford and Lady Jane were convicted of treason and duly attended an appointment with the executioner. Pembroke proved to be somewhat more nimble and saved himself by immediately having the marriage of his son to Catherine annulled on the grounds of non-consummation and by changing his allegiance. Dee's association with both families would not have been helpful. Things got much worse. His father, Roland, who had prospered under Edward, was caught up in the purges that followed Mary's ascension and was arrested by order of the Council and imprisoned in the Tower in 1553. He was subsequently released following a pardon granted on 18th December 1554 but his status and income were lost and his son's prospects of an inheritance gone. *Original Letters* edited by Sir Henry Ellis contains a copy of a letter written by Dee much later to Cecil in 1574 complaining that he had long expected to receive a revenue by the grace of the Queen or Privy Council "which both right well knew, by how hard dealing my father Roland Dee (servant to her Majestie's father, the most renowned and. triumphant king of our age,) was disabled for leaving unto me due mayntenance." Nothing else is recorded of Dee's father and there is no mention of him in any of his son's writings. His mother is known to have been living at Mortlake as early as the year 1568 and the house and land which she owned there were made over to Dee and his wife in 1579 a year before her death.

Dee now committed a cardinal error. Prior to the marriage of Mary and Prince Philip of Spain there had been a rebellion in protest against the alliance led by Thomas Wyatt. Elizabeth was arrested but as no real evidence could be produced against her she was released from the Tower and placed under house arrest at Woodstock. Unhappily, while she was there Dee was foolish enough to cast her horoscope, probably inveigled into so doing by some of Elizabeth's followers: "Before her Majesties coming to the crowne, I did shew my dutifull good will in some travailes for her Majesties behalfe, to the comfort of her Majesties favourers then, and some of her principall servantes at Woodstock and at Milton by Oxford, with Sir Thomas Bendger (then Auditor unto her Majestie)." This was highly dangerous, suggesting astrological guidance for a plot against Mary. It is therefore not particularly surprising that on 28 May 1555 the Privy Council instructed the Master of the Rolls, Sir Francis Englefield "to make searche for oone John Dye, dwelling in London and to apprehend him and send him hither, and make searche for suche papers and bookes as he maye thinke maye towche the same Dye or Benger." This was on the evidence (probably perjured) of one George Ferrys (or Ferrers, a lawyer and convicted debtor who accused Dee of using magic to blind one of his children and to kill another) and of a certain Prideaux who

was subsequently identified by Strype along with Englefield as being pensioners of Philip of Spain in 1574.

The charge was that "I endeavoured by enchantments to destroy Queene Mary." Dee was imprisoned at Hatfield and his lodgings at London sealed up. This was not a good time to upset Royalty. Mary was in the last few months of what would prove to have been a phantom pregnancy, rumours of rebellion were rife and bonfires, consuming those convicted of treason and heresy were, as later recorded in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, an almost daily occurrence throughout the Kingdom.

On the 5th of June 1555 Secretary Sir John Bourne, the Master of the Rolls, Sir Francis Englefield, Sir Richard Read and Doctor Thomas Hughes examined Benger (who was to later become Master of Queen Elizabeth's Revels), Dee and others at Hampton Court "upon such points as they shall gather out of their former confessions, touching their lewd & vain practises of calculating or conjuring." Dee was required to provide written answers to four articles relating to his alleged offences followed by another eighteen. None of the charges against him could be proven; he was taken under guard to London, brought before Lord Broke, Justice of the Common Pleas and sent to trial at the Court of the Star Chamber where he managed to extricate himself from the charge of treason. He was subsequently handed over to the Catholic Bishop of London, Edmund Bonner, for questioning on religious matters but was eventually released in August 1555 after being bound over. He relates in his *Necessary Advertisement* that this was brought about by a letter from the Privy Council to Bonner which he quotes as "After our hartly commendations to your good L. the King and Queenes Majesties pleasures us, you shall cause John Dee, committed to your L. custody, to be brought before some Master of the Chauncery, and there bound to be of good abearing, and forth coming when he shall be called for, betwixt this and Christmas next, and there-upon to set him at libertie" which he dates at 24 of August 1555.

There now occurs what seems to be an amazing turnaround in Dee's circumstances. "Bloody" Bonner was notorious for his persecution of Protestant heretics, as is recorded by Foxe in his *Acts and Monuments*. Foxe identifies Dee as being present and taking part in some of Bonner's examinations of prisoners brought before him on suspicion of heresy, relating that during the examination of a Robert Smith, the prisoner was sent out into a garden with his brother and that they were approached by "one of my Lord's chaplains (identified by Foxe in a footnote as 'Dr Dee a conjuror by report') that much desired to commune with me." The chaplain then addressed him with "many sweet words" and questioned him on religious matters. Dee was again reported to have been present at the

examination of John Philpot, one time Protestant Archdeacon of Westminster and now arrested for refusing to conduct Catholic masses. Dee disputed with Philpot on the interpretation of the writings of St Cyprian regarding Papal authority and earned the rebuke "Master Dee, you are too young in divinity to teach me in the matters of my faith." After a brief further exchange of views Dee left, possibly in a huff. At a later meeting Bonner says "Master Philpot, I charge you to answer unto such articles as my chaplain, Master Dee, and my registrar have from me to object against you." The implication of Bonner referring to Dee as his chaplain is that during his time with the Bishop he had been ordained as a Catholic priest.

Dee recalls in his *Rehearsal* that at this time "I was prisoner long and bedfellow with Barthlet Greene, who was burnt." In this Dee would seem to be rather economical with the truth. Bartholomew (or Bartlet) Green was brought before Bonner on 17th November 1555 at the same time as Philpot. Initially he was well treated and this began a rumour that he had recanted, prompting an accusation of backsliding from Philpot in response to which he wrote him a letter (intercepted by his keeper) in which he denies the "slanders" and describes how at the first meeting he was presented before the Archbishop and others including "Master Dee." After some more-or-less friendly discussion he relates that "Then was I brought into my Lord's inner chamber (where you, i.e. Philpot, were) and there was put into a chamber with Master Dee who entreated me very friendly. That night I supped at my Lord's table and lay with Master Dee in the chamber you did see." Both prisoners were subsequently burnt at the stake, Philpot in December 1555 and Green in January the following year.

The picture presented by Foxe was that Bonner was using Dee during part of his interrogations and in the case of Green as part of a 'softening-up' process to try to worm incriminating evidence from him. Foxe's references to Dee, as "Bonner's chaplain" and "the great conjuror" in the 1563 and 1570 editions of his book which was published in the early years of Elizabeth's reign and which became a 'best-seller' put Dee in an awkward situation for not only did it paint him as a magician but also as a Catholic collaborator who had participated in the inquisition of those now celebrated as Protestant martyrs. Dee brought pressure to bear to have such derogatory remarks removed from subsequent editions. This was possibly achieved through the good offices of George Day who printed both Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* and Dee's *A Necessary Advertisement* which acted as a preface to his *General and Rare Memorial pertayning to the Perfect Arte of Navigation* of 1577. In his *Advertisement* Dee, writing anonymously, attacks all those who have slandered him and accused him of stealing the work of others and then deals with Foxe saying that "the wise, or

the peculiarly chief authorized, will use due, carefull, and charitable discretion, from henceforth, to represse, or abolish, and utterly extinguish this very injurious report, (for these 20 yeres last past, and somewhat longer,) spread and credited, all the realm over: it is to wete [wit], that the forsaid Gentleman, is or was, not onely a Conjuror, or caller of divels: but a great doer therein: yea, the great conjurer: and so, (as some would say) the arche conjurer of this whole kingdom." The whole episode must have been an extremely traumatic experience for Dee who thereafter was always ready to squash any slanders made against him.

Possibly in an attempt to ingratiate himself with Queen Mary and to improve his Catholic credibility, Dee wrote *A Supplication to Q. Mary, By John Dee, For The recovery And Preservation Of Ancient Writers And Monuments*, dated 15 January, 1556. This was presumably written during the time he was enjoying Bonner's hospitality. In this he describes the loss of so many great libraries during the dissolution of the monasteries during the reign of her father. In this he was not alone. John Bale in the preface to his book recalling John Leyland's account of this plundering relates that whole libraries had been bought for scrap paper "some to serve theyre jakes, some to scoure theyr candelstykes, and some to rubbe their bootes. Some they solde to grossers (grocers) and sopesellers, and some they sent oversee to the bokebynders, and not in small nombre, but in tymes whole shyppes full." Dee urges that "if, in time, great and speedy diligence be shewed, the remnants of such incredible store, as well of writers theologicall, as in all other liberal sciences, might be saved and recovered." He proposed that a Royal Library should be established, that a Commissioner be appointed to locate and collect or have copied books and manuscripts and that the costs be provided by the Synod. He then goes on to propose that he should be empowered to visit "all the famous and worthy monuments [collections], that are in the notablest Librarys beyond the sea" to buy or copy such items, the travels to be paid for out of the Royal Purse. Not surprisingly, at a time when England's finances were in dire straits, Dee's request for a free junket on the Continent was ignored.

It was during this time that he began to put together his *Propaedeumata Aphoristica* an attempt to put astrology on a more scientific basis by linking celestial events with terrestrial ones on the basis of more detailed astronomical observations, encompassing his belief that such relationships came about by emanations as was evinced by such phenomena as magnetism and the tides. He suffered a serious illness in 1557/8 and made hasty arrangements for a draft copy of the manuscript to be published.

In the wider world a series of poor harvests played havoc with the country's finances. There was a groundswell of public opinion that all was not right with either Mary or her

government, exacerbated with high levels of inflation and unemployment. Philip, now King of Spain, unhappy with his role as consort, Mary's inability to produce a Catholic heir and the English climate was seldom to be found in England. His agitation for a war with France, a move initially resisted by the Privy Counsel as it would be bad for trade was subsequently endorsed but resulted in an abortive invasion which led to strained relations with the Papacy, an ally of the French. The eventual result was the humiliating loss of Calais, England's sole remaining possession on the Continent. As one contemporary commentator remarked "I never saw England weaker in money, men and riches....nothing but fining, hanging, quartering and burning...A few priests ruled all." At the close of her reign Mary again thought that she was with child. She died on 17 November 1558, the 'pregnancy' proving to have been a form of cancer.

VIVAT REGINA, 1558-1582

It pleased God to send England a calme and quiet season, a cleare and lovelie sunshine, a quietus from former broiles of a turbulent estate, and a world of blessings by good queene Elisabeth: into whose gracious reigne we are now to make an happie entrance.

Raphael Holinshed, *Chronicles* 1587, Vol. 6, p1170.

Following the death of Mary, Elizabeth was duly declared Queen without opposition, the news carried posthaste to her at Hatfield House in Hertfordshire by the Earl of Pembroke, anxious, as were many of his ilk, to prove his new allegiance. Dee (probably among others), was called on to provide astrological advice for the coronation by Robert Dudley (Northampton's son and an aspiring courtier), who no doubt was keen to promote his own services to his new mistress. "Before her Majesties coronacion I wrote at large, and delivered it for her Majesties use by commandment of the Lord Robert, after Earle of Leicester, what in my judgement the ancient astrologers would determine of the election day of such a tyme, as was appointed for her Majestie to be crowned in." Dee's star was now in the ascendant. His earlier associations with the nobility were beginning to pay off. He recalls in his *Rehearsal* 'Her Majestie very graciously took me to her service, at Whitehall before her Coronation, being to her Majestie commended by the right honourable Earle of Pembroke, and the Lord Robert, after Earle of Leicester. At which tyme her Majestie used these wordes unto the said

Lords "Where my brother hath given him a crowne, I will give him a noble." (A crown had a value of one-quarter of a gold sovereign, a noble one-third).

Determined to further his studies, Dee travelled again to the Continent at the end of 1562, lodging with William Silvius, the printer at Antwerp, where he intended to continue his researches with the Dutch scholars and to seek out books for his library. He was by now on good terms with Lord Burghley, reporting back to Cecil in February the following year on the success of his journey saying that he had learnt a great deal about philosophy and had managed to acquire an exceedingly rare book – Johannes Trithemius's *Steganographia*, presumably a manuscript copy, as the work would not be published in a printed form until 1606. The first and second volumes dealt with demonic magic, the summoning of spirits and cabbalism but the third was thought to provide details of sending messages, using a secret code, couched in a language involving angels, spirits and astrological signs. An exciting find for Dee who was now developing his interest in the occult and of particular relevance to Cecil as head of the Elizabethan secret service! Dee travelled on to Zurich where in April, he visited Conrad Gesner – Swiss naturalist and bibliographer and friend of John Caius, English court physician to the Tudors. He remained in contact with Burghley, noting in his *Rehearsal* that he had received a letter from Cecil dated 28th May 1563 containing "his testimonie by letter of my well bestowing of my tyme beyond the seas". By summer of that year he was in Italy at the court of Duke Urbino which was renowned as a center of learning. (Dee's *Epistola ad eximium Ducis Urbini Mathematicum, Fredericum Commandinum* was eventually published at Pisa in 1570). He travelled on to Rome and then arrived in Pressburg in September 1563 to attend the coronation of Maximilian (King of Bohemia, son of Ferdinand I, the Holy Roman Emperor) as the new king of Hungary before returning to Antwerp in January 1564 to supervise the printing of his *Monas Hieroglyphica* which was published on the 31st of March with a dedication "Mathematically, Magically, Cabalistically and Anagogically Explained to the most wise Maximilian, King of the Romans [Germany], of Bohemia, and of Hungary." On the death of his father a few months later, Maximilian was elected Holy Roman Emperor and it is possible that Dee travelled to the Emperor's court to present a copy to him personally, claiming that his gift was "small in bulk, but of the very rarest quality." Woolley suggests that Dee probably felt it safer to dedicate the work to Maximilian who was open-minded in matters of the occult, rather than to Elizabeth whose attitude to such matters was not entirely clear. In fact, as we shall see shortly, his fears were unfounded.

He recalls that on his return to Antwerp he was called upon to attend "the Lady Marquess of Northampton." This requires a little explanation as a Marquess is of course a masculine title. In the autumn of 1564 Princess Cecilia of Sweden set out to visit England on the invitation of Elizabeth. In her retinue were six Maids of Honour, one of whom was a certain Helena Snakenborg (then aged 15). Due to hostilities with Norway and Denmark the party was forced to take a roundabout route through Finland, Livonia, Poland and Germany before embarking almost a year later from Antwerp and arriving at Dover in September 1565 where she caught the eye of William Parr, (brother of Catherine Parr) the Marquess of Northampton. (They were subsequently married in 1571). The party then travelled on to Greenwich where they met Elizabeth. As a reward for his efforts Dee was promised the Deanery of Gloucester but this failed to materialise. (He relates this episode in his *Rehearsal* written in 1592 by which time Helena would have had the title of Marchioness although it would seem that she was also then known as the "Good Lady Marquess"). While he was at Greenwich he was gratified to be able to discuss his *Monas* at length with the Queen and recorded later in the *Rehearsal* that "I must highly esteeme her Majestie's most gracious defending of my credit, in my absence beyond the seas, as concerning my booke.....against such Universitie-Graduates of high degree, and other gentlemen, who therefore dispraised it, because they understood it not."

The graduates and gentlemen were not alone. An early precursor of the 21st Century's "Theory of Everything" it has been described as "possibly the most obscure work ever written by an Englishman." The interested reader can peruse its contents by means of the several copies and explanations available on the internet. Suffice it to say that it was an attempt to weave together Dee's concepts of how astrology, the cabbala and alchemy could be combined and encapsulated in a single symbol – the *Monas*. It was his opinion that only one in a thousand dedicated philosophers might be expected to glimpse the fundamental truths of natural science whilst only one in a million would have a sufficient knowledge of things natural, especially astronomy, astrology, supracelestial virtues and metaphysical influences to grasp it properly. Its elaborate frontispiece is surmounted by the words "One who does not understand should be silent or learn," not something likely to endear him to his readers. In essence the symbol of the *Monas* consists of that for alchemical mercury, the circle representing the sun, surmounted by a supine moon and below a fourfold cross, the arms corresponding to the four elements, standing on the two horned symbol for Aries, signifying fire. Elizabeth certainly seemed to take an interest in his theories, saying "If I would disclose unto her the secretes of that booke, she would *et discere et facere* (learn and do); whereupon

her Majestie had a little perusing of the same with me, and then in most heroicall and princely wise did comfort me and encourage me in my studies philosophicall and mathematicall." This was a result Dee could only have dreamt of, for now he had the friendship of the Queen and the Royal seal of approval for his activities.

Sometime after his return Dee, aged 38, married Katherine, the widow of Thomas Constable, a London grocer. It would seem that the priestly vows of celibacy occasioned by his ordination by Bonner had lasted no longer than the reign of Queen Mary. Dee and his new bride went to live with his mother at her house at Mortlake, possibly on the death of his father. By all accounts this was an old rambling establishment standing between the church and the river. Over time Dee added to it by purchasing small adjoining properties, so that at length it comprised laboratories for his experiments, libraries and rooms for teaching and entertaining. Here he extended his growing collection of books, rare manuscripts and instruments. In 1583 when he travelled abroad with Kelley his house was entered and his property destroyed or stolen (see hereafter). In his *Rehearsal* he gives a description of its previous contents many of which he has lost or has had to replace. He says "The divers bookes of my late library, printed and anciently written, bownd and unbound, were in all neere 4000: the fourth part of which were the written bookes," and estimated their value as having been £4,000, not far off £1 million at current prices. It must be remembered that in the *Rehearsal* Dee was making a case for recompense for all his services so may well have been guilty of some exaggeration. It would appear that he had acted as an agent, buying books as a joint enterprise to be copied and handed around - saying of four books by way of example that "They cost me and my friends for me £533." These included many old documents relating to ancient Irish and Welsh history, eagerly sought after by the *nouveau riche* trying to establish a claim to an aristocratic ancestry. There are numerous lists of the contents of his library and these show that he had books on both scientific and non-scientific subjects – mathematics, Greek and classical philosophy, theology, history and poetry together with a large collection of alchemical and hermetic works including many by Raymond Lull and a copy of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, a compendium of early alchemical, astrological and hermetic texts ascribed to the legendary Hermes Trismegistus, translated into Latin by Marsilio Ficino in the 15th Century. It has been suggested that Dee was not averse to buying his books on credit and in borrowing books which he somehow forgot to return, practices which may explain in part the subsequent ransacking of his library.

Among his instruments he listed a quadrant made by Richard Chancellor which they had both used to make observations of the sun, an astronomical cross staff, two globes by

Mercator, one geographical the other celestial, sea compasses, a magnetic load stone and a "watch-clock" which measured in seconds. He says he had "three laboratories serving for *Pyrotechnia*" and describes a "great bladder with about four pound weight, of a very sweetish thing, like a brownish gum in it, artificially prepared by thirty tymes purifying of it." Dee put the repair and rebuilding together with outfitting with "furniture of vessells (some of earth, some of metall, some of glass, and some of mixed stuff)" at £200.

The house was ideally situated, having easy access to London by both road and by water and sat on routes joining the Queen's favourite residences such as Richmond House, Hampton Court and Nonsuch. Barn Elms the country seat of Francis Walsingham, Elizabeth's future secretary of State and spymaster, was near by. John Aubrey the biographer and historian records that his great grandfather William (civil lawyer and a favorite of Queen Elizabeth) and Dee were cousins and intimate acquaintances. William's country house was at Kew not very far from Mortlake and Aubrey relates that his grandmother told him they were often together. Reading through Dee's *Diary* reveals a constant flow of visitors ranging from the Queen and her entourage to the well-to-do, fellow scholars, the aristocracy, explorers and adventurers. It would seem from some of his entries that beside his advice on scientific and occult matters he was also available for consultation in legal matters.

During this period at Mortlake Dee pursued his studies, enlarged his library, consulted with fellow savants both at home and abroad and wrote on a wide range of subjects, listing in his *Rehearsal* a steady flow of books and treatises written in the following years. In January 1568 Dee presented a copy of a new edition of his *Propaedeumata Aphoristica*, previously printed ten years earlier and dedicated to Mercator, his fellow-student at Louvain, to "Mr. Secretary Cecil, now Lord Treasurer." Two copies were given at the same time to the Earl of Pembroke, one for him to use or give away at his pleasure, the other, (on Cecil's advice), to be presented by him to the Queen. In his book he set out 120 aphorisms outlining a new astrological system, using the analogy with light and magnetism to explain how the astrological influences acted and how these emanations could be focussed by means of special mirrors or lenses so as to enhance their effects. Within three days, Dee heard from Pembroke that Elizabeth had graciously accepted and well liked his book. This gratifying information was accompanied by a gift: - "He gave me very bountifully in his owne behalf £20 to requite such my reverent regard of his honour." An interview with the Queen followed on February 16, when there was talk between them in the gallery at Westminster "of the great secret for my sake to be disclosed unto her Majesty by Nicholas Grudius, sometime one of the secretaries to the Emperor Charles V." Of this secret, Dee writes after, "What was the

hinderance of the perfecting of that purpose, God best knoweth.” The nature of this secret remains unknown. Nicholas "Grudius" Everard (so called because he had been born at Louvain, the one time residence of the ancient Grudius's) was a businessman, poet and patron of scholars.

As a leading mathematician of the times he was invited to write the preface to Henry Billingsley's first English translation of Euclid's Elements which was published in 1570. He begins by proposing that all things can be divided into one of three divisions. Firstly there are those that can be classified as natural being material, divisible, corruptible and changeable. Then there are things which are supernatural, immaterial, indivisible, incorruptible and unchangeable. The natural are perceived by the senses, the supernatural by the mind. The third group, intermediate between the other two, are “things mathematical.not so absolute and excellent as things supernatural, nor yet so base and gross as things natural.” They are immaterial but pertain to the mind rather than the senses, in general form unchangeable but capable of manipulation. They are “the mercurial fruit of dianoetical discourse” i.e. intellectual thought and reasoning. He goes on to describe how the application of theoretical mathematics can be used to devise all manner of mechanical devices which to the uninitiated seem to be magical, basing much of his material on *The Vanity and Uncertainty of the Arts and Sciences* by Cornelius Agrippa (1531).

After having enlarged on this theme at some length Dee then takes the opportunity to attack those who continued to denigrate his character and achievements saying: "ought any honest student and modest Christian philosopher be counted and called a conjurer? Should the seeker after wisdom be condemned as a companion of the hell-hounds and a caller and conjurer of wicked and damned spirits?Should I, for my twenty or twenty-five years' study; for two or three thousand marks' spending; seven or eight thousand miles' going and travelling only for good learning's sake - and that in all manner of weathers; in all manner of ways and passages (both early and late); in danger of violence by man; in danger of destruction by wild beasts; in hunger; in thirst; in perilous heats by day, with toil on foot; in dangerous damps of cold by night, almost bereaving life (as God knoweth); with lodgings oft times to small ease, and sometime to less security - and for much more than all this done and suffered for learning and attaining of wisdom: should I (I pray you) for all this, no otherwise nor more warily, or (by God's mercifulness) no more luckily, have fished with so large and costly a net, so long time in drawing (and that with the help and advice of Lady Philosophy and Queen Theology), but at length to have caught and drawn up a frog? Nay, a devil? For, so doth the common, peevish prattler imagine and jangle, and so doth the

malicious scorner secretly wish and bravely and boldly face down, behind my back” and for good measure rounding it up by saying “O my unkind countrymen. O unnatural Countrymen, O unthankfull countrymen, O brainsicke, Rashe, spitefull and disdainfull countrymen. Why oppresse you me thus violently with your slaundering of me, contrary to veritie, and contrary to your own conscience? And I, to this hower, neither by worde, deede or thought, have bene anyway hurtfull, damageable, or injurious to you or yours! Have I so long, so dearly, so farre, so carefully, so painfully, so dangerously fought and travailed for the learning of wisdom and atteyning of vertue, and in the end am I become worse than when I began? Worse than a madman, a dangerous member in the Commonwealth and no Member of the Church of Christ? Call you this to be learned? Call you this to be a philosopher and a lover of wisdom?” Such recitals of how he had dedicated his life to learning despite great hardship and cost were to be a common feature of Dee's subsequent efforts to obtain some recompense for his efforts.

In 1571 Dee again travelled overseas to Lorraine, a minor Duchy in the Low Countries, recalling in his *Rehearsal* that he was granted passports by Elizabeth and the ambassadors of two other kings "for free and safe travailing" for him, two servants and their horses. The purpose of the journey, in which he was accompanied by "Mr Powell, her majesties servant," was to buy alchemical equipment. "We brought from thence one great cart lading of purposely made vessells, &c." Since this is recorded in his *Compendious Rehearsal* in which he was listing all the services that he had performed for the Crown, it is most unlikely that the state sponsored trip was just for Dee's benefit, for Elizabeth also maintained her own laboratories for the preparation of medicinal (and no doubt cosmetic) preparations. On his return he was suffering from ill-health and was tended on the Queen's instructions by two of her own physicians together with Lady Sidney "to discerne, how my health bettered, and to comfort me from her Majestie with divers very pithy speeches and gracious, and also with divers rarities to eat."

On November 11th 1572 an event occurred which caused much disturbance in scientific circles, a new star appeared in the constellation of Cassiopeia, visible even in daylight. Dee had been acting as tutor and guardian to Thomas Digges since he was nine years old and the young lad had turned into an accomplished mathematician "my most worthy mathematical heir." He was now 27 and already the author of an erudite work on geometrical solids. Together they both produced books describing their investigation of the phenomenon. Though produced by different printers they were issued as a pair as a sign of their collaboration. The observations they employed used improved methods of determining the

star's position by parallax, a means of calculating the distance of an object from the earth, as did Tycho Brahe, the eminent Danish astronomer who made his own study and reported the outcome in his *De Nova Stella*. All these results showed that the star was a distant celestial body not a phenomenon of the lower planetary spheres which vied considerably with the belief that the heavens, being God's realm were incorruptible and immutable and as such heralded a possible upheaval in world affairs and added weight to the new-fangled (and somewhat heretical) ideas of Nicholas Copernicus.

Dee was now becoming conscious that despite his scholastic acclaim and intimacy with the court he was not reaping any great financial benefit and in 1574 he wrote a letter (reproduced in Strype's *Annals*,) to Lord Burghley complaining that he had spent all his money and his time in gaining knowledge. If he had only two or three hundred pounds a year he could continue to pursue science with ease. He now suggested a way out. He proposed that he be given by Letters Patent the right for life to seek out and retrieve buried treasure the proceeds from which he would share with Cecil and the Queen. He said that he had spent twenty years thinking about this, prompted by the numerous consultations he has had regarding dreams and visitations, pointing out that during Henry's dissolution of the monasteries valuables had been buried quickly to prevent them being seized. Dee provided a map of ten localities marked with crosses where he believed treasure could be found. Not only this but he could search for new veins of silver and gold. "I can at my own cost and charge to discover and deliver true proofe of a myne, vayn, or ore of gold or silver, in some place of her Grace's kingdom." The proposal fell on deaf ears and Dee had no response.

After some ten years of presumably childless marriage his wife Katherine died on the 10th of March 1575. To add to his distress, just four hours after attending his wife's burial, the Queen and her Privy Council arrived at his house with the intention of looking at his library. In the circumstances he says "her Majestie refused to come in; but willed me to fetch my glass so famous, and to shew unto her some properties of it, which I did; her Majestie being taken downe from her horse (by the Earle of Leicester, Master of the horse, by the Church wall of Mortlack), did see some of the properties of that glass, to her Majestie's great contentment and delight, and so in most gracious manner did thank me." This is rather illustrative of the relationship between the Court and the "Queen's Philosopher"! There are constant references to Dee's glass and not some little confusion as to whether he is referring to some form of telescope – his perspective glass or to one of the mirrors which he was experimenting with.

Unfortunately the patronage of the Queen and her court was not enough to stop the attacks on Dee and in the same year he records the start of his problems with a Vincent Murphyn: "his abhominable misusing me behind my back," (apparently forging documents in Dee's name). Murphyn was not the only one causing him such problems and on April 28th of 1578 he records that "I caused Sir Rowland Haywood to examyn Francys Baily of his Sklandering me, which he denied utterly," and in November 1580 he "delivered Mr Williams, the person (parson) of Tendring, a lettre of attorney agaynst one White of Colchester for a sklaundre." Murphyn continued to be a nuisance, and on September 14th 1580 Dee records that he began an action against him at the Court of Guildhall and was awarded judgment and £100 damages in October. He subsequently agreed to Murphyn's release in February 1581. Nothing else is known of Murphyn except for an account given by John Strype in his *Annals of the Reformation* in which he relates that in 1582 a Vincent Murphyn was imprisoned after alleging a treasonable plot by Sir Walter Hastings and many other noblemen to facilitate a Spanish led invasion of England via Ireland with the object of putting Mary Queen of Scots on the throne. He admitted that he was involved in the rebellion with a role that involved counterfeiting money to pay the troops, using magic to create damage and of "conjuring" to foretell its outcome. While in the King's Bench prison he came into contact with Clement Draper who with some like-minded fellow inmates was passing the time by investigations into "everything from purges and remedies for minor ailments to the philosopher's stone and the transmutation of metals" (Deborah Harkness, *The Jewel House*). Murphyn implicated Draper and his friends in the same plot. His defense was that he had infiltrated the plotters merely to expose them. The whole sham was blown out of the water when a large collection of forged documents were discovered in his possessions including a number of pieces of paper on which he had been practicing the signatures not only of the alleged conspirators but also Lord Burghley himself!

Some three years after the death of his first wife Dee married again, on 5th February 1578 to Jane Fromond. His new bride aged twenty two, daughter of Bartholomew Fromond of East Cheam, was one of the ladies-in-waiting of Lady Katherine Howard, the wife of Charles Howard the Lord Admiral who in 1588 was to lead the English fleet against the Spanish Armada. As we shall see Lady Howard, an intimate friend of Queen Elizabeth, remained a staunch ally of Dee thereafter. It is perhaps a little strange that Jane, aged 22 and an excellent prospect for an aspiring courtier should have accepted the proposal of a fifty year old with a somewhat dubious reputation. None-the-less she did and remained with him for the rest of her life, through thick and (mainly) thin. The marriage was greatly to Dee's

advantage, strengthening his relationship at Elizabeth's court. He records a visit by Elizabeth Fromond on July 14th of that year, referring to her as "my sister" and went to Cheyham (Cheam) on August 31st to see his father-in-law.

In 1577 the appearance of a comet created further astronomical consternation, following as it did on the heels of the nova of 1572. Dee was summoned to Windsor to give his opinion to Elizabeth, staying there for three days and managing to allay the fears of the Court that this presaged some dire calamity. Despite the encouragement of the Queen and Court for his activities others continued to find them sinister and he continued to be subjected to attacks on his character and inclinations. While he was at Windsor he managed to extract a promise from the Queen of "great security against any of her kingedome, that would, by reason of any my rare studies and philosophical exercises, unduly seeke my overthrow." He goes on to say that he then made her "a very faithful and inviolable promise of great importance," of which the first part had been carried out and the second part "may in due tyme be performed, if my plat [plan] for the meanes be not misused or defaced." Dee's services were called upon again the following year when he was summoned by the Privy Council to investigate a wax image of the Queen stuck with pig's bristles which had been discovered in Lincoln Inn fields and thought to be evidence of an occult attack aimed at Elizabeth. He says that he was able to deal with the matter in a few hours "in godly and artificiall manner" although insisting that Mr Secretary Wilson was in attendance as a witness that he was not employing black magic.

During 1578 the Queen was unwell, suffering from "grievous pangs and paines by reason of toothake and the rheume." Both Dee and his wife were in attendance at Richmond where she was holding court, Dee recording on October 16th that "Dr Bayley (the Royal Physician) conferred of the Queen her disease". On the 28th Dee was summoned back to court by the Earl of Leicester and after further consultation with Dr Bayley they dispatched him on the 4th of November on "My very painefull and dangerous winter journey, about a thousand five hundred myles by sea and land....to consult with the learned physitians and philosophers beyond the seas for her Majesties health-recovering and preserving," providing him with a passport and allowing him only 100 days to accomplish it. He travelled into Germany arriving at Hamburg on 14th November and Frankfurt-on-Oder by 11th December. While he was there he met with Leonard Thurneysser an acknowledged expert in the areas of chemistry, metallurgy, botany, mathematics, astronomy and medicine, presumably to discuss possible remedies, noting in his *Diary* on the 15th of December "News of Turniser's coming

by a special messenger." Presumably he returned within his allotted time for there follow diary entries for March and April 1579 recording the English weather.

Jane Dee was now in the seventh month of her first pregnancy and Dee must have had some concerns, writing on the 4th of May that "Perhaps conception took place in the womb because of less movement and exertion [by the foetus]." His worries no doubt were assuaged for eight days later he notes that "The infant in the womb started turning in different directions." Soon after his return his mother made the necessary arrangements to have the Mortlake property put in his name. A month later on 13th July, Jane gave birth to a son, named Arthur; the same night that her father suffered a stroke dying in the early hours of the following morning. Arthur was duly baptised on the 16th, Edward Dyer and Dr Lewis, Judge of the Admiralty standing as Godfathers and Lady Blanche Parry of the Privy Chamber as a godmother.

In June he records that he was host to a Mr Skidmore, his wife and daughter and the Queen's dwarf Mrs. Thomasin. Jane accompanying Mrs. Skidmore to Court the next day. This would be John Scudamore and his wife Mary who was distantly related to the Queen and a member of Elizabeth's privy chamber since 1574. She was a friend of both Blanch Parry and the Countess of Warwick "a trinity of ladies able to work miracles." Through his wife Jane, Dee obviously had some particularly influential friends!

Money matters continued to be pressing and it would seem that Dee had been forced to borrow to meet his financial needs and his creditors were after him for repayment. For example in October he received from "Sir Lionel Duckett his unkind letter for money." It is possible that he was attempting to alleviate things by taking in pupils for he records that "Goodman Hilton requested me for his 2 sonnes to resort to my howse." and that a Mr Lock brought his two sons, Benjamin and Zacharie to him. This was Michael Lok, who we will meet with later in connection with Frobisher's ill-fated expeditions which had resulted in his being imprisoned in the Fleet for debt. In this case De may well have been looking after the two lads as an act of charity. Lok's son Benjamin seems to have developed some interest in alchemy for in 1658 Dr Thomas Browne offered to lend Elias Ashmole a number of manuscripts which he had from Arthur Dee which included Benjamin Lock's *Picklock unto Ripley's Castle*.

Life continued pretty much the same for Dee and his family during the following years. June 7th 1581 saw the birth of another daughter, Katherine. Mary Scudmore was again among the godparents together with Lady Katherine Crofts, wife of Sir James Crofts, comptroller of the Royal household. A son Roland was born eighteen months later, being

baptised on February 2nd 1583. His *Diary* continues to record the comings and goings of his visitors who no doubt required consultation on both the mundane and the esoteric. In 1582 Dee was asked to prepare his comments regarding the Gregorian reform of the Julian calendar (now some ten days adrift) which had been introduced by Papal decree on 28th February of that year. He produced *An Advice and discourse for her Majestie about the Reformation of the vulgar Julian year, by her Majesties and the right honourable Council their commandment*, recommending that odd days be taken from the ends of the months May to August to eliminate the discrepancy and delivering it to Lord Burghley on 26th February 1583. On March 25th Burghley supported the proposal on expert advice (Dee's protégé Thomas Digges) but in the face of common concern that this was a Popish plot to restore Catholicism the innovation was never taken up (and not implemented in England until 1752). His enthusiasm for carrying out his allotted task was unfortunately to rebound to his great misfortune. In 1576 Elizabeth had told the Archbishop of Canterbury "That..... I should, during my lyfe natural, be dispensed with to enjoy those two rectories of Upton and Long Lednam" with which he had been gifted. The bureaucratic wheels had been slowly turning ever since and the necessary document authorising this was not finalised until 1582. Unfortunately Dee was so taken up with preparing his proposal that he neglected to have the Great Seal appended to it and so lost the income. A Mr Eton of London wasted no time in coming with his son-in-law, Edward Bragden, to ask that Dee either resign the parsonage of Upton or else to let it to the young man. Dee dissembled, promising to let Bragden know if he was likely to consider vacating it, in fact he spent the rest of his life trying to regain its revenues.

BIRTH OF AN EMPIRE, 1558-1583.

*Heart of oak are our ships, jolly tars are our men,
We always are ready; steady, boys, steady!
We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again.*

Music by Dr. William Boyce, words by the English actor David Garrick. (1759)

In 1295 Marco Polo returned to his native Venice together with his father and uncle at the conclusion of a 24 year, 15,000 mile epic adventure across Asia to China and the Far East, returning by sea around India. His account of their journey became a best-seller and overland trade was established. When, as a result of the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453, the land route to Asia became much more difficult and dangerous,

Portuguese navigators under the leadership of King John II sought to reach Asia by sailing around Africa. Major progress in this quest was achieved in 1488, when Bartolomeu Dias reached the tip of what is now South Africa and Vasco de Gama subsequently rounded the Cape and in 1498 reached Calicut in India, returning with a valuable cargo of pepper and cinnamon and establishing a virtual monopoly of the spice trade for decades to come. At the same time Christopher Columbus set out to achieve the same end but by sailing westward, making landfall somewhere in the Bahamas. Despite his initial belief that he had reached the 'Indies' it was soon recognised that an immense continental barrier blocked easy access to the Pacific Ocean and the lands beyond. The Italian navigator and explorer John Cabot, under the commission of Henry VII of England, set out in 1497 seeking a more northerly route than Columbus. Within a few years of Cabot's voyage the existence of fishing grounds on the Newfoundland Grand Banks became generally known in Europe. Ships from France and Portugal were first to fish there, followed by those from Spain while ships from England were scarce in the early years. England, despite being an island nation had sadly lagged behind her continental rivals in both the practice and theory of seamanship.

Spain and Portugal, united under Philip and with the blessings of Pope Alexander VI divided the whole of the new continent between themselves, concentrating on Central and Southern America and ignoring the less attractive northern hemisphere where the rest of Europe struggled to establish settlements in the face of an inhospitable climate and hostile natives. Exploration and exploitation of South America by the likes of Cortes, Pizaro and their fellow conquistadors in the early 16th century revealed a land rich in gold and silver, filled with new flora and fauna and with indigenous populations in various stages of civilisation, wholly ignorant of God's grace and an easy prey for the invaders.

England's response was to seek a passage to the Far East through the icy perils of northern routes either to the east around the top of Russia or to the west through the impenetrable jumble of islands and seaways between North America and the arctic wastes. On his return to England in 1551 Dee's association with the Continental cartographers and his new knowledge of the science of navigation paid dividends. This was information not otherwise readily available in England and with time he was to become an acknowledged expert to whom reference could be made in such matters. When, in 1553 a syndicate of noblemen, courtiers and merchants financed a voyage to investigate the possibility of a north-east passage to Japan and China headed by Sir Hugh Willoughby, their pilot-general Richard Chancellor lost no time in turning to Dee for help in preparing the necessary charts for the forthcoming voyage. In short order he presented him with *The Astronomicall and logistical*

rules, and Canons, to calculate the Ephemerides by, and other necessary accounts of heavenly motions: written at the request, and for the use of that excellent Mechanicien Maister Richard Chauncelor. The expedition set out on 22nd May 1553. There were failures and successes. Willoughby was lost at sea but Chancellor managed to reach what is now Archangel and then travelled on overland to Moscow where he managed to obtain the Tsar's agreement to allow Anglo-Russian trade, returning to England in 1554. As a result the Muscovy Company was set up and with Chancellor in charge a second expedition was sent to make the necessary arrangements and to explore further to the east. Unfortunately the returning fleet, carrying rich cargoes and the Tsar's representative, was struck with disaster, all of the ships but one being lost on the way home. Chancellor drowned trying to save the Ambassador's life in a shipwreck on the Northumberland coast.

English interest waned somewhat after this set-back until it was revived by Martin Frobisher in 1574. Frobisher had a history of neer-do-well, having served several prison sentences for priveteering. In that year he got together with Michael Lok, a member of the Mercer's Company and the London agent of the Muscovy Company. Together they formulated a plan to look for an alternative route to the fabled Cathay, this time by a north-west route around the top of America. Lok was to record in his account of the proposed expedition that when Dee heard of their plans and "favoring this enterprise in respect of the service and commodity of his naturall cuntry" he approached him in May 1576 offering his services. A meeting was arranged at Lok's house with Frobisher and other interested parties at which Lok "layd before him my bokes and authors, my cardes and instruments, and my notes therof made in writing, as I had made them of many yeres study before." Dee was sufficiently enamoured that he produced his own maps and documents and offered to instruct the ships' masters in navigation and cosmography.

They managed to win the support of the Privy Council and persuaded the Muscovy Company to grant them a license and the use of two small ships. Shareholders, including William Cecil and a number of notable nobles were persuaded to subscribe a total of £875 with Lok having to make a contribution of £100 out of his own pocket. The tiny expedition, numbering no more than 34 souls, set out in June 1576 with Frobisher as leader. One ship was forced to return early but Frobisher made some headway in exploration, returning home with a captive Inuit Indian but more importantly with a lump of black rock which rumour quickly portrayed as containing gold and silver. How this came about is clouded in mystery. The popular, if rather fanciful, story is that provided by George Best in his *A True Discourse* published in 1578. Best had not actually sailed with Frobisher but sailed with him as

lieutenant and then Captain in subsequent voyages. He claimed that Frobisher's wife having first thrown the ore onto a fire then took it out and washed it with vinegar upon which the glitter of gold could be seen. Rather more detail of the ensuing furor is provided by James Stuart Campbell in his MA thesis *The Alchemical Patronage of Sir William Cecil, Lord Burghley* and in Vilhjelmur Stefansson's *The Three Voyages of Martin Frobisher*."

Initially assays dismissed the material as being only either marcasite or pyrites (both forms of iron sulphide) but then, for reasons unknown but possibly suspect, Lok gave a piece to an Italian alchemist Giovanni Baptista Agnello who within three days told him that he had in fact been able to extract gold from it and suggested that his success was due to the employment of alchemical methods, making the remark that he "knew how to better nature." Edward Dyer became involved but could detect only traces of silver, a result that persuaded Walsingham, to whom he reported, that there was no truth in the claims. Others however, including Burghley, were convinced and when Agnello joined forces with a German metallurgist called Schutz and they announced that the ore apparently contained recoverable gold to the value of £210 per ton plans for further exploration were abandoned and another expedition was put together to bring back more of the mysterious ore. This was to be England's chance of an Eldorado, a counterbalance to the riches now arriving back from the South American mines to Spain and Portugal. The potential investors in such a seemingly lucrative enterprise petitioned the Queen and were granted a license of incorporation as the Company of Cathay, its members becoming known as the "Adventurers of the North-West." and Lok being appointed as Governor for life.

A few of the promoters of the first voyage declined to provide further funds but a 16th Century mini South Sea Bubble soon developed as others clamoured to be able to invest and a sum of £4,275 was raised. Major investors included Cecil, Leicester and Walsingham (despite his reservations). Sir Philip Sidney subscribed to the tune of £200, expressing the view that the discovery was likely to surpass the quantities of precious metals being mined in Peru. The Queen's contribution of several vessels was estimated to be worth over £4000. Dee was among a number of small investors who put up £25 each and was given the position of "Commissioner for the Assaying of ore from the North West."

The second voyage of 26th May 1577 brought back a further 160 tonnes of the ore which was subjected to a series of assays to test its value. Agnello had now been replaced by Elizabeth's doctor Burchard Kranich who immediately fell out with his fellow countryman Schutz with mutual accusations of ignorance and falsification. They did however manage to agree that the results showed some promise despite samples which had been placed with

several of the London goldsmiths being declared as worthless. Although this was not particularly encouraging the investors were becoming increasingly anxious to see a return on their outlay and chose to ignore the warning signs. A fleet of fifteen ships set out just a year later bringing back another 1370 tonnes of rock to a special water-powered blast furnace and smelting works built at Dartford by Lok for their reception. The results of further analysis showed the material to be worthless and the whole enterprise disintegrated into a squabble over its debts. Overall costs were estimated to be twice the figure expected with the loss of two ships, about 22 boats and pinnaces and some 24 lives. The investors were now responsible for the debts incurred. There is an entry in Lok's accounts which records that he paid £2152 "and in the name of John Dee £417."

Lok, who had acted as treasurer was subjected to a series of lawsuits, bankrupted and imprisoned and in turn accused Frobisher of corruption and embezzlement. There was a suspicion that he had been unable to find any more of the black ore and had simply loaded up his ships with any likely-looking rocks that he could find. In an attempt to recoup their losses of about £20,000 the Cathay Company authorised a fourth voyage which set out in May 1582. Frobisher was replaced by Edward Fenton and the intention was that it was to be purely to establish trade, travelling via the tip of South America. In January 1583 it was intercepted by armed Spanish ships off Brazil and forced to return home empty handed. Unable to meet its obligation the Company was declared bankrupt and wound up. The fiasco did nothing to help Dee's already precarious financial state and as a result of his involvement in the preparation for the voyages and a role in the analysis of the ore he may well have suffered a severe blow to his reputation.

In parallel with his interests in navigation and English sea-power Dee had begun writing a series of works in 1576 to be entitled "*General and Rare Memorials pertayning to the perfect art of Navigation.*" The first of these *The British Monarchy, (The petie Navy Royall)* with a dedication to Sir Christopher Hatton (vice-chamberlain of the royal household) proposed the establishment of a fleet of at least sixty ships, suitably equipped and manned by soldiers who would thereby become trained as a marine force. It would be used to map out the coast, sounding channels and harbours and to protect merchant shipping and the English fisheries. The second volume, "*The British Complement of the perfect art of Navigation*" was never published as Dee was unable to secure the funds necessary for the cost of printing its numerous tables and figures. It contained a description of Dee's "paradoxall compass" which he had devised in 1557. This and his "compass of variation" were intended as aids to overcome the divergence between true and magnetic north, a particular problem in arctic

regions. Although believed by some authors to have been mechanical devices they are identified by Robert Baldwin as having been circumpolar sea charts showing the degree of variation. There is no trace of a third work which contained matter so secret that for the present it was to be "utterly suppressed, or delivered to Vulcan his custody." This, like the fourth volume, *"The Great Volume of Famous and Rich Discoveries"* which was to contain a hydrographical survey of the whole world and set out Elizabeth as the rightful owner to "very large forreine dominions" was never published.

English encroachment in North America was beginning to cause repercussions with the Spanish and Dee was called on to try to establish that England had some prior claim to these northern lands. In late November 1577 he travelled to Windsor to meet with the Queen and over a period of three days talked to her and Secretary Walsingham (one of Dee's best patrons) on his conclusions, based on voyages of exploration supposedly carried out in the time of King Arthur, that her Majesty had a claim to Greenland, Estetiland (Newfoundland) and Friseland. He spent the next few years researching this and recalls that on 17th of September 1580 the Queen passing through Mortlake, paused outside his house and called him to come to her. "She very speedily pulled off her glove and gave me her hand to kiss, and to be short, asked me to resort to her court, and to give her wete [wit – advice] when I cam ther." Dee duly did so; arriving at Richmond on 3rd October where in the garden he presented two rolls containing his opinion as to her right of title to lands in the northern regions. He was subsequently summoned to the Queen's private apartment where he was further interviewed on the topic, this time with Cecil, the Lord Treasurer in attendance. Lord Burghley seemed unimpressed with Dee's claims and he examined Dee more closely over the next two days. Dee suffered further discouragement when on the 7th he came to Burghley's chamber to see him but was refused admittance and when Cecil came out he was ignored by him. It is possible that Burghley was anxious not to embroil the Queen in endeavours which might result in friction with Spain whereas Dee was an enthusiastic proponent of an expanding sphere of British influence supported by an enlarged and strengthened Royal Navy. No doubt Dee left for Mortlake considerably discouraged and not a little put out. His woes increased for on the 10th his mother, aged 77 died in the early hours of the morning. In an amazing coincidence, echoing the death of his first wife, the Queen arrived at his door and "graciously calling me to her, on horsbak, exhorted me briefly to take my mother's death patiently, and withall told me that the Lord Threasorer had gretly commended my doings for her title, which he had to examyn." Presumably Cecil, perhaps with a little Royal persuasion,

felt it best to be reconciled with Dee for on 2nd November he sent him a haunch of venison! None-the-less the episode had created an antipathy which remained with Dee thereafter.

The same year saw the start of a voyage which was to epitomize English seamanship and derring-do. Elizabeth sent off Francis Drake on an expedition to raid Spanish shipping along the Pacific coast of the Americas. He sailed on the 13th of December 1577 aboard the *Pelican* with four other ships and 164 men following in the footsteps of Ferdinand Magellan's epic voyage of some 50 years before. The Atlantic crossing and the perils of the passage around the tip of South America were such that Drake and his crew were the only ones to reach the Pacific. He sailed north; his ship now renamed the *Golden Hind*, attacking Spanish ports and capturing Spanish treasure ships, eventually reaching what is now modern California to restock and carry out repairs, claiming the land for the English Crown. Heading west he reached Indonesia travelled south to round Africa and sailed back into Plymouth on the 26th of September 1580, laden down with gold, silver and spices, the first Englishman to have circumnavigated the globe. The Queen's half share of the proceeds exceeded the rest of the crown's income for that entire year. Not unexpectedly Drake was knighted but Elizabeth ordained that the maps and details of his voyage were to be secrets of the Realm and all participants sworn to secrecy on pain of death.

At much the same time Dee became involved in a project with Humphrey Gilbert a noted explorer and bloodthirsty soldier, the half-brother of Walter Raleigh noting that on November 6th 1577 "Sir Umfrey Gilbert cam to me at Mortlake." Gilbert had petitioned the Queen for a commission to look for a north-west passage to the Far East in 1565 but this had been frustrated when he was unable to agree terms with the Muscovy Company. In 1577 he was pursuing a project to establish an English colony in the West Indies with the purpose of attacking Spanish shipping as it returned laden down with riches from South America. Dee records that on August 5th 1578 "Mr Raynolds of Bridewell tok his leave of me as he passed toward Dartmouth to go with Sir Umfrey Gilbert toward Hocheleya". Hochelaga was the native name for what was to become the site of Montreal in Canada. Gilbert had finally obtained a patent from Elizabeth in June that entitled him to look for new lands which he could "have, hold, occupy and enjoy, his heires and assignee, and every of them for ever, all the soyle of all such lands, countries, & territories so to be discovered or possessed as aforesaid, and of all Cities, Castles, Townes and Villages, and places in the same." In return for which the Queen would receive "the fifth part of all the oare of gold and silver, that from time to time, and at all times after such discoverie, shall be there gotten." Gilbert sailed

on September 26th but was forced back into port by bad weather. He set out again on November 19th but the voyage was aborted and he returned to England in February of 1579.

Dee was also involved with plans for further exploration of a north-east passage to the Far East and on May 17th 1580 that he was "at the Moscovy howse for the Cathay voyage." Hakluyt in his *Principal Voyages* provides a description of the detailed written instructions for attempting this route which Dee gave to the two ship masters (pilots) Charles Jackman and Arthur Pett together with a new chart "more exact than any yet published." They left from Harwich on the 30th of May in two small ships with a total crew of fourteen men and two ship's boys. Although they made good progress their way was eventually blocked by ice. Making their way home Pett returned to England on the 26th of December, Jackman staying behind in Norway and then setting off with some Danes for Iceland, never to be seen again. Dee's *Diary* contains an entry for March 23rd the following year when he had a meeting with "Hugh Smyth who had returned from Magellan Straits and Vaygatz." Smith had travelled with Jackman and Pett and was writing an account of the voyage. Vaygach Island lying in the Barents Sea between the southern tip of Novaya Zemlya and the Russian mainland marked the furthest to the east that they had managed to reach. The reference to the Straits of Magellan is somewhat puzzling.

Dee's involvement with Sir Humphrey Gilbert's proposed exploration of North America had continued and he now looked for suitable recompense recording in his *Diary* on August 28th 1580 a brief note "my dealings with Sir Humfrey Gilbert for his graunt of discovery," and then on September 10th "Sir Humfrey Gilbert graunted my request to him, made by letter, for the royalties of discovery all to the North above the parallel of the 50 degree of latitude, in the presence of Stoner, Sir John Gilbert [Humphrey's brother] his servant or reteiner; and thereuppon toke me by the hand with faithfull promises in his lodging of John Cooke's howse in Wichcross strete, where we dyned onely us three together, being Satterday." On the face of it, this seems an extremely generous reward for Dee's advice and help, however even more appeared to be forthcoming. Gilbert himself set sail in June 1583 with a crew of misfits, criminals and pirates. One of the ships, - the *Bark Raleigh*, owned and commanded by Raleigh himself - had to turn back owing to lack of victuals but the remainder reached Newfoundland which Gilbert claimed for the Crown on the 5th of August. Lack of supplies meant that he was forced to return and he was lost when his ship went down in a storm on the 9th of September.

When Humphrey Gilbert had first solicited approval for his plan to colonise North America he had been part of a consortium of some twenty interested backers. One of these

was Sir George Peckham who, with others helped finance his 1578 voyage hoping that the proposed colonies would provide a refuge for his fellow Catholics. He again assisted Gilbert in planning his second voyage with the advice of Dee and Richard Hakluyt but then decided, with a fellow Catholic, Sir William Gerrard to mount their own expedition to settle some 8.5 million acres of land which had been assigned to them by Gilbert. In June 1582 letters of intent were drafted and Martin Frobisher named as one of the commanders. Peckham and Gerard approached Dee in July, anxious to know whether the enterprise would cause problems with the agreement between Spain and Portugal, (which had Papal blessing), to divide up the New World between themselves. "cam Sir George Peckham to me to know the tittle for Norombega in respect of Spayn and Portugall parting the whole world's distilleries. He promysed me of his gift and of his patient.....of the new conquest, and thought to get so moche of Mr Gerardes gift to be sent me with seale within a few days." On Dee's assurance that it would not be an issue he was promised some 10,000 acres of land in Norumbega (the area which was to become New York) from their parcel. In 1583 Sir Philip Sidney joined with them having been granted three million acres by Gilbert for himself. Their plans were disrupted with Gilbert's death; the Queen forbade Sidney (one of her favourites) to go and Dee's advice proved to be wrong when Spain objected to the violation of her claims to the New World. Financial backing disappeared and Gilbert's patent was inherited by Sir Walter Raleigh, his half-brother, whose attempt at colonisation were not to be entirely successful

1583 also saw Dee much taken up with plans for another expedition to hunt for the elusive north-west passage through to the Pacific. On January 23rd Walsingham came to Mortlake where he found Adrian Gilbert "and so talk was begonne of North-west Straights discovery." The following day Dee, Gilbert, John Davys and Walsingham met again and an agreement was made regarding the necessary charts and routes. Davys, longtime friend of the Gilberts and Drake, was one of England's chief navigators and explorers and instigator of the project to follow up on Martin Frobisher's earlier exploration of the Canadian coast. Further meetings with Gilbert, Davys and potential backers of the expedition were held later in the month. On March 6th Dee records that "I, and Mr Adrian Gilbert and John Davis did mete with Mr Alderman Barnes, Mr Townson and Mr Yong and Mr Hudson abowt the N.W. voyage." and on March 17th "Mr John Davys went to Chelsey with Mr Adrian Gilbert to Mr Radforth's, and so the 18th day from thence toward Devonshyre." John Davys (or Davis), boyhood friend of the Gilberts and Raleigh was another noted Elizabethan seaman, explorer and protagonist of a northwest passage although it was not until 1585 that he managed to

obtain sufficient funding. He was later to fight against the Armada and is credited with the discovery of the Falkland Islands.

Although the expansion of English sea power and the birth of the concept of a British Empire cannot be solely credited to John Dee there is little doubt that he played a major role in facilitating those who brought those events to pass.

ALCHEMY, ACTIONS AND ANGELS, 1558-1582

Some things have to be believed to be seen.

Ralph Hodgson

Elizabeth inherited a kingdom from her sister with a legacy of inflation and debt running back to the reign of her father and brother during which the coinage had been steadily debased by the addition of silver and copper. In the early years of her reign the adulterated coins were recalled and a reissue made with an improved purity but the influx of gold and silver from South America had reduced the real value of these precious metals, leading to inflation. The situation had improved by around 1576 but the build up of Spanish aggression once again put the pressure on Elizabeth and Burghley, the Lord Treasurer to find the means to bolster English finances. Alchemical transmutation of base metals into precious metals was not seen at this time as a nonsense but a logical progression of the existing theories of natural philosophy, albeit a practice requiring a government license. "Coining" – the fraudulent debasement of gold and silver by adding other metals was, naturally considered a crime and was dealt with harshly. As a means of fostering development in this area the government encouraged proposals from likely candidates and laboratories were set up at Somerset House and the Tower of London where such experiments could be monitored.

The alchemist Thomas Charnock presented such a proposal in 1565 in his *'Booke dedicated unto the queenes maiestie'* but a time scale of some fourteen years to achieve the production of gold in substantial amounts probably was one of the factors which saw him loose out to a counter proposal by the Dutchman Cornelius de Lannoy who in the same year outbid him with a rival offer of 50,000 marks worth of gold and precious stones annually. Cornelius's failure to come through and his conniving with foreign agents led to his fall from grace and Elizabeth's subsequent disillusionment with alchemical matters although Burghley retained his belief in the viability of such projects. James Stuart Campbell in his MA thesis *The Alchemical Patronage of Sir William Cecil, Lord Burghley* describes him as "A man

deeply enthusiastic about alchemy in many forms, from philosophy and medicine through to industrial metallurgy." A contemporary of Dee, Richard Eden, another Cambridge scholar, with interests in alchemy was made private secretary to Cecil in 1552, possibly to vet the steady influx of applications for government funding for alchemical experiments. There is however no record of Dee, always short of funds, ever having made any similar proposal in this area.

Cecil's determination to find methods of bolstering the country's finances is illustrated by his involvement in a scheme by William Medley to produce valuable copper from cheap and readily available iron. The process entailed boiling copper ore with sulphuric acid and then adding scrap iron. Although this may have appeared at the time to have smacked of alchemy it is in fact a perfectly feasible chemical operation in which dissolved iron precipitates metallic copper from solution. Initially Medley demonstrated the technique to Sir Thomas Smith (a friend of John Cheke) and Sir Humphrey Gilbert whose brother Adrian may have effected the introduction. Interest was aroused in a number of influential backers including Cecil, Walsingham, Leicester, Dyer and Henry Sidney who combined to form the Society of the New Art and obtained a patent from the Crown. The project soon ran into problems. The high price of the acid rendered the process economically unviable and squabbles over finances and patent rights resulted in a general falling out of the participants. Medley became the scapegoat and imprisoned. After his release interest was revived when he was able to demonstrate a cheaper version using copper sulphate rich water escaping from deposits of copper ore in Mount Parys in Anglesey. The operation was transferred to Poole in Dorset where part of the facilities used by Lord Mountjoy for the preparation of alum was leased to scale up the process. By 1575 the project had again ground to a halt as a result of intrigue, rancor and mismanagement and Medley was once more incarcerated. It is interesting to note that despite his apparent expertise in such matters Dee was not invited to participate.

Despite the suggestions of some biographers, the extent to which Dee was conducting alchemical experiments at Mortlake is something of a mystery. Calder notes that the first dateable evidence for Dee's interest in this field is a note he made in 1556 of over 50 alchemical works he had read and a manuscript which he had annotated with many cross references to other authors, such as Albertus Magnus and Raymond Lully. Although this demonstrates that he was familiar with the theoretical background there is really no documentary evidence to suggest that Dee was engaged in practical work seriously aimed at the transmutation of metals or producing either the philosopher's stone or the elixir of life.

While he may have dabbled in some sort of chemical experimentation in the years before he met Kelley, it would not appear to have been with the great degree of enthusiasm required of a dedicated practitioner of the art, which required long, patient hours engaged in the countless solutions, circulations and calcinations required in the tedious steps of preparing the Philosopher's Stone. The same conclusion was reached by A. E. Waite who in the preface to his collection of *The Alchemical Writings of Edward Kelley* says of Dee "No doubt he knew something of chemistry....but he was not an alchemist." In a similar vein, Josten in his paper on Dee's *Monas Hieroglyphica* quotes from some notes by a Mr Townsend sent to Elias Ashmole after the publication, in 1652 of his collection of alchemical writings, the *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*, expressing the opinion that. "By divers relations which I have heard, I am induced to beleieve that he understood nether the true Theory nor Manual Operation of the great work." In his book Ashmole includes a copy of a letter in verse, attributed to Dee (*Testamentum Johannis Dee Philosophi Summi*), addressed to a John Gwynn in 1568, seemingly following a request for information, which contains only alchemical doggerel:

"Cut that in three, which Nature hath made One,
Then strengthen hyt, even by itself alone,
Wherewith then cutte the poudred Sonne in twayne,
By length of tyme, and heale the woonde againe."
etc., etc.

Fenton remarks (as Ashmole states in a footnote), that there are two extant manuscript accounts by Dee of his experiments written in 1581. The first, on the 24th of July, describes a chemical process, but whether this was intended to be an experiment in alchemy is debatable. The procedure he records is not clear but it would seem to be as follows. He began by treating silver with an excess of aqua fortis (nitric acid) and pouring off the hot solution into a second vessel. As this cooled, material settled out (silver nitrate crystals). The residue in the reaction vessel was then washed with water and the washings added to the separated solution together with some dilute aqua fortis. Dee decided that this was too strong and added a large quantity of rain water. He must have been expecting that this would produce a precipitate of solid but recorded that "this would not strike it down until there was put thereon strawberry water of the sea which did presently strike it down." The nature of the later component is unclear but could well be salt water which would have produced a precipitate of silver

chloride. The aqueous layer was then decanted off and the residue dried, then more rain water added and the mixture boiled. This step was repeated and the remaining solid finally dried again. Dee attempted to "prove" a small portion of the product (i.e. determine its quality) by heating it, but found that it merely turned into a glass (possibly a melt of silver nitrate and chloride). He lost a further quantity by "setting it in naked fire." He continued warming what he had left but by the 18th decided that the heat was insufficient and so increased his fire. Over the next two weeks he recorded only that it became covered with cracks as "the ground doth in summer with heat of the sun." By this time the precipitated silver chloride is likely to have started to decompose back to impure silver powder.

The second experiment covers the period 19th of August to the 2nd of September which he carried out in the company of a Mr. Harry Waters. This would seem to be a separate experiment rather than a continuation of the first as he starts by setting out "7oz and 1/2 of pure air for to circulate in balneo". The balneo was a water bath, the bain marie of modern cooks which allowed for the constant heat of hot or boiling water to be applied to the alchemical vessel. The 'pure air' is possibly either an acid obtained from distillation or more likely alcohol. After three days the process had abated and they prepared for the next stage "At the first day of September it did no more ascend, as it did the first day of setting it into balneum: although it had a very smart heat of the balneum in the end: and therefore Mr Harry Waters took it out and set it in the cupboard, ready for to make connection. But the potter had been too slack with the furnace's baking." The process having failed "Mr Harry Waters went away the 2 day malcontent." Although interesting, this cannot be construed as being alchemical and might well have been an attempt at preparing something of a medicinal nature. As already noted he recounted in his *Diary* in 1579 that he showed John Lewis and his son, a physician, the manner of drawing aromatic oils, presumably for use in medical preparations. It would seem that at this time he was also conducting some private trials on the material which Frobisher had brought back and which had proved to be so worthless.

It is undeniably true that there were rooms at Mortlake which were equipped for this sort of work. In his *Compendious Rehearsal* Dee claimed that he had three laboratories serving for "Pyrotechnia" i.e. equipped with furnaces and other heating equipment and it would seem that he employed assistants to work in them and may have charged others to work under his direction. His input may well have been no more than the provision of alchemical text books from his library and there is nothing in his *Diary* entries to suggest that he was in any way involved on hands on activities. On 28th of December 1579 he recorded that "I reveled to Roger Coke (Cook) the great secret of the elixir of the salt." followed by a

sentence in pseudo Greek in which Greek letters are simply transcribed for their English equivalents to the effect that it was to be used as one part on a hundred. Again it is quite possible that this may simply have been his repeating something from one of the many works on alchemy and hermeticism which he was accumulating. His relationship with Cook was not an entirely happy one and he experienced ongoing problems with his assistant, writing in his Greek letter code on July 12th 1581 of "his incredible doggedness and ungratefulness against me to my face, almost ready to lay violent hands on me as mager [sic] henrik can partely tel." Henrick would appear to have been a fellow philosopher who was visiting Mortlake at the time as Dee then notes that on July 19th "Mr Henrick went to London to visit his wife and children." The dispute continued and on September 5th the diary entry reads "Roger Cook, who had byn with me from his 14 yeres of age till 28, of a melancholik nature, pycking and devising occasions of just cause to depart on the suddayn, abowt 4 of the klok in the afternone requested of me lycense to depart, wheruppon rose whott words between us, and he, imagining with himself that he had the 12 of July deserved my great displeasure and finding himself barred from vew of my philosophical dealing with Mr Henrik, thowght that he was utterly recest from intended goodnes toward him." Dee, possibly aware that his servant could cause him a great deal of trouble if chose to spread gossip about the activities at Mortlake, offered him the promise of money if he would behave together with "some pretty alchemicall experiments, whereuppon he might honestly live." Roger left two days later.

On the 1st of November 1582 Dee noted in his diary that "Mr Plat, my brother Yong his son-in-law, cam to me with a stranger of Trushen, born at Regius Mons: his name is Martinus Faber." In her book *The Jewel House* Deborah Harkness identifies Martin Faber as a Lithuanian born alchemist who was giving Plat instruction. Justice Richard Young is considered by some biographers to have been Dee's brother-in-law by a previous marriage but it is more likely that Dee is here using the term to mean a brother member of perhaps the Guild of Mercers. Young had been a fellow member of the Cathay Company and was an avid pursuer of Catholics and Jesuit infiltrators. Fenton describes him as "One of the most virulently anti-Catholic judges of the age; almost every reference to him in the *Calendar of State Papers* concerns his judgements against papists and recusants." Strype in his *Annals of the Reformation* recounts many of his interrogations of his captives and records a letter from a priest, one Anthony Tyrrel to Elizabeth in 1586 who had been captured by Young and forced to recant. He calls Young "a cruall bloudsuker...for his cruelty in shedding of bloud, it is too well known. For such as he cannot destroy both in body and soul (as he hath done me) he will be sure to prefer unto the gallows). He goes on to allege that Young pressured his

prisoners to infiltrate their fellow religionists to act as informers and as an *agent provocateur*. Tyrell was induced to provide falsified reports such as one which accused Lady Drury of attempting to poison the Queen and others implicating Lord Scoop, Lord Montague, the Earl of Arundel and many others. Young, a long time associate of Dee, reported directly to William Cecil and as such provided a useful conduit in rescuing Dee when fortune turned against him many years later. Hugh Plat was the Cambridge-educated son of a London Brewer, who although practicing as a lawyer had a greater interest in studying natural science and philosophy. He had come to see Dee to try to improve his understanding of alchemy, recording the meeting in his notebook under the heading of "chemical questions and their solutions." He asked for details of what might be observed during the preparation of the Philosopher's Stone and was told that there would be a sound like thunder as it formed but this would subsequently be more like "the frying of grease or tallow." During the conversation Dee assured him that any metal could be transmuted in only three hours with a tiny piece of mercury no bigger than a crumb of bread. Both Faber and Plat left the meeting less than satisfied that Dee had any real knowledge of alchemy. Plat had tried to trick Dee by asking him a question regarding the alchemical process which confused the initial stages. Dee appeared unable to unravel this and after a few fumbling attempts declined to say anything further. Faber also was of the opinion that some of Dee's answers could be found easily in books and that he had no real practical experience of alchemical manipulation. As we shall see later on Dee has occasion to ask an angel for instructions as to how the red powder found by Kelley is to be used – not really a question to be expected from one 'Skilled in the Art.'

While the extent of Dee's involvement in alchemy is debatable there is no doubt that he was becoming engaged in the more esoteric aspects of philosophy. His attempts to contact angelic spirits are recorded in a collection of his manuscripts assembled by Elias Ashmole. The way by which he came upon them illustrates just how much chance plays in preserving such rare items. Ashmole's account in his preface is as follows. In 1642 Robert Jones, a London confectioner, bought an old chest which had once been in the possession of John Woodall who had purchased some of Dee's effects. In 1662 while the chest was being moved some papers were discovered in a secret drawer. It was not immediately apparent what these were and they were left to one side for a time in which a maid used some in her domestic chores. The remainder were replaced in the chest where they would have been destroyed in the Great Fire of London in 1666 had they not been rescued by Jones's wife, now a widow.

Her second husband, Thomas Wade recognized them as having some value and exchanged them with Elias Ashmole in 1672 for a copy of *The Institution, Laws & Ceremonies of the Most Noble Order of the Garter*. No doubt Ashmole was delighted with his acquisition for the papers constituted a substantial section of Dee's *Liber Mysteriorum*. These covered the period December 1581 to May 1583. A second cache of these manuscripts were discovered when the antiquarian Sir Robert Cotton carried out some excavations around Dee's old house at Mortlake around 1610-1620. He found a bonanza of documents in somewhat poor conditions. These were eventually passed on by his son Sir Thomas Cotton to Meric Casaubon who, as described in the introduction, published them in 1659 as *A True and Faithful Relation of What passed for many Yeers Between Dr. John Dee...and Some Spirits*, covering the period May 1583 to May 1587 and March to September 1607. These contain in overwhelming minutiae Dee's recording of questions and answers with his mediums in conversation with angelic spirits. They offer a valuable record of Dee's activities and complement his *Diary*, filling in a missing gap between 1583 and 1586, and relevant passages have been referred to hereunder. I have drawn heavily on works by Fenton, Clay Holden, R&S Dewry and the *Mysteriorum Libri Quinque* by Peterson.

As already described it was the common view that emanations, filtering down from God through his angels and the planetary spheres governed events on earth. Dee took the view that these rays could be caught and focused by means employing devices such as crystal balls or mirrors. He had in his possession a glass globe set in a frame and a fragment of polished obsidian which he referred to as his "shewstone" i.e. showstone. Moreover he believed that these could be dedicated to the control of a single angel and that provided adequate precautions were employed they prevented the intrusion of malignant spirits. It would appear that Dee had been attempting to communicate with the inhabitants of the heavenly realm since about 1569 but the first real evidence is in an entry in his *Diary* for the 22nd of June 1579 in which he notes that " Mr Packington. Mr Richard Hickman and Barthilmew his nephew came to me with Mr Flowr, commended by Mr Vice Chamberlain Sir Christopher Hatton." followed in his pseudo Greek with "The crystal-gazers did their work." There is an entry in Dee's *Diary* that the younger Hickman was born on August the 25th 1554, making him just short of twenty-five years of age when they first met. We shall meet the medium Bartholomew Hickman again much later on in the history of John Dee. There is a subsequent entry for the 25th May 1581 that "I had sight in cristallo offerd me and I saw." Apart from this single remark there is little evidence to suggest that his role in the seances was any more than to direct the conversation and to record his skryer's experiences. Dee uses

the term 'actions' to describe these episodes which typically took place over just one or two days. He saw them as the means of gaining spiritual insight and as such they would be preceded by a cleansing process of fasting, abstinence and prayer, not just for himself but also of necessity for the skryer. It should not be imagined that Dee was alone in such endeavours and there are a number of contemporary accounts of practitioners, less well placed than Dee, being brought to trial. There is documentary evidence quoted by Whitby that John Davis, Humphrey Gilbert and his brother Adrian were among those involved in such activities and Gyorgy Szonyi lists another Elizabethan astrologer and "magus", Simon Forman who about the same time kept a journal of his attempts to call angels and spirits not unlike Dee's and like him being beset by accusations of practicing magic.

The first existing record of Dee's actions, his *Mysteriorum Liber Primus*, begins with a preface setting out the prayers to be used before invoking the spirits. He records that " From the year 1579, it was done in this way: in Latin and in English; (but around the year 1569 in another and peculiar, particular way: sometimes for Raphael, sometimes for Michael). To pour prayers out to God: this was most pleasing to me. May God bring forth his marvelous mercy in me. Amen." Clear evidence that such attempts had been ongoing for some time. He notes the names of angels that he is trying to contact: Annael – The angel now ruling over the whole world and under him Michael, Gabriel, Raphael and Uriel – the four Angels presiding over the four cardinal points of Heaven, "as Agrippa notes in his scale of fours"

His previous mediums perhaps having been found to be wanting Dee had engaged a replacement, one Barnabas Saul. On October 8th 1581 Dee notes " I had newes of the chests of bokes fownd by Owndle in Nothamptonshyre: Mr Barnabas Sawle told me of them, but I found no truth in it. The next day "Barnabas Saul, lying in the hallwas strangely trubled by a spiritual creature abowt mydnight."

In a preamble to the first seance which took place on the 22nd of December Dee takes care to emphasize that he it is not his intention to consort with evil spirits, saying:

"O God Almighty, thow knowest, & art my director, and witnes herein, That I have from my youth up, desyred & prayed unto thee for pure & sownd wisdom and understanding of some of thy truthes naturall and artificiall:..... And for as much as, many yeers, in many places, far & nere, in many bokes, & sundry languages, I have sowght, & studyed; and with sundry men conferred, and with my owne reasonable discourse labored, whereby to fynde or get some yncckling, glyms, or beame of such the forsaid radicall truthes: And having allwayes a great regarde & care to beware of the filthy abuse of such as willingly and

wetingly, did invoke & consult (in diverse sorts) Spirituall creatures of the damned sort: angels of darknes, forgers & patrons of lies & untruthes: I did fly unto thee by hartly prayer, full oft, & in sundry manners..... And having perceyved by some slight experiens with two diverse persons, that thou hadst a speciall care to give me thy light, and truth, by thy holy and true ministers Angelicall and Spirituall: and at length, hearing of one, (a master of Arts and a preacher of thy word admitted) accountd as a good Seer and skryer of Spirituall apparitions, in Christalline receptacle, or in open ayre, by his practise procured: and trusting to frame him, by my earnest & faithfull prayers unto thee (my God) to some my help in my forsayd Studies: tyll, thou (o heavenly father) woldest by thy unsearchable proveydence, send me some apter man or means thereto. Thereuppon trying him and using him, I fownd great diversity betwene his private usuall manner, and intende of practice, and my pure, sincere, devowte, & faithfull prayer unto the onely. And therefore often & fervently I exorted him to the good; and reproved both him, and his ministers, with my no small danger, but that thou (in manner unherd of) didst pitch thy holy tente to my defence, and cumfert, in conflict most terrible: as thou best knowest O God, and I willed him thereuppon to preach thy mercyes, & the verity of the kingly prophet his testimony.....Which my cownsaile he promised me to follow, as thou art witnes, O our true & almighty God. And as thy good spirituell creatures neyther had delight in the man, neyther wold so playnely & preistly give me theyr answers or informations by him, that he might be hable to perceyve the pith therof. So was he at length very unwilling to here him self rebuked for his nawghtynes, and to be barred from the Mysteries of thy truthes understanding; which were the onely things that I desyred, through thy grace, O our most mercifull God. Therefore, as well for a Memoriall answerable to the premisses, as for the better warrant of my such exercises to be made account of, hereafter: (leaving all unto thy infinite mercies, and unsearchable providence,) I have thowght it not impertinent, to note downe, even in this place one of the last Actions, which I had with the forsayd preacher: When I made earnest & faythfull petition unto thee (o the true and Almighty God) for sending, unto my cumfort & erudition, (yf it were thy blessed will,) thy holy, & mighty Angel Annael: of whome and of all the Hierarchies heavenly all prayse honor & thanks, be rendred unto thy divine majestie." Saul "a master of Arts and a preacher of thy word admitted" seems to have been causing some concern regarding the nature of the spirits he is invoking.

Dee records "After my fervent prayers made to God, for his mercifull cumfort and instruction, through the ministry of his holy and myghty Angel, named Anael, (yf it wer his divine pleasure) I willed, the skryer, (named Saul) to loke into my great Chrystalline Globe, yf

God had sent his holy Angel Anael, or no: And Saul looking into my forsayd stone, (or Chrystall Globe) for to espie Anael, he saw there one, which answered to that name." On being asked by Dee to confirm that he was who he claimed to be the spirit disappeared to be replaced by another clothed in glittering golden apparel accompanied by visions of dead men's skulls and a white dog. Dee brings out a stone set in a frame and asking if "any good angel" is assigned to it is told that it is Michael but he will not appear until the New Year and to invoke him they must prepare themselves by praying and fasting. Anael leaves them with the injunction to "Do good to all men. God hath sufficient for thee, and for all men. Fare well." Dee adds a footnote to his record of the action to the effect that Anael was "governor of the planet Venus: and also chief governor-general of this great period, as I have noted in my book of *Famous and Rich Discoveries*."

The contemporary view of angels, based on Jewish and Christian theology and the Cabala placed them in a hierarchy of three spheres each containing a triad of three orders. At the top were the Seraphim, the caretakers of God's throne; the Cherubim, each with four faces of a man, an ox, a lion and an eagle, and the Thrones (or Elders), symbols of God's justice and authority, also known as the Ophanim, represented as interlocking wheels with their rims covered with hundreds of eyes. The angels of the second sphere were the heavenly governors, comprising the Dominions or Lordships who regulated the duties of the lower angels and presided over nations, with feathered wings and carrying scepters or swords; the Virtues or Strongholds, supervising the movements of the heavenly bodies and the Powers or Authorities, God's warrior angels, the bearers of conscience and keepers of history and overseers of the distribution of power among humankind. In the third sphere are those angels who function as heavenly messengers and soldiers. They are the Principalities or Rulers, carrying out the orders of the higher angels, educators and guardians of the realm of earth; the seven Archangels, who included Anael, Raphael, Uriel, Gabriel and Michael, God's messengers and the guardian angels of nations involved in such prosaic matters as politics, war and commerce and finally the lowest rank of the Angels, the ones most concerned with the affairs of living things.

His relationship with Saul soon became even more strained when his new medium fell foul of the Law. Dee relates that "January 27th 1582, "Barnabas Sawl his brother cam. Feb 12th, abowt 9 of the klok, Barnabas Saul and his brother Edward went homeward from Mortlak: Saul his inditement being by law fownd insufficient at Westminster Hall." He received a letter from Saul on the 20th and from the 21st to the 25th a Mr Skulthorp came to visit him. The outcome was not a success and Dee once again searched for a replacement. He

records that on March 1st "Mr Clerkson browght Thomas Robinson Magnus to me at Mortlak, and so went away that day agayn." Fenton found that in the original document the name 'Thomas' is struck out but suggests that this was in fact the Thomas Robinson, who was to matriculate from Caius College, Cambridge, in 1583, the author of a poem entitled *De lapide philosophorum*. Clerkson apparently acted as a recruitment agent for Dee. The intended relationship of Robinson with Dee is unknown. Saul made a brief return to Mortlake on March 6th ": Barnabas Saul cam this day agayn abowt one of the klok and went to London the same afternone. He confessed that he neyther hard or saw any spirituall creature anymore." On March 8th "Mr Clerkson and his frende [Talbot] cam to my howse. Barnabus went home agayn abowt 3 or 2 klok, he lay not at my howse now; he went I say, on Thursday with Mr Clerkson". March 9th "Mr Clerkson and Mr Talbot declared a great deale of Barnabas nowghty dealing toward me, as in telling Mr Clerkson ill things of me that I should mak his frend, as that he was wery of me, that I wold so flatter his frende the learned man that I wold borrow of him. But his frende told me before my wife and Mr Clerkson, that a spirituall creature told him that Barnabus had censured both Mr Clerkson and me. The injuries which this Barnabas had done me diverse wayes were very great." Interestingly Halliwell in a footnote in the *Diary* to the entry regarding Clerkson and Talbot's remark's about Saul tells us that some one had written "you that rede this underwritten assure yourselfe that yt is a shamefull lye, for Talbot neither studied for any such thinge nor shewed himself dishonest in any thinge," to which Dee has annotated "This is Mr Talbot or that learned man, his own writing in my booke, very unduely as he cam by it." There were several other entries by Talbot, subsequently erased.

These are the events which would lead to a complete upheaval in Dee's life, for 'Mr Talbot' metamorphosised into Edward Kelley and there is a strong suspicion that he and the mysterious Mr Clerkson had been engaged in a fair degree of character assassination on the unfortunate Saul.

THE MAN WITH TWO NAMES, 1582-1583

He who seeks to deceive will always find someone who will allow himself to be deceived.

Niccolo Machiavelli

Very little is known regarding Kelley's early life and his character has been considerably blackened by his biographers, making it difficult to see through the cloud of

vituperation which cloaked him during and after his life. He was accused of deceit, forgery, trickery and worse of all necromancy. In his diary Dee, in a retrospective entry, notes his birth as August 1st 1555. Waite says that he appears to have been born at Worcester, according to Anthony Wood (*Athenae Oxoniensis*, ed. 1813) in the 3rd year of Queen Mary's reign. The register for St Swithins in Worcester records a baptism there of an Edward Kelly on 2 August of that year, with the father recorded as Patrick Kelley. A sister, Elizabeth, was baptised there three years later on the 23 March 1558. Dee also records the birth of a brother – Thomas – at Worcester on October 17th 1565. There is an entry in the register for St Helens at Worcester for a Thomas Kelley, giving the date of baptism as 20th October but in 1564, the father's name again being Patrick. In a footnote to Dee's diary Ashmole relates that "Mr Lilly told me John Evans told him he knew Kelly's sister and she showed him some gold her brother had transmuted and that Kelley was first an apothecary at Worcester." It is suggested that aged seventeen he briefly attended Oxford University under the name of Talbot although there is no real evidence to support this. Waite suggests that he had some experience in the law, that he was a skilful penman who acquainted himself with archaic English and possibly Welsh and that in the employment of these accomplishments he was accused of producing forged title deeds for a client, although the indictment was on uncertain grounds. As a result it was alleged that he had been pilloried at Lancaster and deprived of his ears. It has been suggested by some biographers that Kelley was lame. Wooley quotes a Papal official as having called him "Il zoppo" – the cripple. This appears to be based largely on the fight he had with a servant, while they were in Prague, when he threatened to cut off his head and touched him on the neck with his walking staff. Subsequently Kelley chased the man out into the street with a sword in his hand, from which we may deduce that he was not disabled to any great extent.

There were later accusations that he had practised necromancy and John Weever in his *Antient funeral monuments* published in 1767 recounts the following story: "This diabolically questioning of the dead, for the knowledge of future accidents, was put into practise by the foresaid Kelly: who, upon a certaine night, in the Parke of Walton in le dale, in the county of Lancaster, with one Paul Waring (his fellow companion in such deeds of darknesse) invocated some one of the infernall regiment, to know certaine passages in the life, as also what might bee knowne by the devils foresight, of the manner and time of the death of a noble young Gentleman, as then in his wardship. The blacke ceremonies of that night being ended, Kelly demanded of one of the Gentlemans servants, what corse was the last buried in Law-church-yard, a church thereunto adjoyning, who told him of a poore man that was buried

there but the same day. Hee and the said Waring intreated this foresaid servant, to go with them to the grave of the man so lately interred, which hee did; and withall did helpe them to digge up the carcase of the poor caitiffe, whom by their incantations, they made him (or rather some evill spirit through his Organs) to speake, who delivered strange predictions concerning the said Gentleman. I was told thus much by the said Servingman, a secondarie actor in that dismall abhorrid businesse: and divers gentlemen, and others, are now living in Lancashire to whom he hath related this story. And the Gentleman himselfe (whose memorie I am bound to honour) told me a little before his death, of this conjuration by Kelly; as he had it by relation from his said Servant and Tenant; onely some circumstances excepted, which he thought not fitting to come to his masters knowledge.

French offers the suggestion that he acted briefly as a secretary to Thomas Allen, a fellow savant of Dee and that he may have gained some knowledge of the occult sciences while he was with him, although he does not offer a reference for this assertion. Allen (or Alleyn, 1542-1632) was an astrologer and mathematician. He taught Robert Fludd the alchemist and like Dee was associated with many in the same circle of intellectuals, in particular those around the Earl of Northumberland where he probably met Dee. He was noted as an astrologer to Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester and there is a dispute as to whether it was Allen or Dee who drew up the horoscope for the young Philip Sidney. Aubrey notes that like Dee he gained a reputation as a conjurer able to call up spirits. Like Dee he was summoned by Queen Elizabeth to provide an opinion on the new star which had appeared in Cassiopeia in 1572

Waite, drawing on a work by Louis Figuier *L'Achimie et les Alchimistes*, Paris, 1860, continues his account of Kelly's early life by saying that he found it necessary to loose himself in Wales possibly in the early 1580's where he lead a wandering life, arriving finally back in England in the region of Glastonbury Abbey. Here he was shown an ancient document which he recognised as being concerned with alchemical transmutation. On enquiry he learnt that this had been found in the tomb of a bishop, during the despoliation of the monasteries, together with two small ivory caskets containing a red and a white powder. Kelley purchased the document and the caskets for a guinea from the local innkeeper into whose possession they had fallen. As we shall subsequently see, scrolls and a red powder figure in his later dealings with John Dee. Woolley quotes a tale told to Elias Ashmole by the alchemist William Backhouse (1593-1662) to the effect that Kelley had "Cheated a Lady of certain jewels" and under the assumed name of Talbot had arrived at Mortlake to lie low.

Nothing else is recorded of him until he surfaces at Dee's house in 1582, introduced to Dee by the mysterious Mr Clerkson.

TALKING WITH THE ANGELS 1582-1583

Men willingly believe what they wish
Julius Caesar, *De Bello Gallica*.

As we have noted Talbot arrived at Mortlake at the start of March 1582 in the company of a Mr Clerkson. It would seem that he was ready primed to take over Barnabas Saul's duties as Dee's skryer for after blackening his predecessor's character on the 9th of March he begins the very next day. Dee records of the action in his *Mysteriorum Liber Primus* as starting at 11.15 on the morning of Saturday 10th. "One Mr Edward Talbot cam to my howse, and he being willing and desyrus to see or shew something in spirtuall practise, wold have had me to have done some thing therein. And I truly excused myself therein; as not in the vulgarly accownted Magik, neyther studied, or exercised; but confessed myself longtyme to have byn desyrus to have help in my philosophicall studies throwgh the Cumpany and information of the blessed Angels of God. And thereuppon I browght forth to him my stone in the frame (which was given me of a frende and I said unto him, that I was credibly informed, that to it (after a sort) were answerable certain good angels. And also that I was once willed by a skryer, to call for the good angel Anchor, to appear in that Stone to my own sight. There is a side note by Dee, referring to Talbot, which reads "Note; he had two dayes before made the like demande and request unto me , but he went away unsatisfied, for his cuming was to entrap me, yf I had had any dealing with wicked spirits as he confessed often tymes after and that he was set on." What made Dee change his mind is unknown but here is a strong suggestion that Talbot had been sent to discover if Dee was attempting to invoke malevolent spirits by means of magic. Dee urges Talbot to proceed "And therefore I desired him, to call him: and (if he would) Anachor and Anilos likewise, accounted good angels....He than settled himself to the Action and on his knees att my desk (setting the stone before him) fell to prayer and entreaty &c. In the mean space, I in my Oratory did pray and make motion to god and his good Creatures for the furduring of this Action. And within one quarter of an howre (or less) he had sight of one in the stone ...and he spake plainly (to the hearing of E.T.) that his name is Uriel." When asked if there are any more angels who can be reached by the stone Uriel says that there are Michael and Raphael but "Michael is first in our works." Dee

immediately enquires about a book that he has "ys my boke of Soyga of any excellency?" and is told that it had been revealed to Adam in paradise by the good Angels of God but only Michael can interpret it. Dee tells Uriel that he had been told that after he could read the book he would only live for another two and a half years but is reassured by the good news that he "shalt live an Hundred and od yeres." Uriel then provides a vision in the stone of a triangular seal to be engraved in gold and worn on the breast as a "defense for the body at every time, place and occasion."

The *Book of Soyga* was an anonymous semi-cabbalistic work of magic containing a combination of astrological data, lists of the names and genealogies of angels and invocations for raising spirits together with incantations and instructions often with words written back-to-front or encrypted, somewhat in the style of Trithemius's *Steganographia*. It was preoccupied with assigning numerical values to letters and letters to the planets and elements and compiling words of magic. Jim Reeds, a professional cryptographer, has provided a detailed description and has demonstrated that the seemingly random allocation of letters in the thirty six large square tables which it contains, each a square grid of 36 rows and columns is in fact based on an intricate mathematical formula. The somewhat evasive reply by Uriel concerning this work may well have been due to Talbot's ignorance of its contents. It would seem that the book disappeared sometime afterwards and then mysteriously was found again, perhaps after he had had time to read it.

The seance continued in the afternoon and they are told that Michael can be invoked by means of certain of the psalms of David and by prayer "a means ... whereby you gather with your selves due powre to apply your natures to the holy Angels ...you must use pleasant savours with hand and hart: whereby you shall allure him and wynn him (thorowgh Gods favour) to atteyn unto the thing you have long sowght for." Dee is instructed that "There must be Conjunction of myndes in prayer, betwyxt you two, to God contynually. Yt is the wyll of God that you shold, jointly, have the knowledge of his Angells to gither." He then adds "You had atteyned unto the sight of Michael but for the imperfection of Saul." To further the invocation of angels they are given details for the construction of seals and a table. The table is to be made of "swete wood", two cubits square, two cubits high, standing on four feet under each of which was to be placed a seal, all standing on a square of red silk. Characters and words are to be written on the sides of the table in yellow oil. The main seal is to be made of perfect (colorless) wax, nine inches in diameter and an inch and a quarter thick with a cross surrounded by the letters AGLA on the back. This is to be placed on the table, covered with another square of red silk with tassels at each corner and finally the skrying

stone in its frame placed on top. Finally Uriel warns Dee that there is a spirit named Lundrumguffa intending to harm his wife and daughter and who "will seke Saul's death, who is accursed." Dee recollects that "I fownd Saul privillie dealing with him (wich manner of wicked dealing I had oft forbydden him) and yet he came after and wold have carryed Saul away quick as Robert Hilton, George, and other of my howse can testify." It would seem that either Talbot or Clerkson were well informed as to Saul's activities with Dee and that they used this as an ideal opportunity to ensure he would not return. The action continued on following day when Uriel was joined by Michael and an innumerable company of angels and finished with an assurance that Lundrumguffa had been banished. Further seances were held on 14th and 15th with more angels appearing. There is a side note by Dee at the end reading: "God will be revenged uppon Saul: for he hath abused his names in his Creatures. He hath sinned agaynst kinde. His punishment is great: and so I ende."

It must be remembered that during all these and future activities Dee saw and heard nothing, depending entirely on his skryer to describe what was going on. Dee wrote down the conversations and appears to have drawn most of the seals and tables under Talbot's instructions. There was a further sequence of three Actions over the period 19th to 21st of March during which the angels give instructions for the production of a great seal. Michael tells him "I will shew thee in the mighty hand and strength of God, what his mysteries are: The true Circle of his Aeternitie, Comprehending all vertue: The whole and sacred Trinitie." This will be a new version of the *Sigillum Dei*, dating from the 14th Century, the symbol of the living God, which Dee will call his *Sigillum Dei Aemeth*. It is a magical diagram composed of circles, interlocking heptagons, hexagons and pentagons inscribed with the name of God and his angels which allowed those who could achieve divine vision the power over all creatures except the archangels. Dee is instructed to divide its outer circle into 40 segments and Michael summons another angel, Semiael, who in turn produces 40 spirits dressed in white. Each of these in turn dictates a letter and a number to be entered into the outer circle, each of these signifying the name of seven angels. At the end of the session comes a warning "Thow art watched all this night: who is even now at the Dore: Clerkson." Further letters are dictated on the next day to fill in the first heptagram which again are translated in to the names of the seven archangels which Dee has as Zaphkiel, Zadkiel, Cumael, Raphael, Haniel (Anael), Michael and Cumael. On the last day the final instructions are given to complete the Sigil by filling in the remaining hexagons and pentagons.

At the end of the seance on the 20th the angels deliver a message that "He must go for the bokes, els they will perish," to which Dee adds the note "He ment that my partner Ed.

Talbot should go to fetch the bokes from Lancaster (or therby) which were the Lord Mowntegles bokes, which Mr Mort yet hath: wherof mention is made before." Dee subsequently records in the *Diary* that on March 22nd "Mr Talbot went to London to take his journey." Dee records another two seances which were carried out just over a month later on the 28th and 29th of April. At the first of these Michael appears and Talbot tells Dee that to his "diverse... complaynts and requests sayde The Lord shall consider thee in this world and in the world to come. This is one action, in one person: I speak of you two." To which Dee enquires "You meane us two to be joynd so, and in mynde united, as yf we wer one man?" Michael tells him that he understands him correctly and then goes on to admonish him for his slackness. It would seem that the table and seal required to further the angelic guidance had not yet been implemented. Dee replies that any delay was because of the lack of means to buy and prepare the things that had been requested. Two more spirits appear and Talbot is shown a number of tables filled with letters and numbers to be transcribed. Dee records that "All the Tables before were by E.T. letter for letter noted out of the Stone standing before him all the while: and the 7 tables following wer written by me as he repeted them orderly out of the stone." The following day Uriel and Michael appear and the latter tells them "We procede to one GOD, one knowledge, one Operation. Behold these Tables: Herein lye theyr names that work under God uppon earth: not of the wicked, but of the Angels of Light. The whole Government doth consist in the hands of 49 ... whose names are here evident. Mark these Tables...This is the first knowledge." They are then shown the way of joining the seven tables given them the previous day in the form of a large cross and Uriel begins to reveal the names of more angels. Dee provides a list of the 49 names at the end of the session, all start with the letter B.

Finally there is an unwelcome surprise for Talbot who tells Dee that the angel Michael has told him that "I must betake my self to the world, and forsake the world. That is I should marry. Which thing to do, I have no naturall inclination: neyther with a safe conscience may I do it, contrary to my vow and profession." It would seem that he was implying that, like his predecessor Saul, he had been ordained as a priest. There was a final skrying a week later on May 4th but before it began Dee writes that "E.T. wold not willingly now deale with the former Creatures, utterly misliking and discrediting them, bycause they willed him to marry. Neyther wold he put of his hat in any prayer to God, for the Action with them; whereuppon I went into my Oratorie, and called unto God, for his divine help of the understanding of his laws and vertues." The prayer seemed to be effective for afterwards the seance continued as normal. Dee subsequently notes in the *Diary* entry for the same day that "Mr Talbot went."

It would appear that they were not reunited until July 13th when Talbot returned to Mortlake; there was some disagreement "some wordes of unkendnes," but they parted on friendly terms. Talbot appears to have followed up on the angelic instructions of 20th March for he tells Dee that "Lord Morley had Lord Mounteagle's books" and promised Dee some of Doctor Miniver's books. Presumably the reference here is to William Stanley, 3rd Baron Monteagle, who had died in 1581. His daughter and heiress Elizabeth was married to Edward Parker, 12th Baron Morley. Talbot then left again without participating in any further seances.

In his absence the disgraced Saul returned to Mortlake on July 19th to see Dee but if he was hoping for a reconciliation he was unlucky for Dee "chyd him for his manifold untrue reports."

There was then a pause in Dee's record of his attempts at invoking spirits but at some point he came to understand that Talbot was actually Edward Kelley for some six months after the April session another series of angelic communication took place between 15th and 21st of November, Dee's record of which is subtitled "*Post reconciliationem Kellianam*". In this, for the first time the skryer is recorded as 'E.K.' and indeed in his *Diary* Dee writes on November 22nd that "E.K. went to London, and so the next day conveyed by rode [road] toward Blakley (Blockley), and within ten dayes to returne." The transformation of Talbot to Kelley has occurred.

On the first day of the session a new spirit, King Camara, appears and introduces forty two of his fellow angels named in the list produced in the preceding seance. The procession continued on the following day together with displays of their associated sigils and letters. Dee then asks the angel Hagonel a somewhat strange question: "Yf I wold have the King of Spayne his hart to be enclined to the purpose I have in hand what shall I do?" But only receives an ambiguous answer. This is the first indication of Dee's mission to put the world to rights by finding a powerful ruler who will be God's instrument in implementing a new order of things. To pick on Philip was highly dangerous and treasonable at a time when Catholic sympathisers were being hunted down and persecuted. It is a complete mystery as to why he should not have picked Elizabeth for this role, perhaps he felt a woman was not appropriate, perhaps he had made some overtures and been rebuffed. Later Hagonel tells him " And whereas thou dost use a demaunde, as concerning thy doings to a good intent and purpose: and for the prayse and advancement of Gods Glorie, with Philip the Spanish King: I answer that whatsoever thou shalt speak, do or work, shalbe profitable and accepted, And the ende of it shalbe good." The sessions continue over the next few days with continuing dictation of names and the composition of tables in which they are to be recorded. Finally at

the conclusion of the action on the 21st of November Hagonel tells them that " One thing is yet wanting: a mete receptacle There is yet wanting a stone....Dost thou see, loke and styr not from thy place." Kelley points towards where the angel is indicating but Dee can see nothing. He records "EK loked toward my west wyndow, and saw there first uppon the matts by my bokes a thing, (to his thinking) as bigg as an egg: most bright, clere, and glorious: and an angel of the heyth [height] of a little chylde holding up the same thing in his hand toward me." Hagonel tells him to go and pick it up and Dee " went toward the place, which EK pointed to: and tyll I cam within two fote of it, I saw nothing: and then I saw like a shaddow on the grownd or matts hard by my bokes under the west wyndow. The shaddow was rowndysh, and less then the palm of my hand. I put my hand down uppon it, and I felt a thing cold and hard: which, (taking up, I) perceyued to be the stone before mentioned." In parting the angel tells him "Let no mortall hand towche it, but thyne owne." A new showstone, given to Dee by God as a token of his importance. A miracle or chicanery?

There is now a significant entry in Dee's *Diary*. He writes that on March 18th 1583 "Mr North from Poland, after he had byn with the Quene he cam to me. I receyved salutation from Alaski, Palatine in Poland; salutation by Mr North who cam before to the Quene, and next to me was his message." As we shall see he was about to completely alter the lives of Dee, Kelley and their families.

A further series of angelic communications took place between 23rd March and 18th April. It is discernible that Kelley's interests at this time had more to do with using the angels to help in finding buried treasure than in divine revelation. On the first day of the session there is a note by Dee that "EK being come, with Mr John Husey of Blakley [Blockely], (on the 22 day of Marche) and EK being desirous to understand somewhat of our spiritual frendes as concerning such matter as had fallen out very strange to him and Mr Husey: abowt a certayne moniment [collection] of a boke and a skroll fownd in Northwik hill by the direction and leading of such a spirituall Creature, as when they had gotten the same, and they endeavored by art to have some exposition of the skroll, written in strange characters, they wer willed to repayre to me. and there they shold be answered: &c. which thing now they did."

Blockley is a small village in Gloucestershire, 35 miles northwest of Oxford, Northwick Hill is nearby. John Husey, like the mysterious Mr Clerkson, emerges as an associate of Kelley's and will figure in our story again. Unless one is willing to believe that they had indeed been led to these objects by a spirit then there can only be a strong suspicion here that some form of confidence trick was being carried out, either by Kelley and Husey together on the gullible Dee or else by Kelley on Husey. There will subsequently be

reference to a red powder which they also found. It would seem reasonable to assume that this episode was the foundation for later tales of Kelley having found such objects at Glastonbury (see previous section).

On the 24th Kelley reports the appearance of a figure which he says was "somewhat like to Mr Adrian Gilbert." It seems that Gilbert was present at Mortlake, for on the 26th Dee asks the spirits "Our desyre is to know what we are to think of the Man which cam out of my Oratory and layd the fyry Ball at Mr Adrian Gilbert his fete yesterday, as he sat in my study with Mr Kelley and me." Being assured that the 'Man' was not an evil spirit Dee then asks "Must Adrian Gilbert be made privie of these Mystereries?" to which he is informed that he might be made aware but was not to participate. Dee then goes on to ask about Gilbert's proposed voyage, wanting to know if the natives would be converted and asking for information about the regions he would be exploring. As so often he only received an ambiguous answer. On March 28th, Maundy Thursday, Dee writes that while he had been away in London on the previous day Kelley had been conferring with the spirits on his own but had been frightened by the appearance of what he took to be an evil apparition. Dee assures him that this would not have been allowed and they receive confirmation from an angel that they subsequently summon. Kelley goes on to report that the angel brings in "the Skroll with the Characters...which was fownd by spiritual direction this month, the 12 day, abowt 10½ after none by Mr Kelly and Master Husy." Dee again raises doubts about Adrian Gilbert and John Davys but the spirits are unhelpful. In a further session that took place the same afternoon Dee raises complaints that his proposed reform of the Calendar had been rejected and that royalties for Gilbert's voyage had not been granted. "Therefore both these points, respecting her Maiestie, I wold gladly have cownsayle, such as in the Judgment of the highest might be most for my behofe, to follow." As always the response was not very helpful.

During the seances the spirits reveal that they have their own agenda and details of the purpose of the angelic communications slowly become clear. Dee, with Kelley's help is to prepare a book which will lead to a new Revelation and set the world's religious difference to right. The book is to be written in the language of the angels, the language used by Adam in the Garden of Eden, passed down to Enoch and used by him in his own book of divine revelation, subsequently lost in the Great Flood. Further sessions then took place in which details of the proposed book were revealed and a time limit imposed. The angel Uriel tells them: "In 40 dayes must the boke of the Secrets, and key of this world be Written: even as it is manifest to the one of you in sight, and to the other in faith. Therefore have I browght it to

the wyndow of thy senses, and dores of thy Imagination: to the ende he may see and performe the tyme of God his Abridgment. That shalt thou write down in his prope and sanctified distinctions. This other, (pointing to EK) shall have it allwayes before him, and shall daylie performe the office to him committed. Which if he do not, the Lord shall raze his name from the number of the blessed, and those that are annoynted with his blud." A copy of the book made in Kelley's hand is still in existence. As Charlotte Fell Smith says, "a remarkable tribute to the mechanical skill in draughtsmanship, the extraordinary application and ability, of this very versatile personage. It contains hundreds of diagrams of figures, round or rectangular in shape, composed of an infinite number of minute squares each containing a letter or figure. These letters occur in every possible combination and order, some reading straight across the page, others diagonally, and so on." Perhaps having had time to peruse Dee's *Book of Soyga* Kelley had determined to use this as a template with the tables increased in number to 49, each with 49 squares. Dee certainly copied some of the tables from it and included them in his own copy of the *Book of Enoch*.

There is a curious incident involving buried treasure and a possible interloper. On the 10th of April Dee wrote "As we were talking of the Macedonian (the grecian) who yesterday came with Mr Sandford his letters, there appeared in the corner of my study a black shadow: and I did charge that shadow to declare who he was. There came a voice and said that it was the Macedonian and about his hat was written in great letters this word KATASTIKTOS which E.K. wrote out and it signifieth *maculosus or condemnatus* [defiled and condemned].

The next day Dee refers to a diagram showing ten pictograms "To me delivered by Mr Edward Kelley 1583, Martii 22 Friday. Mr Husy cam with him from Blokley," on the back of which is a strange inscription. He relates: "After my comming home from the court abowt 4 of the klok after none, and after my being in my study a while, it cam into my hed to assay to deciphre the cifre which before is spoken of, and was browght me by EK, (They wer fownd at Huets Cross as the spirituall creature affirmed when he led them to the finding of this Moniment and a boke of Magik & Alchimie..... And at the first I was half out of all hope: but yet making many assayes, and gessing at it (at the length) to be latine, I fownd this to be the true Alfabet. God giving me the perseyverance." Dee interprets this to show the location of ten sites at which there is buried treasure. The inscription reveals that these were left by Menabon, a Danish king and fellow warriors. Isn't this amazing! What a coincidence that in 1574 Dee had written to Lord Burghley proposing a plan to discover and recover buried treasure and nominating ten locations at which this could be done. Either Dee had

instigated this episode or else Kelley had found the letter and had hatched a scam. If the later it seems strange that Dee seems to have seen no connection with his previous proposal.

Four days later an incident occurs in which Kelley appears to sustain physical injury through spiritual contact. "As EK was writing the eighteenth leaf which was of the spirites of the earth, (in the after none abowt 4½ of the klok) he red a parcell therof, playnely & alowde to him self, and thereuppon suddenly at his syde appeared three or fowre spirituall creatures like laboring men, having spades in theyr hands & theyr heares hangyng abowt theyr eares, and hastyly asked EK what he wold have, & wherfor he called them. He answered that he called them not. & they replied, & sayed that he called them: Then I began to say, they lyed: for his intent was not to call them, but onely to read and repeat that which he had written: and that euery man who readeth a prayer to perceyue the sense thereof, prayeth not. No more, did he call them. And I bad them be packing out of the place: and thereuppon removed from my desk (where I was ruling of paper for his writing) to the grene chayre which was by my Chymney: and presently he cryed out and sayd they had nipped him and broken his left arme by the wrest: and he shewed the bare arme and there appered both on the upper syde and lower side imprinted depe-in, two circles as broad as grotes thus: very red: And I seeing that, I sowght for a stik, and in the meane while, they assalted him, and he rose, and cryed to me (saying) they come flying on me, they come; and he put the stole, which he sat on, betwene him and them. But still they cam gaping, or gyrning [snarling] at him. Then I axed him where they were: and he poynted to the place: and then I toke the stik and cam to the place, and in the name of Jesus commaunded those Baggagis to avoyde and smitt a cross stroke at them: and presently they avoyded [departed]." As in so much of what occurred during these seances it is almost impossible to understand what was really going on. Was this a trick by Kelley to add conviction to his deceit or had he produced stigmata in the grip of his delusions?

On April 18th Dee queries the angel II (or EI –possibly Ilemese) regarding his Book of Soyga, which is missing and which for some reason he seems to think may have been taken by William Cecil. He is told "It is in Scotland – a Minister hath it; it is nothing worth. The boke conteyneth fals and illuding Witchcrafts." The discussion then turns to the buried treasures shown on the scroll brought by Kelley and Husey. Dee is concerned that should they go and dig them up without license they would fall foul of the law but if they applied for permission then what they found would be declared treasure trove and they would lose it. In either case there was a risk that they could be prosecuted under a Statute issued in 1541 against conjuration and witchcraft, which set out that "Where dyverse and sondry persones

unlawfully have devised and practised invocacions and conjuracions of spirites, pretendynge by suche meanes to understande and gette knowledge for theyr owne lucre, in what place treasure of gold and sylver shoulde or moughte be founde or had in the earth or other secrete places, and allso have used and occupied witchcraftes inchauntementes and sorceries...." The penalty on conviction was death and forfeiture of goods.

Il advises them that if they could obtain a small amount of the dirt from each location then they could use this to command "the Creatures, whose powre it is to work in such causes: which will bring it (never trust me) before you can tell twenty." Dee then refers to a chest and asks "As concerning that chest, I pray you how come the Macedonian or Mr Sandiford know of it so particularly as he did?" The spirit tells him that Husey had spoken of it in public at Brentford. It would seem that Dee's involvement with Kelley has aroused the interest of a number of others whose intentions may well be suspect. Calder suggests that Kelly's vision of the Macedonian as a black shadow may well have been an attempt to ensure that Dee had no further dealings with him.

The angel Il then makes a cryptic remark saying "Your Chymney head will speak agaunst you anon: yet I am no brik layer". The spirit then advised EK to "communicate to me [Dee] the boke, and the powder, and so all the rest of the roll, which was there fownd: saying, True frends use not to hide any thing eche from other." A footnote by Dee reveals that he had hidden "the recordes of my doings with Saule & other &c." in the chimney breast. It would seem that Kelley has not been entirely open with Dee either, holding back some material involved in his activities with Husey.

The next session began on April 20th with Kelley ready to give the whole enterprise up. He told Dee he would claim that they had been communicating with "evill and illuding spirites seking his destruction." That he could no longer see the angelic writing which he had been dictating to Dee, only a black cloud, that he had come to Mortlake to study and to learn some knowledge whereby he might live but it had become a prison and that he was plagued by slander such as had occurred when he had fallen out with 'little Ned' at the Black Raven at Westminster for witnessing a bargain between Ned and a surgeon called Lush and a great deal more "of matter; melancholik and cross." Dee attempted to calm him down and allay his fears but Kelley then changed tack and complained that he had no money. This obviously struck a raw nerve for Dee bluntly records "And whereas he complayned of want, I sayd my want is greater than his: for I was in det allmost 300 pownds, I had a greater charge than he; and yet for all my 40 yeres course of study, many hunderd pownds spending, many hundred myles travayling, many an incredible toyle and forcing of my will in study using to lerne or to

bowit out some good thing, &c. Yet for all this I wold be very well pleased to be deferred yet longer, (a yere or more,) and to go up and down England clothed in a blanket, to beg my bred, so that I might, at the ende be assured to atteyn to godly wisdom, whereby to do God some service for his glory." This seemingly calmed Kelley down and the seance commenced but in the next session on the 23rd he tells Dee that " at the very begynning of this days action, when he expressed the first Voyce (this day), hard of him, his belly did seame to him, to be full of fyre: and that he thowght verily, that his bowells did burne: And that he loked downward toward his leggs, to see if any thing appeared on fireAllso that whan he had made an ende, he thowght his belly to be wyder, and enlarged, muche more then it was before." The skrying ends with some prayers and then Dee records that "we made AG. [presumably Adrian Gilbert] to understand these the mercies of the Highest: and he rejoyced greatly, and prayes the Lorde. And, so EK, was fully satisfyed of his Dowtes: And AG, and he, were reconciled of the great discorde which, yesterday, had byn betwene them, &c." Gilbert is obviously still involved in the goings-on, even if not actually participating in the seances. A further reconciliation occurred three days later when " By the providence of god, and Mr Gilbert his meanes, and pacifying of EK his vehement passions and pangs, he cam agayn to my howse: and my wife very willing, and quietted in mynde, and very frendely to EK in Word, and cowntenance: and a new pacification on all partes confirmed:" Kelley's physical problems continued however and on April 29th: "EK, was skarse able to abide or endure the voyce of the spirituall Creature, when he spake of these things now: the sownd was so forcible to his hed that it made it ake vehemently." After they had finished Kelley read a letter from his wife. In April 1582 the angel Michael had told Kelley (then masquerading as Talbot) that he must take a wife. It would seem that Kelley, however reluctantly, had acquiesced and had married nineteen year old Joanna Cooper, eight years his junior, of Chipping Norton, a small market town about 18 miles northwest of Oxford, in the intervening period. In a retrospective entry in his Diary Dee records her birth on June 23rd 1563 "Jane Cooper, now Mystris Kelly, toward evening." From the relevant Parish records Susan Bassnett has identified a Joanna, daughter of Thomas Cooper as having been baptised on the 28th of June 1563 at the Church of St Mary the Virgin at Chipping Norton. Her marriage to a John "Wesson" took place there on the 27th of June 1579 and the baptisms of their son John in 1580 and a daughter, Elizabeth, a year later. The burial of John Weston, clerk, is recorded on the 6th of May 1582. It would seem that Joanna had not remained a widow for long.

There was a further session after supper in which the angel Uriel tells them that "I have Chosen three of you, as the mowthes and Instruments of my determined purpose." This presumably is intended to include Gilbert. He then castigates EK and says would have been carried away if he hadn't repented – "lay away thy works of youth and fly from fleshy vanities."

Another session began on May 5th. Uriel appears and warns them of a coming apocalypse and tells them that the book must be finished soon because "Oute of this, shall be restored the holy bokes. which have perished even from the begynning. and from the first that lived And herein shalbe deciphred perfect truth from imperfect falshode, True religion from fals and damnable errors. With all Artes: which are propre to the use of man, the first and sanctified perfection: Which when it hath spred a While, THEN COMMETH THE ENDE." A dire warning indeed.

Later in the day at half-past 8 in the evening Dee again raises the question of the buried treasure. He asks Uriel if Kelley should go first to Newberry "and with the erth being taken thence, to procede to the other places noted in the skroll and then with the erth of those ten places, the rest of the skroll, the boke therewith fownd. And the red congeled thing in the hollow stone, to come directly hither: and then the rest of the peculier practise for enioying the premisses, to be lerned." to which he agrees. Dee then asks: "concerning the Victorious Capitayn, The Lord Albert Laski the Polake who so much desyreth my acquayntance, and Conference, how shall I use my self, to God his best liking, my Cuntries honor, and my own good Credit?" The response is mildly encouraging. Laski had arrived at Harwich on May 1st on what was supposed to be an unofficial private visit and was lodged at Winchester House at Southwark.

Dee then enquires about a vision that Kelley had had while they were both at supper the previous night in which he witnessed "the appering of the very sea, and many ships thereon, and the Cutting-off the hed of a woman by a tall blak man." Uriel tells him that "The one did signifie the provision of forrayn powres against the Welfare of this land: which they shall shortly put in practise: The other, the death of the Quene of Scotts. It is not long unto it." Were these amazing evidence of Kelley's or the angel's prescience? Perhaps not. Philip of Spain, incensed by English support of the Protestant Netherlands and the continual harassment of Spanish shipping had long nursed an ambition to invade England, remove Elizabeth and restore a Catholic Monarchy. An attempt to send a fleet up the Channel in 1574 had failed but had instigated a major Spanish rebuilding project in 1557/8. By the late 1570's there was a perception in England that following the subjugation of Holland by Spain,

Philip would use this as a base to launch the long anticipated invasion. By 1583 Elizabeth's government had accumulated a considerable amount of evidence regarding his intentions to make this a real threat. In actuality, the Armada didn't sail until 1588.

Ever since her escape to England in 1568 Mary, a Catholic with a strong case for her inheritance of the English throne had been a constant worry to Elizabeth and her Court becoming the focus of a number of plots, some real, some imaginary, for the assassination of the Queen who, adverse to shedding the blood of a relative, had repeatedly prevaricated on her execution until she finally signed her death warrant in 1587, an event which could have been reasonably foreseen four years earlier. In both cases the predictions could probably have been made by anyone with a knowledge of current affairs but none-the-less it is curious that it should crop up in this context.

On May 6th Dee set off for London, leaving Kelley working on the book, and returned the same evening. The purpose of the visit is not recorded. It had become Kelley's role to draw out and fill in the numerous tables and his meticulous penmanship can be seen in surviving documents, clear evidence of his reputation for calligraphy.

At a session on the afternoon of May 8th Dee is anxious to clear up some particulars regarding the preparation of the book as it is intended that Kelley would be away for 10 or 12 days collecting earth from the sites identified in the scroll. He then raises a problem, explaining that they have insufficient funds to get a horse for the journey and asks that the spirits might bring them just a small amount. In response he is rebuked by Uriel and told he will be punished which so frightened him that he promised to govern his tongue in future and mend his ways even to the extent of not having sexual intercourse with his wife without heavenly permission. He continued to make amends in the session which took place the next day on the 9th. It would seem however that they had scraped together some money for he records that Kelley was to leave immediately by boat to London to buy a saddle, bridle and boots as they had managed to purchase a "pretty dun Mare of Goodman Pentacost for £3 redy money in angels" This is confirmed by an entry in his *Diary* which reads "E.K. went toward London, and so to go homward for 10 or 12 dayes."

ENTER THE PRINCE, 1583.

Put not your trust in Princes. Psalms, 146.3

As recorded earlier, Dee had received news of the intended visit of Albert Laski to England in March 1583. His visitor, the Palatine or Prince of Sieradz, a vassal duchy of the Polish Kingdom under the rule of Stephen Bathory, rejoiced in a number of variations of his name, the forename of Wojciech becoming transformed into Olbracht, Adalbert, Albrecht, Albertus or Albert and his patronymic as Laski, Laskie, Alaski, a Lasco or Alaschie, derived from the family's estates at Lasko in north-western Poland 55 miles south-east of the regional capital of Szczecin. For the purposes of this narrative he will be referred to hereafter as Albert Laski. He was to play a key role in the activities of Dee and Kelley over the next few years and a brief history of Polish and European politics is necessary to understand the complicated situation into which they would become drawn.

In 1572 Sigismund II, the last King of the Polish Jagiellon dynasty had died without heirs. The decision was taken that a new king would be determined by election of the nobility, the four candidates being Henry of Valois, brother of King Charles IX of France, Tsar Ivan IV of Russia, Archduke Ernest of Austria, and King John III of Sweden. Henry was declared the winner but only served as king for four months as, learning of the death of his brother, he returned post haste to claim the French throne. There followed an interregnum in which Maximilian II of Austria, the Holy Roman Emperor having been proposed for the throne was then rebuffed owing to fears that he would introduce a counter-reformation and re-introduce Catholicism. Maximilian attempted to seize power but a Polish noble, Stephen Bathory was crowned king on 1 May 1576 and Maximilian's death five months later ended any further attempts at insurrection. Bathory entered into a defensive alliance with Maximilian's successor the Hapsburg Rudolph II of Bohemia and fended off the territorial aspirations of the Ottoman Empire by signing a truce with the Turks. As a result of Russian aggression he invaded Russia in 1581, laid siege to Pskov and forced Ivan the Terrible to sue for peace.

Laski had been born in 1533 at Kesmark (modern Kezmarok) in Slovakia, then within the Kingdom of Hungary. After his father's death in 1542 he spent his time between the family estates in Transylvania and in Poland and then at Prague where he enjoyed the protection of the Hapsburgs. He exhibited a thirst for knowledge, surrounding himself with religious leaders, writers, and scholars, including alchemists and astrologers and became a member of the Polish Calvinist movement. He was well off and spent money for the publication of political or literary works of others and was himself the author of a Latin pamphlet on religious subjects. None-the-less he was not a particularly pleasant character, with a reputation for profligacy and an unwavering determination to achieve his own ends by

fair means or foul. A contemporary historian recording Laski's infamous deeds, expressed the view that there was no crime which Laski would not have committed. He inherited the family pragmatism for political wheeling and dealing; his father Hieronymus having first supported the anti-Hapsburg Hungarian movement, headed by Jan Zapolya but swiftly joining with them when he realised Zapolya was loosing.

Laski married three times. His first wife was Buczynska Katarzyna the widow of a Polish captain, then in 1564 he married Beata Kosciulecka, rumoured to be the illegitimate daughter of King Sigismund. After only a year he imprisoned her and confiscated all her money. Laski had been a member of the Polish delegation sent to Paris in 1573 to interview Henry of Valois for the Polish throne and it is supposed that during his visit he met and married his third wife Sabina de Seve, described as "a young Italian woman of mean condition and bad reputation" although other authors refer to her as the daughter of a family of lawyers active in Dijon. There is a letter written many years later in 1589 from Sabina de Seve Laska, Palatina di Siradia to Christine de Lorraine-de'Medici congratulating her on her wedding so whatever her beginnings she would seem to have gained the acceptance of the European nobility. From this marriage he is known to have had four children, two sons and two daughters.

Laski had supported the candidacy of Maximilian and there was a suspicion that he was still involved with a group of Polish nobles who had aspirations to the throne. In retaliation for his activities Bathory seized Laski's estates and forced him to flee to Vienna and then Italy. Converting to Catholicism he eventually managed to secure a return to Poland but then made a serious mistake. In an attempt to bolster his finances he offered his services to the Russian Tzar, Ivan IV (the Terrible) and became embroiled in a plot with two Zborowski brothers aimed at assassinating Stephan Bathory. The conspiracy was unmasked in 1581 by the capture and torture of a fellow member of the coup. Laski denied any involvement saying he had rejected the advances of the plotters out of hand and by fast talking managed to get the charge of treason against him dropped. It is against this background that Laski, feeling that things were getting too hot for him probably decided that a visit to England where he might be able to sell his extensive knowledge of the complex European political situation might well be to his advantage.

During Bathory's campaign against Moscow English merchants had supplied the Tsar with great quantities of arms, munitions, and military experts via the Muscovy Company. His victory made him a master of almost the entire territory of Protestant Livonia (modern Lithuania and Estonia) and the lands lying between anti-Catholic Russia and Protestant

Sweden, an ideal position to interfere with England's Baltic trade. However at the time of Laski's visit Elizabeth was entertaining envoys from Ivan the Terrible who were proposing an alliance against Poland. There had been a ceremonial banquet in their honour in April 1583 where those present had included Robert Dudley the Earl of Leicester, Francis Walsingham, Christopher Hatton, Sir Francis Russell and Sir Philip Sidney, all very familiar names in our story. At the same time the possibility of negotiating a treaty with Bathory aimed as a counter-balance to the influence of the Hanseatic League (a commercial and defensive confederation of merchant guilds and their market towns that dominated trade along the coast of Northern Europe, stretching from the Baltic to the North Sea) was also being considered. Not unexpectedly Laski's arrival caused some dismay that he might jeopardise proceedings.

There was also the question of just how much information Laski could offer concerning a possible alliance between Poland and Spain. The Prince's contacts included Cardinal Stanislaw Karnkowski (Archbishop of Gniezno and Primate of Poland) through the Archbishop's secretary Vincent de Seve (Laski's brother-in-law) together with the Polish Papal Nuncio Cardinal Bolognetto and Baron Gasper Schomberg (or Schonberg) a client of the Hapsburgs who had proceeded Laski to London at the end of 1581 and who may have suggested to Laski that he should do likewise. Schomberg was in close contact with the Spanish Ambassadors in England, France and Bohemia, the latter being Guilelmo de San Clemente who we will encounter later on. In February 1583 a Spanish priest from Antwerp had presented Bathory with a proposal for his providing aid in the Spanish attempts to take control of the Netherlands and subsequently Bolognetti had broached the possibility of a Spanish-Polish alliance. Charlotte Fell Smith suggests that there was some doubt as to how Laski was to be received, whether he was actually in favour or in disgrace with King Stephan Bathory, having written a letter to the Queen calling her "the refuge of the disconsolate and afflicted," which suggested the latter. Just to be safe he was met at when he landed at Harwich and conducted to his lodgings at Winchester House, Southwark, by an Essex nobleman.

Lord Albert Laski was described by Holinshed in his *Chronicles of England* as being of an indifferent tall stature, amiable, with an "English-like" complexion and a long white beard which covered his chest and shoulders when parted of which he was inordinately proud. He was accounted as being generous and witty and while usually wearing red added a purple robe when meeting the Queen, intended to establish that he had a degree of royalty in his ancestry. His hosts were soon to discover that in fact he had lost most of his money through misadventures and high living and was an inveterate sponger used to living on credit. Care

was taken that he was accompanied as far as was possible by members of the Court and his activities came under the close scrutiny of their spies. Although both Walsingham and Burghley were deeply suspicious, Elizabeth, always susceptible to a charming rogue seems to have taken a shine to him. Dee had his first meeting with Laski in the chambers of the Earl of Leicester at Greenwich on the 13th of May 1583. Things must have gone well for five days later Laski and two retainers arrived at Mortlake where they stayed for supper.

Kelley returned to Mortlake on May 23rd, bringing the samples of earth from the treasure locations with him. Dee offered up prayers of thanks for his safe return and also for "benefit received of late of the Governor and assistants for the Mines Royall (which I perceyved, was the extraordinary working of God for theyr inward perswasion; they being els very unwilling so to let the lease, as I obteyned it). "This refers to an application from Dee and Adrian Gilbert to lease from the Company of Mines Royal (in which Cecil was a major investor) the right to search for gold, silver, copper and mercury in the Devonshire mines for fifteen years. As we shall see other events took precedence over any such activities.

No doubt Dee lost no time in telling Kelley all about his meeting with the Polish prince. There had obviously been some pretty serious discussions with Laski at the recent supper party and the Prince had left three questions to be addressed to the angels. These were:-

1. Regarding the life of Stephen, King of Poland, what can be said?
2. Will his successor be Albert Laski, or from the House of Austria?
3. Will Albert Laski, Palatine of Sieradz, have the kingdom of Moldavia?

Once again Dee is sailing in dangerous waters. We cannot know whether Kelley was prepared for this, in the event the answer was, as usual, ambiguous but seemingly intended to persuade Dee that his future should be joined to that of Laski: "Consider the first, respect the second: Measure your selves, as the third. For what you were & shalbe is already appointed. And what he was, is and shalbe, it is not of our determination. His purposes are without ende: yet, to an ende; in you, to an ende. Therefore when you shall be called uppon, do that which is commaunded..... Many witches and devils have risen up against this stranger....but I will grant him his desire....your names are in one book." The suggestion by Uriel on April 23rd that the endeavour would be by three participants and which at that stage, prior to the arrival of Laski, would seem to have pointed at Adrian Gilbert is now looking to have changed its composition.

On the 28th May Dee records that: "As J and E.K. sate discousing of the Noble Polonian Albertus Lasci his great honour here with us obtained, his great good liking of all States of the people, of them that either see him or hear of him, and again how much I was beholding to God that his heart should so fervently favour me, and that he doth so much strive to supresse and confound the malice and envy of my Country-men against me.....Suddenly, there seemed to come out of my Oratory a Spirituall creature, like a pretty girle of 7 or 9 yeares of age." This is Madimi, a spirit who will stay with them for some time. There ensues some discussion as to whether Laski might be related to the Lacy family. Subsequent sessions offer further spiritual endorsement of Laski with a suggestion that he will be a king. Just over a week later all is in uproar. On the afternoon of June 5th Dee relates how "E.K. had been ever since nine of the clock in the morning in a marvelous great disquietnesse of minde, fury, and rage, by reason his brother Thomas had brought him news that a Commission was out to attache, and apprehend him as a felon for coyning of money. Secondly that his wife was gone from Mistresse Freemans house at Blokley, and how Mr Husey had reported him to be a cozener, and had used very bitter and grievous reports of him now of late; and that his wife was at home with her mother at Chipping Norton, whereupon, I considering his great disorder and incumbrance toward him eternally, and his greater offending of God with his furious impatience internally; and remembering the whole premises of God his service to be performed by us twoI was touched with a great pang of Compassion, both that any Christian should use such speeches as he used, or be of so revenging a minde and intent as he shewed himself to be: and also in respect of mine own credit to be brought in doubt for embracing the company of such an one, a disorderly person: and thirdly, that, the good service of God might hereby be taken from our two executing, to our great danger, both in body and soul: Therefore to do my duty as a man resolute (upon our uniting for God's service) to do for him as for my self: I made God my refuge for comfort, counsel, and help in this great affliction, and crosse of temptation." There is a side note against the accusation of coining which reads "A meer untruth in every part thereof, and a malicious lye" presumably written afterwards by Kelley. A female angel appears and calms Kelly down, who then asks "What can you (for all your exhortation) accuse me of? Indeed I thank you very heartily for your exhortation and good counsel; but how unjustly I am misused at Huseys hand, and so provoked to this extream affliction of mind and sundry unseemly speeches, be you Judge between Husey and me. The angel replies "whosoever hath committed sin and is not reconciled, shall have the reward of a sinner.....but this man is not reconciled in Conscience (repenteth not his wickedness) thereby it followeth he cannot be

reconciled with God; Ergo he must be rewarded as he is,.....And by these reasons I prove that Husey is easily to be infected, either with envy, malice, slander or dishonor of Gods word." The angel continues "Truth it is that a Commission is granted not onely to enquire of thee, but also to attach thee, and that by the Council. If he go down he shall be attached, therefore tempt not God." To which Dee then asks "But if he tarry here and his being here so known as it is, it is likely that he shall be attached here to my no small grief or disgrace. What is your counsel herein." To which the angel offers some comfort, saying "It is written misery shall not enter the doors of him whom the Highest hath magnified. DIXIT, & DICO, & DICTUM SIT, [I said, and I say, and it was said] the world shall never prevaile against you."

Dee then enquires "In respect of the book, the Scrowl, and the Powder to be communicated, what is your judgement or mind seeing when he was coming from Islington with them, he was threatend to be pulled in pieces if he came with them to me?" It would seem that Kelley's falling out with Husey had taken a somewhat ugly turn. The angel's answer is somewhat dismissive ".....All that is spoken of, is in very deed, vanity. The book may be used to a good purpose. They were wicked ones. But as these things are the least part of this action, so are they not much to be looked after." Dee presses further "As concerning the Powder (I beseech you) what is your knowledge of it?" but only gets an unhelpful response ".....It is a Branch of Natures life. It is appointed for a time, and to a purpose." Another enquiry by Dee "As concerning the earthes of the Eleven placesWhat is now to be done with them?" to be told "..... It was a foresight of God, if they had been there now they had utterly perished" (a curious increase from the original ten). Dee again voices his concerns over Kelley's possible arrest "Shall not I make meanes to Mr Richard Young, as one of the higher Commissioners to do my companion here some good?" to which he gets a somewhat terse reply "Trouble your self when you need (E.K. She spake this somewhat sharply). Get your friends to signifie down good report of you. Come not there in many years." (Dee's friend, Justice Young will continue to be involved with Dee for many years).

On the afternoon of Friday, June 14th, a new angel appears called Galvah "in your language I am called Finis." She tells them that the book is to be begun on Tuesday next. Dee asks again about Laski "whom we are certified to be of God elected to govern him a people, whom we are willed to love and honour, What have you to say of him?" but is only told "ask me these things tomorrow." Holinshed records that after Laski had attended a society wedding he had travelled on to Oxford University where he had enjoyed an enthusiastic welcome, being greeted by the assembled "scholars in their gownes & caps,

batchelors and maisters in their habits and hoods, and a consort of musicians. There was a firework display, he was wined and dined, treated to both comic and tragic plays, there were speeches in Greek, Latin and Dutch and public disputations on "philosophie, physike, and divinitie." It is possible that at Oxford he met Giordano Bruno, an Italian Dominican friar, philosopher mathematician and astronomer who had arrived in England in April, lectured at Oxford and became acquainted with Philip Sydney and his circle although there is no evidence that he ever met Dee. Bruno's cosmological theories went far beyond the Copernican model in proposing that the Sun was essentially a star, and moreover, that the universe contained an infinite number of inhabited worlds populated by other intelligent beings. Found guilty of heresy by the Inquisition in Rome, he was burned at the stake in 1600. Dee notes in his Diary that travelling back from Oxford, Laski arrived at Mortlake in the company of Lord Russell (Francis Russell, 2nd Earl of Bedford, pro-Protestant and a friend of William Cecil and Robert Dudley), Sir Philip Sydney and "some other gentlemen," on the 15th, travelling by river. Dee recorded that "he was rowed by the Quene's men, he had the barge covered with the Quene's cloth, the Quene's trumpeters &c. He cam of purpose to do me honor, for which God be prayesd!" It would seem that he didn't stay for very long as a session is then held in the late afternoon at 6 o'clock after they had left. Kelley had made himself scarce during the visit and had gone fishing, and receives a sarcastic comment from the angel Il. Later Galvah tells Kelley that he "were best to hunt and fish after Verity," Dee noting "She spake so to E.K. because he spent too much time in Fishing and Angling." Dee asks again about Laski and is told "His name is in the Book of Life: The Sun shall not passe his course before he be King." Dee asks whether his kingdom will be Poland or somewhere else and is told that he will have two kingdoms "the one that thou had repeated and the other he seeketh as right."

Dee then asks "concerning the troubles of August next, and the dangers then, What is the best for him to do? to be going home before, or to tarry here?" and is told "Whom God hath armed, No man can prevaile against." Dee then wants to know how he will personally fare "In respect of my own state with the Prince, I pray how much hath he prevailed to win me due credit: and in what case standeth my sute, or how am I to use my self therein?" but only gets a rather unhelpful reply "I have told you that at large even now, and if thou look into those things that are now told and are now done." There follows an interesting passage in which Dee inquires about an incident which had occurred the previous evening in which a Charles Sled had suffered two severe nosebleeds and which had again happened in the morning when Dee was giving him "my charitable instructions giving him virtue and

godlinesse." Edmund Campion was an English Catholic who had entered the Jesuits as a novice in 1573, serving in Prague and Bohemia. During this period he had been visited by Philip Sidney. He was sent to England in 1580 and was arrested the following year, put on trial and executed in 1582. One of the principal witnesses at his trial had been Charles Sled who had been in contact with Campion while he was in Europe and was one of Walsingham's army of spies and informers. Was he now at Mortlake as a mutual friend of Dee and Sidney or was there a more sinister reason? It would seem that he was more than a casual visitor and may have been staying there on the pretext of studying under Dee as Harkness relates that much later, in 1607, he gave the alchemist Clement Draper a method for precipitating quicksilver and gold. (We met Draper in chapter 4, where he was a fellow prisoner of Vincent Murphyn in the King's Bench prison).

On June 18th they are given more instruction as to the book. It is to be called Logaeth which is pronounced as Logah "which in your language signifieth Speech from God." It is to be written backwards with the first page at the back. There follows further instruction as to where words and tables already revealed are to be placed.

The following day Laski is again at Mortlake. Dee notes: "my Companion (E.K.) would have caused personal apparitions of some of the reprobate spirits, before the prince Albert Laski in my Study, thereby to shew some experience of his skill in such doings: But I would not consent to it" but is told by the angel Galvah that this is an error. "Behold, it is said, before he go from hence I will pour water into him; And my Angel shall anoint him, as I have determined: Hide therefore Nothing from him; For you belong unto him.....I speak this for thy understanding." Dee asks "This Prince would gladly know, Whether it shall be best for him, with the first opportunity, to be going homeward," and is told "It shall be answered soon." Dee then queries "May he be here present at the action doing?" and is informed that "Those that are of this house, are not to be denied the Banquets therein." Dee returns to another of his concerns, asking "You perceive, how he understandeth of the Lord Treasurer his grudge against him; And perhaps some other also, are of like malicious nature: What danger may follow hereof, or incombrance?" To which the answer is "The sum of his life is already appointed, one jot cannot be diminished. Let him rejoice in poverty."

Having thus been given angelic approval, Prince Laski is duly brought into a seance in the afternoon. "We attended to Galvah some instructions or discourse concerning the Lord Laskie." A new angel now appears called Jubanladace who is "the Keeper and Defender of this man present." He is promised great victories and the spirit shows a cross with which he tells them Laski will "overcome the Jews, Saracens and Paynims – For I will establish one

Faith (saith the Lord of Justice)." They were now rudely interrupted. On of the Prince's entourage, called Tanfeld had earlier delivered a letter to Laski from the Court. He also had some messages for Dee and fearing that he would be sent away before he could deliver them walked into Dee's study to give them to him. This on the surface is a reasonable explanation but it may well have been the case that this was an excuse born of simple curiosity as to what was going on, or even worse that Tanfeld was a spy planted by Walsingham. No doubt the intruder was rapidly ushered out but the possibility of yet more gossip had been created. The session continued with a grim warning from Jubanladace "He that entereth in thus rashly, Lo five months are yet to come, and fishes of the sea shall devour his carcase." He then goes on to say of Laski, that "whatsoever he taketh in hand shall prosper...these words are the words wherewithal I do anoint him....Cecill hateth him unto the heart and desireth he was gone hence. Many others do privily sting at him..... But (I say) I will pour down my wrath upon them." Dee asks "For his return homeward, what is your advice? Perhaps he wanteth necessary provision, and money." Jubanladace replies "he shall be holpen here, and elsewhere, miraculously.....Let him go, so soon as he can conveniently." De presses further, suggesting that "Treasures of the Lord are not scant, to them whom he favoureth." He is told "The Queen loveth him faithfully, and hath fallen out with Cecil about him: Leicester [Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester] flattereth him. His doings are looked into narrowly. But I do alwayes inwardly direct him, and I will minister such comfort unto him, as shall be necessary in the midst of all his doings. When this Country shall be invaded, then shall you passe into his Country, and by this means shall his Kingdom be established again. This is more than my duty. This is the first time he hath been here and it is wonderful. The second coming is not long unto, and then shall he be wonderful." Laski stayed the night at Mortlake, no doubt with mixed emotions following both warnings about his enemies and predictions about his royal future prospects.

After two further sessions in which more details regarding the book are received and a prayer to be used is dictated another seance followed on June 26th at which Laski is again present. Dee has written most of what occurs in Latin as some security from prying eyes for in part it details some sensitive information. The angels tell him that Stephen Bathory will be killed in battle and that Laski will be called to become King of both Poland and Moldovia. In this the spirits seem to have been misinformed, Bathory died on the 12th of December 1586, not in battle but in a period of relative peace. After an interregnum of about a year he was succeeded by Sigismund III of Sweden.

Three days later, on the 29th, it would seem that Kelley is beginning to have qualms about what he is getting into. The session begins with some instruction from the angel Madimi in a strange language which they are told is Syrian. Kelley says that it is gibberish and that unless it stops he will write no more. He must then have said that he was leaving for Dee records that " My heart did throb oftentimes this day, and thought that E.K. did intend to absent himself from me, and now upon this warning I was confirmed, and more assured that it was so: Whereupon seeing him make such haste to ride to Islington: I asked him why he so hastened to ride thither: And I said, if it were to ride to Mr Harry Lee, I would go thither also to be acquainted with him; seeing now I had so good leasure, being eased of the book writing: Then he said, that one told him the other day that the Duke did but flatter him, and told him other things, both against the Duke (or Palatine) and me &c. I answered for the Duke and my self and also said, that if the fourty pound annuity, which Mr Lee did offer him, was the chief cause of his minde settling that way (contrary to many of his former promises to me) that then I would assure him of fifty pound yearly and would do my best by following of my sute, to bring it to passe as soon as (possibly) I could, and thereupon did make him promise upon the Bible. Then E.K. again upon the same Bible did swear unto me constant friendship and never to forsake me: And moreover said, that unlesse this had so fallen out, he would have gone beyond the Seas, taking ship at Newcastle within eight dayes next: And so we plight our faith each to other, taking each other by the hands upon these points of brotherly, and friendly fidelity during life."

On July 2nd Dee reports that as he was writing some letters to Adrian Gilbert in Devonshire the spirit Madimi appears and he asks her " How is the minde of Mr Secretary toward me, me thinketh it is alienated marvellously." He is told that both Walsingham and Lord Burghley hate him. The angel tells him "I heard them when they both said, thou wouldst go mad shortly; Whatsoever they can do against thee, assure thy self of. They will shortly lay a bait for thee; but eschew them...They have determined to search thy house: But they stay untill the Duke be gone.....They hate the Duke, (both) unto the death." Madimi then warns them to be careful of the English spies that are with him. Dee asks again about his house being searched and is told that this will happen as soon as the Prince has left because they suspect that he is a traitor. Dee protests his own innocence but is told he is too naive and that "In summe, they hate thee. Trust them not." Dee is again told that Laski is likely to leave in the middle of August which precipitates a whole host of worries. What should be done with the 'furniture' that they have been using for skrying? What about Adrian Gilbert's intended voyage? Should Laski stay at Mortlake or return back to his house in London? All

answers are ambiguous. Clearly Laski's departure is being hindered by his money problems but when Dee asks if he Laski will be getting some funds from home to help with his outstanding charges the only reply he gets is 'The Lord shall provide!'

Dee may well have gone to see Laski with these gloomy tidings as he recounts on July 4th that "When I came home yesterday from the Court, and from London, and from the Lord Laskie, I found that E.K. was purposed to ride forth of Town, and intended to be away (as he expresly told me) five dayes." It would seem that some of Kelley's friends had been to see him at Mortlake and were waiting for him at Brainford. Knowing that Laski was intending to visit Mortlake over the next few days and who seems to have taken a shine to Kelley, Dee began a letter to the prince to advise him that Kelley was intending to be away and asking him when he might arrive so that he might persuade Kelley to wait for him. Unfortunately he included words to the effect that although Kelley had said he would be back after five days whether this was true or not "God alone knows". On being shown the letter Kelley took great exception to this passage and accused Dee of concealing some secret meaning in the phrase. Unable to allay Kelley's suspicions Dee tore up the letter. Kelley shortly afterwards reported the appearance of a spirit telling him to leave. Dee reminded him that the same was said to Barnabas Saul when the spirits intended him harm. Kelley then said that the spirits had told him that "if I tarry here I shall be hanged and if I go with this prince he will cut off my head and that you mean not to keep promise with me and therefore if I might have a thousand pounds to tarry, yea a kingdom I canot. Therefore I release you of your £50 stipend and you need not doubt that God will defend you...and again I cannot abide my wife, I love her not, nay I abhor her and here in the house I am misliked because I favour her no better." Dee attempted to reassure him but Kelley without further ado jumped on his horse and set off for Brainford. After he had gone Dee's wife came into his study and Dee told her that Kelley was "out of quiet against his wife, for her friends their bitter reports against him behind his back and her silence thereat &c." Just three hours later Kelley reappeared in Dee's study 'unbooted for he was come in a boat from Brainford.' Dee says that although he was relieved to see him he just kept writing up his notes of Tuesday's last Actions. Kelley tells him that he has lent out his horse and so has returned. At ten o'clock in the evening they are sitting in the study and Kelley reads some books which Dee had brought from Laski at London and then sees Madimi who says she has come "to see how you do" to which Dee replies "I know you see me often and I see you only by faith and imagination," to which Madimi answers, pointing at Kelly – "That sight is perfecter than his," adding "Curst Wives and great Devils are sore Companions." (Kelley's wife seems to have returned to Mortlake, for a few days

later, on July 7th Dee records in his *Diary* that he dismissed a servant called George who was "payd all reconings in the presens of Goodman Hilton and Mistres Kelley in my study.")

Dee asks again about Burghley, Walsingham and a Mr Rawly but gets no real answer. He then asks about Laski's pedigree: "William Laskey and Sir Richard Laskey his brother.... of William going into France and then into Denmark and [of] his marriage into Poland came this Albert Laskey?" but gets no satisfactory answer. There is a final plea from Kelley – "Will you Madimi lend me a hundred pound for 2 fortnight?" It falls on deaf ears. The spirit tells him "I have swept all my money out of doors."

Funds must have been exhausted and the situation was made worse when on July 31st Lord Dudley informs Dee that he would be bringing Laski to dine at Mortlake within the next few days and it has to be explained to him that there is not enough money to entertain him. Dee records in his *Compendious Memorial* that "Her Majestie being informed by the Right Honourable Earle of Leicester, that whereas the same day in the morning he had told me that his Honour and Lord Laskey would dine with me within two dayes after, I confessed sincerely unto him that I was not able to prepare them a convenient dinner, unless I should presently sell some of my plate or some of my pewter for it. Whereupon her Majestie sent unto me very royally within one hour after forty angels of gold from Sion [House], whether her Majestie was now come by water from Greenwich." An unexpected piece of generosity by Elizabeth, notoriously stingy with money. Perhaps Walsingham, anxious to know of Laski's intentions, thought it worth funding the meal in the expectation of one of his spies eavesdropping on the conversation.

Dee had by now obviously made up his mind to accompany Laski on his return to Poland. The circumstances which drove him to abandon his house at Mortlake, set out with his family and Edward Kelly and his wife to an uncertain future were probably based on a number of factors. His perceived lack of recognition and recompense for what he considered to have been exemplary service to Crown and Country, exacerbated by his perilous financial position would have certainly been contributory factors. He had become suspicious of those who he had previously considered his allies – Cecil and Walsingham "hated him." The angels were now telling him, through the mediumship of Edward Kelley that he was to be the author of a new book of revelations and Count Albert Laski was the instrument of God by which a new world order would be initiated. A belief that was reinforced by the fact that 1583 was the occasion of a much anticipated rare triple conjunction of the planets Jupiter and Saturn in opposition to the Sun. Such conjunctions happened every 20 years or so and were not particularly noteworthy but this one was different. It had become a topic of debate

amongst intellectuals such as Tycho Brahe, Kepler and Roger Bacon and taken up by such authors as Dante and Shakespeare. Successive conjunctions plotted against the Zodiac take the pattern of a triangle and are thus known as trigons. They follow a repeating pattern and after four conjunctions, over a sixty year period, have returned to the same starting point in the heavenly Zodiac, the twelve signs of which are divided between the four elements of earth, air, water and fire. There is a larger periodicity of some 200 years when the great conjunction occurs in a new trigon and an even longer cycle of about 900 years when all four trigons have occurred. 1583 was just such an occurrence and ominously the transition was from an age governed by water to one under the domination of fire, an event widely believed to herald apocalyptic changes, the opening of the Seventh Seal, the overthrow of the Antichrist and the Last Judgment. Alice Hogg, in the preface to her book *God's Secret Agents* dealing with the infiltration of Jesuit agents into England in the 1580's summarizes the prophecies of "Tempests, floods, midsummer snowstorms, darkness at midday, rain clouds of blood, monstrous births and strange convulsions of the earth. She quotes from the 15th century mathematician Regiomontanus that "If, this year, total catastrophe does not befall, if land and sea do not collapse in total ruin, yet will the whole world suffer in upheavals, empires will dwindle and from everywhere will be great lamentations."

Holinshed in his *Chronicles of England* records the popular agitation which had been roused by the publication of a "certeine astrologically discourse ... which foretelleth the coming of a prophet, & the destruction of certeine climates and parts of the earth, and new found heresies, and a new founded kingdome, and damages through the pestilence, and abundant showers: which dooth prognosticat the destinie of a great and mightie king." As we shall see such apocalyptic predictions as these would become a recurring theme in Dee's subsequent actions with his spirit guides. Given his pivotal role in such world shaking events it is little wonder that Dee was so frightened of losing Kelley, his only effective link with the guiding spirits, the only instrument through which the Book of Loagaeth could be written and the new order achieved.

At some time during August he compiled an extensive list of the books in his library and of his possessions and made arrangements with his brother-in-law Nicholas Fromond to look after the house until his return which he anticipated to be within one year and eight months. The final entry in Dee's *Diary* for 21st September 1583 reads "we went from Mortlake, and so the Lord Albert Laski, I, Mr E. Kelley, our wives, my children and familie, we went toward our two ships attending for us, seven or eight myle below Gravessende." On the same day Dee's friend Sir Philip Sidney (knighted in January) was married to the fifteen

year-old Frances, Walsingham's daughter. It is not known if Dee had had an invitation to the wedding.

A POLISH ODESSY, 1583 - 1584

The hearts of Princes are the secrets of the Lord
Angelic quote, Szczecin, 2nd January 1584.

To mark the start of the new enterprise Dee began a new workbook, heading it *Liber Peregrinationis Primae* with a subtitle of "From Mortlake, England to Craconia, Poland". It begins by recording that on Saturday, 21st September 1583 they left at about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, meeting Albert Laski on the Thames and travelling on to London where "in the dead of the night" they transferred to Greenwich by wherries. There they stopped for refreshment at the house of Goodman Fern, a potter and friend of Dee before journeying on to where their ships lay at anchor some seven or eight miles below Gravesend arriving there at sunrise on the Sunday. Laski, Dee, with his wife, children and Kelley travelled in one, Laski's men and two horses in another "by me also hired for this passage." Given the fact that both Dee and Laski were broke it is of some curiosity as to where the funding for this had come from. It is possible that Laski had received some money from Poland but more likely that Dee had obtained credit against his library and equipment, something which may have precipitated the subsequent ransacking of his house at Mortlake, as we shall see.

Dee names two servants who accompanied them (John and Elizabeth Crokar) and it would also seem that the party included Edmund Hilton who with his brother Robert had entered Dee's household a few years previously at the request of their father, an acquaintance of Dee's. Although there was little more than a breeze they hoisted sail and set off but were soon facing contrary winds which caused them to anchor near some sand banks known as the Spits. During the night the anchor dragged and the ships, in danger of being wrecked, were only saved by cutting the cables and hoisting sail, aided by a sudden change in the wind which Dee attributed to their fervent prayers and the hand of a merciful God. They made their way to Queenborough on the Isle of Sheppy and attempted to get themselves ashore by means of a fishing boat, only to narrowly escape drowning when its sails became so entangled with the larger boat it almost capsized. Finally breaking free, with the water up to their knees, one of the oars lost and Kelley bailing for all that he was worth they managed to reach the shore only for Dee to fall into the water and ooze as he was being helped out of the

boat by its captain. He ended his account with the heartfelt words "God be praised for ever, that all that great danger was ended with so small grief or hurt." It was not an auspicious start to their travels.

Presumably they took lodgings ashore and nothing daunted held a session of angelic communication a few days later on Wednesday 25th September which Dee records entirely in Latin, no doubt as security against prying eyes. Michael appears and gives them a pep talk telling them to put their trust in God, to avoid evil, remain true, as the servants of God shall always prevail and giving them further encouragement by telling them that they will be as two fiery flames destroying all evil. Finally, returning to more practical matters he tells them that as soon as the new anchor arrives from London they should make sail and leave. Dee subsequently recorded that the following day they went to their ship, laying in it all night at anchor and on Thursday 27th "we sayled fro Quinburrough, and so by the lands end into the main sea, N.E." Crossing the North Sea they arrived the next day off the coast of Holland but were forced to put back out to sea again as "none of our Marriners, Master, nor Pilot knew the Coast." Presumably because they had hired them on the cheap. Just avoiding running aground as they entered the approaches to Brielle they made anchor and after spending the night aboard finally landed on Monday 30th September.

The Netherlands at this time was essentially a conglomeration of counties and duchies (including present day Luxemburg) which had come under the control of Charles I (and V), The Holy Roman Emperor, son of Philip, Duke of Burgundy. He had abdicated in 1556 and the provinces passed to his son, Philip II of Spain (the one-time husband of England's Queen Mary) who installed his sister, Margaret of Parma as viceroy. The imposition of Spanish garrisons and the ruthless suppression of heresy by the Inquisition led to revolt in 1568. Religious dissention resulted in the adoption of Calvinism in the Northern provinces (now Holland) while the south (modern Belgium) remained Catholic. The unrest led to the despatch of an occupying army of some 20,000 Spanish troops. The rebellion continued and by 1576, aided by England, the provinces had become united without regard to national or religious differences in an attempt to drive out the invaders and by 1579 they had proclaimed their independence from Spain. The Duke of Parma, having subdued the southern provinces would go on to capture Antwerp in 1584, posing a threat to the English wool trade and thus encouraging a more active participation by England. Elizabeth sent troops, led by the Earl of Leicester, to aid the nascent Dutch Republic. A victory was won at Zutphen in 1586 where Sir Philip Sidney, much to the Queen's distress, lost his life. His body was returned to London where the extravagant funeral just about bankrupted his father-in-law, Francis

Walsingham. It was this English interference that set Philip on the course that was to lead to the Armada of 1588. This then was the developing situation in which Dee and his party found themselves. As we shall see they took a circuitous path around the North Sea coast avoiding as far as possible an inland route.

Three days after arriving, still at Brielle, another seance took place with Laski as a participant, at 9 o'clock in the morning of October 2nd. Initially written in Latin it lapses into English at the end. Kelley describes a large building which Laski recognises as the Royal castle at Cracow. The angel Jubanladace appears and tells Laski that all is well and that "God has numbered the days of your future." He urges them to give thanks to God for saving them from the perils of the sea and encourages them to endure to the end. No doubt somewhat anxiously Dee asks about the reaction of Elizabeth and her council to their departure and is told that her initial anger has somewhat subsided.

They left Brielle by sailing barge on the 3rd October travelling northwards via Rotterdam to Amsterdam and thence to Enkhuizen where Edmund Hilton was despatched by sea to Gdansk, Poland's main port, with Dee's luggage. The party travelled on in smaller boats to Harlingen and then eastwards to Leeuwarden, finally arriving at Dokkum in West Friesland on the afternoon of October 12th. The next skrying session was held the following day. The nature of the angelic communications is now much changed from before. The book has been completed, now the emphasis is all on serving the Lords purpose and carrying through their mission without wavering. After the appearance of a crucified figure, naked and bleeding, the angel Michael appears and exhorts them to stay true in the path of righteousness because they will be surrounded by ungodly enemies. "Lift up your eyes and see the way in which the sons of man have become fools." The wicked will be punished he tells them: "This says the Lord, I am the God of Justice and I have sworn that there is no one among them, nay, not one soul, that shall live." Michael is replaced by Gabriel who admonishes them further "If you will prevaile against the wicked and rejoyce among the sanctified you must observe and keep such commandments as are ordained by the God of Truth." These are: Ask counsel of God, Be mild, fast and pray, be charitable, use true friendship in the service of God and persevere to the end. There then appears a woman, so clear and transparent that Kelly can see that she appears to be pregnant with a male child. He describes her as dressed in a crimson coat and having a long thin face and a strange silk attire around her head. From the description Laski recognises her as his wife. Gabriel bids her "Go woman, thy grief shall be lesse than it hath been." Afterwards Gabriel is beset by evil spirits and the session ends, recommencing in the afternoon. Gabriel again warns them to follow the

path of righteousness. They must practice charity, every sin is noted and eventually punished, mildness purges the body and exalts the soul to everlasting wisdom. By suffering the afflictions of the world they will become martyrs. Better to fill up the soul with heavenly contemplation than to pamper "the filthy flesh." They must refrain from pleasures of the body. There is a warning to look to their servants, there must not be in the same house those who delight in virtue and those "as harbour vice upon vice, whose drunkenness is abomination and whose diet stirreth up fornication, for wickedness is amongst them and they fear not God." Just to encourage them Gabriel assures them that "He who continueth to the end receiveth his reward, but he that leaveth off is a damned soul." Finally he tells Dee that "In England they condemne thy doings and say thou art a renegade. For they say thou hast despised thy prince [i.e. Elizabeth]." However he reassures him that if he wishes, the Lord will send a plague to punish them, fires from heaven to consume them or the earth can open up and swallow them, Dee just has to say the word. It would seem however that he resisted the temptation, for the session ended there.

They left Dokkum on Tuesday 15th October arriving at Emden in Germany on the 17th in the evening only to find that the town's gates had been shut and were thus forced to sleep on the boat. Laski however managed to secure lodgings for himself on the opposite shore. They entered Emden the next morning pressing on by a small boat until they reached Oldenberg on Monday 21st, finally arriving at Bremen the following day where they were lodged at the sign of the Crown in an old widow's house. The next session, on October 26th, was held in the absence of the Prince who had stayed behind with Earl John of Emden and Friesland. It will be remembered that Laski had a connection with the Family of Love which had had its genesis at Emden and he may well have been renewing friendships there, although in the light of the following seance it would seem he was also seeking a loan.

It appears and Dee asks regarding Vincent Seve, Albert Laski's brother-in-law. Kelley reports that he sees him walking in a street, dressed in a black satin doublet with cross cuts and a long ruff, edged with black or blue around his neck. Another man is with him, somewhat like Laski. They are in a town, some 60 or 80 miles away, near the sea, which Kelley guesses to be Emden. Dee asks whether Laski has received any money "at Grave [Graf] John his hand, so as may serve our turn" but gets no satisfactory answer. There is then a further description of the apocalyptic times to come. "These five years to come are the Deliverence.....I will plague the people and their blood shall become Rivers. Fathers shall eat their own Children, and the Earth shall be barren: The beasts of the field shall perish, and the Waters shall be poisoned. The Air shall infect her Creatures and in the deep shall be

roaring. Great Babylon shall be built and the son of wickednesse shall sit in Judgement. But I will reserve two Kingdoms untouched and I will root out their wickednesse.....But I will be glorified by you... and you shall have power. Happy are those who continue to the end." They are then cautioned not to call him again until he comes to visit them at their final destination. There is another session on November 1st when Dee asks for further information on a number of practical issues: Vincent Seve, Edmund Hilton and help with money for Laski. An angel appears who Dee thinks is Aphlasben, his "Good Angel" who in a long speech says very little before ending with "Thy goods are safe and the earth shall provide for you." Dee presses him for news of Vincent Seve and there follows a somewhat strange vision. Kelley tells him that he can see him at Charing Cross in the company of a tall fellow with a cut beard dressed in a sky-coloured cloak. Seve is going towards Westminster and enters into conversation with a lean-faced gentleman on horseback wearing a short cloak and carrying a gilt rapier. The man is accompanied by five others with short cape-cloaks and having mustaches. Vincent has written on his forehead "Where power wanteth, rigor weakeneth." Vincent laughs, showing two broad teeth. In his hand is a little stick. On his left hand is the scar of a cut. The man on horseback dismounts and goes into Westminster Hall with Vincent passing a servant holding a white staff. A Waterman standing nearby asks the servant "whether that be he; that is the Poland Bishop?" The servant is then told that his master will be dispatched the following day. The vision disappears and the two men reappear. One says "I understand by the King, that he beareth him great favour." To which the other replies "But Kings when they become rich, wax covetous. But do you think he will come this way?" to which the response is "Yea mary, if he be wise; for he shall find no better friendship than in Denmark."

After his record of the session Dee adds a note to the effect that while they were at Bremen Kelley had further spiritual revelations and that "among many other things told and delivered" [to him] was a verse which Dee then sets out. Apocryphal in nature this predicts that in two and a quarter years a City will be built "where the Holiest stood" which will be a scene of strife and bloodshed and fire and steel will be rife. England will perish; the Spanish will loose their King and France rebel and fall. A holy man besieged at home (presumably meaning Dee) will be freed by the help of the Polish King and "a Kingdom shall from Heaven come and things forthwith again to Order call."

They left Bremen on the 2nd of November, continuing in an eastward direction, travelling "two great mile" to stay at a nunnery at Ostarhold and thence over the next few days through Fureden and Harburgh arriving at Buxtenhaden on the 5th. Here they transferred

into "two great Skutes or Boats, Horse-wagon and our stuff and all" and entering the River Elb crossed over to Blanken Nasen where after dinner they travelled on by coach to Hamburg where Laski was waiting for them at the English House (a lodging and meeting house for merchants and an ideal place to catch up on the latest news). Dee and his party obtained accommodation at a somewhat more humble establishment nearby. The next day, while Laski remained behind they set off again but Dee's servants and children who had left earlier took one route, while he, his wife, Rowland his eldest son and Laski's servant called Myrcopskie took another. It was not until midnight that he had news of the rest of the party from messengers who had been sent out to find them. On the 7th they arrived at Lubek and stayed at "the signe of the Angel, or rather St Michael, at a Widow her house, a very honest Hostesse." Two days later he received disturbing news by letter from Laski of "the English mens ill dealing and consulting with the Towns-men of Hamburg for my stay, and conveying back again into England &c." There are no further details of what had caused the upset but possibly it may have involved unpaid bills.

While at Lubek, on Wednesday 13th November, they held another session. Throughout this and the following seances Dee constantly struggles to determine as to whether the visitations are truly from God or are evil spirits sent by Satan to delude them. Kelley has a vision of a flaming sword and a voice admonishes them at great length to beware of wickedness. "he that consenteth with an Harlot is accursed...and Leprosie shall dwell in his house for ever...he that despiseth me is accursed.... unto them that enter into the house of blasphemy is vengeance ready at hand." Dee somewhat taken aback tries to establish if this is directed at them personally or is simply a general warning but the spirit just continues on in similar vein finishing with the injunction "Love together; serve God together; Be of one heart together. Always preach God."

Two days later, still at Lubek they hold another seance. Still alarmed, Dee asks that they should be dealt with mercifully. Spirits appear and set out a chair for one of their number, putting a canopy over his head and cushions under his feet. He is "a goodlier man than the Lord A.L." He bids them "Pluck up thy heart and be merry." He tells them they need to rest for the winter, opening up their minds to such things as "may advance thy Credit and enrich thy Family." They should "wander not farther into unknown places ... the very seats of death for thee and thy children and such as are thy friends." Dee asks if the spirit means that they should stay there and go no further with Laski and is told they should until the summer. "Let him go before and provide for himself that he may the better provide for you. The weather will be hard and the travel unfit for children. If thou covet to live in ease,

heap not up thy wives sorrow." Dee clearly struggles with this change to their plans and asks again that it is the spirits will that they should stay in Lubek and part from Laski and is told "Are you mad men? Will you run headlong into danger?" The angel reassures him that this is not prejudicial to their previous instructions. He then has more upsetting news for Dee and tells him "Your brother is clapped up in prison....your house-keeper I mean They examine him: They say that thou hast hid divers secret things. As for thy Books; thou mayst go look [for] them at leasure.... thy house may be burnt for a remembrance of thee too." There are two issues raised here. Firstly of course one must wonder if Kelley was now getting second thoughts on the wisdom of trailing all the way across Europe following a man who was seemingly with little in the way of finances and with the likelihood of a freezing cold winter ahead. The second is the suggestion that Dee's 'brother', presumable his brother-in-law Nicholas Fromond, was in trouble. As we shall see this is uncannily accurate and leads one to wonder if Kelley was privy to information from England which he was not sharing with Dee.

A following session on November 18th did little to clarify matters, with Dee and Kelley being exhorted to eschew the ways of Satan and to continue in the paths of righteousness. The theme continues in a further seance on the 20th. They are told to fight and cast off the world, a fight of many days. When Dee asks how many days Kelley sees the number 40 but there is no indication as to whether this refers to days, weeks or years. There is yet another action on the 23rd. Dee inquires about Laski and is told "He shall come to destruction, as thou and thine to miserable beggary: Because he hath consented to them that are Ministers of iniquity, spirits of falsehood." Five days later the message is much the same, they are again told to repent and mend their ways.

Seemingly Dee chose to ignore the advice to stay where they were, possibly believing it to have been given by an evil spirit, and on 10th December, after dinner, they left Lubek. Albert Laski went by coach to visit Lord Christopher, the Duke of Meckelburgh while Dee and his party travelled through Wismar, reaching Rostock on the 14th where two days later he again invoked the spirits. Dee is told to burn his blasphemous books but on enquiring as to which these are receives no reply. Again they appear to have invoked an evil spirit until finally Michael appears, driving away the apparition and telling them "Thus hath Truth vanquished darknesse." He tells them that "the end of 40 daies must come....The grain is yet in the earth...when it springeth and beareth seed, the number shall be the last," which Dee finds to be "A dark parable"

They left Rostock on the 22nd of December heading south-east and arriving at Stettin (Szczecin), in Pomerania, on Christmas Day in the morning. A session followed on the 2nd January 1584. Dee begins his notes with the comment that the 40 days have now been accomplished and that the help of the Almighty is now needed. An angel appears and tells them that by humility and perseverance they may become almost akin to the angels, the servants of God, although still imperfect but if they resist the will of the Lord they will be cast down. They must become holy; they are not to be obstinate. Their names are sealed and they will correct the world. Dee asks for further information regarding Albert Laski and Vincent Seve but is told "The hearts of Princes are the secrets of the Lord: Such as they are, as unlock the doings of this world." Dee presses further as to why Laski has delayed in coming to them and the spirit tells him "Those things that are of wickednesse are not of our remembrance. This stay shall hinder a third part of his glory. But all your life is not of him: nor he of you. If he become good he shall be well rewarded. He is forward, Vincent is in France." Laski in fact arrived at Szczecin a week later on the 9th.

On Sunday the 12th Dee records that after dinner, while they were talking together Kelley heard a voice saying "Now the time has come." Later, after supper Dee suggests to Kelley that he should show him some passages in the Apocalypse of St John and Kelley hears a cryptic message that "a white horse is the beginning of your teaching and the word of god. 10 and 9 are nineteen." Dee records that in checking in the Apocalypse, Chapter 19, verse 11 they found a relevant text (And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war). The voice continues "Do not doubt it for I am a servant of God." Dee identifies the spirit as Uriel who says "I am a witness of the light....I touched him and he became a prophet." Dee asks him if he means Esdras and Uriel agrees and directs him to the 9th chapter of his fourth book. "There you shall finde manifestly the Prophetie of this time and this action."

The Book of Esdras (or Ezra) is an apocalyptic work dealing with the return of the Israelites from captivity at Babylon in the time of Cyrus the Great and probably dated from about 400 BC. Its original Hebrew and Greek translation had been lost but it was in circulation in a Latin version. Its themes concern the successful accomplishment of a mission by Ezra in the face of great opposition and the need to rebuild the Temple and to purify the Jewish community of its wickedness. It includes seven visions. Ezra asks God how Israel can be kept in misery if God is just and is told by the archangel Uriel that God's ways cannot be understood by the human mind. Soon, however, the end would come, and God's justice

would be made manifest. Ezra asks why Israel was delivered up to the Babylonians, and is again told that man cannot understand this and that the end is near. In the third vision Ezra asks why Israel does not possess the world. Uriel responds that the current state is a period of transition, gives a description of the fate of evil-doers and the righteous and tells him that the coming Judgement Day is final. There follows visions which are more symbolic in nature. A woman mourning for her only son, who is transformed into a city; an eagle with three heads and twenty wings rebuked by a lion and then burned; the triumph of the Messiah over the empire and of a man, representing the Messiah, who breathes fire on a crowd that is attacking him. Finally, there is a vision of the restoration of scripture. God appears to Ezra in a bush and commands him to restore the Law. Ezra gathers five scribes and begins to dictate. After forty days, he has produced ninety-four books: the twenty-four books of the Tanakh and seventy secret works. Uriel tells him "Make public the twenty-four books that you wrote first, and let the worthy and the unworthy read them; but keep the seventy that were written last, in order to give them to the wise among your people." This all sounds very familiar and one is lead almost inevitably to the suspicion that Kelley was well acquainted with such apocryphal works and so too must have been Dee who would have identified himself in the same role as Ezra.

Dee comments "Alak, we think the time very long before we entered in the right trade of our true lessons." and Uriel replies "When you have the book of God before you, Then I will open these secrets unto you" and refers them to the Bible. Dee responds that he was thinking of "our other book, which is to be written" and that the delay was the occasion for many temptations but Uriel tells him to ignore these and that "The Timber is not yet seasoned or else thou shouldest Prophetie" adding "I mean not thee E.K." The next day Dee records that after they had discussed the book of Edras at some length Uriel appeared and telling them to refer to the 6th chapter says "faith must flourish, the world is rotten and is skalden with their own sins." He then goes on to predict the coming of the Antichrist in three years time and tells them that seven books will be delivered to one of them. He then tells Kelley that because "Thou art flesh and become stubborn [and] thy judgement waxeth dull" heavenly understanding and spiritual knowledge will be kept from him. He will none-the-less be made a great seer. He then says "This is the last time that any shew shall be made in this stone."

Leaving Szczecin on the 15th they ravelled on, arriving at Poznan in west-central Poland on January 19th where Dee found time to enjoy a visit to the Cathedral. It would seem that perhaps the exhaustion of travelling was taking its toll for he records problems with Kelley on the 25th putting him in great danger and that on the 27th he had a brief quarrel with his

wife. They left the next day arriving at Konin over a long and dangerous bridge on the 30th. The weather was by now making travel extremely difficult. Leaving on the 1st February they needed to hire 25 men to cut a way some two miles through the ice for their coaches but were still prevented from entering their destination at Vinew where flood water and floating ice barred their way. A strong wind that night drove most of the ice away and they were able to struggle into the town of Lasko by February 3rd where they were lodged by the Provost at his house by the church. Over four months had passed since they first set out. Along the way they have been threatened, admonished, harangued, cajoled and encouraged by the spirits and battled through the hardships of a mid-European winter. It says a great deal for their perseverance and endurance that they, their wives, children and servants had finally arrived relatively safe and sound.

It would seem that suitable arrangements had been made for their accommodation, for as they start the next session on February 11th Dee remarks on "my great study" where the action is taking place. Kelley sees a sea like quicksilver with a harbour and two rivers running into it. A mountain appears and a giant, standing with one leg in the sea and the other in a river. One leg is of gold the other of lead, both "are like two posts, of the substance of the Rainbow". He has a face with many eyes and noses, indistinctly seen, a body like red brass, his right arm the colour of silver and the left black and twinkling. The head is quicksilver like the sea. A voice tells the giant to measure the water and the mountain and he responds "It is a cube twice doubled in himself in a straight line....The fourth in the third and three in himself square. The age of nature." A vision which has distinctly alchemical or at least hermetic overtones. A new angel now appears and tells them that its name is Nalvage. He continues "You have 49 tables: In those Tables are contained the mystical and holy voices of the Angels dignified and in state disglorified and drent in confusion which pierceth Heaven and looketh into the Center of the Earth: The very language and speech of Children and Innocents such as magnifie the name of God and are pure ...Unto me are delivered five parts of a time wherein I will open, teach and uncover the secrets of that speech...the CABALA of NATURE ...in all parts may be known... and the son of God shall be known in POWER and establish a Kingdom with righteousness in the earth and then cometh the end." A week later Nalvage reappears and Dee tries to get some clarification of the 'time in five parts' and is given an ambiguous answer that it is of two years although the definition of such is a year is unclear. There then comes a most disturbing vision. Kelley tells Dee that the spirit is showing him a house, similar to the one that they are in, with six or seven ape-like shadowy figures with claws like eagles climbing about it armed with torches which they use

to set it on fire. Dee's wife runs out and collapses as though she were dead. She is followed by Dee and the children. "you knock your hand on the earth...they take up your wife, her head waggeleth this way and that....all the rooffalleth into the house....your wife is dead, all her face is battered. The right side of her face, her teeth and all is battered....Marie seemeth to be pulled out of a pool of water half alive and half dead, her hair hanging about her ears....they carry her out at the gate. You seem to runne in the fields and three or four men after you." Nalvage reappears and tells him that this is God's warning that evil forces have risen up against him but he will be protected. He finishes "if thou move thy seat it shall be more acceptable for even this year shalt thou see the beginning of many troubles, and the entrance of this Lasko into the bloody service of the world." It is now being suggested that they must leave and move on. Nalvage departs and is replaced by a small child who (somewhat confusedly) tells him that she has been to England at his house where all are well. She then reports that the Queen has said that she was sorry that she had lost her philosopher but that the Lord Treasurer had replied "He will come home shortly a begging to you." She assures him that "none can turn the Queen's heart from you" and tells him that she could not get into his study as the Queen had had it sealed up. He is then told that Sir Henry Sidney, his enemy, had died "upon Wednesday last." There seems no reasonable explanation of this. Sidney was still alive at this time although he died some two years later on the 5th May 1586. Dee has made a side note to the entry that he later learnt that this was untrue and this was misinformation from an evil spirit. Throughout the sessions during this period there always seems to be an unease by Dee that the messages might be from the Devil rather than inspired by God. That Kelley also had his own agenda is a distinct possibility.

Dee asks what was to be done in the light of the previous suggestion that they should leave and is told that he should stay at Lasko. Kelley then tells him that the Devil "bringeth the sound of my mouth to thy ears....for I said Cracovia and he spake Lasco." The spirit reveals that she is in fact their old acquaintance Madimi and confirms that Dee should go to Cracow as soon as he can and that the vision of the burning house was a warning that if he stays he will be in danger. Dee is struggling with the news that they must leave what he thought was the goal of their journey. He asks where they shall stay and whether he should set up their paraphernalia there. It would seem that not all of his luggage had yet arrived for he asks for time to wait for his chest which is still at Torn. What about the cost? "Perhaps my Lord [Laski] his furniture of money will not be such as to serve for our carriage anew. Besides that I would with Kesmark to be redeemed, before he should come to Cracovia. Perhaps then with the people, his credit would be greater..... I would that needlesse cost, here

bestowed, had been saved or that you had told us this sooner." Madimi replies "Those that become Kings care nothing for farmhouses...silence now is my best answer." It would seem that Dee had obtained credit for his expenses and had thought Laski would be able to pay this back, a hope that now is looking rather forlorn.

Dee's preoccupation with money (or the lack of it) surfaces again when at the start of the next session on February 21st he tells Kelley that he would like to talk to Madimi about the buried treasure left behind in England. He was also wanting to ask about medicine for an ague which he is suffering and about Laski's wife. Madimi makes a brief appearance but disappears again, reappearing the following day. Dee sets out a whole series of questions:

"Good counsel for my health recovering and confirming.

If the Pedestal (for the holy Table) being made here, shall be carried with us to Cracow, rather than to make a new there: both to save time, and to have our doings the more secret?

What is your knowledge and judgement of A.L. his wife, in respect of her life past, present, and to come; for we doubt she is not our sound friend?

It is our very earnest desire, that the Danish Treasurer in England, in the ten places, (seised on by E.K.) might be brought hither, very speedily: whereby A.L. might redeem Keysmark and Lasko lands morgaged: and also pay his debts in Cracow, and about Cracow.

For, else, neither can he come with any credit to Cracow (as he is willed) neither can he come to us there so commodiously and oft, as our conferences may be requisit. And thirdly, the day of Keysmark forfeiting (without the Emperour his favourable help) draweth nigh; as in April at St George his Day next.

And by your speech of England, you give me occasion to enquire whether her Majesty doth cause my rents to be received by my Deputy assigned or no?

Whether her Majesty or the Council do intend to send for me again into England or no?

And as concerning the red powder which E.K. found with the book in England, what it is and what is the best use of it and how that use is to be practised or performed?"

This last query is very revealing as it would evidence Dee's lack of practical knowledge regarding the alchemical production and use to the Philosopher's Stone as suspected by Plat and Faber when they had visited him at Mortlake in 1582. It would seem that their dire financial straights were pushing Dee into desperate methods of generating some money. Keysmark (Kesmark or Kezmarok) is a town in the Spisz region which lies across the present

Slovak/Polish border. It would seem that Laski had included some land there together with his holdings at Lasko to raise a loan to finance his visit to England.

Madimi gives only a long and ambiguous reply which addresses none of Dee's questions. She tells them they should continue to Cracow, the Polish capital some 130 miles to the south and advises them that "This year to come is of great blood-shed...therefore thou must be separated, that the promises of God may be fulfilled."

Dee continues to worry about the future. Another seance is held nearly two weeks later on the 4th March at which he asks "at the instance of A.L. not present now" about the promise made to Laski at Mortlake that he should have the kingdom of Moldavia. Madimi replies with a parable about a servant who having been sent on several journeys by his master comes to the conclusion that he is being deceived and rebels, only to be banished. His master then seeks someone who will be faithful and obedient. She concludes with a message for Laski "I will anoint thee before thy time for my promise sake: That thou mayest fall in the midst of thine own time, for thy weaknesse is great." The implication is clear, Laski is a lost cause and they must seek elsewhere to fulfil God's plan. Madimi disappears and is replaced by Nalvage who tells them that they have angered God and must leave. Dee pleads that he has been sick with the ague and has been waiting for Laski to help with money to hire a coach and horses. The angel again tells them that Laski has fallen from grace and that they must go their separate ways. They left five days later on the 9th of March 1584.

CRACOW, March – August 1584.

Let him that hath wisdom understand

The Angel Gabriel, Cracow, April 25th 1584.

Dee and his party arrived at Cracow the Polish Capital on March 13th 1584 where they lodged in the suburbs. They stayed there for a week while Dee looked for accommodation before moving into a house in St Stephens Street which he hired for a year for the sum of 80 guilders. Kelley, who had remained behind, joined him on the 27th (which Dee explains was April 6th by the new Gregorian calendar now in use in much of Europe and which he now uses in his diary entries).

The first session in Cracow starts four days later. Nalvage appears and gives them a dressing down as being unworthy, telling them "consider that you are servants; do therefore the will of your master." This done he then reviews the Table which they have been

preparing from his previous dictation and starts to explain at some length the significance of its layout and inscriptions. Nalvage returns on the 12th and after the usual harangue continues his instruction "according to your Doctrine delivered which is contained in 49 Tables. In 49 voices or callings: which are the Natural Keyes to open those, not 49 but 48 (for one is not to be opened). Gates of understanding, whereby you shall have knowledge to move every Gate and to call out as many as you please [i.e. summon angels], or shall be thought necessary, which can....open unto you the secrets of their Cities and make you understand perfectly ... the Tables. Through which knowledge you shall easily be able to judge...all things contained within the Compasse of Nature." He then tells them that they must be diligent in learning because they will not be able to invoke him after the 1st of August. The session recommences in the afternoon; Nalvage first driving away an evil spirit which appears as a great black dog. He then starts to teach them the letters in the Table which must be used for invocations. The instruction continued through the following day with combinations of letters spelling out the angelic names. In the afternoon Nalvage has a private conversation with Kelley, who later confides in Dee that he has been told "to leave dealing as an Idolater or Fornicator against God by asking counsel such as he did." It would seem that Kelley over the last few days had been trying to gain information about Laski and had "left his questions in his window written." Nalvage told him that the devil had now taken these away and when Kelley went to check he found that they had disappeared. Nalvage continues to instruct them deriving names of the spirits from combinations of mystical numbers. He tells them that 4723 is "the Mystical roote in the highest ascendant of transmutation" and that its square, 22306729 is the "True mother of Fire." Dee is told to bring out his shew-stone again and is told that it now seems much brighter than before. Michael appears and tells Nalvage that he may also appear in the stone and will be assisted by Gabriel. Both duly put in an appearance. Dee asks to know if Laski "be past the chief danger of his present infirmity." He is advised to pray for him as the angels don't know what will be God's intentions for him.

Over the next few days Nalvage and Gabriel return, and continue dictating endless lists of letters and names. By April 17th Kelley obviously has had enough. He tells Dee that in a vision the previous night by "a good creature" that their instructors had been devils and that "he would no more sit to receive A. B. C. and not by letters any Doctrine of theirs unless they would otherwise expresly and lively deliver a plain rule thereof." He says Dee's servant John could just as well deliver the mystic letters and he wasn't needed. (This will have been John Crokar who with his wife Elizabeth had set off with Dee when they had slipped away from Mortlake). Dee was also probably feeling some stress for he left Kelley in the study saying

that God would provide. Two days later Dee was in his study working on the angelic names when he heard Kelley passing his door. He tried to engage his interest by showing him what he was doing but Kelley was still adamant that they were being deluded by teachers who had been unable in the last two years to give them understanding. He said that he could have learnt all the seven Liberal sciences in that time (if he had first learned Logic), he would have no more to do with them and wished that he was back in England. If the Books were his, he added, then he would burn them, and admitted that he had written to Laski to tell him all of this. After again urging Dee to use John because the spirits were not solely bound to him he left. Later that day Dee received news from a visitor named as Fabius and said to be Laski's brother-in-law that Laski was coming to Cracow. Fabius and another visitor, referred to as Emericus (later identified as Laski's secretary, Emericus Sunttag or Sontag) then departed for Kesmark. Things seemed to be going from bad to worse.

Somehow Dee must have been able to calm Kelley down for another session took place on April 21st at which Nalvage and Gabriel assure him that he has no grounds to distrust them. Dee asks them about the powder which Kelley had found. Can they confirm that is the Philosopher's Stone? Perhaps Dee, or more likely Kelley, was considering using alchemy to improve their finances. No help was forthcoming from the angels who made no reply but continued with their instructions regarding numbers and names. "Every Letter signifieth the member of the substance whereof it speaketh. Every word signifieth the quiddity of the substance. The Letters are separated and in confusion and therefore are by numbers gathered together, which also signifie a number, for as every greater containeth his lesser, so are the secret and unknown forms of things knit up in their parents." They confirm that the letters they are dictating are those of the original language used by Adam before the Fall which can be used to work the power of God. Kelley then asks about the nature of this power but is rebuked by Gabriel who tells him "What it is, that it is, for the knowledge of it may lead you in error" which offends him and he ends the seance. It is difficult to know just what was motivating Kelley at this time. His hopes that following Laski would lead to position and riches now seemed forlorn, yet he probably lacked the means to return home. In the event he subsequently told Dee that he was willing to spend two hours each day for instruction from the angels. The next invocation duly took place on April 25th and a list of 80 magical words were dictated together with their reverse spelling. Dee pleads with the angels to tell them the translation of these into English and this is given by Nalvage as "Behold saith your God, I am a circle on whose hands stand 12 Kingdoms; six are the seats of the living breath, the rest are as sharp Sickles, or the h[o]rns of death wherein the Creatures of the earth are to are not (sic)

except mine own hand, which sleep and shall rise. In the first I made you Stewards and placed you in 12 seats of government giving unto every one of you power, successively over 456, the true ages of time; to the intent that from the highest vessels and the corners of your governments you might work my power, pouring down the fires of life and increase continually on the earth. Thus you are become the skirts of Justice and truth. In the name of the same, your God, lift up, I say, your selves. Behold, his mercies flourish and name is become mighty amongst us in whom we say, Move, Descend and apply your selves unto us as unto the partakers of his secret wisdom in your Creation." Gabriel finishes by telling them "Let him that hath wisdom understand. Grow together for this hath its fruit in due time. Albert Laskie hath not done the Commandment of God, he should have been here by this time." Afterwards Dee notes that Laski arrived at Cracow that night, staying at a little wooden building "among guards" by St Stenislau Church and on the following Friday travelled on to Kesmark hoping to recover his property.

At the next session a further 52 words are revealed. This time the message they carry is in reverse order of the list as given. "Can the wings of the windes understand your voices of wonder. O you the second of the first, whom the burning flames have framed within the depths of my Jaws, whom I have prepared as Cups for a wedding or as the flowers in their beauty for the Chamber of righteousness. Stronger are your feet than the barren stone and mightier are your voices than the manyfold windes; for you are become a building, such as is not but in the minde of the all-powerful. Arise, saith the first; Move therefore unto his servants, shew yourselves in power and make me a strong seething for I am of him that liveth for ever."

A few days later Gabriel relates a long parable. A prophet tells of a whale which shall come from the east. Passing by a merchant and a crowd of people indulging in worldly pleasures he comes to a naked man holding leaves, flowers and herbs with which he tells the prophet he will be clothed. The prophet blesses him and leads him along a rough and stony path through huge monstrous men until they overtake a little child who claims to be a man. They continue until they come to a hill where the child becomes weary and stops. The prophet returns for him, pointing out that he is indeed only a child. He leads him to the top of the hill where the sun is shining hot and clear and bids him to look into its centre. The prophet tells him that now he knows him and he will become a man. The naked man is given pen, ink and paper and is told of many mysteries and of the coming of the whale which has swallowed a chest of great value. He complains that he has no clothes and is cold but is told to sit and wait until the child becomes a man. He tells them that the king, skilful in sciences

and the conqueror of many other countries was afraid of a whale which would be his destruction. He sends his servants to bring him the child but they can only find a marble stone. The king then finds the child himself and clothes him richly and shows him many secrets. The prophet seeing this brings the child (unwillingly) back up the mountain, telling him that when he was a child he led him but now he must make his own way. There is a great tempest creating much damage to the kingdom, four beasts appear, swimming in the flood water and land on the hill and the prophet has them killed. A second wind brings five crowns and in their midst the Father of Life. The third wind brings twelve cedar trees which take root on the hill, bringing forth strange fruit which the prophet tells them to eat to assuage their hunger. Another wind arises and the hill becomes a flaming fire and there are five earthquakes. Finally the whale appears and is stranded on the hill. The prophet makes them enter the whale's mouth. They emerge "richer than an emperor's throne," the naked man is clothed and the child is now a man. The prophet tells them that in the whale are many chambers and secret places which he will divide between them. The child who was a man will have the right side and for him twelve gates will be opened. The naked man will have the head, heart and left side "whose places are 46." They are told "You shall enter and be possessed this day together... the son shall return again 21 times and in one year. You shall depart hence into a dwelling...the place of comfort and inspeakable glorie." Dee asks for an explanation and is told that he is the naked man, Kelley is the child, the king is the devil and the hill the world. The waters are the bosom of God, the four beasts the four elements, the twelve trees the twelve parts of the heavens and the whale the spirit of God. The chambers are the degrees of wisdom and the thunders and winds are "the ends of God, his will and judgements." Dee at least must have found this to be most encouraging.

Dictation of mystic words and their translations continued on the 28th much as before, then on the 30th after a bewildering series of symbolic visions Gabriel tells them that they will only be visited on each of the next three Mondays. On each of these days they must fast, the table is to be covered with a new linen cloth with a new candle and a new candlestick set on it between them. As ordained, Gabriel and Nalvage duly appear seven days later on the 7th of May. Kelley is again taken to task for invoking spirits by magic and he responds by asking "If Moses and Daniel were skilful in the Arts of the Egyptian Magicians and were not thereby hindered for being the servants of God, why may not I deal with these, without hinderence to the Will of God?" He is warned that he must stop such practises and abhor worldly ways. He has recorded 27 Characters by such methods (presumably sigils by which spirits can be magically invoked) and next Monday he is to burn one of these with brimstone and abjure the

rest. He has been using "trash" and this must be discarded. They are then told that before August they will have the keys which give "entrance...into the privy Chambers of wisdom" and that they will be given the first 14 at the next session. Dee returns to his constant worry. What about Laski? He was supposed to be part of their enterprise so will he be coming back again? He is told "Cease to ask these things here, where it is said, no impure thing should enter." Dee then notes that while they had been engaged a messenger had come from the Prince to tell them that he was "in some cumber and hindrance." His brother-in-law Fabius and another had given him "rash counsel" but with the help of "the Commons, or Citizens" he had "obtained his purpose." After the session finished Dee records that they saw a procession of sixty coaches escorting one covered in red cloth in which was held the rebel Samuel Zborowski who had been captured by Jan Zamoyski, the Polish Chancellor. Zaborowski, who with his brothers, had been plotting to have Bathory assassinated was beheaded a few weeks later causing much resentment within sections of the Polish Nobility. Jan Kasprzac suggests that soon after reaching Poland Laski had, no doubt emboldened by the angelic messages, begun scheming with his old friends to mount a coup. Any suspicion that Laski was implicated in the plotting, let alone had aspirations for the Throne, would have had extremely serious consequences for Dee and his entourage.

On the 14th of May Kelley confirms that he has disposed of his "trash" and one of the 27 characters has been kept in Dee's possession. This is duly burnt and its ashes laid on a paper on the Holy Table. This seems to have been satisfactory as Nalvage then dictates a list of over 500 mystical words together with their pronunciations to the extent that after a while Kelley requests leave to walk a little to stretch his legs. Even given the fact that many of the words are repetitive, this would be an outstanding performance from someone who was just making them up as he went along and raises the question as to why, if this was all a pretence on Kelley's part, he should make himself such a task when he could so easily have made it much shorter and easier. In conclusion Nalvage tells them that "The next Monday you shall have as many."

May 21st duly arrives but neither Nalvage or Gabriel put in an appearance, instead Kelley sees a spirit who is "jolly and green", with a long robe and long golden hair. After an uplifting speech the apparition, who is named as Mapsama, tells them "Sudden sorrow is at hand...Laskie, if he serve me, shall be King of Poland. If he serve another, his bowels shall fall out before him with poison....The King and Chancellor have sold the people of this Land and are sworn Turks. Turn not home to Lasko, for if thou do thou shall offend me. Go to the Emperour for I will comfort thee with his favour. Let him not return thence." Disturbing

news indeed! Dee is now being told that he must leave Cracow and travel to Bohemia to seek an audience with Rudolph the Holy Roman Emperor. Presumably Kelley and Laski no longer feel it safe to remain.

Later that day the session recommences and Nalvage and Gabriel appear and announce that a further 30 Calls are yet to come which can be used to summon the angels who control the spirits of the Air and these are duly dictated. At the end Dee cannot resist popping in an enquiry regarding Queen Elizabeth and is assured that she is still alive. He returns to his constant worry over Laski, who it would seem has been in contact with the Polish Chancellor. He is told by Nalvage that "he is despised in the sight of God and is delivered over to destruction. Let him do what he will with him, but let him not join his minde with him" and again urges Dee to go to the Emperor. Finally Dee is told that by Sunday he will be able to use the Calls to "open the Gates and Cities of Wisdom." The following day Gabriel and Nalvage continue with their instruction, enumerating the angels and spirits of the Air and providing them with yet another long list of names. On the 23rd Kelley again expresses his doubts about the spirits but agrees to continue to report what he is being shown. A globe of the world appears and Nalvage points out and names countries, identifies the spirits of the air which govern them and describes the land and the people, some familiar, some bizarre with strange inhabitants. He tells them that are gold mines under the Arctic. A wooden castle on side of a mountain in Armenia is identified as Noah's Ark. Told of a land beyond Gia pan (Japan) Dee guesses this to be Atlantis. Under the South Pole live little men with long beards ruled by the Emperor of the World in a great city. Kelley sees a place 300 miles long, surrounded by fire with four rivers coming from it to each of the points of the compass. At its entrance stand three men "like us", one with a pleated gown, one in a cassock and the third in the rough skin of a beast. Nalvage tells him that this is Paradise hidden from the sight of Man since the fall of Adam. A great city beside a river in Italy "shall not have one stone standing in it." This is Rome and possibly by metaphor the Catholic Church. Dee enquires about the Spanish West-Indies and as told that this will be covered in the following day's action. That evening Kelley tells Dee that he won't take part in the next seance. In the morning Dee asks him to begin but Kelley again refuses and gives him "a short and resolute answer." Nonplussed Dee retreats to his own study to seek divine help. Shortly afterwards Kelley brings him a book by Cornelius Agrippa and points out that in it are the names of the countries and provinces described by Ptolemy and that the spirits were simply cheats who had copied these descriptions and that therefore he would have nothing more to do with them. Dee tries to pacify him by pointing out that he had also brought a work by Pomponius Mela

(an early Roman geographer) and Gerardus's chart of the world to better aid their understanding of the countries ruled over by the angels named by the spirits. Kelley was not to be persuaded and retreated back into his own study.

Perhaps Kelley was getting fed up with the whole business; perhaps he was just tormenting Dee. Whatever the reason he seems to have been persuaded to continue and another action takes place on May 28th. At first he reports only a white circle and a little white smoke. Dee records that this went on for an hour and a half until Mapsama appears "after divers our discourses of my wife, her speeches and usage toward E.K." It would appear that Jane Dee had, one way or another, been able to effect reconciliation. The spirit instructs Dee as to the preparation of the book. He is to bind together 48 leaves of silver paper into a book seven inches wide by 8 inches long. After it is done he must "perform your journey as you are commanded." Dee asks what he is to do after it has been bound. Kelley, presumably still pretty much out of sorts with the whole business rejoins "I will answer for him – burn it." A few days later there is another session with Gabriel full of apocalyptic prophecies, hell-fire and damnation for the wicked and the need for Dee and Kelley to carry out their roles in saving the world. In conclusion the angel gives them a clear instruction "Hinder not the Lord in his expeditions. Remember he hath commanded you to go to the Emperour."

Kelley, for reasons best known to himself, now announced that he repented of his evil ways and diabolical experiments. "He very plainly and at large made manifest his conversion to God from the practises with wicked spirits.... he was ready to burn whatsoever he had of their trash and experiments. "That he would write in a book the manifold horrible doctrines of theirs whereby they would have persuaded him." Dee lists these, such as that Jesus was not God and should not be prayed to, that there is no sin, that the number of men, women and souls has remained constant and that the soul passes from one body into that of a child's at conception, that the story of Adam and Eve was symbolic rather than a matter of fact and that the Holy Ghost did not exist. This was a confession that Dee must have found greatly disturbing and which says a great deal about Kelley's mental state. He then confided in Dee that about nine or ten days before he had intended to have left secretly "by the help spiritual of those with whom he had so long dealt." He had felt the threat of destitution, something he hated and feared, but now "he careth not if he should have want... he took it neither to be shame or sin to beg and that he now made more account of God his favour and life eternal than he doth of all transitory wealth and riches." This appears to be quite a turn around for someone who may have instigated the whole adventure in the expectation of just that. It has

to be remembered that the only window we have into the events of this period are the records of the angelic conversations and the occasional notes and queries which are added to these. We have no real knowledge of what Dee and especially Kelley were doing between times. How were they managing to provide for a household of wives, children and servants? Perhaps Dee was engaging in consultations, casting horoscopes and tutoring as he had done at Mortlake. It is reasonable to guess that Kelley, the more practical of the two, was engaged on casting around for alternative employment. If so, what had occasioned his change of mind?

The next day Kelley reaffirms his sins and that he is now content to serve God but although they persevere for nearly four hours nothing appears in the stone. They try again the following day and immediately a long arm appears trying to snatch the shewstone which is dislodged from its frame as Kelley tries to fend it off. Once things have been righted Gabriel appears and tells them that this was sent by the "King's Enchanters." Dee is surprised that Bathory's magicians should be able to detect their activities and Gabriel gives him the un-nerving news that "The King knoweth your doings." Kelley has a vision of a town with a large turreted house in which are people dressed in red coats in the Polish fashion. A "bigge man" sits inside the house which is hung with Turkish carpets on one of which is the representation of a man, mounted on horseback, holding a sword and with a wart on his cheek "like the man I saw at Mortlake." In a side note Dee identifies the building as Bathory's castle in Littaw (Lithuania – merged with Poland in 1569) and the mounted man as being the Lithuanian coat of arms. The allusion to the Turkish carpets echoes the previous allegation of the angels that Bathory was in league with the Ottoman Empire. Dee once more raises the topic of Laski asking that "some comfort be given to A.L. being somewhat oppressed...to see his own subjects and servants to triumph against him in his low estate from high and for all the lack of money and wealth" but Gabriel's response is far from encouraging. He then tells Dee he is to make haste for his journey, something which is clearly causing him some concern as to the means to find the necessary finance, only to be told "To talk with God for money is a folly."

Towards the end of June Kelley is again expressing his fears that they are being misled by evil spirits. A voice has told him that Laski should not go to the Emperor's Court "for lack of money, for he should get none here." Money, he said, was to be come by through wicked spirits because they were the "Lords of this World and God was not of this World." On June 24th, while Dee was writing up his notes, Kelley made a visit to Laski who was ill and staying

with the Franciscans. While they were there a spirit named as Ave tells Laski to read a passage from the Psalms of Roffensis which gives encouragement in the face of enemies.

There is a fairly lengthy session on the 25th of June in which Gabriel dictates the arrangement and mystic letters of another Table which will allow them "to work all the World over at one time." The next day Ave appears and reveals details of the meaning of the Table given them the previous day. It contains all human knowledge and knowledge of all elemental creatures – those of the air, of the water and of the earth together with the property of fire which is the secret life of all things. Knowledge of finding and using metals and stones (ores), the "conjoyning and knitting together of Natures. The means of moving from one place to another and the knowledge of all "crafts mechanical" and finally the secret of transmutation "formal but not essential." Ave then provides the names of the spirits which they can invoke in order to exploit this knowledge. It is suggested that they might have control over earth spirits which could produce money for them. During the session Kelly once more expresses his distrust of the angels, calling Ave a devil who takes offence and disappears. He is replaced by Madimi who tells Dee that he should be at the Emperor's Court. Dee makes the case that this is impossible without Laski providing them with some money but is told to have patience. In the evening, as they are sitting in Dee's study, Kelly expresses contrition and asks for forgiveness. He then senses a heavy weight on his shoulder which is revealed as Ave who forgives him, telling him that there has been a great conflict between the good angels and the wicked spirits which Dee sees as having been evidenced by a tremendous storm the previous day.

Ave returns on the following day and gives further instruction as to how the names are to be written into the tables which Dee has prepared and how these four tables should be joined together. Once the book has been prepared Dee will be able to call on the angels and to command spirits to appear for his use but to his consternation he is told that the book can only be used once. Dee asks for more information regarding corrections to be made to the tables and for names that are missing. Ave reiterates that they should leave and tells Dee that "immediately after your being with Caesar (Rudolph) shall the whole world be in sudden alteration. Battails and boudshed great number. The Kings of the earth shall run unto the hills." He adds that Laski must do as he is commanded. "for the Lord hath spared him among the Kings of the Earth.....Let him provide for this one journey: He shall not need to provide for the rest: For he that hath all, hath provided for him.....The fifteenth day of September, shall you set up the signe of the Crosse; even in the midst of Constantinople."

At a following session on the 2nd July Ave again tells Dee he must leave. Dee asks for the information which he previously requested regarding names and the manner of calling spirits but Ave is less than helpful, gives ambiguous answers and tells him "I have delivered you the Tables, so use them." He finally relents and says that they shall have the English pronunciation of the names the following Thursday. Gabriel and Nalvage duly appear and Dee is told "be of comfort for thou shall overcome." Kelly asks "What do say of me?" The reply is "Take heed, how thou meddlest with hell, less it swallow thee." The discussion turns to how they may use the calls that they have been given and Kelly asks about the means of causing spirits to produce money. He is told "thou hast least care: Thou drawest both of God and man. That is promised thee, shall be payed thee." Dee notes this as meaning a 400 dollar annual pension promised to Kelly by Laski and also more provided "by Art." Nalvage then goes on to provide English meanings of the Calls (spells) by which they can invoke spirits. Dee still finds discrepancies and missing information. Two days later on 7th July Nalvage once more urges Dee to leave Cracow. The lord, he is told, can see the thoughts of men "even of this wicked King [Bathory] which seeketh to destroy Laskie.....You have but ten days to tarry." On the 11th a new spirit appears called Ilemese (presumably their old friend Il from Mortlake) who tells them that Nalvage and Gabriel cannot appear as they are in "spiritual contention" with Satan. He provides them with English translations of the Calls. For the next two days Ilemese and Gabriel appear and the translation of the Calls continues at great length.

On the 14th tragedy struck the Dee household. His son Roland, aged eighteen months, is suddenly taken sick and rapidly appears to be at death's door "his eyes set and sunk in his head." Dee makes a vow that for the rest of his life he would only eat one meal each Saturday if the Lord would avert the illness. His plea seems to have been successful for there is no further entry regarding his son's health.

Despite being told that he must leave Cracow by the 17th, Dee is still there on the 23rd. A naked black man appears and tells him that he has broken God's commandment. Dee makes his excuses. He was told that he must go with Laski who would make provision for the journey but objects that so far there have been no funds forthcoming and the Prince was unwilling to travel. He is taken to task for his disobedience and told that Laski "shall become more poor, so that his own children shall despise him." He is forgiven but is told that from now on Laski is not to be told any of the "Secrets of God." Somehow Dee must have scraped together some money, for on the 31st when the apparition reappears and again reminds him that he should have left, Dee tells him that they have only sufficient provision for himself and

Kelly but not enough to include Laski. The spirit tells him that he will suffer later on for his failure but when pressed for an answer as to whether they should go or not gives an ambiguous answer. Dee finally seems to have got the message for his next workbook entry records that on the 1st of August 1584 he left Cracow by coach together with Kelly and his brother (Thomas) and Edmund Hilton, Dee's assistant. They reached Prague, 245 miles due west, in Bohemia, eight days later.

A MEETING WITH THE EMPEROR, August – October 1584

The flower of opportunity should be plucked when ripe, for soon it will be withered
John Dee, letter to Octavius Spinola, Prague, 1584.

Europe in the late 16th Century was, in essence, governed by the Habsburgs. In the west, Philip II, one-time spouse of Queen Mary of England ruled Spain and Portugal (enriched by the silver and gold flowing in from their South American possessions), occupied the Netherlands so as to control maritime trade through their ports and interfered in the affairs of France. In the east his nephew, Rudolph II, who had inherited the title of Holy Roman Emperor from his father Maximilian II, ruled Germany, Austria, Hungary, Croatia, Transylvania, Moravia and Bohemia (modern Czechoslovakia). R. J. W. Evans has provided a detailed account of his life and times in his book *Rudolf II and His World* including the period of Dee's sojourn in Prague. Rudolph has been described as being of a reserved and secretive nature with little appetite for affairs of state, suffering periodic bouts of depression, subject to a savage temper which led him to make arbitrary and irrational decisions which he later regretted and was suspected of being bisexual. Despite his upbringing in the Spanish court he was tolerant of Protestantism and other religions and this made him a prime target for Catholic Counter-Reformation activists sent by the Pope such as Archbishop Bonomo who submitted a plan of campaign to him in 1584 aimed at the systematic extirpation of heresy in Bohemia. He had extensive collections of antiques, novelties, scientific instruments and paintings (often erotic). Rudolph's real interest lay in the area of Natural Philosophy and he welcomed its practitioners such as the astronomers Tycho Brahe and Kepler. In addition he maintained a number of alchemical laboratories and often performed his own experiments. Evans portrays him as being "a notorious patron of occult learning who trod the paths of secret knowledge with an obsession bordering a madness," with interests in astrology, hermeticism and the Cabala, quoting from the *Proposition of the Archdukes in Vienna* (1606)

that "His majesty is interested only in wizards, alchymists, kabbalists and the like, sparing no expense to find all kinds of treasures, learn secrets and use scandalous ways of harming his enemies....He also has a whole library of magic books. He strives all the time to eliminate God completely so that he may in future serve a different master." The Emperor had only just moved his court from Vienna to Prague, the Bohemian capital, the year before Dee's arrival in 1584. Dee, who had dedicated his *Monas Hieroglyphica* to Rudolph's father, would undoubtedly have been known to him by reputation and should have been a welcome visitor.

It is a matter of speculation as to whether the failure of the impoverished Albert Laski to become their expected benefactor had now led Kelley (and the spirits) to focus on Rudolph. His obsession with the occult, and in particular alchemy, offered the possibility of gainful employment and his position as Holy Roman Emperor was an even better instrument for initiating a new world order – under Dee's tutelage of course. Hence the angelic instructions to abandon Cracow and remove to Prague while Laski was held in reserve.

Interestingly, Evans recounts that Dee had a copy of an almanac prepared by the Czech astrologer Cyprian Leowitz, published at Lauingen in 1564 in which he forecast sudden violent changes to coincide with the new fiery Trigon and in which Dee had underlined passages connected with the Habsburgs and Bohemia. Leowitz was on good terms with the Rozmberk family and was the author of a tract in 1558 on the casting of horoscopes which had included one of Dee's first published works, the *Propaedeumata Aphoristica*.

The arrival of Dee and his party on the 9th of August 1584 could not have been entirely unexpected as he was made welcome in the house of Thaddeus Hajek, astronomer, botanist, mathematician and Rudolph's personal physician. Hajek had been one of the astronomers who had studied the nova in Cassiopeia in 1572 and the comet of 1577. These included his friend Andreas Dudith who was in contact with Ortelius and Philip Sidney and who had views not entirely dissimilar to those of Dee. Despite his innovative ideas in astronomy Hajek remained deeply superstitious and was more concerned with the role of celestial activities in terrestrial affairs, casting horoscopes and writing a work on astrology. He was also rumoured to be Rudolph's chief advisor on alchemical matters. As part of the network of fellow students of Natural Philosophy that Dee had built up through the years it is likely that the necessary accommodation had been put in place once Dee had been instructed to leave Cracow. Hajek's father Simon had been an alchemist and the house was embellished with appropriate inscriptions and drawings of "Birds, Fishes, Flowrs, Fruits, Leaves and ... vessels, as for the Philosophers works." Dee was provided with suitable lodging arrangements, including a study in which he could work, near to the Bethelhem Chapel in Prague's Old

Town. This was close to the Stone Bridge, started by Charles IV in 1357, which provided the only means of crossing the River Vltava and reaching Rudolph's castle perched high on the hill opposite.

Six days after his arrival in Prague, Dee begins anew, starting his next workbook as "*The First and Imperial Book of the Prague Mysteries*." He prefaces it with some calculations as to the coming apocalypse, reckoning that as 1655 years passed from the creation of Adam to the Flood so after the same span from Christ's ascension, in the year 1688, a flood of fire would transform the world. He is still struggling with the problem of their sessions being invaded by minions of the Devil and quotes a number of passages from the bible warning of those who have been misled in this fashion such as the one from John, chapter 4 which reads "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God."

The session starts with Dee hoping to get more information on the preparation of his book. Kelley reports that he can see in the distance a furnace mouth "as big as 4 or 5 gates of a city" from which pours a lake of seething pitch. A man standing beside the lake calls forth a monster with the hind parts of a lion but with seven heads and a feathered neck, gives it a sword and then shackles it with a chain. The beast is then equipped with a hammer with a seal on its face and a voice tells them "The stars, with the earth, even unto the third part are given unto thee: the fourth part thou shalt leave untouched." The vision disappears and they are visited by Madimi who treats them to yet another taste of things to come. Pregnant women will be delivered of monsters, kings will be "beaten in a mortar," those who "paint themselves" shall "drink the blood of their neighbours and of their own children." There will be "seven woes unto false preachers who are the teeth of the Beast." The virgins will become Satan's concubines. There is a warning about "the Merchants of the earth... they are become spies...and the dainty meat of Kings...they shall fall into the pit that they have digged for others." Dee asks for news of his family, left behind at Cracow and is not encouraged when he is told "The King of darkness whetteth his teeth against thee.....he seeketh the destruction of thy household and thereby thy overthrow: The life of thy children; yea, he tempteth thy wife with despair and to be violent unto herself." There follows good news. "Thy wife, thy children, thy servants...even the coverings of thy house, are under the protection and defence of such a power as against whom...Satan can[not] prevail." She goes on to tell him that she cannot see Laski who has perhaps "hid himself behinde some mountain, or is crept into a cave." To make this a little clearer she explains that "sin is the greatest mountain." Her

inability to find him is a sign that God is no longer with him. Dee is confused, "our coming hither was to come with him" and is told that he had been brought to Prague so that he should not tarry with Laski. He must now arrange for the rest of his household to join him. Finally Madimi gives him something of a shock. "Thou shalt write unto Rudolphus as I shall inspire thee. Then shalt thou go unto him, saying, that the Angel of the Lord hath appeared unto thee and rebuketh him for his sins. If he hear thee, then say unto him, he shall triumph. If he hear thee not, say that the Lord....putteth his foot against his breast and will throw him headlong from his seat....If he forsake his wickedness...his seat shall be the greatest that ever was and the Devil shall become his prisoner....this is the marvellous beginning of this last time." Poor Dee, when he had started out the plan had been simple, they would follow Laski to Poland where with the Lord's help Bathory would be overthrown and a new world order would ensue. Now Albert Laski, impoverished and a sinner, was to be discarded and instead Dee must go to the Holy Roman Emperor himself and tell him to mend his ways. No small task for the faint hearted. The next day Dee asks that Mapsama should appear and help him with the details for finishing the book. Instead Madimi materializes and upbraids Dee for not having finished the book by the appointed date of the 1st of August. Now, she tells him, it must be prepared from "fair and decent paper...to receive that which should have been printed in gold." Dee pleads that he did his best to have the book silvered but to little effect. He is reminded that Laski's sins had let Satan interfere with God's work. None-the-less because "I have sworn unto thee for him, I will suffer him to be exalted but in the midst of his triumph he shall fall." Dee's future now lies with Rudolph. "This Emperour shall be thy aboad....I have new lessons to teach thee and new books to open, such as have been sealed in the wilderness." Nothing daunted, the next day, Friday, August 17th, he sets pen to paper and drafts an introductory letter to the Emperor in Latin. (I am most grateful for the following translations which are courtesy of Philip Neal and can be found on his website, see sources).

To the most serene and powerful prince and lord, Rudolph by the grace of God ever August Emperor of the Romans, King of Germany, Hungary and Bohemia etc, Archduke of Austria, Duke of Burgundy, Styria, Carinthia etc, Count of the Tyrol and my most clement lord

The providence of our almighty creator, O Rudolph, happiest of all Christian emperors, which arranges and perfects all things and indeed the ordered sequence and coordination of things from first to last, is so unknown to men, that most people think that everything they see happening outside or beyond the bounds of their plans takes place at random, by

happenstance or chance, in this way and that. But those whose minds are illuminated by the light of divine truth and more attuned to considering numerous sequences of things separated by long intervals will perceive clearly what they should: what went before as apparent causes and necessary occasions at another earlier and long separated time. And to omit for now a diversity of examples which I might give by bringing together the lives, conditions and deeds of other men, this one fairly notable example may be given, the almost all too incredible meeting and divine harmony which seems to be at hand between your Sacred Imperial Majesty and me your humble servant in God (from numerous preceding occasions on both sides). When I was still young, two illustrious emperors courted me: the victorious Charles V and his own brother Ferdinand, your Imperial Majesty's magnificent grandfather. The one met me at Bratislava in Hungary, the other at Brussels in Brabant. The one in 1563, the other in 1549. And I began to enjoy the favour of the most clement Emperor Maximilian, father of your Imperial Majesty and worthy of immortal glory, then the crowned king of Hungary despite the Turkish Tyrant, also in Bratislava, also in 1563, and I sought both to cherish his most rare virtues and to pass them on as an example to posterity in a certain hieroglyphical book. While I was toiling on that book I had a premonition that there would be one or another of the Austrian family at some time who would confirm (or would be able to confirm) my greatest hope and the best and greatest Republic of Christians. Your Imperial Majesty is therefore the FOURTH Roman emperor of the most noble family of Austrian princes flourishing in my time to whom I present myself: I, the fourth letter of the threefold alphabet [i.e. the letter D in the English, Latin and Greek alphabets]. And so I present myself, to humbly offer to kiss the feet of your Imperial Majesty, rejoicing if I may in any way be of grateful use to such an emperor of the Christian Republic. To your sacred Imperial Majesty alone, if at some time you are prepared to ascertain these things (and are willing to betray them to nobody) you will be doing a thing most needful.

Prague, 17 August 1584,

Your Imperial Majesty's Most humble and faithful retainer,

John Dee

The following Monday he asks if Uriel approves of his draft but is treated to yet another exhortation to strive for divine forgiveness and guidance. Gabriel tells him that he has a tower to build with foundations of iron and walls of diamonds, with seven Heads or Turrets which "behold, judge and gather." and "Unto the laying of every stone, are you made privy." Dee is then told that Rudolph is to be told all about the angelic revelations. "Open

unto Rudolph the manner of God's visitation, Shew unto him the Holy Vision, for I make thee unto him an hand, an arm, yea and halfbody....and he shall be thy comfort." Uriel continues in much the same theme the following day, declining to comment on the letter, but encouraging Dee with the promise that he has been brought to Prague "Not as a citizen but as an owner of many houses" provided he does what he is told. He produces a book and reading from it tells Dee (then aged 57) that "thy age and continuance in this world, in flesh... is 73 years and a half." Turning to Kelley and showing him the figure 46 says "So much shalt thou live by nature and die violently." Sobering news indeed. Finally he tells Dee to deal with Rudolph without any more delay because until he does he will not appear again.

Despite being prompted to make haste Dee waits until the 24th and then decides that his best plan is to use Emericus Sontag, Laski's secretary (who presumably must have come to Prague with them) to take the letter and a covering message to Gulielmo de San Clemente, the Spanish Ambassador. For good measure he also sends him a copy of his *Monas Hieroglyphica*. San Clemente held a position of some power in Rudolph's court where he represented Philip II, the Emperor's uncle.

To the most illustrious lord, Lord Don Gulielmo de Sancto Clemente, the emissary of his most serene and Catholic King of Spain to his sacred Imperial Majesty etc
My most respected lord

The condition of men on earth is such (noblest of men) that none seems to be born for himself only. Indeed let none receive for himself all things so necessary to him which spring to life spontaneously or are freely given to him by others. Thence arose the mutual societies of men, their mutual friendships, their mutual works, their mutual gifts, exchange and purchase of things and contracts of sale of things. There are various diverse statuses of men, from which manifold offices and trades are procured of men, between men and with men. Nor is the only usefulness and pleasure (which will perish of all of them the scope or end which they study and strive to achieve. But some have another goal, and a more godly one, which we may name virtue or honourableness, sent down from heaven to form and adorn men's mind and adapt them to itself, so much so that it renders them worthy of heavenly thrones. This is what, most illustrious man, made your excellence so intent on me the other day, and so benign and most courteous. This is what will refresh your memory and will sharpen your wits in my Cause, to be proposed and recommended to his Imperial Majesty, and treating it in the way in which such mysteries ought to be treated when few will believe them and fewer still understand them, even though they are most true and most useful in

themselves. The sooner his Imperial Majesty embraces this wonderful and most great, not providence alone but goodness, of God, the sooner and more fully the sincerity, goodness and usefulness of my mission to him will be manifest. I should have wished to deliver the enclosed book and letters enclosed to your Excellency, in person. But (if you will pardon me) since I have injured the skin of one of my toes I cannot very easily come on foot today. Accordingly I have prevailed upon a friend of mine to do it and (kissing your Excellency's hands) to offer you all my services and to offer this, for what it is worth, as a gift for his Imperial Majesty.

Prague 24 August 1584

John Dee

Madimi is summoned and Dee has some questions for her. News must have reached him that Henry Sidney was still in the land of the living and naturally he wishes to know why he was misinformed. The answer is that once again, due to Kelley's lack of faith, Satan has misled them. Dee is also anxious to have news of his family but the angel is uncooperative. "I have nothing else to say unto thee but blessed be those that believe in the Lord." As it happens letters arrive from Laski, Dee's wife and from England. The latter, posted on the 15th and 16th of April had taken four months to arrive. They did not bring good news. They were sent by Nicholas Fromond, Dee's brother-in-law, who had been left in charge at Mortlake and detail how "Mr Gilbert, Mr Sled, Mr Andreas Firmorshem, my book-seller, used me very ill in divers sorts." This is the first intimation that Dee has that his house has been ransacked. That night Emerich Sontag brings him word that the Spanish Ambassador has delivered his letter and book to the Emperor who has promised an audience within three or four days.

As previously mentioned, not all of Kelley's visions were confined to the shewstone. On 1st September as he was sat with Dee in his study he said that he could see three little creatures walking to and fro in the sunshine on the pavement outside. Dee proposes to get the stone ready but Kelley says he would rather see them as they are which causes Dee some consternation as they have been told that only the use of this would protect them from deceivers. A message is delivered "The Kingdom of God and of his son Christ (which is true God and the substance of his father, true God of true God) is contrary to the Kingdom of this world" to which Dee notes "The Confession and belief of the Catholick Church: not to be talked of now."

Two days later there is a domestic upheaval with the potential to wreck Dee's plans. He was at his lodgings getting ready to go for his supper, when looking out of the window he

saw Alexander (a servant of Albert Laski's, who had come with them to Prague) sitting on a stone outside. He goes to tell him to come to eat but finds him in a state of great distress. Alternatively weeping and using foul language "many souldiers terms of stout words" he tells Dee that he has been attacked by Kelley. It would seem that Kelley had purchased a cloak from Hajek's wife for five ducats and to seal the bargain had bought some wine and a party had ensued during which Kelley, much the worse for drink, had told Alexander that he would cut off his head and had touched him on the neck with his walking staff. Alexander retaliated, drawing his sword and they had then had to be separated. Dee hurried around to Hajek's house where he found Kelley in a stupor, laying on a bench. He eventually persuaded Alexander to return to their lodgings. In the morning Kelley returned, no doubt suffering from a hangover, and seeing Alexander apologises and shakes his hand. Unfortunately the previous night Alexander had been accosted by the City Watch and had told them that he would cut Kelley to pieces. In turn the Watch had told Dee that he was responsible for keeping the peace between the two. On hearing this Kelley became enraged, started to attack Alexander and had to be held back by Dee, Emericus and Kelley's brother Thomas. Kelley broke free and armed with Thomas's rapier in his hand, "in his doublet and hose, without a cap or hat on his head," chased Alexander into the street who begged for mercy. At this Kelley picked up a stone and threw it at him "as a man would at a dog" and returned to the lodgings "in a most furious rage that he might not fight with Alexander." On the face of it this was no more than a drunken brawl and its aftermath, but Dee could see that if word of it reached the Emperor then it would do untold damage to his claim that they were there to put an end to the sinful ways of others.

A little later, in the afternoon he received his anticipated response to his letter to the Emperor. The message, from Arnoldus Vander Boxe, the Ambassador's assistant asked that he should come at 2 o'clock that afternoon where he would be met by Octavius Spinola, the Emperor's Chamberlain who would take him to Rudolph. Dee hot foots it to the Palace; arriving there an hour late for his meeting and waits in the Guard Chamber while he sends Emericus to find out what is going on. Luckily Spinola is looking out of the Emperor's window and calling out to him finds that Dee is waiting. He leads him "by the skirt of the gown" in to the Privy Chamber where Rudolph is waiting for him with a "gracious and cheerful countenance," with Dee's *Monas* and letters beside him. The Emperor assured him that Spinola had told him of Dee's esteem and good intentions in coming to see him but admitted that he had found the book rather too hard to take in. Rudolph then said that he had understood from the Ambassador that Dee had something to tell him for his benefit. Dee,

looking around to make sure that they were alone, begins his presentation. He tells Rudolph that all his lifetime he had spent in learning in many fields and in many countries "with great pain, care and cost to come by the best knowledge that man might attain to " but no book nor any man living had been able to provide him with "those truths I desired and longed for. He had therefore asked that God might "send me such wisdom as I might know the natures of his creatures and also enjoy the means to use them to his honour and glory." His prayers were answered and for the last two and a half years he had been preparing "such worksas no man's heart could have wished for so much." Now he has a message from God to the Emperor and he tells Rudolph exactly what he was told to say. "The Angel of the Lord hath appeared to me and rebuketh you for your sins. If you will hear me and believe me you shall triumph: If you will not hear me, The Lord.....putteth his foot against your breast and will throw you headlong down from your seat." The Lord has promised that if Rudolph will forsake his wickedness he will become the greatest ruler that ever was and the Devil will become his prisoner. Dee assumes that by this is meant the "Great Turk," Murad III, Sultan of the Ottoman Empire. This is his commission from God he tells the Emperor and assures him that "I feigne nothing, neither am I an hypocrite, an Ambitious man, or doting or dreaming this cause." Furthermore, Rudolph is to be shown all the details of the angelic visitations and the "holy Vision" i.e. the Book. Rather than having Dee thrown out Rudolph tells him that he believes him and tells him that he thought "I loved him unfaignedly and said that I should not need so earnest protestations and would not willingly have had me to kneel so often as I did." The meeting lasted for over an hour and towards the end the Emperor assured him that he will hear and understand more of what Dee has to tell him. Unwilling to leave Dee starts to repeat his message until Rudolph, having heard enough, mutters some assurances in dismissal saying "he would henceforward take me to his recommendation and care and some such words....which I heard not well for he spake so low." Dee leaves, bowing several times on the way out and as he leaves Spinola meets him and offers him his friendship.

At a session on the 5th of September Uriel appears with his head wrapped in a black scarf. When asked for an explanation the response is "Such as defile the seat of the soul and are suffocated with drunkennesse enter not unto the Kingdom of Heaven neither can behold the ornaments of the Lord....see how Satan...maketh his dwelling place within you." Kelley has fallen from grace and has been duly reprimanded. He seems to have been forgiven quite quickly for later on Uriel tells them that "The Lord hath chosen you to be witnesses....not in the offices of Apostles, but in the offices and dignities of the Prophets." The day has come

when the kingdoms of the earth are going to fall and "out of Hierusalem, out of the Church of God and of his son Christ, shall pass out and flow the water of life.....Those that inhabit the holy City and usurp the authority of the Highest...shall be scattered....They are become proud and think there is no God...they are the sons of wickedness." This is going to happen during Rudolph's reign and "when he hath wiped away his darknesse and offence of his soul, I will appear unto him, to the terrour of all Nations." He then makes a prophecy that "In the year 88 shalt you see the Sun move contrary to his course, the stars encrease their light and some of them fall from heaven." This perplexes Dee who wonders if this refers to 1588 or 1688. Uriel adds that he will be merciful to Rudolph and that he will "bring into his house such as shall be skilfull...to work Gold, Silver and the Ornaments of his house." There is a distinct whiff of alchemy in the air. Finally he tells them that there will be no more instruction, now comes a "time of warning and of counsel." After Uriel disappears Kelley, in repentant mood, makes a vow never to eat supper or an evening meal on a Saturday for the rest of his life in restitution for his offences. The same day Dee records that he has sent two thank you letters via Emericus, one to the Spanish Ambassador and one to Spinola, asking the latter how he should now proceed with Rudolph. He finishes this with a little footnote reading "The flower of opportunity should be plucked when ripe, for soon it will be withered." Unfortunately Emericus brings them back as both San Clemente and Spinola are absent with Rudolph who has temporarily left Prague and their delivery is delayed until the 11th. Dee also sent letters to Laski and to his wife (no doubt full of his audience with Rudolph). Finally Dee gets an answer from Rudolph via Spinola. It is not as forthcoming as he might have hoped. The Emperor apologises that as his knowledge of Latin is limited and he is occupied with many other concerns it would be best if Dee could explain his proposals to Doctor Kurtz who is "party to his Majesty's innermost councils, is most trustworthy, and endowed with great erudition." Jacob Kurtz von Senftenau (Jacob Curtius) was a highly respected official at the Imperial Court and a close advisor to the Emperor. In addition to his political activities he was also a contact between Rudolph and contemporary scholars, eventually bringing both Tycho Brahe and Kepler to live at Prague. Rudolph's excuse that he only had a limited knowledge of Latin may have jarred somewhat with Dee who noted during a subsequent discussion with Spinola that the Emperor "spake well in Latine to me."

Without further ado, Emericus, who is now acting as a go-between (and no doubt keeping Laski up-to-date with the situation), is sent to find out when the good Doctor might be available. Spinola sends him back to tell Dee that Kurtz will be told of the Emperor's decision the following day, whereupon poor Emericus is sent back and told to "bring himself

in sight of the Noble Spinola ...thereby to help his memory for warning and information to be given to the said Doctor Curtz that so we might come together so soon as conveniently might be." Dee is now rather in a quandary. He has been told that Rudolph could be made privy to all that the angels had revealed, but what about Kurtz? He attempts to contact the spirits on September 13th but initially they refuse to appear. Dee suspects that this is due to some misdoings on the part of Kelley and himself and praying for mercy and grace, suggests that the Devil was intending to frustrate them. Eventually Uriel puts in an appearance, with his face covered as before and tells them that they still have not made a sufficient reconciliation with the Lord and therefore he will not reveal his face. Never the less he will "wink at thy weakness" and continue to help them. He confirms that if only Rudolph will live righteously he will receive his just reward and "I will bless his loynes and his house will stand to the third generation." This is a little strange, for Rudolph never had married nor had he any intention to and as he was credited with several children by his mistresses his loins would seem to have been in good working order. Dee decides that in the light of some of Uriel's remarks he should only deal directly with the Emperor but Uriel contradicts him and tells him he should hide nothing from Kurtz.

After the session Dee learns that Spinola has told Emericus that Kurtz will be informed about the arrangement and indeed a little later in the morning he sees him emerging from the palace. The next day Emericus is sent to Kurtz's house and a meeting is set up for the following day. Dee is given a warm welcome. Kurtz tells him he had heard of his reputation when he was in Germany and had read some of his books and now he was anxious to hear what Dee had to say. Dee gives him the same preamble as he had delivered to Rudolph of his long years of searching for enlightenment but then gets down to business. He has had instruction from God's angels – Michael, Gabriel, Raphael and Uriel and many other heavenly messengers by which he has produced 18 books (his work books) and these he has brought with him to show Kurtz. Starting with the last which covered the revelations regarding Rudolph, Dee leads him through them all for six hours "by degrees lightly, I gave him a taste or sight of the most part and also let him see the Stone." Kurtz asks Dee what conclusion he would like him to take to the Emperor. Dee suggests that he should tell Rudolph what he had seen and been told but that his advice was "That his Majesty was to thank God for his great mercies and graces offered" and mend his ways accordingly. Kurtz promises that he will write up some short note of the meeting and report back to the Emperor. He would then let Dee know the outcome. No doubt encouraged Dee returned to his lodgings only to find that Kelley has had a visitation from an evil spirit who told him that Dee was

"now with one who would use [him] like a Serpent" by confusing him. Kelley had been told that he would be damned and that their endeavours would never come to a fruitful end and that much of what Dee had recorded in previous sessions was lies. This was probably not the sort of ending to the day that Dee would have welcomed.

Over the next few days Dee is in a fever to know what report Kurtz has made. Emericus is sent hither and thither. Spinola sends for him to find out if the meeting took place. The next day Emericus comes across Kurtz at the palace but is unable to discover whether or not he has reported to Rudolph. Dee becomes suspicious that the Doctor is unwillingly to relay the suggestion that the Emperor is a sinner and engenders an increasing antipathy towards him. His fears seem to be confirmed at the following seance on the 21st when Uriel tells him that "They rejoice in their own folly and despise me: yea because they despise thee whom I have sent with my word unto them," which Dee assumes refers to both Rudolph and Kurtz. Uriel adds "and lo, Rudolph, I will scatter thy bones and thy head shall be divided in many pieces." There then comes some amazing news. The angel tells Dee "Lo, for thy labour I will reward thee...Behold I had determined to root out the English people, to have made a wilderness and desert of it; to have filled it with many strange people and to have tied the sword to it perpetually. But lo, I will give thee that land; only for thy sake it shall not be consumed. And after certain months I will bring thee home...I will take the Crown from the house it is in and I will place it, as I have prophesied unto thee," however, he adds "for a time thou shalt live with Caesar [Rudolph]." The Emperor, he says, thinks that Dee has the secret of the Philosopher's Stone. He is to write to Rudolph admitting this and Uriel will give him instruction as to how it is prepared together with a special gift of healing. Dee's role will now be to tempt Rudolph with the lure of worldly riches and bring him to his destruction. As to Kurtz, Dee should "Handle him like a man, for he will deceive thee" at which Kelley requests that he "might this night be bereft of his life, to the terror of others" but is told to have patience. When asked about Laski, Uriel says that because Dee has always interceded for him he will be reconciled with him and he will be coming to Prague shortly "but he is a wanton and very prone to sin." Dee is warned that he should bring his belongings to Prague from Poland because his books are being read by others who are gossiping about him.

There must now be a strong suspicion that Kelley is pursuing his own agenda. By the time they had arrived at Cracow it must have become evident that Laski had neither the support of his fellow nobles or the financial means to make a bid for the Polish throne. Rudolph, patron of the occult and in particularly alchemy, now became a distinct possibility,

hence the angelic instruction to uproot and move to Prague. While Dee had the reputation of wisdom in such matters, Kelley must have known that his practical experience was minimal. Kelley on the other hand may well have been engaged in such activities (was the red powder he had brought back to Mortlake of his own manufacture?). Hence 'Uriel's' offer to instruct Dee. Having Dee's books close at hand would provide a necessary resource. Once Kelley had gained an entry into Rudolph's alchemical circle Dee would be encouraged to fulfil the angel's prophecy of his return to England. However the reason for Kelley and the spirits to try to create a distrust of Kurtz is curious. Perhaps Kelley felt that Kurtz would soon realise that Dee's knowledge of alchemy was limited.

It was unlikely that Dee's arrival in Prague was welcomed by everyone. The city was filled with occultists of every calibre who would naturally resent a newcomer seeking to gain favour with the Emperor. On the 24th of September he notes that there had been unpleasant gossip about him at a meal at the Spanish Ambassador's house. It was being alleged by some Dutchmen that he was a conjurer (i.e. invoking evil spirits), a bankrupt alchemist and was here trying to "get somewhat of the Emperour." Moreover he had sold his possessions to finance Laski who had deceived him. Spinola had however stood up for him. Uriel encourages him to disregard such malice and tells him "It is my spirit that leadeth to the Embassadour from Spain. I will reward him." Dee will be with Rudolph despite the interference of the Devil. After the session Emericus comes to give him an invitation to dine with the Ambassador. Finding Spinola in his study Dee thanks him for his support. He tells him of his distrust for Kurtz and that therefore he has written a letter to Rudolph and asks for the Ambassador's comments. In addition he shows Spinola two of his workbooks. Spinola confides in him that he is descended from Raymond Lull the famous alchemist who was born in Majorca and who was known to have made the Philosopher's Stone and therefore he can accept that Dee's claims in this respect are true. Moreover he senses that "God intendeth some great matter in this world" and he is willing to do what he can to further God's purpose. As for the Emperor, he has a good opinion of Dee and his book and he should ignore the Dutch slanderers as they were simply being hostile to a stranger. At Spinola's invitation he returns the next day with the stone and two more of his workbooks. After the Ambassador had studied these he offered the opinion that they had indeed been produced by the help of holy angels. Dee must have offered to let him attend a seance because Spinola, understandably cautious, says that he was a sinner "and not worthy to be privy, much lesse to be a doer in them." None-the-less he would do what ever he could to help. Prudently, he asks Dee for copies of his letters so that he might consider them before delivering them to the Emperor.

On his return to his lodgings he is greeted by Kelley who tells him that he intends to go back to Cracow for his wife and then leave for England. Dee was perhaps getting used to these threats, for in a side note he writes "as he pretended." He probably had other things to worry about. He records "Now were we all brought to great penury; not able without the Lord Laskies, or some heavenly help, to sustain our state any longer. Besides this I understood of the Queens displeasure for my departure and of the Bishop of London [John Aylmer] his intent to have begun to have accused me of Conjuraton and so to have had the secret assistance of you know whom." Could this have been Walsingham?

On the 26th of September Dee notes that after a chance meeting between Kurtz and Simon Hajek a servant had been sent to find the address of his lodging house. At 7 o'clock the next morning Kurtz sends a message to say he will be arriving in two hours time. It would seem that not only had Dee brought his belongings from Cracow but also his family, as he records that Kurtz greeted his wife and his daughter Katherine. For reasons best known to himself Kelley had hidden himself in his chamber. No sooner had Dee got his visitor settled in his study than he began his complaints. He had come as a sincere and faithful servant of the Emperor, intending only to benefit Rudolph, "no hindrance, losse or hurt" nor to obtain money. He was of a good reputation throughout Europe but "here my name and fame should suffer shipwrack, where I thought I had been in a sure Haven....my thinketh that great injury is done unto me." There are "envious malitious backbiters that also are about this Court" and goes on to relate the slanders voiced at Spinola's dinner table. Kurtz appeared to be shocked and expressed ignorance of such matters. He assures Dee that he has made a "plain and sincere" report to Rudolph of their previous meeting to which the Emperor had as yet made no response. His Majesty thought the things he had been told to be almost incredible or impossible and wanted more time to consider them. Rudolph would like to see the books that Dee had shown him, or at least copies and especially the one containing "a paraphrasis of the Apostolical Creed." Dee, unhelpfully, replies that he was not prepared to let go of the books themselves but was prepared, at his leisure, to write out copies. He then tells Kurtz that because it had taken so long to hear from him he had letters ready to send to Rudolph to explain his intentions further and gives him a summary of their contents. Kurtz offers to have one of his servants deliver them to the Court that afternoon, but Dee (wisely) declines on the basis that the Emperor was not expected to return for another two or three days. After this standoff the conversation turned to more prosaic matters. They talked about mathematics and Dee showed him some of his books, the *De superficierum divisionibus* which he had published in 1570 in collaboration with Frederico Commandino during his stay at Urbino and

his *Propaedeumata Aphoristica*. "After this with mutual curtesies offered on both parts (after the manner of the world) he took his horse and returned homeward."

In the morning Dee decides to send his letters to Rudolph via San Clemente and writes him a cover note in explanation. What began as an endeavour to receive instruction from God's holy angels to reveal the nature of the world in which Dee acted only as a scribe writing down the words as they were dictated to him has now become much more than just producing the books but a mission to direct the future of the world and of the Catholic Church. He asks the Ambassador to deliver the letters to Rudolph and to let him know that he is ready to serve him as a philosopher and mathematician. He hopes that an answer might be obtained soon as he would like to bring his furniture and books to Prague "before the harshness of winter." In a postscript he describes the meeting with Kurtz and repeats his remark that the Emperor had thought what he had been told was impossible or incredible. For this reason he is writing to Rudolph to explain things again and would welcome the opportunity to talk to the Emperor once more. He lets San Clemente know that he has declined Kurtz offer to take his letters to the Emperor, preferring to write directly. The letters all bundled together were duly despatched to the Ambassador by Emericus Sontag.

It would seem that to appease Kelley, Dee had agreed to his wife coming to join them for he wrote to Edmund Hilton who had stayed behind at Cracow to reassure the rest of his household that all was well and that they should not be alarmed regarding her departure. He sent another letter to Albert Laski for money, a somewhat forlorn hope. The letters were entrusted to the care of Dee's servant Hugh who was dispatched to deliver them on foot, no mean task given the distance involved and indicative of their impoverished state.

Further problems dogged Dee. On the 1st of October he finds it necessary to beg the spirits for help with his wife who is pregnant and unwell, perhaps due to stress, as he says she is "testy and fretting." The response is much less than he would have hoped for. Uriel castigates them as sinners wanting to steal God's bounty. "You live with an Harlot and shall possesse the rewards of Fornication and Adulterers....I will place a threhold door-bar, stronger than a Rock of yearn [iron], which shall stand between your eyes and knowledge.... I am the true medicine of such as put their trust in the God of Hosts." None-the-less he will give Dee "science and understanding" so that he will find favour with Rudolph "him that I favour not." In an aside Kelley is told that he will be given what he desires but what is given will be taken away and "when thou wouldst be wise thou shall not and when thou wouldst see thou shall not" at which he takes umbrage and wants to end the session. Gabriel goes on to give them a somewhat obtuse definition of Physic (medicine) "the true and perfect science of the natural

combination and proportion of known parts" but which is beyond the capacity of those who use it just to make money. He tells them that they must listen to his instructions for forty days and he will reveal many unknown secrets. Gabriel says he will return the next day to provide a remedy for Jane whose disease is "very dangerous and threateneth her child, yea and her self death." (Possibly this is to allow Kelley to consult some medical books for inspiration). The verdict is that at his wife's conception a fever had affected the soul's entry into the foetus and as a result her digestive functions have become corrupted. Uriel disappears again "I have taught the disease; I will go and see if there be a remedy." He reappears after dinner with the answer. Dee is to take a pint of wheat, a live pheasant cock, eleven ounces of amber and an ounce and a quarter of turpentine. The pheasant is to be plucked and broken into pieces with a pestle, the amber to be ground small and all the ingredients put into a gallon of red wine. The mixture is to be distilled twice and divided into three parts. After Jane has fasted for forty hours she should drink one part, a little at a time, make a sauce of another to use for five or six meals and the last portion is to be used "in secret." Kelley points out that if Uriel was a good angel he could simply cure Dee's wife through the virtue of the scrying table or somesuch thing but is told to "cease thy malicious tongue." They will have nothing more from him until they are repentant and reconciled. Whether Dee prepared and administered this concoction is unknown, at any rate Jane recovered and subsequently lived to a ripe old age.

At the seance two days later on the 4th of October, Uriel, again with a scarf across his face, points out how much he has helped them. If they had ignored his warning and stayed in England his children would have been scattered, his wife in sorrow and "the birds of the air rested on thy carkase." He has protected them from the fury of the sea and the rage of Satan. Although there might be hard times they will ultimately get their reward. To which the more practical Kelley asks "but will you give us meat, drink and cloathing?" Dee records that Kelley had a private conversation with Uriel which he declined to communicate, but then told him that he was ready to sell his clothes and leave for England. If his wife would not go with him, he would leave without her. After a further discussion Kelley tells Uriel that he doubts that he is an agent of God. There then comes instruction for a visit to Cracow. Dee is told that he should not take his wife but that he should make the trip in secret together with Kelley and his brother Thomas who is to remain as a servant at Laski's house. The Prince is to be brought to Prague and Dee should defend him against his enemies.

At the end of the week Dee receives a message that Kurtz will be coming to see him the following morning, instead he decides to visit the Doctor at his home and arrives there early.

His host is none too welcoming and after some chit chat about the book which Dee had lent him he tells Dee that Rudolph felt that his sins were a matter between him and his confessor. Dee replied that he was sorry his words had not been understood and that the criticism was not from him but from heaven. He would pray that Rudolph was made aware that he had misinterpreted what he had been told. Kurtz told him that he knew further letters had been written and Dee admitted that these were now with San Clemente but if the Ambassador failed to deliver them that day he would give them to Kurtz to give to Rudolph, which Kurtz promised to do. Dee dashed around to San Clemente and told him all about his meeting. The Ambassador pleaded the press of other business for the delay but promised that the letters would be delivered straight away. Dee, having now annoyed his only two possible allies at court, hurried to wait outside the Emperor's audience chamber from where Kurtz eventually emerged. He assured Dee that Rudolph had not taken offense at his message and Dee confirmed that San Clemente would be bringing his letters later.

Dee is now desperate to know what is happening. He sends a messenger to the Ambassador's house and learns that the letters were delivered and that he could expect an answer through Doctor Kurtz, so straight after dinner he pays him yet another visit only to be told that so far Rudolph has not sent word. Dee, attempting to mollify Kurtz explains that he had always been careful to maintain his reputation but that now at Prague he was anxious not to be "despised, or not regarded, or to be a trifler." He appreciated that Kurtz was often instrumental in forming the Emperor's views in such matters. His host promises that he will "deliver all in the best wordes he could, in friendly sort." A more amicable conversation then ensues; Kurtz shows him some of his mathematical work, arithmetical tables for use in astronomy and a more accurate quadrant. In reply Dee reveals the "secret of my glasse, for battering in a dark night," possibly some sort of storm lantern, and is told that Rudolph would like to see it. Dee promises that he will fetch it from Cracow as soon as possible. Somewhat encouraged Dee now asks for a passport for himself, his family and his household. He is assured that this should not be a problem and Kurtz dictates a suitable request for him to send to Rudolph. Presumably this was granted as Dee set off back to Poland on the 8th of October 1584.

INSTRUCTION IN ALCHEMY. January – July 1585.

*All haile to the noble Companie
Of true Students in holy Alchimie,*

*Whose noble practise doth hem teach
To vaile their secrets with mistie speach.*

Anon, *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*, 1642.

There now occurs a strange hiatus in the recording of events. Meric Casaubon's *True and Faithful Relation* jumps from Dee's departure from Prague to Cracow on October 8th 1584, headed at page 256, to a new workbook, dated January 14th 1585, with page number 353 and again relating to activities in Prague. We can be sure that in the intervening time Dee had been to Cracow because he starts by recording that on the 20th December 1584 "we did set forth, I, Master Kelley, Rowland my infant, with his nurse and John Crokar (in a Coach with Horse, which I had bought of Master Frizer) from Cracovia toward Prage." Money (or perhaps credit) would seem had been obtained from somewhere. Dee specifically refers to a prior workbook as there is an entry dated January 6th, 1585, in which he records writing to Jacob Kurtz "And a letter of his written to me the 8th day of October Anno 1584, is beginning of the Book next written before this." (my underlining). It may well be the case that this previous book was lost, but if so why was there a space of 97 page numbers in Casaubon's book? It would seem a more reasonable guess that the missing section was removed after printing but before binding. If so, what prompted the deletion of the records of events which happened 75 years previously? We know that he published the book in 1659 as a proof that spirits existed and that attempts to invoke them might well summon agents of the devil. Was there something in the missing workbook which he felt might get him in trouble with the ecclesiastical authorities? And if he did indeed omit that section did he also destroy the original? It would seem to be the case that the printing was stopped for a while by the authorities and possibly at that time the missing section was removed or lost. In his Table of Contents Casaubon simply states that "The account of some two moneths, from 8 Octob 1584 to Decemb 20 are wanting." What ever the reason there are no available records of what Dee was doing during these missing months. It may have entailed an attempt by Laski to ingratiate himself with Bathory and to introduce Dee to the Polish king.

Dee arrived back at Prague on December 30th and the following day he wrote to San Clemente telling him that he was still preparing arguments to support and explain his mission to Rudolph but it would require a few days to have his new lodgings made ready. He was staying initially with Doctor Hajek but had made arrangements to hire a house in Salt Street, near the market place for 70 dollars annual rent and was waiting for the present incumbent to

move out. Another letter followed a few days later on January 6th 1585 to Jacob Kurtz, letting him know also that he had arrived from Cracow with his family and furniture and hired accommodation at some expense and complaining that in his absence there has been criticism and insults trumped up against him. Kurtz must have written to him during the stay at Cracow for he goes on to thank him for his letters and says it was a great comfort to understand that he had a good opinion of him. Dee took possession of his new accommodation on January 12th and two days later commenced another seance. Kelley reports a vision with distinctive alchemical overtones. He sees a spirit with an ash coloured veil who enters a garden full of various kinds of fruit. On a hill in the middle is a round house with four internal corners, four doors, coloured white (transparent), red, black and green and four round windows. Through one door the house appears to be on fire, like a furnace, through another door it is like a fountain, full of water with streams running out from each corner, ebbing and flowing into a central stream which rises up and falls, Dee uses the Latin word "circulariter", i.e. circulates, in describing it. The contributory streams are also coloured, saffron and blue, the central water is white and the circulating stream "is of quicksilver, as if it were somewhat mortified." The house becomes filled with fire, the red door is opened, the house fills with smoke and there are "motions" moving about. Opening the black door then fills the house with dust the colour of lead. The spirit leaves the house and "goeth by a waterside to a Rockish Mountain" from which he summons seven men armed with spades, shovels and mattocks and leads them back to the house on the hill and bids them to dig. At first their equipment breaks but after it has been strengthened they begin to undermine the house and its foundations are revealed as a glass vessel filled with fire which gushes upwards. There can be seen within the house slime, water thinner than slime and pure water. "Now there commeth together stuff like yellow earth which the fire wrought out of the black earth: And the pure water runneth into that yellow stuff." The spirit guide puts the mixture of yellow earth and water into an iron vessel where it takes on the appearance of grass mingled with water and taking some earth breaks it into six pieces, each of which he dips into the pot. The first is transformed into gold, the second into silver and the following ones into copper, an iron slag, a white stone and tin.

There are a number of alchemical principles discernible in the vision. Four rivers flowing in and out of an inner ocean symbolises the process of circulation (the repeated distillation and condensation of a volatile material. The four stages of the alchemical process were distinguished by colour – Melanosis or the nigredo - blackening; Leukosis – whitening; Xanthosis or Citrinitas – yellowing (which eventually fell out of fashion) and the final stage

Iosis – reddening. The alchemical concepts of fire and water were interchangeable "Their Fire is water and their water is fire. Their water at the same time washes and calcines and so does their fire" (Michael Maier, *Atalanta Fugiens*). A subsequent revelation from the angel implies the need for Dee to attain to a higher spirituality but the vision may well indicate the train of Kelley's thinking. At a subsequent session Uriel tells him "Whatsoever I teach you hath a Mystery....all things that you learn of me, you must be content to receive as mystical instruction, comprehending perfect truth." On the 17th there are visions of a woman digging in the earth which produces water and of a pregnant woman who produces a glass full of red oil from the ground. An old man takes the glass from the woman; it breaks and from it comes a little book. Dee is instructed to "write the mysteries of God with a humble heart. Another angel appears and delivers another book written in holy characters, with the injunction "speak no more than is contained in this book." The messages now become somewhat incomprehensible. "Take off your Dlasod dignified, and Luminus, or from due degrees....Gather or take fierce degree....And double then Dlasod, and thy Rlodnr." Helpfully the angel bids them to pray so that they might understand. The spirit tells them "Of every work there ascendeth one Audcal, and so every Law Rlodnr....and purpose Dlasod, take a swift Image and have the proportion of a most glorious mixture Audcal and also Lulo. Continue and by office seek Rlodnr backward by the red digestion. But he by the common or red Darr doth gather most ripest work, purge the last fortune well fixed. Then the four through your [Rlodnr]. ...Roxtan finished more together at the lower body by one degree....In him become his red and highest degree of his resurrection through coition." The angel then tells him to bring the Book of Enoch and shows them where the six magical names appear – Dlasod, Roxtan, Rlodnr, Audcal, Darr and Lulo in the first square which is the first table in Nature – "all that may be spoken in that you call Animal, Vegetable or Mineral workmanship of Nature is here."

At the next session, on January 18th Uriel returns and asks them what they have learnt from the previous lesson. Dee admits that they had not understood its real meaning. He is told that they have been given "the true perfect and most plain Science or understanding of all the lower Creatures of God: their natures, fellowship together, and perfect knitting together, which is fourfold. The first, the knitting together of celestial influence, and the creatures below. The second, the centre of everybody Essential. The third, the combinations of many parts or bodies concurrent to one principle. The last the true use and knowledge of every substance to be conjoined and distributed." He goes on to explain that they must now work to achieve a proper understanding and that this can be done in just one day by discovering the

relationship between the words, the letters and the numbers of what has been revealed. He then begins to dictate a stream of numbers. Dee becomes faint and the spirit tells him to leave while Kelley takes over writing them down. After a recess for dinner they resume and are told to use the numbers to order the words from their Table. To their consternation, the following day their guide tells them that because Kelley replaced Dee as the scribe they have been deceived by the Devil and fed misinformation and proceeds to give them a new batch of numbers. The instruction continues after lunch and again in the evening. They must have been feeling the strain by then for Dee records this as "After drinking at night, at 7 o'clock." The requirements for abstinence before invoking the angels seems to have gone by the wayside. Little more is revealed other than the cryptic phrase "Take common Audcal purge and work it" which mimics the start of many an alchemical recipe. A few days later, after yet another admonition to mend their wicked ways the lesson continues, they are to be instructed in Rlodnr and in the law of Coition and Mixture. "The first is the instrument working, and drawing things together of one nature. The second is the bounds and termes, wherein every mixture consisteth, and beyond which it cannot go." He tells them that the first part consists of four parts, every part of which is double and the first of these is Tepens but no more will be revealed until "I see the favour of God more open unto you. After 7 dayes I will come again."

He duly returns on January 28th and begins by addressing their unworthiness and sinful natures and lack of appreciation for all the favours God has bestowed on them. If necessary Dee might need to choose another skryer. There ensues a long lecture covering the Creation, Adam's fall from grace, the Trinity, Christ's Incarnation, the Eucharist and the doctrine of transubstantiation, adding the following day that the role of a preacher, talking of God and Christ and expounding the scriptures, was to talk plainly, truly and openly so that they are understood. This is not necessarily a view that might find favour with a Catholic Church conducting its worship in Latin. The instruction in the occult continued. This is the Holy Art Gebosol "which is not as the Philosophers have written." The first step is supernatural, limited to the 48 Gates of Wisdom where their Holy Book begins, the last is to be able to speak to God. This then is not practical alchemy but hermeticism, the belief that the alchemical processes should be mirrored by spiritual ones by which a self purification and transmutation would occur allowing the practitioner access to the higher realms of nature.

There is a further wait for a week and then the spirit returns. Dee asks about Laski but is told the angel can no longer see him as he has Satan in his heart and has neglected God's commandments. This causes Dee some panic. Lasky is still essential for the worldly aspects

of their life such as the cost of the house in Cracow, if he is abandoned where will their financial support come from? There is no useful answer. The spirit, on being asked reveals that his name is Levanael. He appears again nearly a fortnight later and accuses Kelley of lack of Christian commitment "Thou confessest not thy self, neither thy sinnes, before God." He must find a priest and make amends.

At a seance on February 23rd, as Dee and Kelley were sitting at the shewstone they hear a tapping on the wall and a bench and both feel a spiritual presence. Madimi appears and without preamble chastises them. "What should I speak unto you, since you have no faith? Why should I teach you that despise my documents?" She softens a little and warns Dee that "envious minds and false hearts do hunt after thee" which given the malicious rumours circulating in Prague about him was something he was probably only too well aware of. He asks her advice and she tells him that one, or both, of them should go straight away to Laski. There is a plan to arrest him but if he leaves his enemies will know that God has warned him. As always Dee points out that he has very little money and asks how soon he should go. Madimi tells him as soon as possible for the danger is imminent; he should go on horseback rather than by wagon and travel to Wratislavia (modern Wroclaw or Breslau) then in the southwest of Bohemia. Dee tells Madimi that he will need at least three horses to carry all his books but is told to hide them instead. He asks if he will return or should he send for his wife later but gets no helpful response. He must leave like a thief, secretly and speedily. He does not need to depend on Laski, rather the other way round. "If he do evil, his punishment is ready: If he do well, he doth it for himself." Dee needs no further urging, two days later, accompanied by Kelley and his brother Thomas as a servant, he rides for the village of Limberg (Nymburk) six miles from Prague on the way to Wroclaw. In the morning Dee prepares for an early departure, asking that the horses should be made ready at 4 o'clock so that they might be off at daybreak. While he is sorting out his mail, Kelley, who is lying awake in bed in the next room thinks he hears him call but when Dee denies it assumes that it was a spirit. Later as Kelley is sitting in Dee's chamber he feels something writing on his back and climbing up into his head. He has a vision of Michael standing over Dee with a pen in his hand. Anticipating an important message Dee seizes pen, ink and paper and prepares to write, keeping the rest of the company they were travelling with waiting. Michael appears and tells him that because he has obeyed he will be shown the future. Before "twelve moneths of your account be finished" he will keep his promise concerning the destruction of Rudolph "lest he triumph, as he often doth." He will be swept from the face of the earth and perish miserably. Now he drops shattering news. The agent of the new world order is no

longer Laski, no longer Rudolph, but Stephen Bathory. "I will bring in, even in the second moneth (the twelve ended) Steven.....and will place him in the seat Imperial; He shall possesse an Empire most great." Laski is to be abandoned. "My minde abhorreth from Lasky, for he is neither faithful to me, nor to thee: neither he careth for his own soul." Kurtz is spying for Rudolph who knew of Dee's leaving "before thou camest out of thy own doores" and they are both plotting against him. Rather than flee, Dee must now return to Prague and face him and show him up as a liar. Michael then tells him to attend to "see that the infant be regenerated" i.e. the baptism of Dee's newborn son and confirms his choice of Godparents. By late afternoon they were once more back in Prague. Dee first calls on Curtis Balthasar Frederick of Ossa and on his return home finds Emericus Sontag and Kelley together. They are so taken aback by his unexpected arrival that they were "half not able, or not willing to speak." No doubt Kelley was bringing himself up to date on the current political situation and exploring his options. Eventually they told him that the previous day Rudolph had been very depressed (a condition he suffered frequently) and would speak to nobody. The Emperor, as Michael had told him, had known all about Dee's leaving. Emericus was at great pains to blame the Jews and in particular the son of Jacob Kurtz, who had got the horses for him, for telling Rudolph.

Despite all the gossip and rumour Dee still had some friends. On March 14th his son Michael was baptised at St. Vitus's Cathedral by Rudolph's chaplain. The Spanish Ambassador, San Clemente and Lord Romsey (Wolf Rumpf), a privy councillor, stood as godfathers and Marguerite de Cardona, the Spanish wife of Lord Adam Dietrichstein, the Emperor's major domo, as godmother. Dee it would seem, still had some standing at court.

The next week Kelley is in some turmoil. On the Monday he had a glimpse of a small fragment of fire; the next day he felt a creature moving about in his head and sometimes peering out through his ears. On the Wednesday they are visited by an apparition covered in a white garment spotted with red and black and with its face hidden who expounds at length on God's purpose, mercy, justice and perseverance. Kelley becomes uneasy and says that he will not accept the instruction of the spirits unless they are approved by a priest at confession. The spirit asks him which is the greater, the authority of the Church Militant or the Church Triumphant in matters of truth, to which he replies that it is the latter. The Church Militant is comprised of living Christians, battling against sin and the Devil, The Church Triumphant those who are in heaven. The spirit replies that their authority is the Church Triumphant which takes precedent over a "fleshy priest" which is to say that the angel's authority is greater than that of the Pope. The spirit leaves, promising to tell them more about the

Philosopher' Stone at the next session. Dee's record of the session ends with the note that Book 24 followed, which was started on the same day, in the afternoon, by Levanael.

It begins with an alchemical recipe using the mystical terms previously dictated by the spirits. "Take common Audcal, purge and work it by Rlodnr of four divers digestions, continuing the last digestion for fourteen days, in one and a swift proportion, untill it be Dlafod fixed a most red and luminous body, the Image of Resurrection. Take also Lulo of red Roxtan, and work him through the four fiery degrees, until thou have his Audcal, and there gather him. Then double every degree of your Rlodnr, and by the law of Coition and mixture work and continue them diligently together. Notwithstanding backward, through every degree, multiplying the lower and last Rlodnr his due office finished by one degree more than the highest. So doth it become Darr, the thing you seek for: a holy, most glorious, red and dignified Dlafod. But watch well, and gather him, so, at the highest: For in one hour, he descendeth, or ascendeth from the purpose."

In the afternoon Kelley is again unwilling to act as scribe and suggests that Dee's servant John is used instead, but to no avail, Levanael rejoins with "Thy talk is human folly." Dee asks for an explanation of the alchemical recipe and is told that Audcal is gold, Dlasod is sulphur, Roxtan is "pure and simple Wine in her self. Lulo is her mother" an explanation which Dee finds a little confusing "There may be in these words great ambiguity." The angel continues, "Lulo is tartar, simply of red wine. Audcal is his Mercury. Darr (in the angelical tongue) is the true Name of the Stone." Dee is even more puzzled and in a side note writes, referring to Audcal, "He said before it was gold." Although not revealed it is a reasonable guess that Rlodnr is aqua regia, a mixture of nitric and hydrochloric acids. The process thus begins with common gold which is dissolved with successive portions of the acid, the last one to take fourteen days and then perhaps evaporated to dryness – "until it be Dlasod" (sulphur). Sulphur in alchemical terminology could denote either the basic chemical or the inherent nature of any substance which could be detached by appropriate processing. Tartar of wine, potassium hydrogen tartrate, is heated through four stages of increasing temperature, producing alkaline potassium carbonate. Like sulphur, mercury also had an alchemical meaning as a volatile material or spiritual essence. Thus the meaning of Audcal here as mercury may denote the collection of a volatile material – probably just water. The two products are mixed and heated to dryness. In comparison with alchemical processes described by acknowledged practitioners of the Art such as Ripley, Norton and Charnock the recipe is a sham. It is just possible that the result might be intended to tint base metals to give them the appearance of gold, as is suggested by Glyn Parry (*English Magicians and the*

Crown of Poland). That Dee makes no comment underlines assertions already made that he had no real knowledge of either practical or theoretical alchemy. It does little to credit Kelley with any expertise in this area either. If this were to be presented to Rudolph, who was well versed in alchemy it would be likely to provoke mirth rather than amazement.

As always Dee was seriously short of funds to the point where his wife Jane, with a new mouth to feed, is provoked enough to get him to petition God and the angels for some help. On the 21st of March he pleads for "sufficient and nedful provision, for meat and drink for us and our family" otherwise they will have to pawn their household goods and clothes to either the Jews "rebels against his divine Majestie" or to people in the City who are "malicious and full of wicked slanders." Either course would do little to enhance Dee's credit as a divine messenger. Perhaps not unexpectedly the spirits are unhelpful "let thy house yeeld and the covering of thy body give place to the necessity of hunger." The advice is that Dee should now make haste and go to Poland, to Bathory and to Laski, not easy to do without the funds to get there.

A week later Kelley asks for the "circle of letters" or a copy of it, which had been revealed to him at Oxford so that he might show it to a Jesuit and ask his advice, as he still suspected that the spirits were in fact devils. This is assumed to be the scroll showing the location of buried treasures which he and John Husey had found at Northwick Hill. Dee declined, saying that he would first have to ask the angels for permission. At this Kelley flew into a rage and demanded it straight away. Dee pleaded that he was too busy, he was writing many letters, one to Queen Elizabeth (he later refers to "my letters and business into England"). At this Kelley tries to lock him in his study until he produces it and a wrestling match ensues with Dee yelling for help. Things eventually calm down and Michael appears to Kelley who asks if he should have the document. He is castigated at length as an ingrate and imp of Satan but is finally assured that as long as he is alive no wicked or evil spirit will appear to him "whosoever therefore appeareth hereafter is of God." Michael then tells Dee he must leave for Poland. Dee pleads ill-health and asks to delay for eight days but is urged to leave straight away.

Come the 1st of April and Dee is still in Prague. In the meantime he has received letters from Albert Laski. A side note in his workbook reminds him "Emerick, his traitorous dealing to be deciphered." Kelley has a vision of a tall man, his face wrapped with a black scarf, trampling on two men beside him until blood is spattered all around. Dee takes the hint and prays for forgiveness for his weakness and frailty. He is told that he should have gone when told but he delayed and now that letters have come "that have passed through the hands of

Sodomites and Murderers....you rejoice, you receive comfort, you determine to go." With that the angel informs them that there will be no more visions in the shewstone for forty days.

It would seem that the letters were invitations to come to Cracow to meet with Stephen Bathory. They may well have included a letter of credit because on April 5th Dee records that he and Kelley left for Cracow with Thomas Kelley and Hugh Brycket as servants.

AUDIENCE WITH BATHORY, April –July 1585

If at first you don't succeed, try, try, again.

Thomas H Palmer, *A Teacher's Manual*, 1840.

Just a week after leaving Prague, Dee and his party arrived outside Cracow on April 12th 1585 to be greeted by whirlwinds, creating great dust clouds. They were perhaps an omen of the upset to come. When they arrived at their rented house they found that the landlords, John Long and Martin Plutner, had doubled their income by letting it out to some strangers. The new occupants obligingly allowed them the use of one of the rooms and Dee and his party spent an uncomfortable night. Things turned a little ugly over the weekend and for a time it looked as though they would be turned out into the street, forcing Dee to have an injunction raised against the landlords. As luck would have it help arrived in the shape of Albert Laski who set about throwing the invaders out but settled for them vacating the lower rooms instead. Dee arrived at the courthouse with his legal team "Mr Tetaldo, (an Italian) an ancient Practitioner in the Polish and Cracovian Causes" where he won a judgment against the landlords giving him a six month further occupancy. They responded by warning him to quit the premises by Michaelmas. It would seem that Laski had regained some favour with the King (who had restored some of his lands to him, albeit at a much reduced income) because the same day he went up to the castle and related all of Dee's woes. The result was most encouraging. Bathory, after telling Laski he should have thrown out the intruders, arranged for the house to be held for Dee *ex officio*. Not only that, but Dee was to have an audience the next day. It would seem that he had by now learnt a little caution in his dealings with royalty as at their meeting he tells Stephan only that he has been sent to see him by a divine order. The King's response must have been music to his ears for he is told that Bathory has heard many good things about him and that he is pleased to have met him at last and he is willing to meet him again after the following Easter holiday. Over the next few days Dee met with Hannibal Rosseli, a Franciscan friar and Professor of Divinity at Cracow,

to discuss the commentaries he had written on the *Pimander*, a book of divine revelation, attributed to the legendary Hermes Trismegistus. On Easter Monday both he and Kelley took communion, in the latter's case something which for Dee was "to my unspeakable gladnesse and content, being a thing so long and earnestly required and urged of him by our spiritual good friends."

The twenty days of being incommunicado having elapsed, Michael puts in a brief appearance on the 23rd of April and tells them that if Stephan declines to hear Dee he will wreak his vengeance on him. At the following session they are told that Stephen is now "the Darling of the Highest....the anointed and beloved of the Lord" and they are to "honour him, labour for him and obey him" but none-the-less he is to be rebuked by the Lord for his sins.

Two weeks later, in early May, Kelley is once more in turmoil. Laski has not paid him money which was promised, he doubted that the Prince was indeed a reformed character, and he had no wish to be associated with such a former reprobate. Dee shows him one of the letters received from Laski while they were in Prague in which he said that he was staying at a monastery belonging to the castle at Rithwyan (Rytwiany, south central Poland on the river Czarna) which he had just managed to regain and that he was full of contrition and remorse. Kelley remained unconvinced and determined to return to Prague, becoming "very blasphemous against God" to Dee's "great grief and terrour." In the morning Kelley sends his brother to bring Dee down to him where he is laying in bed in his room under Dee's study. He tells him that a spirit had appeared to him earlier and told him that Dee was to leave secretly with both his servants and to go to Laski, comfort him and go to see Bathory on his way back home. In the meantime Kelley was to board with "the Italian Doctor" (Dee adds a side note – Gregorius Jordanus Venitus) at Perin's house. This presumably is the Venetian, Gregor Jordanus, physician and cosmographer to Rudolph II. Seemingly, Dee was much heartened by the news and after offering up a pray of thanks went to church. As always there must be a deep suspicion as to just what Kelley was up to.

Dee subsequently left to visit Laski at Rytwiany and returned on the 20th of May. Kelley tells him that while he was away he had been visited by many apparitions and had had discussions with them regarding "The state of Christendom." Moreover Dee's approach to Bathory had been found wanting, he should have spoken more openly about his mission and revealed more of the contents of the actions. That as punishment his son Michael would die and there would be no more spiritual help until the King had been rebuked by the Lord. Kelley was to be ready to leave him as the actions were to be cut off because of their unworthiness. At Kelley's suggestion the shewstone was brought out so that they might

discover God's will. A small, naked boy appears who promptly delivers an apocalyptic warning "The end of all flesh is at hand. And the sickle of the Highest shall reap down the Moutaines; The Valley shall be without fruit: And the seed of man shall be accursed." There is good news however, because they have acknowledged the power of God and the truth of his Message, the Lord's favour will be bestowed on them, their wives, children and servants. Laski too, if he mends his ways, will still benefit as was promised on the 7th of September 1583. He will be "A Corner Stone in the Angle of my Temple." Dee must now take the shewstone to Stephan so that the spirit can reveal himself. In preparation, Dee notes that for the third time he went to Communion "That all manners of wayes I might have a clean and a quiet Conscience."

Despite the threat to withhold from any further actions the spirits must have relented for a seance takes place on May 21st at Niepolomice, a small town 15 miles east of Cracow, the site of a castle built by Casimer III in the 14th century. Presumably Dee and Kelley had travelled there to meet Albert Laski because he is also present at the action. The small child appears again holding a crown over Laski's head. He is told that although he has become rich, he should have faith because it is better than riches. "I have brought thee unto Steven; And I will give him thee into thy hands....wilt thou that before thy face I shall destroy Steven for his wickedness? Wilt thou that I shall strike him with a perpetual Leprosie, or wilt thou that I shall correct him and leave him to do good unto thee?" Laski humbly replies, asking that the King should be spared from such punishment but should be encouraged to friendship. He is told that he has acted wisely in not seeking for revenge and God's spirit "shall never depart from thee, from this day....thy sinnes are blotted out of Gods remembrance." However, Stephan must still be corrected. The spirit asks what language this should be carried out in and when told in Hungarian, demurs, saying that it is a hateful tongue, "for it is full of iniquity.....I will open my mouth in Latin." Laski should now go and persuade the king and if he is receptive then the spirit will appear to him. Laski must have been successful because two days later, still at Niepolomice, they are both invited to an audience with the King. They are brought into his chamber where they find him seated at a window looking out over a new garden which he is having made. He begins by telling Dee that he believed that revelations by divinely inspired prophets had ceased since the death of Christ but he had been persuaded by Albert Laski that he should listen to what he had to say. Dee replied by saying he would address Bathory's concerns in three ways. Firstly that the belief that all prophecy had necessarily ceased with the resurrection of Christ was mistaken and he cites a number of examples of divine revelations made subsequently. When the disciples went to Antioch one

of them named Agabus was filled with the Holy Spirit and made prophesies. (Saint Agabus was an early Christian martyr, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, who predicted a great famine in the time of Claudius and the capture of Paul if he went to Jerusalem). Cornelius the Centurion was instructed by an angel to seek out Simon Peter who had had a vision of beasts and birds being lowered from heaven and was told to eat them. When he protested that they were unclean a voice commanded him not to call unclean that which God had cleansed and purified. When Cornelius arrived Simon Paul realised that this was an instruction to convert and baptise the gentiles. Cornelius and Paul are filled with the Holy Spirit and "speak in tongues." Finally he points out that the Apocalypse of St John is a revelation of things to come. Secondly, that he has never been able to discern in any of his actions that they have been anything but to the honour and glory of God and thirdly he is willing to show Stephan the records of all his angelic conversations, held in 24 books, some in Latin, some in Greek but mainly in English so that he might judge for himself.

Stephan must have found the arguments sufficiently persuasive that four days later another seance was held at 7 o'clock in the morning of 27th of May, in a private room at Niepolomice, at which he and Albert Laski attended. The proceedings began with a long prayer by Dee in which he recalled that he had been driven out of England, with his wife and family because of the malice directed against him. God had protected him and had bound him to Laski to carry out his purpose and they were to be Stephan's warriors in the Lord's service. Eventually Kelley sees a vision of man in a white robe with disheveled hair, standing with one foot on a stone circle and the other over water. A ball of fire descends and the spirit tells Stephan that because he has neglected righteousness evil spirits are pursuing him and there are conspiracies against him (something Bathory was only too well aware of) but if he would cease his wicked ways the Lord will protect him. He will conquer kingdoms to the north and south and west into Bohemia (i.e. the Holy Roman Empire).

Dee and Kelley consult the shewstone the following day and the same spirit appears and treats them to a long address on the nature of man's ingratitude for all of God's blessings. He is then replaced by Ilemese who says Stephan is to be told that God has now shown him his will. Dee has been given the "knowledge and secrets of the things in nature" and because the King has been chosen these will now be revealed to him in turn "and he shall have a great treasure." In particular he will be shown the secret of the Philosopher's Stone, just as was offered to Rudolph. Bathory must nominate someone at his court through whom Dee can have access to the King (Laski no doubt) and he is to provide money to maintain Dee and Kelley. These matters are to be kept secret between Stephan, Dee and Laski. The angels will

communicate to the King either directly or through Dee. There is then a warning "But it may be Laski will hold him by the heele." When Dee asks what is meant by this he is referred to the story of Jacob in the Old Testament who was born holding onto the heel of his brother Esau and who afterwards cheated him of his birthright "for a mess of pottage" (Genesis 25, 26-34). There is another brief note of a meeting with Stephan and Laski on the 4th of June at which Dee simply reiterates that he has knowledge of nature's secrets. The next action takes place back at Cracow on June 6th with Dee seeking further instructions in dealing with the King. He is told to remain silent and to let matters rest. "The receptacle and the Books, see you open them not, nor touch them until you hear more from me." To reassure him he is told that he still has God's favour. It would seem that in the end Stephan remained unimpressed with the presentations because no more is recorded of events in Cracow and Dee and Kelley had returned to Prague by the end of July or the beginning of August. They took with them a new acquaintance, Francesco Pucci, a relationship which was to provide yet more problems.

BURNING THE BOOKS, August 1585 – April 1586

Obedience is a garland before the Lord but curiosity is the Devil.

The Angel Uriel, August 6th 1585, Prague.

Dee began a new notebook recording an action in the presence of Francesco Pucci held at Prague after their return. Pucci, described by Charlotte Fell Smith as "An Anglicised Italian pervert" was born in Florence in 1543. Although he took minor holy orders as a youth his uncle, Mariotto Giambonelli, a rich Roman jeweler, apprenticed him to a banker in Lyons. On Giambonelli's death Pucci inherited his wealth and enrolled himself at the University of Paris in 1571 where he was a witness to the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre of the Protestants. He subsequently enrolled at the University of Oxford, graduating with an MA in 1574. His quarrelsome nature led to him being expelled a year later and he spent the following two years in London as a member of the Huguenot community where he again caused upset by disputing theology with the Church authorities. Leaving England in 1576 he travelled to Basel where he began a long running debate with the theologian Fausto Sozzini. His stay there was brief, he was banished for publishing an heretical tract supporting Pelagianism (the idea that original sin did not taint human nature and that mortal will is still capable of choosing good or evil without special Divine aid) and returned to London in 1579, where he published further pamphlets calling for a general council to re-unite Christendom

and launching a vigorous attack on the Roman Catholic church. Views which would have struck a chord with Dee, who, even if they never met would have likely been aware of them. He again left England in 1582, arriving at Cracow in 1583 where he resumed his debate with Sozzini expressing his expectation of an immanent judgement day. At some time during this period he met Dee and Kelley and no doubt found their occult activities interesting. Dee's belief in a mystical revelation and in a spiritual Christianity free of doctrinal limitations was close to Pucci's own unorthodox religious views. The first indication that they knew each other is contained in a footnote by Dee to a horoscope of the Polish wife of a Florentine named Montelupi which reads "I received this note at Cracow, anno 1585, July 12th for F. Pucci." By the time he joined them he was held by the Catholic Church to be a dangerous heretic, something which did nothing to help their reputation.

Peter Holmes records that he made the mistake of lending Kelley money at a time when his own financial position was increasingly precarious since he had nearly exhausted his inheritance. When they returned to Prague he went with them and managed to win their confidence to the point of allowing him to sit in on a seance. Possibly his contribution to their finances played a part in his acceptance although it was to become a bone of contention between them subsequently. On Tuesday, August 6th 1585, at 5 o'clock in the morning, at sunrise, Dee relates that a session was held "in our secret study" at which Pucci was present. Uriel appears and embarks on a theological discourse. God's judgements are perpetual and everlasting, he tells them. His words the spirit of truth and understanding, his testament holy and undefiled. However a Queen has risen up "a lyar and the fire brand of destruction" setting the "kings of the Earth" in contention with God, a veiled allusion to the Catholic Church as the bride of Christ. Another angel appears and gives Uriel a book with a red cover sealed with seven gold clasps who declares that God's secrets are opened. "Rejoyce, O thou the house of Jacob, for thy visitation is at an end and thy visitation is beginning.....then shalt the Lamb stand in the midst of thy streets O Hierusalem and shall give statutes unto thy people...all Nations shall come unto the House of David." His listeners will now learn the truth as the chosen servants and ministers of the Highest. The whole world lies in wickedness he tells them, deceived by Satan. Are you spreading his lies and deception? He asks them. It is not acceptable for them to interpret God's scriptures and mysteries themselves. These must be understood by "ordinance and spiritual tradition." The Word of God was transmitted to the Apostles by the Holy Ghost. They were given the "Keyes of Heaven," the same authority and power as Jesus to forgive sins. Christ allowed the early Christians to be "Partakers of the heavenly visions and celestial comforts" but this did not

permit a re-interpretation of the scriptures. Moses and the prophets "expounded not the law but the voice of God." Christ, although flesh spoke the words of his father. His disciples taught only through the Holy Ghost. How then can Dee attempt to teach when he has not been called to become a teacher of the Word of God? He must humble himself and fall down before the Lord. "Lay reason aside and cleave unto him. Seek to understand his word according to his holy Spirit. Which ...thou shalt find in a visible Church, even unto the end." Any one who is contrary to God's will "which is delivered unto his Church, taught by his Apostles, nourished by the Holy Ghost, delivered unto the World and by Peter brought to Rome by him, there taught by his Successors, held and maintained" is contrary to God and his Truth. Uriel then remarks that Luther, Calvin and all those who have abjured the Church and Congregation of Christ will have their reward and this will be Hell Fire. He goes on to tell them that it is wrong to label the Pope as the Antichrist even though he might be an evil man. Bishops may be good or evil but this only reflects on them as men and not on their authority. It is not however their role to make their own interpretation of the scriptures. He adds cryptically "This wicked Monster that sitteth in the Holy Temple and sinneth against the highest shall be thrown down head-long with his pride. And he shall be chastised and corrected with the mouth of you two; For at the house of the Lord Judgement must begin.... Fear not, I will put unto your words strength and powere: And if he hear you not but stretch forth his hands against you I will rain fire and brimstone from Heaven and his dwelling places shall sink."

They must now acknowledge their sins and follow the Lord's commandments. They should "cleave to the Church for the Churches sake.....submit to holy yoke and ordinance... which shall lead you to the Congregation governed by the Spirit of God, wherein you shall understand the secrets of God his Book." He advises that "Simplicity is much worth, obedience is a garland before the Lord, but curiosity is the Devil." Pucci is to be included in their endeavours "God has called thee to the partaking and understanding of his will."

No doubt overcome by all these revelations Pucci fell on his knees, confessed he was a sinner and gave thanks to God. It would seem that the seance inspired him to seek a reconciliation with the Catholic Church for in a letter to his mother, dated the 13th of August (Firpo and Piattoli, quoted in Evans) he writes: "But then I heard from the angel most weighty propositions concerning the coming of Antichrist in a short space and received great confirmation of my hopes for an imminent renovation of all things, which God will accomplish through persons authorised by him and adequate to that task. Lamenting therefore my sin I will repair to the ministers of that [Papal] Seat, to give them satisfaction for

my offense in the sight of God." There is a small appendix to Dee's workbook, dated September 6th indicating that Pucci had left and a decision had been taken "in Rome" to provide help. As we shall see this is the beginning of Dee's suspicions that Pucci was becoming an agent of the Catholic Church.

So far we have been following the adventures of Dee and Kelley through the pages of Meric Casaubon's *True and Faithful Relation* which he based on the papers rescued by Sir Robert Cotton from where they had been buried at Mortlake. In Casaubon's own copy of his book he has made a note after the record of the 6th of September that "There is a gap of more or less half a year" between this and the following workbook, entitled *Liber Resurrectionis*, which begins on April 30th 1586. The missing period is bridged in part by a manuscript found in the collection of Elias Ashmole and which is covered in great detail by C.H.Josten in his paper *An Unknown Chapter In The Life Of John Dee* and from which the following account is derived.

The session is headed by "A Latin preface to the first of seven actions (which took place on the 10th day of April at Prague) and which has now been translated into Latin. In the year 1586." It begins with a long account of the circumstances leading up to the session in which Dee begins by setting out a defense against the rumors and slanders which are circulating about their activities. He starts by relating his problems in ensuring that the divine revelations given them in secret should not be allowed to fall into the hands of the profane while at the same time sharing some knowledge of them to those worthy enough to benefit from them. There are those he says who will label them as credulous fools, misled by evil spirits or simply imposters who have fabricated the records but the details of this last revelation will, when it is made public, dispel all doubts and be met with unbelievable rejoicing. In order to provide an understanding of the truth and to provide a clearer perception of the things mentioned in the revelation he will describe three relevant events. It would seem that somehow or other he had obtained a portion of a memorandum written to Rudolph by one of his secretaries (in late 1584, presumably around the time of Dee's mysterious journey back to Cracow) concerning the Papal Nuncio, Joannes Franciscus Bonomo the Bishop of Vercelli, who was preparing to leave Prague. The Bishop was concerned over the rumours circulating about Dee who had approached the Emperor directly without first seeking the approval of those with the authority to rule on matters of spiritual visitations. These were particularly suspect because they were being invoked using magic, meaning they were likely to be evil spirits. Good angels did not have a distinct shape but could only be sensed while in a state of ecstasy. Dee was married and thus given to worldly

matters whereas angels would only reveal themselves to the celibate. It was assumed that the Emperor had refused further audiences believing his soul might be in danger and for this reason had nominated Dr Kurtz as an intermediary and had given the Nuncio an account of what had taken place at his meeting with Dee. The gossip was that the meeting in any case had more to do with the Philosopher's Stone than angelic visions. The secretary felt that Rudolph should be aware of this so that Dee (currently away in Poland) might be forewarned before his return as the Nuncio was intending to report the matter to the Holy See, "for (as the saying goes) darts cause less damage if they are foreseen." It would seem that Dee had at least one friend at Court. The secretary adds one more piece of tittle tattle to the effect that there was a rumour that Dee had been made a Doctor of Medicine at the University with a monthly stipend of 40 florins although whether this was through the good offices of Kurtz or had been requested by Dee himself was uncertain. This is the only reference extant to lend credence to the title by which Dee was subsequently known. Seemingly Kurtz was not the enemy that Dee had first thought as when asked for his opinion had praised him, saying he was extremely learned in a great number of subjects. Bonomo, sent by Pope Gregory XIII to restore Catholic influence in a region which was unacceptably liberal in its religious toleration, echoed an undercurrent of suspicion and hostility towards Dee that was now prevalent in Prague. Evans quotes Vaclav Budovec, a member of Rudolph's Imperial Council, who knew Dee personally, as describing him as "A learned and renowned Englishman...[who] was at first well received. He predicted that a marvelous reformation would presently come about in the Christian world and would prove the ruin not just of the City of Constantinople but of Rome also. These predictions he did not cease to spread amongst the populace." The overthrow of the two pillars of Catholic and Orthodox faith was not something which could be taken lightly by the established Church and his continuing presence in Bohemia was construed as a direct threat to the Pope's mission to bring Rudolph back to Catholicism.

A marginal notation in the manuscript confirms the date of their return to Prague in 1585 as being the 1st of January and a few days afterwards Dee met with the author of the letter who confirmed its authenticity and for good measure passed on all the latest rumours that were circulating about him. Dee goes on to describe their visit to Poland in April 1585 and gives the date of their latest return to Prague as being in July. Within the next few days "a certain great nobleman" called to see him and invited him to call on the new Papal Nuncio Germanicus Malaspina, the Bishop of San Severo who had replaced Bonomo. The invitation was repeated with more urgency over the following eight months but Dee was suspicious that

a trap was being prepared for him and politely declined. Ultimately Dee pushed his luck too far and by the end of March Malaspina had had enough. On the 20th the noble intermediary pressed for a meeting and then two days later Francesco Pucci who had been living with Dee since their return relayed the same message in rather more forceful terms "although adding here and there somewhat sweeter and more pleasant word." Realising that they could prevaricate no longer Dee and Kelley arranged to meet the Nuncio on March 27th, sending Pucci ahead to pave the way. On their arrival an earlier visitor was just on the point of leaving. Dee identifies him as the Duke of Florence, however the second and last of the Dukes, Cosimo de' Medici had died in 1574 and this may have been his son, Francesco I de' Medici, grand Duke of Tuscany who was known to have a passionate interest in chemistry and alchemy. Perhaps Malaspina had been picking his brains in anticipation of the coming meeting. After the Nuncio had settled Dee, Kelley and Pucci (no doubt there as a witness) into seats he began by expressing his concern regarding the state of the Catholic Church. Heresy was gaining ground and Rome and the Apostolic See were threatened with the gravest peril. He then dangled his baited hook. How useful it would be if only some pious members of the Church might receive revelations from the good angels of God which might provide a remedy. Enquiries had been made but where such revelations had been made they were considered to be private matters and not made public. If therefore his guests, "with whom...blessed angels often are present, and to whom God himself reveals his mysteries" had any advice as to how the impending evils could be countered he would only be too pleased to listen to them. Dee perceived only too well the noose into which he was being invited to stick his neck. He agreed that the Church was suffering but it was not in his hands to offer remedies against such calamities. "Even if it were true that (by a singular favour of God) we very often receive informations and instructions from the good angels of God and sometimes from God himself....yet have we not received hitherto any express advice of God or admonition from the angels with regard to the matter now put before us." Such matters indeed were outside his provenance and he felt unable to offer a merely human judgement on them. While God had indeed revealed great mysteries to them, it was under a seal of silence. If, however, God did give them any advice as to how the difficulties of the Church might be overcome, then they would be only most happy to pass it on to those to whom it should be communicated.

Malaspina replied that he was very satisfied with Dee's response and was pleased that they had finally met. So far things seemed to have gone reasonably well but then Kelley decided to make his own contribution. In his opinion, the way to reform the whole Church

was obvious. There were some "shepards and ministers of the Christian flock" who seemed devoid of the true faith and idle and by their bad example caused more damage then they could ever repair by their lengthy sermons. The example they gave was that living bad lives could be excused by speaking good words. The "doctors, shepherds and prelates" should mend their ways and live by their words as well as their conduct. The Nuncio replied that he thought that well spoken, thanked them and hoped that he might in turn visit them for a longer conversation on such matters. Initially, they may have thought they had managed things reasonably well but they were to be disillusioned.

At the beginning of April 1586, in anticipation of Easter, Kelley after several days of fasting went to confession with a Jesuit priest, a professor and Lecturer in Theology. After he had rehearsed his sins he found himself being cross-examined on other matters and then accused of a great crime which he had as yet not admitted. Kelley denied anything further and explained that a year previously he had also made confession of all his previous sins and had been absolved. Finally the priest made clear his accusation, he had spoken openly, both to the Nuncio and to others that he and Dee had had conversations with holy angels and with God himself and received from them revelations. It was not credible that these were of a divine origin and were more likely to be inspired by the Devil. Kelley argued that all the records that they had compiled of the angelic conversations gave ample evidence that they were in fact dealing with genuine angels "of light and truth." This was a mistake. As soon as the books were mentioned the priest demanded that they should be handed over for examination by himself, Malaspina and the Rector of the Jesuits. Instead of making some suitable excuse Kelley decided to take the offensive telling the priest that he had neither the capability or the authority to sit in judgement on such matters. His authority came from the Church Militant but these revelations were a matter for the Church Triumphant, who had authority over the spiritual realm. They had never taught, written or indeed believed anything that was contrary to the Catholic, Apostolic or Orthodox religion. The messages were to the praise, honour and glory of God and continually guided them to a betterment of their lives, piety and the practice of peace and charity. While it was true that they contained many wonderful mysteries and secrets these were for them alone and were their "introductory lessons in a celestial school." In any case the book remained in the hands of John Dee. The priest tried by various stratagems to persuade Kelley to secure the books for him but with no success. Finally Kelley became so exasperated that he offered the priest a challenge. They should both offer up a prayer to God that if the spirits were indeed holy angels then a heavenly fire would consume the priest but if they were the work of the devil then Kelley

would be destroyed instead. It would seem that the Holy Father lacked the courage of his convictions as he declined the offer. The interrogation continued on the following day when the priest demanded to know how they were managing to support themselves as he knew that they were not receiving any finances from England. Kelley made the point that it was none of the Father's business but none-the-less he would tell him the truth of the matter.

Unfortunately Dee declines to provide details in his record of the conversation, stating only that Kelley replied "by doing this and that (true and clear details were here mentioned) and by divine favour, we have so far been amply provided with sustenance and clothing."

Presumably they were living on a combination of consultancy, teaching, the good will of others and credit. Eventually the priest gave up but refused Kelley absolution, not even for the sins to which he had already confessed, something which greatly infuriated Dee to the point where he writes that "so poisonous an egg should have been laid whence, one must fear, a most horrid basilisk, a great danger to very many people will be born if it be hatched much longer and be fomented with further bilious matter."

A short while afterwards while Kelley was dining with some friends a spirit voice told him he should again visit his confessor together with some other priests at the Jesuit College. Kelley explained all that had taken place previously to his companions and they set off, no doubt embolden by drink. On the way he had a spiritual warning that "Unless you take care Ossa and Pucci will deceive you and will render your design fruitless." (Dee had had unknown dealings with Curtis Balthasar Frederick of Ossa earlier in the year). Arriving at the College they waited while a janitor went in search of the priest and some other Jesuits to meet them. Somewhat amazingly Ossa and Pucci then appeared, asked them their business and tried as well as they could to delay the meeting. Kelley was eventually told that the people he wanted to see were not available. Understandably Kelley flew into a great rage putting Pucci in fear of his life. To make matters worse Pucci, who was still a member of Dee's household related the story that night after supper, saying that he was pleased at the outcome because he thought that Kelley was intent on even further quarrels with his confessor. Kelley's friend, who had been a witness to all of the proceedings was sent for and confirmed that the intention for the meeting had been peaceful and that Kelley had only wanted to explain his position so that he might be given absolution. Pucci expressed his regret at so misunderstanding things and dropping on his knees begged to be allowed to make amends. Kelley, on spiritual instruction forgave him and all parties retired to their beds, well after midnight. Relations with the Church of Rome were becoming even more strained.

The next day Kelley was visited by a spirit who instructed that the three of them should begin a light fast in preparation for a session the following day. They duly met on the 10th of April in Dee's oratory, which he describes as being "at the top of the tower, a small heated room, truly elegant and commodious." There is no vision but a voice tells them that the world has become corrupt full of the "sons of sin and defenders of darkness." Men are more concerned about political affairs than the salvation of their souls but retribution is coming "the temples you have erected will be thrown to the ground." The news of the impending birth of Jesus was delivered not to Jerusalem and the Holy Temple but to humble shepherds. When he was delivered he was taken to Bethlehem to be greeted by wise men who had gained knowledge of the star. In the end God declared his authority by ejecting the sons of iniquity from the Temple and from Jerusalem. "Thus, precisely, God proceeds with you, whom He has sworn to make great by the honour of His right hand and in the vehement fire of His Power....those who have become scribes and pharisees, the hypocrites and sons of all abominations, those who disgrace the truth that was manifested by the Apostles...will be punished...for they have sold for money the spirit of truth....And therefore the God of heaven and earth appears to you; to you who are shepherds, placed outside the polluted city...who desire to find the star and seek the visitation of Him Who will be coming to you....you will return to the temple and you will eject those who justify themselves ...For they have sold for money the spirit of truth." Dee, Kelley and the spirits seem set on a collision course with the Church of Rome. The time is not yet the spirit continues for their power to be made manifest. It returns to a familiar message, they are full of wrath and malice, subject to the tyranny of the flesh and to carnal fancies. They must cast off the desires of the body and replace them with a spirit of obedience and humility, loving and cherishing each other. They are now three, not two and each of them has their own part to play.

They reconvene after lunch and there follows an account which at face value is both astounding and miraculous. The spirit begins by condemning those who set out to rob others of possessions they have gained by their own labour and honest means. Even worse is one who wishes to take away what has been given by command from God. A demonstration will now be made so that their enemies may realise that they are acting against God's will. Dee is told to go and get all the records and books which they have been compiling for the last four years and he brings them back in an oblong white box in which they had been stored, a total of 28 volumes in all including that containing the preface of the current action. He is instructed to tear this out and then pull the rest of the records apart. These included beside the records of all the actions the *48 Claves Angelicae* (48 Angelic Keys) and the *Book of*

Enoch (Liber Loagaeth or The Sixth (and Sacred) Book of the Mysteries). Kelley is now told to bring "the little black bag, the book and the powder which you have hidden." After a considerable painful internal struggle he complies and places them alongside the books on the table. The spirit now instructs him to put all of the books into the black bag and place them in the furnace with which the room is being heated. Pucci is told to join him as a witness. Dry firewood and timber chips are added to the conflagration and the fire stirred with an iron spit. Pucci is called back into Dee's oratory, and Kelley, who is still watching the fire, reports that he can see a man walking about in the flames putting back together the books and the box holding the powder who then disappears. Pucci is called back to the fire and confirms that nothing is left but ashes. There follows a second incineration of loose and unbound papers and charts with the exception of one subsequently referred to as "Pucci's recantation written in his own hand" and a small part of the *Book of Enoch*. Instead of expressing his anguish at the loss of some four years work Dee simply welcomes the opportunity of having been able to display their obedience and is then reassured that "not one letter will perish of whatsoever has been committed to the fire...I have the power to collect together what has been brought forth by me...when later the tyranny of those men ceases....these things were put into the fire, in the same way you will receive them again." Finally he tells them that their enemies will be dealt with but for the time being they should avoid provoking them. The events following this episode are described in Dee's next workbook, dated April 30th 1586 with a subheading of "A miracle, to be forever remembered."

The house where Dee was staying overlooked a neighbouring vineyard owned by someone who Dee names as John Carpio. He has been identified as John Carp or more properly Johannis Carpionis de Kaprstein, the alchemist Jan Kapr in the employ of the Emperor. As we shall find in the following sections John Carp will become involved in Dee and Kelley's future activities. Dee records that as Kelley was standing at the end of the gallery by his chamber looking out over the vineyard below he saw a gardener pruning the trees who called up to him to come down. As Kelley watched the figure moved away and then appeared to disappear in a pillar of fire. Kelley sends his wife to investigate but she can find no one there. Rather puzzled Kelley tells Dee what has happened, suspecting that he had seen an evil spirit. They both decide to investigate and start a search of the garden. Discovering nothing they sit down at the far end of the vineyard and wait. After about a quarter of an hour Dee sees a piece of white paper flapping about in the breeze. When he goes to pick it up he finds three of the books which had been destroyed in the fire some three weeks earlier, the Book of Enoch, the 48 Angelic Keys and his *Liber Scientiae Terrestris*

Auxilis et Victoriae, none of them any the worse for having been incinerated. After giving thanks they waited a while longer and the figure, who they recognised as the spirit Ave reappeared and calling to Kelley to follow him led him back into the house and into the upstairs chamber where he reached into the fireplace and pulled out all of the rest of the books "excepting the Book out of which the last Action was cut, and Fr. Pucci his recantation, also to E.K. appeared in the Furnace all the rest of the papers which were not as then delivered out." The angel tells Kelley to leave but assures him he will have all the rest afterwards and leads Kelley out "in a little fiery cloud" down the stairs past Pucci's chamber door and disappears. Kelley takes the books to where Dee is waiting under an almond tree.

What are we to make of this entire episode? Leaving aside the possibility that this was indeed a miracle there is the inevitable conclusion that a hoax had been perpetuated. This raises a number of interesting questions. An obvious reason was that this was all about the determination of the papal Nuncio, Malaspina and the Jesuits to get hold of Dee's workbooks and other documents. If they could be convinced that the books had been destroyed this would give Dee and Kelley breathing space. The preamble to the action was not to be added to the fire, as this was a defense against the rumors circulating about them and would be of subsequent use. There is one thing we can be sure of – the books were not burned in the fire. That leaves only two possibilities, depending on whether or not Pucci was part of the deception. There would seem to have been evidence that Pucci was trying to ingratiate himself with the Catholic authorities but whether Dee and Kelley were aware of this at the time is not clear. If he was considered to be a friend and was a part of the deception then the whole action may well have been a sham and it was the intention that his part in the hoax would be to report the loss of the books to the Jesuits and the Nuncio. On the other hand if it was thought that Pucci was an informer who would relate the day's events to others then it must have been intended that he would be deluded sufficiently to be a credible witness to the apparent loss of the books. If so then Dee and Kelley must have either spent quite some time in producing bogus books and documents sufficiently realistic to deceive him or else Kelley must have been capable of an astounding sleight of hand when pretending to feed the genuine material into the furnace.

Whatever the truth in this matter the fact remains that a hoax had been perpetrated, that the session in the afternoon was spurious and Dee's record of it was untrue. This being the case we are entitled to ask was the morning session also a sham? Was this the only time that a spiritual conversation had been falsified or had it happened before? There is an old adage to the effect that "once a liar, always a liar." Perhaps all of the angelic revelations regarding

Albert Laski had been part of a confidence trick to get Dee and Kelley out of England and subsequent ones had been invented to ingratiate themselves with Rudolph of Bohemia and Bathory of Poland. To push the argument to an extreme, could it indeed be the case that the books of mystery, the angelic writing, the elaborate tables and diagrams were all part of a gigantic deception? This one single incident casts doubt on the view of Dee being a gullible innocent duped by Kelley and opens up the suspicion that he was a collaborator in some very shady dealings.

There is an additional puzzle as to what happened to the record of the events of the 10th of April. As noted above this was not included in Casaubon's *True and Faithful Relation* and he notes a gap between the proceeding and following actions. Josten relates that Casaubon's personal annotated copy of his printed book was lent to Elias Ashmole by the Earl of Anglesey in December 1672. Ashmole copied Casaubon's corrections and annotations into his own copy of the book (now MS Ashm 580) adding his own annotations. Presumably if Ashmole had what is the record of the action (now in the Bodleian Library, referenced as MS Ashm 1790) it would be expected he would have made an annotation to that effect in his copy of Casaubon's book but this doesn't seem to be the case. So when and from where did this come from? Did Ashmole actually have a copy or was it bundled in with other material when Ashmole's collection was given to the Bodleian Library? Black in his *Catalogue of Ashmole's Manuscripts* (1845) says of MS 1790 "This volume consists of a collection of papers put in an old pair of covers, by Ashmole, and of others that have been found loose in the library: to the former description belong parts I-IV, VII and a portion of VIII. They have been recently bound together in a folio volume. The first part is a thin book, with covers of grey paper (ff. 1-2, 21)." Part I is the account of the action on April 10th. So this would seem to confirm that at some time Ashmole had in his possession Dee's account of the action but strangely neglected to make any mention of it in relation to Casaubon's book.

EXILE, April-September 1586

God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform.....

*Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take; The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy and shall break in blessings on your head.*

William Cowper, 1774.

Later, on the 30th of April, the day when the books had been miraculously returned, there ensued another action. In the intervening time Dee had met with his friend, Rudolph's secretary, who related to him a conversation he had had with Malaspina just before the Nuncio left Prague around the 23rd of April. Kelley's contribution to the discussion on March 27th had so infuriated him that he had come very near to being thrown out of the window (a favourite way of demonstrating annoyance in medieval Prague). Not unexpectedly the news caused Dee some concern. Antipathy by some members of Rudolph's Court was bad enough, but making an enemy of the Catholic Church was an altogether different and more serious matter. Dee, urgently needing spiritual advice, begins the session with a fervent prayer to God thanking him for the miracle and asking what they should now do. Is Rozmberk to be admitted to their friendship and be subject to a holy covenant and what should they do about his offer of shelter? Clearly, sensing that things are not going well for them they have been exploring their options.

Willem of Rozmberk (1535-1592, motto *Festina Lente*, make haste slowly) was a Bohemian nobleman and a member of an influential house. He had held a number of important positions, High Treasurer, Commander of the army and in 1570 High Burgrave of Bohemia, the highest office in the land, one which carried diplomatic responsibilities which involved him in the politics of neighbouring Poland. Together with Rudolph he had been awarded the Order of the Golden Fleece, the highest accolade of Habsburg chivalry, in 1585. He also had a consuming interest in science, literature, music and architecture and with his brother Peter Vok created a vast library in Prague with some 11,000 volumes. His interest in alchemy rivaled that of Rudolph, financing some six laboratories and accumulating a sizeable collection of alchemical, apocalyptical and cabbalistic manuscripts. His was aided by his chief adept Bavor Rodovsky who was housed in a laboratory close to the Emperor's own in the area around Prague castle. Rozmberk and Rudolph were linked not only by their common interests in alchemy but also by a mutual enthusiasm in the search for precious stones and minerals which led them to develop the commercial aspects of prospecting and mining. There was one facet of the hermetic art that particularly engaged his attention however. He had been married three times already, each of them childless. The walls of his castle at Cesky Krumlov were covered in occult symbols drawn from alchemy, astrology and the bible associated with fertility. His attraction to Dee and indeed to Kelley must have been irresistible.

The action begins with a spiritual voice addressing a message to Rozmberk and getting straight to the issue of his lack of heirs. "This day in the Blood of the Lamb, do I pronounce

forgiveness of sinnes, upon thee: and for a signe and token: Thy lines shall be opened, and thy seed shall be multiplied upon the Earth." The spirit tells Dee "Behold, I have given thee unto Rozmberk, him also have I given unto thee." Again there is a prophecy that in the "Yeare 88" the end of the world will be known, meanwhile "I will bless you abundantly with all the gifts and seeds of nature. See therefore that you work and labour that your hands may bring forth fruit." There are to be only six more visitations, each on the last day of every month. They are then told "Pucci is defiled and shall not be partaker of these six visitations to come: but shall depart from you and be ready as the Lord shall find him, and as he shall be warned of [by] you. Notwithstanding my spirit shall not depart from him and I will open his understanding that he may convert many. For the World must be satisfied with testimony as well of his life, as the recantation and professed Doctrine." Unfortunately this rather ambiguous declaration sheds no real light on the part Pucci played in the events of April 10th. Dee responds, saying "We lack ...his recantation written by his own hand, I cannot find it in the Books restored." What Pucci was recanting and why he should put it in writing is unknown. Clearly there had been events in their relationship which Dee has not recorded. He is told that the books must now be guarded and may not be opened until the time of the sixth action to come. Meanwhile for Rozmberk "all things may be known and made manifest.....That which is said of him, that say thou Dee unto him."

That Dee had already had dealings with Rozmberk becomes evident in a memorandum which he adds at the end of the Action noting that on the 1st of May Jacob Menschick, a member of Rozmberk's staff, arrived with a coach to take him to an appointment with his master "over the water" at his gardens by the waterside where he read to him in Latin "the things that concerned him" and asked "what he had done, since the time of my being with him, that I might better understand these words spoken to him and of him." Rozmberk tells Dee that he has been praying for forgiveness of his sins and for guidance as to whether or not he should marry and "in what stock or kindred." If it was God's will then he looked to take comfort and guidance from Dee. He had also prayed that the Emperor might find favour with God for his own marriage and in mending his own loose life. He then added for good measure that he had been reflecting on these very same things earlier in the day while dinning with the Archbishop. Naturally Dee was delighted to hear all of this and offered to pray for Rudolph. Rozmberk concludes the meeting by promising to fulfill the advice and warning of God expressed in the Action and saying he would marry a maiden as he was willed. (His wedding, to Polyxena von Pernstein, daughter of the Bohemian High Chancellor, Vratislav of Pernstein took place on 11th January 1587. It also proved to be childless). No doubt a happy

man, Dee returned across the river and returned home. Rozmberk retired to his palace built in the grounds of Prague Castle by his uncle. A few days later Dee received a letter from Rozmberk, written in his own hand and delivered by Jacob Menschick. In it he apologises for his Latin being a little rusty and asks that it should be understood more by its intent than by what has been written. He beseeches Dee to pray for him constantly and to ask God to direct their counsels, works and actions for the salvation of their souls. Dee loses no time in making a translation of the latest spiritual action and sending it to Rozmberk. At last they have found a rich, noble and important patron and protector. It was just as well in the light of coming events.

Valkenaw, famous for the manufacture of alchemical apparatus. It would seem that he and Kelley have now determined to add to their endeavours (and possibly income) by branching out into a new activity. From here he travelled on to the market at Leipzig in Saxony arriving there on May 11th where he lodged with a Peter Hans Swartz. Leipzig market or trade fair was inaugurated by Otto the Rich, Margrave of Saxony in 1190 and by the Middle Ages had gained imperial patronage under Maximilian I being held three times a year. Factories and shops flourished in the town, supplying the crowds of foreign businessmen who attended. While Dee may have been there looking for books and other items it would also have provided an ideal cover to meet with contacts from home, away from the prying eyes back in Prague. He tells us that he renewed the acquaintance of an English merchant Laurence Overton who had stayed with Dee in Prague while suffering an illness and for some reason had incurred Jane Dee's enmity. In addition it would seem that Dee had travelled the 100 miles to Leipzig hoping to meet his servant Edmund Hilton who he had sent back to England in November 1587 with letters for the Queen, Walsingham and others. Overton had arrived from England a few months earlier and confirmed that he had met Hilton on several occasions when they had been in lodgings together and that Edmund was likely to be arriving back from England within a few weeks time. Dee found Overton evasive and afraid to have much to do with either him or his servant, indicative perhaps that Dee was still held in disregard at home.

Dee says that he is omitting "other matters" which occurred in his journey but does give in full the text of a letter which he wrote to Francis Walsingham, to be taken back by Overton. In it he explains he had come to Leipzig expecting a reply to his earlier letters and wonders if this was because they had been held back, perhaps because of "most weighty affairs publick hindering or delaying her Majesties most gracious, discreet and wise resolution herein." The key word here is resolution. What was it that Dee had asked of

Elizabeth? He acknowledges that his previous letters may not have been entirely clear "for the strangnesse of the Phrases therein." There then follows a rather mystifying passage. "That which England suspected, was also here, for these two yeers, almost (secretly) in doubt, in question, in consultation Imperial and Royal, by Honourable Espies, fawning about me, and by other, discoursed upon, pryed and peered into. And at length, both the chief Romish power, and Imperial dignity, are brought to that point, resolutely, that, partly they are sorry, of their so late reclaiming their erroneous judgement against us and of us, and seek means to deal with us, so as wee might favour both the one and the other: And partly to Rome is sent for as great Authority and Power as can be devised, and likewise here, all other means and wayes contrived, How, by force, or for feare, they may make us glad to follow their humours." It had been his hope that he would have been able to rebuff all these attacks upon him if he could have "referred my self to her Majesties answer, thus, in vain, expected." He continues that Malaspina, the Papal Nuncio after spending a year trying to meet with Dee had gone back to Rome with "a flea in his eare, that di[s]quieteth him, & terrifieth the whole State Romish and Jesuitical." Walsingham, he says, has sufficient power to deal with his request on his own and need not make it a case for the Council Table. He asks for justice for his house, library, goods and revenues and adds that "If you send unto me Master Thomas Diggs, in her Majesties behalf, his faithfulness to her majesty, and my well liking of the man, shall bring forth some piece of good service. But her Majesty had been better, to have spent or given away in Alms, a Million of Gold, then to have lost some opportunities past. The God of Heaven and Earth is our Light, Leader and Defender.... his mercies upon us will bread his Praises, Honour and Glory....he has made of Saul (E.K.) a Paul: but yet, now and then, visited with a pang of human frailty." He addresses the letter to "the right Honourable Sir Francis Walsingham Knight, her most Excellent Majesties Principal Secretary, my singular good Friend and Patron, with speed" and signs it with "Your Honours faithful well-willer to use and command for the honour of God and her Majesties best service, John Dee." It would seem that circumstances have overcome his previous view of Walsingham as someone who "hated him" and was trying to lay traps for him.

What are we to make of all of this? There are parts which can be construed to add weight to the theory advanced by some biographers that Dee was acting as a secret agent on behalf of Walsingham but a rather simpler explanation is that having left England without a Royal warrant he is now asking that he be forgiven and granted an official passport and thus some protection against being molested by his enemies. There is also a sense that Dee's grasp of reality is perhaps slipping.

Dee made his way back to Prague arriving there on the 23rd of May to find his world turned upside down. Kelley showed him a letter he had been given for him just the day before, its author identified as Julius Asconius. It contained a grim warning. The "Beast of Babylon" is leaving nothing untried, no stone unturned, in an effort to injure and destroy him. A letter has been sent to Rudolph accusing him of necromancy and other prohibited arts by the new Papal legate Filippo Sega, Bishop of Piacenza, who had replaced Malaspina. In this it would seem he was aided by George Lobkovic (Jiri Popel z Lobkovic) an ardent pro-catholic member of the Emperor's court. Dee tried desperately to remedy the situation, writing to Rozmberk on the 26th. He begins by relating an account of his journey back. It would seem that he had spent some time with a good friend of the Duke, Caspar von Schonberg and then travelled through "mountains, valleys, thick forest, open fields and deep snow" but nonetheless has returned the Duke's carriage and horses unharmed. The mission has been a success he tells Rozmberk, presumably because he has managed to secure alchemical apparatus to begin work. He then gets to the point. The Nuncio is seeking to have them expelled and unless Rozmberk can intercede with Rudolph their plans will be set awry. He finishes by emphasising that the Duke, Kelley and himself are three "but one in God...for he who has me, he also has E.K. and I have mine." Two days later he sends another desperate note to Rudolph saying that he is aware of the serious accusations being made against him and his partner and asks that he might be given the opportunity to repudiate them. It was all in vain. On the 30th of May a Chancery clerk brought him an Imperial decree banishing them both from all of Rudolph's "Kingdoms, Dukedoms and Lands" and giving them just six days in which to comply. Unable to do otherwise they set out to try to find a new home, arriving eventually at Erfurt in Thuringia, 160 miles northeastward of Prague, where, despite the good offices of Lord Schonberg at the request of Rozmberk, the City Elders refused to allow them to rent permanent accommodation forcing them to send their families and possessions on to Kassel a further 70 miles. It would seem that Dee was already on a friendly basis with William IV, Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel and arriving there with a train of four coaches he glossed over the circumstances of their exit from Prague, telling him that they had left Rudolph of their own accord on account of his "slender entertainment" of them. William was known as an astronomer and patron of the arts and sciences and no doubt found Dee a congenial visitor. While there Dee records that Kelley, who had remained behind at Erfurt, received a letter from Rozmberk on the 18th of June, brought by John Carp, seeking guidance on God's will on his proposed wedding and other matters. The events that followed, presumably told to him by Kelley, were that he had been divinely commanded to

place a clean sheet of paper upon the altar in the monastery of the Minor Order of St Francis while the senior monk was celebrating mass. When mass was finished, words were found "beautifully written on the piece of paper". The spiritual message was that: "I have appointed you, William, because you have joined your hands with mine, and by thus appointing you I have made you my David, to slay Goliath. For you will be blessed in the strength of my hand and my spirit, because I have heard your prayers. Therefore do not neglect the time of your visitation, but roar with the keenest zeal and indignation. And take as your wife the young woman who is allied to your household, and who is prepared for your loins and your old age. Cherish her with your love, so that my promised blessing may become clear in you and in her." The next day, after they had been copied out for Rozmberk, every line and letter had vanished, and afterwards nothing remained visible. Only a cynic would think that Kelley had yet again been guilty of practising sleight-of-hand.

On the of 15th July Dr Kurtz brought them a message from the Erfurt council who were now becoming more agreeable, saying that "if the Lord Rozmberk would again send unto them, they would think better upon the matter." How Kurtz came to be involved as an intermediary is unknown.

While they stayed at Erfurt they had a visitor. When Dee had left for Leipzig Francesco Pucci had stayed behind at the house in Prague. At about the same time as Sega had written to the Emperor setting out his accusations against Dee, Pucci had travelled to Frankfurt am Maine with the Nuncio's blessing and then returned to Prague. Now he came to tell them that perhaps they might be able to go back there. The Nuncio, he told them, was more "courteous" than his predecessor but was just a little offended that they had only referred to him as "Most reverend father" rather than his proper title. His only object in referring them to Rudolph was to have their claims properly examined and if found faulty they should be sent to Rome but he had then found that Rudolph was more incensed against them than he was himself. Dee inserts a note here explaining that when Rozmberk went to the Emperor suggesting that their banishment might have been an error Rudolph told him that the Nuncio had argued vehemently against them and that the Pope had commanded him by letter to send them to Rome. For this reason the banishment had been intended to help them as much as he could and in future he might be more accommodating. Pucci continued in his persuasions that Sega intended no harm to them and that going to Rome would only be to their own benefit, producing a letter, written by himself, setting out the Nuncios offer which, he said had been approved by Sega. After some arguing, this was given into Kelley's safe keeping. The letter invited all three of them to travel to Rome for an interview with the Pope

to clear themselves of the accusations of practicing magical arts and holding and writing heretical opinions. The Nuncio would give them a letter of safe conduct to ensure that they would not be harmed during the journey. There was a sting in the tail however, the letter finished by saying that no one who was guilty of such crimes would be prepared to undertake such a journey. In other words a refusal to obey would be construed as an admission of guilt.

The next day Dee rode to Saalfeld some 30 miles away to see if he could rent a house belonging to Earl Albert of Schwarzenberg but could think of nothing else but how outraged he was with Pucci's return. He now harboured a dislike "for his unquiet nature in disputations.... for his blabbing of our secrets without our leave, or well liking, or any good doing thereby; either in God his service, or our credit, but rather the contrary.....And also for his household behaviour, not acceptable to our wives and family." The spirits had warned them that Pucci was no longer to be a part of their company and now here he was trying to entrap them "by fair fawning words" into the hands of their "mortal enemy." He had obviously come to spy on them and report back to the Nuncio on their activities. Dee could see that the letter was intended as a trap as it now put the onus on them to either try to answer the points raised in it or else disregard it, either option putting them at a disadvantage. He therefore hit on the plan of sending Pucci back to Sega with a sealed letter asking for confirmation that the document he had brought was indeed dictated by the Nuncio or had been contrived by Pucci himself. In his absence a better option for ridding them of this nuisance might occur. When he got back to Erfurt on the 13th he found Pucci even more vehement in his arguments that they should obey the Bishop and go to Rome, pointing out that they had been instructed to do this in the actions with the spirits. Dee replied that this had been intended metaphorically not physically. Pucci had offended God with his curiosity into their affairs and he should remember his previous repentance and the forgiveness that he had obtained. Now he had offended much more by his interference and his conspiracy against them "with our mortal enemy this Nuncius Apostolicus, upon whom he did fawn, in whose favour he is, who joyneth counsail with him in our affaires, who dare prescribe us what we have to do in so weighty affaires as our Journey to Rome, who hath framed a bill, accusing us confusedly of Heresie and wicked Magick." Pucci protested violently that he only intended for their welfare and was trying to intercede for them with the Nuncio. Dee simply replied that "God seeth all and doth all, for our benefit."

After supper on the 15th of July Dee decided to ask Pucci yet again as to whether the letter he had brought was truly with the consent and agreement of Sega but this time he was unwillingly to give a straight answer. Dee expressed his astonishment and told Pucci he had

written a letter in reply. In his letter he set out the events that have brought him to his present state. By God's will he had been led from England, facing danger from the sea and from those who had conspired against them to carry their message to Rudolph who was then roused against them by the Nuncio. Dee and his partner, their wives, his children, even the infant Michael "still at his mother's breast," together with his servants had been banished and forced to leave, taking with them as much of their possessions as they could get into two carriages, what could not be taken with them they had distributed to the poor. Before leaving, on April 10th, they were warned by God of the events to come and by means of a divine fire the books of revelation were consumed and taken into the custody of the angels. When they are ready however they would be able to "render unto God the things of God and unto Caesar that which is Caesar's." Meanwhile they are the most obedient and humble children of the holy Catholic Church and of the supreme pontiff, Catholic bishops and other ecclesiasticals and he only wished to have his honest character and reputation restored. Dee read the letter to Kelley who agreed that it was more "quiet and modest" than one that he had written himself but which he would now refrain from sending (a slight indication perhaps that there was just beginning to be a change in their relationship as to who was the dominant partner). When Kelley told Pucci of the letter he asked to see and read it, a request which Kelley denied and so Pucci refused to carry the letter back to Sega. Dee gave him a summary of the contents and records his reply "whereas you write of the Books burnt, why write you not unto him of the recovery of them as I now perceive by you both that they are restored? And it shall be a disgrace to you if the Nuncius shall understand more by other, than by your self. Thereof have I no care, that which is written, is written and I know the truth of my writing: And they are not all restored that I know of: And whatsoever he hath at my hands he may be assured is true: whatsoever he shall otherwise hear, the Record thereof cannot be so good, unlesse, our Record consent thereto; then said he, why write you of those Books burning, being done before your comming away: It is as if you wrote backward." This somewhat ambiguous passage would seem to confirm that Pucci had not revealed to Sega that a fraud had taken place despite his attempts to win favour by luring Dee and Kelley into travelling to Rome and may be taken to indicate that Pucci was not a participant in the deception. He makes the point of their "Record" carrying more weight than any other account. Despite his growing dislike of Pucci, Dee shows no sign of concern that the deception might be exposed. He gives a quite curt dismissal of Pucci's response. "Have you no care Mr Pucci, for the method of my letters" and tells him that if he declines to take them then he will find other ways to get them delivered or even write to the Nuncio to tell him of his refusal. After some further

discussion he is finally persuaded to act as postman by Kelley sending instructions to John Carpio to reward him with 50 dollars for their safe delivery. In a footnote of the record Dee records that Pucci asked them how they could doubt his fidelity to them "whom I love as my own life" when he desires nothing more than the overthrow of "This Monster of Rome." Dee will have none of it, his bringing the letter showed him to have the same fidelity to the Pope and to the Nuncio. "Therefore Fr. is false to the Pope, or us, or both, or rash, foolish, blind etc." A little later Pucci got into an heretical argument with Kelley regarding the virgin birth of Christ causing Dee to note that "when I heard, I trembled....it is evident hereby that this Pucci is very leprous, both in this heresie (what other he is infected with, God he knoweth)" Before setting out Pucci asked for testimonial letters confirming his faithfulness to be written to Dee and Kelley's friends. Dee simply pointed out that his deeds were as well known to their friends as to them and that they had warned them about him and could not understand why they continued to suffer him any longer in their house and company. At this Pucci became rather abusive, telling him that he had as great an authority to publish their secrets as them, that he understood their books recording the actions better than them, he had no need of their consent to deal with the Nuncios and that he could order Sega and Rudolph to rescind the decree of banishment. Dee then adds a telling comment. Pucci was included in the decree as part of Dee's household and was included in the spiritual actions. Because of this he should be aware of the dangers of flouting the Emperor's order and of consorting with the ecclesiastical authorities unless "he is assured of their good will who have shewed themselves our mortal enemies." Pucci left for Prague on the 17th taking with him Dee's letter to Sega and letters to John Carpio from Kelley enclosing with these some more letters from Dee to Rozmberk.

Dee had his answer from Phillipo Sega in a reasonably courteous letter dated the 28th of July in which he says he intended no harm to him or Kelley, merely to act as an intermediary between the Pope and Rudolph. He was only offering the opportunity to for Dee to declare his faith and goodness and to have the approval of the Apostolic See for his communication with angels which would then protect him from his detractors and allow him to continue with his work. Shortly afterwards Dee learnt that Rozmberk had persuaded Rudolph to relent somewhat and allow him to take the fugitives into his custody back in Bohemia. Dee appends a brief, undated passage in Latin which Casaubon describes as "A paper (here inscribed and styled *Oraculum Divinum*) in Kelley's absence, written and delivered (as Doctor Dee doth here record) by spiritual and divine means: The drift whereof is, to confirm Prince Rosimberg, at whose request, the sentence of banishment is mitigated." This is

followed in Casaubon's *True and Faithful Relation* by a passage written at Trebon and dated as the end of August 1589. (This would seem to be a typographical error in which the 9 is an inverted 6). In it he says "When Mr Kelley was gone from me at Salfeild [Saalfeld] toward Bohemia, and in the mean space the Emperour had granted to the Lord Rosenberg licence for us to return into Bohemia, to any of his Lordships Towns, Cities, Castles, etc. This was delivered by spiritual and divine means, and the writing yet remaineth in my Lord his hands, out of which I copyed this for the order of our History somewhat making plain."

After a gap of some three years Dee's marginal diary entries in his almanac again become available with the note that on September 14th, 1586 "We came to Trebon."

SANCTUARY, September 1586-April 1587

A friend in need is a friend in deed.

Quintus Ennius, 3rd century BC.

Trebon (Tribau, German – Wittingau) at the time was a small village in the south of Bohemia on the banks of the River Moldau. It had been owned by the Rozmberk family since 1366 as was the nearby castle at Cesky Krumlov. It was also the site of one of Rozmberk's alchemical laboratories and would become a home for Dee and his family for the next three years. Shortly after their arrival a seance was held on the 19th of September. At their last spiritual visitation in April they had been told that six months would elapse before the spirits would return. The time had come for their next visitation. It would seem that they had acted precipitately; there is a cold and curt message to return when Rozmberk can attend. They reassembled on the 14th of October at 7 o'clock in the morning, just after sunrise in a small chapel next to the apartment allocated for their use. Dee set up the table and the shew stone, now encased in a gold frame was placed upon it and a short prayer was made thanking God for their safe deliverance through their many travels, for their recovery from the exile from Prague and for the friendship of Lord Willem Rozmberk. Dee begins by enquiring as to what is to be decided about Pucci. During the action Dee periodically translates Kelley's dictation into Latin for the benefit of Rozmberk. The session begins with a vision of a great plain covered in withered and burnt grass. At the far end stands a great rotten tree with water running out from its roots and sinking into the ground. A man appears from the tree and all the grass is made green. A globe of fire appears in the stone and a voice tells them that the Kings and Princes of the Earth are like the tree "all rotten and barren, behold you bring forth

no fruit" this presumably aimed at Rozmberk. A man dressed in the white robe of justice will be sent to provide wisdom and understanding "and Jerusalem will descend." The spirit delivers an apocalyptic message. After a few months time "I will smite and break the holy place so that there shall be no abomination in it...but first cometh terrour to all Nations." There is then a promise to Rozmberk "this day I am descended and my promise is upon him...I will this day make a Covenant with him....and what I have promised him...I will bring to pass...I will appear to him hereafter and he shall be partaker of the celestial mystery." They are told that Rozmberk should stay away from Prague for the next four months "for he shall deceive those that are deceivers.... Two winds shall arise from the Earth within these next yeares in this Kingdom: In the first let him sit still: In the second let him arm himself and resist with victory." In the following vision Kelley sees a great wood beside a river; a bear swallows a black hawk and tears the wings from a white one. He then sees a castle, approached across a bridge, which has beside it a dial containing images of the sun and moon. A huge black bear tears the moon with its teeth and the castle and bridge fall in ruins. The symbolism here is interesting. Although it might be considered to have an alchemical flavour the term Ursine, besides its usual meaning of a bear, is also the Latin form of Orsini. The Rozmberk family had long sought to associate themselves with the powerful and influential Italian Orsini family and often used the form of Ursini-Rozmberk, later completing the change to Orsini-Rozmberk. It would be interesting to know just what Rozmberk made of these revelations. There is no evidence whatsoever that he had any aspirations to replace Rudolph. The session ended with a cryptic sentence: "you shall shortly see, against what stone Pucci hath spurned."

The immensely wealthy Rozmberk proved to be a generous patron, news of which soon reached the ears of Francesco Pucci who arrived at Trebon creating a disturbance about money which he claimed was owed him by Dee and Kelley. Their version was that this had been freely donated to them in the pursuance of God's work. They determined to put an end to his accusations once and for all, assembled a number of leading citizens, a priest and some of Rozmberk's servants as witnesses and produced two large bags of money. 800 florins, the sum alleged to be owed to him, was taken out and placed on the table and he was given the simple choice of taking the money or else declaring that it had been a gift. Pucci prevaricated, saying he wanted it to be known that he was taking the money "in the name of God and from them as the servants of God" but Dee was having none of it and said that there was no way in which he could accept that God had ordered them to repay it. In the end avarice won, Pucci counted out the money and left and the witnesses signed an affidavit as to

what had been done. Dee concluded by hoping that they might now enjoy better peace and be free of his poisonous and restless tongue. In this he was wrong.

This sudden accumulation of wealth marks a sea change in Dee and Kelley's fortunes but as we shall see however it also heralds a change in their relationship. Kelley now became far more active in pursuing his own destiny and emerged as the stronger character. Dee's *Diary* records many of their comings and goings. On October 18th Kelley left Trebon travelling to Prague where he expected to remain for three weeks. Rozmberk follows on the 8th of November (ignoring the advice of the spirits) and on the 19th Dee traveled to the glass works, no doubt to purchase vessels for the alchemical experiments on which they have now embarked. Albert Laski is still in contact with him as Dee records having a letter from him delivered by Alexander, Kelley's old sparring partner.

In September, a Thomas Simkinson had arrived from Russia, on a mission from Edward Garland. Simkinson, like the Garlands, is another shadowy figure that becomes involved in the comings and goings at Trebon. His instructions were to "goe to Brunswik or Cassil and inquire if Master John Dee be there or where he is and when you finde him, certifie him howe that I have sent you purposely to knowe where he doth remaine and at your return I will come and speake with him my selfe. Also you may certifie him that the Emperour of Russland having certaine knowledge of his great learning and wisdome is marveilous desirous of him to come into his Countrey." Simkinson writes down an affidavit setting out the offer which is to the effect that provision is to be made for Dee and his whole family to travel the 1200 miles to Moscow where he will receive an annual income of £2000, with meals provided directly from the Emperor's table and would have "authority amongst the highest sort of nobility there and of his privy-councillors." Not only that but an escort of 500 horsemen would be provided at the Russian border as an escort. If Dee felt that the offer was insufficient then he should ask for more and would have it. In addition to the stipend from the Emperor Garland assures him that he would also receive "of my Lord Protector yearly a thousand roubles" Simkinson signs his statement "In witness that this is the truth I have written the same with my owne hand, and thereunto set my name, in Wittingaw, otherwise called Trebona, the 18 of September, Anno 1586. By me Thomas Simkinson of Hull." Edward Garland arrived in December with his brother Francis and a party of eight Russians and confirmed the offer from "the most mightie Prince Feodor Ivanovich...and the most excellent prince Boris Feodorovich, Lord Protector of Russia," setting out all the details in a letter which he signed in the Emperor's name in front of Francis, Edward Kelley and others as witnesses. There is some question as to the background to this offer as Theodore I,

Tsar since 1584 on the death of his father Ivan the Terrible, was known to be simple-minded and to have had no interest in either alchemy or indeed natural philosophy so perhaps it was his medical skills which were being solicited. Perhaps wisely Dee declined the offer although much later his son, Arthur, accepted a similar offer and served as physician to Tsar Michael I. Dee was to record this episode later in his *Compendious Rehearsal* which he wrote in 1592. Richard Hakluyt included copies of the two documents in his encyclopedic work *The Principal Voyages of the English Nation* in the section concerning English activities in Russia and suggests that perhaps the Russians were wanting Dee "partly to use his counsell and direction about certaine discoveries to the Northeast; and partly for some other weighty occasions: but because their conquest to Siberia was not as then fully settled, and for divers other secret reasons, it was for ye time with al thankfulness refused." His book was published at about the same time as Dee's *Rehearsal* so presumably he had a sight of the documents or at least copies directly from him. Provision of any details of English navigational discoveries around the top of Russia would certainly have put an end to any hopes Dee might have had of returning home.

Kelley meanwhile continued to make journeys near and far, engaging on business of his own. On January 18th he returned from a visit to Prague with a gift from Rozmberk for Dee's wife Jane, a gold chain and jewel which he estimated to be worth 300 ducats. He left two days later heading for Prague and then on to Poland in the company of Francis Garland, Fernando Hernyk and his brother Thomas. Dee had news from him on the 6th of February, while riding out searching for Rozmberk who was travelling back to Trebon from Vienna. In a letter dated the 25th of January, Kelley tells him that Rozmberk was glad to have had his letters and is well disposed towards them. He asks to be commended to Mrs Dee "a thousand times and unto your little babes" and hopes to return in about twenty days. The same messenger also brought him a brief but touching note from his wife "Swethart I commend me unto you, hoping in God that you are in good health, as I and my children, with all my household am here, I praise God for it; I have none other matter to write unto you at this time." One of the few occasions when domesticity creeps into Dee's writings.

Kelley returned on the 19th of February, causing Dee to send several messages to Rozmberk to announce his arrival, indicative of Kelley's relative importance in their affairs. Funds now seem to be flowing freely. On March 7th Kelley brings him 300 ducats of 3,300 which he had received from Laski and on the 21st he gave another 170 "and of the 200 for changing 60 remayne" indicating that they are practising alchemy based on multiplication rather than transmutation, i.e. they are starting with gold and endeavouring to increase its

quantity by suitable manipulations an enterprise which opens the possibility for deception. Between March 14th and 17th they both travel to Reichstein in the north of Bohemia where Rozmberk had another of his alchemical laboratories.

By now the animosity of the Catholic Church seems to have abated – possibly because Dee had been removed from being a possible influence on the Emperor. His reputation appears to have been restored and he is gaining a widening circle of useful acquaintances. A Frenchman, Nicholas du Haut, servant to Dee's friend Otto Henrick, Duke of Brunswick, comes to see him looking for employment. Lord Biberstein, returning from a visit to Rozmberk invites him to a meeting at the inn where he is staying so that he might make his acquaintance.

Dee and Kelley's next encounter with the spirits takes place on the 4th of April when a seance is held at Trebon. Kelley sees a black curtain drawn across the stone and a voice bewails the wickedness and corruption of mankind. There is a message for Rozmberk "William the son of Ursine, the Lord talketh with thee this day." He is enjoined to "Endeavor thyself with Solomon, to build a common-wealth, wherein I will be exalted, as the servant of the son of God and as his follower....Neglect not the time of this thy visitation, neither despise this Kingdom wherein thou shalt reign, for in so doing I dwell with thee for ever and with thy posterity which shall be (in me) mighty." Once again the spirits (or Kelley) are holding out the offer of an end to Rozmberk's failure to produce an heir. The question of the missing powder is raised and they are told that what they have is to be "extended and multiplied with them that are here present, that it may be apt for thy uses and the strengthening of thy faith." They are told to keep one half of it but to "give unto Caesar what is Caesar's....unto him that is thy head do thy true obedience: although his heart be hardened against thee and thirsteth after thy destruction." It is likely that Rudolph's change of heart in letting Dee and Kelley back into Bohemia was prompted by his alchemical interest and that part of the arrangement with Rozmberk was to share in any information which might result. It rather sounds as though he was now asking for his share of the powder. As the session continues Dee is told that his wife is "at the door of sickness" and as for Kelley "Barrenness dwelleth with thee, because thou didst neglect me, and take a wife unto thy self contrary unto my commandment" which seems most unfair and contradictory to Kelley's previous instructions back at Mortlake. In a side note Dee records that Kelley had been praying daily that he might be relieved from acting as skryer. Now the spirit tells him that "Thou art made free: neither shalt thou at any time hereafter be constrained to see the judgement of the highest, or to hear the voices of the heavens. But thou art a stumbling block to many.

Notwithstanding, my Spirit shall dwell with thee and in the works of thy hands thou shalt receive comfort." He will now be free to devote all his time to alchemy, an activity which he clearly thinks is going to be far more rewarding than recording divine revelations. The spirit continues "the power which is given thee of seeing shall be diminished in thee and shall dwell upon the first-begotten son of him that sitteth by thee." Arthur Dee, just two months short of his eighth birthday, is to be "exercised here before me until the time come that his eyes shall be opened and his ears receive passage towards the highest." Kelley has fourteen days to make up his mind whether to continue or not. If he decides that it is time for him to retire then he is to "bring hither and lay before me the powder which thou hast, for thou hast offended me, as a false steward, in taking out of that which is not thine own." Just why the spirits should have decided that Dee's son had the ability for divine revelation is unclear; perhaps this was just a rather cruel joke on Kelley's part at a time when he was becoming more and more distant from Dee.

A DAMNABLE DOCTRINE, April-May 1587

The greatest clarkes are not the wisest men.

Sir Edward Kelle's Work, Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum 1652.

Dee anticipated that Kelley, pleased to be free of the activities which had for so long troubled him, would be happy to train little Arthur in his new duties. However Kelley declined to act as a tutor and it fell to Dee himself to begin the training. He prepared a prayer for his son to ask for divine help and guidance and on Wednesday the 15th of April led him to the stone placed on its holy table and both prayed. Arthur describes some black and white spots, figures and lines which Dee gets him to draw on paper although suspecting that some of these might be no more than flaws in the glass. Two old men appear with black beards and gold crowns. One disappears, two lions arrive, another man a "great company of feet" and finally a man without a doublet wearing a white cloak. As nothing else materialises Dee calls a halt. The exercises are continued with three sessions each day. On Thursday the visions are much the same, spots, lines and some letters. Come Friday morning the lad has had enough and says he can see nothing but on being pressed reports a few letters. The second session proves to be a complete failure but Dee perseveres and then in the afternoon while Arthur is still staring into a blank shew stone Kelley appears and asks if they are making any

progress. When Dee admits to Arthur's seeming inability Kelley tells him that as he was coming to see them he looked out of the window of the gallery and saw a number of angels going in and out of their chapel through a little hole in the glass window there; Madimi, Il and many others "in very filthy order; and Uriel appeared and justified all to be of God." Sitting down next to Arthur he looks into the crystal and describes a book lying on a wooden table. As the pages of the book turn he reads the words inscribed on them and on the side of a rapidly spinning globe. "Blessed is she who, through sin for me, restores the house that is collapsing and makes it whole for men. I am who I am, who gave and will give you a law from which perpetual peace and happiness will come to mortals. You will shortly see and hear everything. If in the meantime your souls, joined together for the better will subject themselves to me and mine in the manner of sons, all sins committed in me are forgiven. He who goes mad on my account, let him be wise. He who commits adultery because of me, let him be blessed for eternity and receive the heavenly prize." A rather surprising statement. The following day they reconvene. Arthur tried again but can see nothing. Kelley takes over and reports that he can see all of the spirits that had been flying in and out of the window "in that most disorderly and filthy fashion." They all disappear apart from Madimi who is naked "and sheweth all her shame." Kelley greets her with "Fie on thee, Devil avoid hence with this filthiness" and Madimi asks why he should find fault with her. He tells her that her actions and words the previous day were "provocations to sin and unmeet for any godly creature to use". She responds by asking him what is sin? Dee tells her that it is breaking God's commandments to which she asks what would be the case if God made a new commandment setting aside an old one? To which Dee can only admit that he would have to be obeyed. Madimi then asserts that sometimes, in order to punish a man's wickedness God will cause another man to kill him so that what witnesses will construe as sin committed by the assassin, God will consider to be righteousness. She assures them that whatever they see and hear is indeed divine and tells Dee "I that touched thy son might also have taken away his breath". Kelley sees a spirit in a long white gown making as though to strike Arthur, who at this point faints. Dee noted that he was very sick for a while (and no doubt relieved to be excused his scrying duties). Kelley has a vision of a white pillar surmounted by the heads of Dee, Kelley and their two wives with a crown of crystal above them. Madimi brings down a half moon on which is written "Nothing is unlawful which is lawful unto God" and then flies on a carpet to an orchard where she cuts branches from two trees and grafts them into another then produces an "ugly thing like a devil" and tells it "wherewithal thou thoughtest to overthrow and most infect, thou art utterly overthrown and shalt never return again" at which the

monster sinks into the ground with a whiff of brimstone. Kelley now sees that the grafts have taken and grown into the tree. Madimi tells them if they "resist not God but shut out Satan (through unity amongst you)" then if they come together every seventh day their eyes will be opened and they will be taught the secrets of the holy books which have been dictated to them "That you may become full of understanding and in knowledge above common men." She adds that Rozmberk "shall become mighty in me" and then turns to the issue of the alchemical powder. This is not to be used until a time which will be appointed by God. There is a warning "you shall shortly have to do again with the cruelty of the Emperour and the accursed Bishop." If they remain true to God then they will be protected but if they lapse then their only recourse will be to flee back to Germany. Dee assumes that the intention is that he, Kelley, Arthur and Rozmberk are to form the unity but he learns that Kelley has an altogether different interpretation which he tells Dee is so abhorrent that he fully intends to cease having any further dealings with the spirits. When Dee presses him further he explains that it is his understanding is that they are intended to have their wives in common. Understandably taken aback Dee asks for clarification. Does this mean in a spiritual way or, contrary to God's commandment, for carnal purposes? The answer comes written on a white crucifix; it is indeed a physical union which is required. Not surprisingly Dee is shocked that such a thing could be suggested. Kelley, for his part, now feels that he has every right to put an end to his dealings with the spirits. At dinner the two of them sit down with their wives and Dee still struggling to come to grips as to whether the intention was intended to be put into practice or was some sort of test "found means to make some little declaration of our great grief (mine chiefly) now occasioned, either to try us, or really to be executed, in the common and indifferent using of Matrimonial Acts amongst any couple of us four." As would be expected their wives were less than enthusiastic and expressed the hope that a more agreeable outcome might be obtained.

That night, after dinner, as Kelley was sitting alone in his laboratory preparing alcohol from some wine a small spirit appeared who, giving his name as Ben, tells him that his technique is not good enough to get the purest product and obligingly shows him a better means of distillation and separation. He then asks Kelley where he was from and how he had arrived there. When it is explained that he is an Englishman and had come by sea, the spirit reminds him that it was God who had helped him through the many dangers of his voyage. There follows a long conversation during which Ben reveals that it was he who had led Kelley to the alchemical powder and that unless he is prepared to obey God's will in respect of the last action then he would "take the vertue and force of the powder from it: That it

should be unprofitable and that he should become a beggar." Dee, he said, was evil to require proof that the instruction was of divine origin and should be "lead a prisoner to Rome." Ben then revealed to Kelley some amazing prophesies. Queen Elizabeth would be destroyed by heaven in about July or November and at about the same time the King of Spain would also die. The Pope would lose his life during mass before two years were up and his successor would be the fifteenth of his name. He would be a reformer but would be stoned to death by his cardinals. After the Queen's death "one made mighty" by the death of the King of Spain would invade and conquer England but someone who was presently abroad would land at Milford Haven and with the help of the populace overcome the interloper. A Britain, named as Morgan would become king and his successor would be named Rowland. Rozmberk, Ben continues, will be in danger of poisoning in the coming months. The Tables of Enoch which he had written out were in some places incorrect. The disclosure continued unabated. St John the Evangelist had not died but was an invisible being at Patmos and still preached in a visible form from time to time. Times of great famine and bloodshed were coming with great slaughter but they would be saved. There were four others who had also been made privy to God's mysteries and they would meet them at Rome. Ben then disappeared, mounting up in a flame of fire returning a little later to show Kelley the means of using a sponge between two silver plates as a means of condensing out an oil from his distillation which could be used as a fuel for their lamps. While fascinating, it all rather sounds as though the spirits had more to do with fumes from Kelley's distillation than a divine presence. (For the record Queen Elizabeth died in 1603, Philip of Spain in 1598 and Pope Sixtus V in 1590, to be succeeded by Urban VII). During these revelations the spirit alleged that Francis Garland was a spy for Lord Burghley and Edward Garland was not his brother. Francis would shortly be going back to England and Kelley and Dee would be summoned there but should not go. (Kelley may well have harboured some suspicions regarding the Garlands, and from his expressed reluctance that they should return to England we may deduce that he (or the spirits) felt his prospects were being better served by remaining under the patronage of Rozmberk and Rudolph).

This is perhaps a convenient point to pause and examine Dee's relationship with the Garlands. Teresa Burns in an article in the *Journal of the Western Mystery Tradition* makes the highly interesting observation that although in his diary, Dee refers to four Garland brothers; Francis, Edward, Robert and Henry, none of these have ever been positively identified. There are no extant records relating to correspondence, payments, business details or any other matters associated with these names and the only record we have of their

connection with Dee or Kelley is in the writings of John Dee. Who they were and what activities they were engaged in remains a mystery. Burghley, picking up on the rumours of Kelley's growing alchemical achievements was becoming interested in luring him back to England where the need to amass funds to meet the growing threat of a Spanish invasion was becoming particularly pressing and they may have been acting on his behalf. As we shall see they become frequent visitors to Trebon which suggests that they were reporting back to either him or Walsingham, but if they were then it was not under the names by which they were known to Dee.

After supper Kelley relates all of these revelations to Dee in a conversation lasting until 2 o'clock in the morning. Dee retired to bed to find Jane still awake and tells her "that there is no other remedy, but as hath been said of our cross-matching, so it must needs be done." At which she "fell weeping and trembling for a quarter of an hour." Dee managed to pacify her and to persuade her to accept the instructions but still harboured a deep mistrust of Kelley. "Because I have found so much halting and untruth in E. K. his reports to me made, of the spiritual Creatures, where I have not been present at an Action: and because his memory may fail him, and because he was subject to ill tempers, I believe so much hereof as shall by better trial be found true, or conformable to truth." He notes that later in the day Kelley again had "divers apparitions...and instructions" in his own chamber which he disregarded and remained firm in his intent of having nothing more to do with spirits. He does however relate that he has been told to amend the Book of Enoch by joining tables together and correlating the letters and numbers which he has written down. Dee gets out the book and endeavours to make the necessary corrections but becomes confused by tiredness. Kelley is drawn into his chamber by the spirits and returns after an hour with a list of more additions and a message from Raphael admonishing them to obey God or suffer the consequences. "I Raphael, counsel you to make a covenant with the Highest, and to esteem his wings more than your own lives." This finally convinces Dee and he is now "utterly resolved to obey this new doctrine to us, peculiarly, of all the people in the world enjoined." The next day, April 21st, he produces a document which he has drawn up "That we all four, might with one minde and consent, offer and present unto thee, this writing as a Vow, Promise and Covenant, if it so please thy divine majesty to accept it." In it he explains that although this new doctrine appears so contrary to human reason and Christian thinking they will nevertheless they will put aside any doubts and obey these divine instructions that they will come together in both spiritual harmony and also in "the matrimonial licence and liberty, indifferently among us four to be used."

This divine instruction for communal living is so bewildering, flying in the face of contemporary morals and religious beliefs as to require some attempt at explanation. At this stage in their relationship it is starting to become clear that Kelley is distancing himself from Dee. His value as an alchemist is proving to be of growing interest not just to Rozmberk but also as we shall see to Rudolph. Dee, with his baggage of mystical divine revelations of apocalypse and his association with the likes of Pucci and similar minded heretics is increasingly a hindrance to Kelley's advancement. We still cannot be sure just how much of the content of his spiritual visions is invention or how much is a result of a disturbed mind acting on the impulses of his uncontrollable subconscious. It is possible that he hit upon then subterfuge of reporting a divine instruction which he is sure Dee would find so repugnant that he would finally accept Kelley's repeated allegations that they were the victims of malevolent and malign spirits. There would be an end to the actions and Kelley could go his separate way. If this was his plan then he was to be disappointed, either he or his uncontrollable spirits had set the reward for obedience too high. Dee was so convinced that he was in direct communication with God and so desperate to achieve the divine wisdom that he now had been promised that the ruse failed to shake him from his faith. It is of course a possibility that Kelley simply had a desire for extramarital sex and was simply instigating a cruel hoax on the gullible Dee for his own malicious pleasure. In an attempt to cover his back and absolve himself from blame Kelley now draws up a testament in which he puts the blame entirely on Dee for not accepting the diabolical origin of their instructions and makes him record it in his workbook. Although lengthy, it is worth repeating here in full as it gives a clear insight into Kelley's effort to distance himself from any repercussions.

"I Edward Kelly by good and provident (according to the Laws and ordinances of God) determination and consideration in these former Actions, that is to say, appearings, shews made, and voyces uttered, by the within named in this Book, and the rest whatsoever Spirits have from the beginning thereof (which at large by the Records appeareth) not only doubted and disliked their insinuations and doctrine uttered, but also divers and sundry times (as coveting to eschew and avoid the danger and inconvenience that might either by them, their selves, or the drift of their doctrine ensue, or to my indamagement divers wayes, happen) sought to depart from the exercises thereof: and withal boldly (as the servant of the Son of God) inveighed against them: urging them to depart, or render better reason of their unknown and uncredible words and speeches delivered; and withall often and sundry times friendly exhorted the Right Worshipful Master JOHN DEE (the chief follower thereof) as also in the

Records appeareth, to regard his soules health, the good proceeding of his wordly credit (which through Europe is great) the better maintenance to come of his wife and children, to beware of them, and withall to give them over: wherein although I friendly and brotherly laboured; my labour seemed to be lost and counsel of him despised, and withall was urged with replies to the contrary by him made, and promises, in that case, of the loss of his soules health, if they were not of God; Whereunto upon as it were some farther taste of them, or opinion, grounded upon the frailty of zeal, he ceased not also to pawn unto me his soul, &c. which his perswasions were the chief and onely cause of my this so long proceeding with them: And now also at this instant, and before a few dayes having manifest occasion to think they were the servants of Sathan, and the children of darkness; because they manifestly urged and commanded in the name of God a Doctrine Damnable, and contrary to the Laws of God, his Commandments, and Gospel by our Saviour Christ as a Touchstone to us left and delivered, did openly unto them dislike their proceeding, and brotherly admonished the said Worshipful, and my good friend Mr. JOHN DEE to beware of them: And now having just occasion to determine what they were, to consider all these things before mentioned by me, and wisely to leave them; and the rather because of themselves, they (as that by their own words appeareth) upon our not following that Doctrine delivered, gave unto us a *quietus est*, or passport of freedome: But the Books being brought forth, after some discourse therein, after a day or two had, and their words perused spoken heretofore, did as it were (because of the possible verity thereof, *Deo enim omnia sunt possibilia*) gave us cause of further deliberation: so that thereby, I did partly of my self, and partly by the true meaning of the said Mr. DEE in the receiving of them, as from God; and after a sort by the zeal I saw him bear unto the true worship and glory of God to be (as that was by them, promised) by us promoted, descend from my self, and condescend unto his opinion and determination, giving over all reason, or whatsoever for the love of God: But the women disliked utterly this last Doctrine, and consulting amongst themselves gave us this answer, the former actions did nothing offend them but much comforted them: and therefore this last, not agreeing with the rest (which they think to be according to the good will and wholesome Law of God) maketh them to fear, because it expressly is contrary to the Commandement of God: And thereupon desiring God not to be offended with their ignorance, required another action for better information herein; in the mean, vowing, fasting, and praying, Mrs. DEE hath covenanted with God to abstain from the eating of fish and flesh untill his Divine Majesty satisfie their myndes according to his Laws established, and throughout all Christendome received. To this their request of having an action, I absolutely answer, that my simplicity before the Highest is such as, I trust

will excuse me: And because the summe of this Doctrine, given in his name, doth require obedience which I have (as is before written) offered, I think my self discharged: And therefore have no farther cause to hazzard my self any more in any action. Wherefore I answer that if it be lawful for them to call this Doctrine in question, it is more lawful for me to doubt of greater perril; considering that to come where we are absolutely answered were folly, and might redound unto my great inconvenience. Therefore beseeching God to have mercy upon me, and to satisfie their Petitions, doubts and vows, I finally answer, that I will from this day forward meddle no more herein."

22. of April, 1587.

by me EDWARD KELLY.

It would seem he had second thoughts however, for on the 24th of April while Dee is praying Kelley tells him that a spirit has appeared and taking up the principle shewstone and its gold frame has disappeared despite his attempt to catch hold of it. The episode put Kelley in "great fear and trembling" for a while. Another spirit appears in another stone which had been set on the table and tells them that if harm had been intended to them then they would have perished long since. They are to be the executors of God's justice and have the "first fruits of the time to come." They must however not reveal the new doctrine to any mortal man; it has been given them so that they can demonstrate their faith and belief in their vocation. The angel finishes by telling them "if there be any of you that seeketh a Miracle at my hands...let him or her present themselves here the next Monday, with the rest." Afterwards Kelley tells Dee that his body was filled with a fiery heat "even from his brest down unto all his parts, his privities and thighs."

Dee follows his notes of the action by setting out a new version of the covenant drawn up by Kelley who had disliked the previous one, describing it as "a doctrine damnable, and contrary to the laws of God". In the new version the phrase "it seemeth to us expresly to be contrary to the purity and chastity which of us, and all Christians, thy followers, is exactly required" is deleted as is a paragraph in which Dee has written that the Doctrine was delivered from the "true and living God.....who only hath the ...Authority of sins releasing and discharging.....We therefore (according to blessed Raphael his counsel last given) most humbly and sincerely require thy Divine Majesty to accept this our Covenant with thee (for that, thy merciful promises made unto us, may be to us performed and thy divine purposes in us and by us may be furthered and advanced and fulfilled" and a subsequent section in which he has put "Thou wilt....not impute it unto us for sin....done or performed upon carnal lust or

wanton concupiscence." Kelley has then added a new paragraph to the effect that they have been warned that the doctrine "should unto no mortal man else be disclosed" but is to be kept a secret between the four of them and that should any of them disclose it, both they and the recipient will be struck dead by divine power. (How they thought that such an arrangement could be kept a secret from their servants and thus become a subject of scurrilous and damaging gossip beggars understanding). It concludes by setting out the names of Dee, Kelley and their wives as signatories at the end and finishes "Note and remember, that on Sunday the third of May, ann. 1587 (by the new account) I John Dee, Edward Kelly and our two wives covenanted with God and subscribed to the same, for indissoluble and inviolable unities, charity and friendship keeping between us four, and all things between us to be common, as God by sundry means willed us to do. Let it be done to the honour, praise and glory of God, in faith and obedience. Amen."

The matter was still not settled. On May 6th Dee wrote "Now it was by the women as by our selves thought necessary to understand the will of God and his good pleasure, Whether this covenant....is and will be acceptable...and that hereupon the act of corporal knowledge being performed on both our parts, it will please his Divine majesty to seal and warrent unto us most certainly and speedily all his Divine, Merciful and bountiful Promises and Blessings; and also promise us wisdom, knowledge, ability and power to execute his justice." Dee and Kelley make their way into the Chapel where Dee reads out the covenant. After a pause of a quarter of an hour Madimi appears and asks them if they are committed. Dee replies that they are and the spirit tells them to act "Let everything be in common between you." Afterwards there is a rather puzzling episode in which Dee records that Kelley asked for the covenant and taking it cut it in two keeping the half with the his own and his wife's names on it and handing back the other half to Dee. Subsequently he asked for Dee's half which he then kept. Dee then records that afterwards Madimi took the two halves and joined them together again.

A further seance is held on May 20th when a spirit clothed in a purple robe standing in a great globe of fire harangues them for failing to implement God's counsel. "Behold I have prepared a banquet [banquet] for you and have brought you even unto the doors; but because you smell not the feast you disdain to enter....see that all things be one among you and cleave not asunder lest I take vengeance upon you." There is a savage reprimand for Kelley "And thou, even thou that hast tore in peeces even this morning again this Covenant which thou hast made with me, behold the time shall come that thou shalt be torn in peeces thy self." It is futile for him to tear the Covenant up "for my register is eternal." The spirit accuses Kelley

of looking to leave Trebon but anyone who takes him in will be drowned in the lake of hell. "Carpio ... for his former intent of separating you" will suffer divine punishment. As has already been suggested, by now Rozmberk was beginning to come to the view that whereas Dee was an encumbrance Kelley was a useful acquisition and that their separation would be no bad thing. To this end it would appear that he was using John Carp to lure Kelley away. Dee records that Kelley afterwards said to his wife that "his boots were now put off, and [he had] changed his purpose of going away with Carpio now." It would seem that Dee finally felt that the time had come to carry out their divine instructions for he subsequently records that the Covenant has been fulfilled.

Two days later, Dee and Kelley are strolling in a new orchard which is being laid out alongside the river when Kelley sees two small spirits fighting. When Dee asks about the nature of their disagreement one of them tells him that he had sent something to Jane Dee by his servant but his opponent had stolen it. The second spirit then produces a yellow square which Dee guesses to be the shewstone that had been taken during the session on the 24th of April and disappears with it. On his return he is asked "Hast thou laid it under the right pillow of the bed where his wife lay yesternight." Dee returns to his chamber where he finds his wife lying on her bed where they had spent the previous night and there under her pillow is the stone which had been spirited away. An altogether strange and unexplained mystery although as always suspicion must be laid at Kelley's door.

The next action, using the newly recovered stone, takes place on the 23rd at which they ask that the "act of obedience performed" might be accepted and that they would now be instructed in the "understanding and practice of wisdom." The first appearance is of a knight, clad in bright armour, armed with a spear and sword, carrying a great shield covered in pictures of cherubim and riding a white horse. There follows a passage which seemingly Dee deleted from his manuscript and which was omitted by Casaubon. It has been transcribed by Fenton from the original documents. The knight asks Kelley "was thy brother's wife obedient and humble to thee?" and is told that she was. He then asks Dee the same question and is again assured that the agreement has been obeyed. They are told "Even as you were one obedient unto another, even so shall the Lord deal with you."

He rides away into a field and Madimi appears. She asks Dee of his wife "dost thou lie or say truth, in saying she was obedient?" who replies "I counted her obedient for that she did whereof she thought her obedience to consist." Madimi follows the knight into the field and in turn is followed by a woman with clothes as of beaten gold, naked to the waist who announces that she is the "Daughter of Fortitude, and ravished every hour, from my youth.

For behold I am Understanding, and Science dwelleth in me." She tells them that they will be given the power to resist their enemies. "Let the earth give forth her fruit unto you and let the mountains forsake their barrenness where your footsteps shall remain... prepare for me, for I come shortly." With a final warning to "disclose not my secrets unto women" she disappears into the field. After half an hour she reappears with a small book and tells them to return after dinner. They must kneel to receive the knowledge from the book and no female creature is to be allowed into the room nor may they reveal anything that they learn to their wives or to anyone else. As instructed, they return some four hours after dinner and kneel at the table. A voice tells Kelley "I know it is troublesome for thee to kneel: Sit." (Perhaps additional support for the suggestion that he was to some extent disabled). The spirit with the book appears and this is now split in two. She tells them that they have one hundred days to learn the secrets contained in the two book halves – one for each of them. They must return every seven days to receive this wisdom which will be divided between them. They will have power "in the Heavens and in the lower bodies (i.e. the ascending celestial spheres) and shall enter into the fourth or fifth heaven." Kelley will "have a new coat put on thee and it shall be all of one colour." Dee will be given the power to open (understand) the book which God has dictated to him through the spirits. In seven days they must bring the things that the Lord has given them. Dee understands this to mean the book of Dunstan and the alchemical powder. The spirit then goes on to prophecy the future. "Now cometh the time that the Whore shall be called before the Highest, and the tenth month hence, shall the Turk and the Muscovite make a perpetual league together and in the thirteenth month shall Poland be assaulted with the Tartarians, and shall be spoiled....so that in the sixteenth month they shall all fall together from Christ. And the hand of God shall run in vengeance, even through this kingdome and through Germany and into Italy and in the 23 month Rome shall be destroyed." At the time Poland was in a state of considerable upheaval. The death of Stephan Bathory in December 1586 was followed by an interregnum while Maximillian, Rudolph's brother, contested the throne with Sigismund III of Sweden, the eventual winner. There was not at this time however any likelihood of an alliance between the Ottoman Empire and Russia nor did one materialise. Poland would not be overrun and Germany, Italy and Rome would remain more-or-less unscathed. Once again the spirits had failed to foresee the future.

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS. May 1587 – March 1589

The best laid schemes o' mice an' men gang aft a-gley,

An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain for promised joy.

Robert Burns, *To a Mouse*, 1786.

Despite the promise of the "Daughter of Fortitude" to meet with Dee and Kelley every week for the next hundred days and reveal the secrets of the universe to them there are no further recorded details of any actions held by Dee and Kelley apart from a few cryptic entries in his *Diary*, one on the 25th of July 1587 of "Actio Sancta" (Holy Action), another on the 20th of October that he "took up the furniture for the Action" and one on the 5th March 1588 of "Sacrae Actionis finis." On the 12th of December 1587 in an account of a fire which resulted from an overturned lamp he says that amongst the books destroyed was "the book of Zacharius...that I had translated out of the French for him [Kelley] by spiritual commandment, although just when he had received this direction is unknown. Despite the tormented soul searching they (or at least three of them) had endured in agreeing to cohabit as a prerequisite to their divine instruction this seems never to have been received. It is of course just possible that there was indeed such a revelation and that Dee, following the injunction never to reveal it to anyone else, ensured that all records remained hidden. There are two similarly brief entries in May and July 1588 which can be interpreted as meaning that their "cross-matching" continued for some time, possibly with some domestic friction as he records that on the 19th of July there was "A certain kind of reconciliation between our wives and the next day "some relenting of E.K. also by my Lord's entreaty." This may have festered on for some quite time as in May 1588 Dee relates that Kelley's wife "received the sacrament: and to me and my wife gave her hand in charity; and we wished well to her."

Now that they were settled in at Trebon Dee's *Diary* reveals much of their daily lives. He hired a John Basset at the end of August 1587 to teach Latin to his children for a remuneration of seven Hungarian gold ducats quarterly although not without some problems as he records three days later "Basset his hurley burley" with Kelley's brother Thomas. Presumably they overcame their differences as Basset was still in place the following November when he received the second installment of his salary. Jane, Dee's wife, was now pregnant again and on the 24th of September 1587 he noted she felt the baby moving. A few weeks later there was cause for alarm as there was some bleeding and they feared for a miscarriage. As things turned out however the problem passed and a midwife was summoned in February the following year. Theodorus Trebonianus Dee was born on the 28th of February 1588 with "Mercury ascending in his horoscope," just nine months after the

implementation of joint marital relations. Theodore is Greek for "Gift of God." Some questions are best left unanswered. Others were not so lucky. Thomas Kelly had married on June 14th 1587 to Ludmilla the sister of Jinrich z Pisnice who rose to become deputy Chancellor (a useful contact for Kelley). Unhappily his new wife miscarried on the 18th of January the following year, loosing a baby girl. Dee administered myrrh in warm wine and noted that "The woman was sufficiently strong after." Exactly a year later she miscarried again, this time loosing twin boys.

As in any household small children never failed to cause their parents alarm. On New Year's Day 1588 there was an upset when Dee's son Michael fell while playing and a sharp stick he was holding struck him in the eye, luckily not causing any lasting damage. In May the lad became ill "sick of an ague and troubled with a cough," Kelley suffered a similar sickness and had to dose himself nightly with purges. Dee himself became afflicted with the same problem in June which caused him to take to his bed. At the start of August Arthur was playing with the young son of "The Captain of Rhaudnitz (Roudnice)" who accidentally gashed him on the nose with a razor. The Captain may well have been in the entourage of Rozmberk and his wife who were staying at Trebon for a few days on their way from Cesky Krumlov to Prague. Dee himself, now aged 60, was suffering the problems of advancing age reporting loose teeth and a humming in his ears.

Dee records the engagement of others into his service, Nicolas on the 15th of October 1587, who afterwards suffered some sort of an accident on the 11th of January the following year and later, in August, he hired John Hammond, "gentleman, to serve me in his honest services for a year; and to have 30 dollars for his full and all manner of wages." The children's tutor John Basset, who Dee had discovered to actually be an Edward Whitlock, left at the end of the same month under somewhat suspicious circumstances, absenting himself while going to Budweis (Ceske Budejovic) to buy "colours" perhaps dyes or pigments.

Throughout this period there were underlying tensions within Dee's establishment, most of which he refers to in vague hints, often written in his pseudo Greek. On the 27th of June 1587, "Terrible suspicion because of the treachery...[the rest illegible]. 31st of August, "About midday, most terrible threats." 8th of November, "terrible disagreements, accusations etc." 12th of November, "It was told to me that some in the house hold reports that I dealt with the Divel. This was...[by] E.K. and his wife Joan." 26th of May 1588, "Threats." Despite (or perhaps because of) the patronage of Rozmberk he had to endure the enmity of others. Kelley, perhaps maliciously, told him on the 19th of February "of my friends, how untrue they were." Woolley relates that for some reason they had aroused the intense dislike of

Rozmberk's estate manager Jakub Krcin (who Dee refers to as "Critzin, The Grand Captain"). Krcin had responsibility for building works – farms, breweries and a new dam. He was also involved in the construction of Rozmberk's alchemical laboratories and it was no doubt this that brought him into contact with Dee and Kelley, calling them "privileged scoundrels" and refusing to attend a wedding feast on the 24th of November 1587 at the Trebon Town Hall because he knew that they would be there. Dee subsequently attempted to win him over, writing on the 10th of April the following year "I went to Mr Captain Critzin to know if he were offended with me, who in outward show used me reasonably courteously." Rozmberk himself attempted to resolve the issue as Dee records that on the 11th of June "My Lord sent Critzin with his companion to salute me, and offer me help."

During 1587-1588 Dee's writings record the many comings and goings of his visitors who called at Trebon. On the 22nd of June 1587 he noted that Francis Garland had left Trebon for England (so at least the spirit Ben had managed to get one thing right). Four days later a problem from the past materialised in the person of Francesco Pucci and what was worse he brought a friend, Christian Francken. Francken a former Jesuit was notoriously the author of a number of tracts attacking that order and promulgating his views rejecting the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, not therefore someone who Dee would want to be associated with. He was however pleased to learn that Francken had now "recanted his wycked boke against Christ." Although the Catholic Church had continued to harbour grave suspicions regarding Pucci the nuncio Segha had undertaken to hear his full confession and abjuration on the 6th of March 1587 so perhaps Pucci had arrived at Trebon to report on Dee's activities. He stayed until the 13th and while he was there Dee records that "Illustrissimus" and his wife also arrived and that there were "discussions" with Kelley and himself. (It is generally considered that Dee used this term to mean Laski). Dee noted that on the 20th "Illustrissimus left with his most noble Lady" for Cesky Krumlov. A few days later Kelley and his brother also left Trebon. The phrasing of the entry indicates a growing suspicion on the part of Dee that his colleague was not being entirely open with him. "E.K. with his brother and Lodovick, went on horseback: he said he was going to Prague but he set forth upon the little-used Crumlaw road" (i.e. for Cesky Krumlov), stopping at Ceske Budejovic for the night. Kelley then returned from the fair held at Linz five days later. Prague lies 100 miles due north of Trebon, Linz 35 miles due south, so perhaps Kelley had followed Rozmberk for a more private meeting. On the 16th of September "The Lord Biberstein came to Trebon: and Cracht with him" and on the 22nd Rozmberk and his wife stayed briefly at Trebon on their way back to Prague. A week later Thomas Kelley and John Carp left for Prague followed on

the 12th of October by Edward Kelly who returned on the 26th, presumably with Carp as Dee records that in the following days "Jo. Carp did begin to make furnaces over the gate &c. and he used of my round bricks: and for the yern [iron] pot was contented now to use the lesser bricks, 60 to make a furnace." (Dee and Kelley's alchemical endeavours will be dealt with in more detail in the following section).

Edmund Hilton arrived on the 31st of October. Dee doesn't indicate from where, possibly he was returning from another trip back to England. He may have left again briefly on some business for he is back again on the 14th of November. A week later Francis Garland is at Trebon bringing letters from Edward Dyer and Dee's old associate Richard Young. At the beginning of December Rozmberk and his wife were again at Trebon, staying for some two weeks, no doubt catching up on progress with their alchemical experiments and leaving on the 12th for Cesky Krumlov. While they were there John Carp was dispatched to Prague "to marry the maiden he was so troubled for. The Emperor's Majesty, by my Lord Rosenberg's means, had so ordered the matter." A week later Dee and Kelley received an invitation to his wedding which was to be in the New Year. On the 18th of December Francis Garland's brother Robert and a Thomas Simkinson arrived from England "thinking we were ready to come into England upon the Queen's letters sent for us. One other brother came also and stayed there." They were still there almost a month later when on the 13th of January 1588, Edward Kelley, who had been intending to leave for Cesky Krumlov, decided that it was too late in the day to go and sent his brother to find Dee with the message that Dee was studying too much and should join him for some relaxation. Dee records that he and the two Garland brothers played an unspecified game till supper time and then reconvened in the evening to continue, departing on friendly terms. This would appear to have been an attempt on the part of Kelley to make amends as Dee finishes his account with "This was thus after the great and wonderful unkindness used towards me, in taking my man." Kelley left the next day, having been summoned by Rozmberk, returning five days later. At the same time Dee notes that he received a letter from "the Lord Chancellor," who Fenton identifies as being Adam of Hradec (Newhouse) one of Rudolph's most trusted advisors and who was involved with Rozmberk's alchemical activities.

In early February the two Garlands left Trebon for England, taking letters from Dee to Edward Dyer and Justice Young. Shortly afterwards the now married John Carp arrived on a visit. During this period Rozmberk and his wife appear to be alternating between their castles at Cesky Krumlov and Trebon no doubt using the opportunity to check on progress and offer encouragement. Dee may have been sending him updates by letter as he records that in late

March one of Rozmberk's secretaries brought him an answer "with offer and promise of all whereby he can pleasure me.

At the start of April 1588 Francesco Pucci turned up again, causing upset. Back in April 1585 they had been told by the spirits that there would be a gap of six months before the next action and Pucci seems to have taken it into his head that there would then be regular sessions at six month intervals. "Mr Pucci disquieted Mr E. K. about requesting an Action to be had, one of our six months Actions, being now the term beginning the fourth day of this month. The end of the talk was a strange speech of Mr Kelley to Fr. Pucci: after 15 weeks write to me and I will answer you." This rebuff caused even more problems as Pucci then retaliated by stirring up trouble between them and Rozmberk. On the 22nd of April Dee relates "Terrible and false accusation or suspicion that I had censured Pucci against Mr K. and the Prince." On the 1st of May Dee felt it necessary to send John Carp to Rozmberk who was at a glass works some four miles outside Trebon, with "My letters of purgation for Pucci his attempts or intents in his letter to my Lord and Mr Kelley, unknown to me." Carp returned three days later and "brought me word of my Lord's displeasure conveyed and confirmed by cosening Pucci his letter had." This was followed on the 7th with a letter from Rozmberk to Kelley "declaring his great displeasure" to which Dee comments "Certainly those letters were unwelcome to Mr E. K." Perhaps Pucci and Kelley had been conniving behind Dee's back. At any event this was the last that Dee was to see of Pucci who stayed on at Prague until 1591 continuing to write tracts on speculative theology quite contrary to orthodox teaching and which were put on the Papal Index. He returned to the Netherlands before eventually making his way towards Italy in 1593. His journey was interrupted when he was arrested at Salzburg, handed over to the Inquisition and put on trial as an unregenerate schismatic. He was saved from the stake by a second abjuration, being beheaded instead at the Tor di Nona prison in 1597 and his remains burnt in the Campo dei Fiori.

Dee was still using his assistant Edmund Hilton as a courier as on the 6th of April he recorded his departure to Prague with John Carp from where he was to travel back to England. It is possible that Albert Laski paid Dee a visit in June 1588 as he says that "Illustrissimus" and his wife came to Trebon on the 8th, leaving again for Prague on the 11th. At about the same time there came news by a letter from Francis Garland that Edward Dyer was on his way. Garland and Joan Kelley's brother Edmund arrived on the 13th of June, but Dyer, who was thought to be in the close neighbourhood didn't arrive until a month later on the 20th of July, possibly having diverted to attend to some business elsewhere. The visit did not go well initially as Dee notes two days later that "about 10 in the evening, Mr Edward

Dyer did injure me unkindly" and it took the efforts of Edward Kelley to effect a reconciliation the following day. As will become clear William Cecil was attempting to get Kelley back to England to employ his assumed skills in producing gold to aid the crown's finances but had probably arrived at the view that Dee had no useful expertise in alchemy. While Dyer was at Trebon Laski again arrived there at the start of August and had a brief private meeting with him. Dyer, Edmund Cooper, Francis Garland and Rowles (identified by Dee as a servant of Edward Dyer) all left on the 9th of August. Another visitor at this time was a Thomas Southwell who arrived in July and who became involved in ironing out an episode of domestic dispute "of his own courteous nature did labour with Mr Edmund Cooper [Kelly's brother-in-law] and indirectly with Mistress Kelly for to further charity and friendship amongst us." Southwell left on the 13th of August towards Prague but cannot have travelled very far as he returned the following day. While there he told Dee a tale that he had been given a lump of the Philosopher's Stone as "big as his fist" by his old tutor and had given it to a Jesuit named Stale.

Dee continued to record the comings and goings of all and sundry. Rozmberk and his wife were making regular journeys between Cesky Krumlov, Trebon and on to Prague. Laski paid another visit in November, probably seeking Dee's astrological advice on his future prospects following Stephan Bathory's death. Edward Kelley and his now constant companion John Carp left for Prague in October, Kelley returning in early November with Francis Garland and Edward Rowles who had both arrived from England. Back in July the much anticipated Spanish invasion had got underway. The Armada had entered the English Channel on the 19th, its huge galleons relentlessly harried by the smaller but nimbler British ships commanded by the High Admiral of the Fleet, Charles, Lord Howard of Effingham and captained by the likes of Drake, Grenville, Humphrey, Hawkins and Frobisher. The intention was that the Spanish admiral, Alonso Perez de Guzman, Duke of Medina Sidonia, would rendezvous with the Duke of Parma's army waiting near Dunkirk, ready to join the fleet in barges sent from ports along the Flemish coast. When he arrived Sidonia found that the invasion force, weakened by disease, was not yet ready to leave and that the port had been blockaded by Dutch ships. As he anchored out to sea Drake sent in fireships plunging the Spanish fleet into confused panic. The ensuing Battle of Gravelins and strong gales drove the scattered ships of the once proud Armada ever northwards in a desperate attempt to return home around Scotland and Ireland leading to the loss of many thousands of lives and half of the original fleet. For some months rumour had been circulating around Europe as to the outcome. In August the Spanish Ambassador in Paris had written to Philip II "gout-ridden

and prayer-obsessed," confined for most of the day to an invalid chair, that it was probable that Drake had been captured and in Prague a *Te Deum* was sung in thanksgiving for a Catholic victory. No doubt his visitors were able to provide Dee with the latest details of the English victory and to regale him with Elizabeth's famous speech when she had addressed the troops at Tilbury. Garland and Rowles left again some two weeks later to go back to England, taking with them letters from Dee to the Queen, Dyer, Richard Young and Edmund Hilton. They must have brought Dee what he thought was good news, for his letter to Elizabeth, after congratulating her on her triumph, thanks her for inviting them all back to England. It is as follows:

Most gracious Soveraine Lady, The God of heaven and earth, (who hath mightilie, and evidently, given unto your most excellent Royall Majestie, this wunderfull Triumphant Victorie, against your mortall enemies,) be allwaies thanked, praysed, and glorified: And the same God Almighty, evermore direct and defend your most Royall Highnes from all evill and encumbrance: and finish and confirme in your most excellent Majestie Royall, the blessings, long since both decreed and offred: yea, even into your most gracious Royall bosom, and lap. Happy are they that can perceyve and so obey, the pleasant call of the mightie Ladie, OPPORTUNITIE. And, therefore, finding our duetie concurrent with a most secret beck of the said Gracious Princess Ladies OPPORTUNITIE, now to embrace, and enjoyed, your most excellent Royall Majesties high favor, and gracious great clemencies of CALLING me, Mr. Kelley, and our families, home, into your British Earthly Paradise, and Monarchies incomparable: (and that, about an yare since: by Master Customer Yong, his letters) I and mine, (by God his favour and help, and after the most convenient manner we can,) will, from henceforth, Endeavour our selves, faithfully, loyally, carefully, warily, and diligently, to rid and untangle our selves from hence: And , so very devotedly, and soundly at your Sacred Majesties feet, to offer our selves, and all, wherein we are, or may be hale, to serve God and your most Excellent Royall Majestie. The Lord of Hoists, be our help, and guyed, therein: and gaunt unto your most excellent Royall Majestie, the Incomparablest Triumphant Raigne and Monarchie, that ever was, since mans creation. Amen.

Signing it: Trebon, in the kingdome of Boemia, the 10th of Novebre: Ao. Dom: 1588: stylo veteri. Your Sacred and most excellent Royall Majesties most humble and dutifull subject and servant, John Dee.

Unfortunately there is no record of the correspondence between Dee and Richard Young who seems to have been working hard at achieving a reconciliation with Elizabeth. Whether the letters that Garland and Dyer brought did in fact contain a specific invitation for Dee and his family or whether he was included just as an additional inducement to get Kelley to return is unknown. Realisation had slowly been dawning on Dee that what Burghley wanted was to get Kelley back to England to use his by now reputed powers of gold making to improve the State finances. On the 22nd of July 1588 he had recorded in his *Diary* "Mr Edward Dyer did injure me unkindly" although Kelley managed to smooth things out the following day. The Lord Chancellor, Adam of Hradec was at Trebon over the three days 15th – 17th of September. There is an anguished entry by Dee dated for the same period. "The rancour and dissimulation now evident to me. God deliver me. I was not sent for." By the end of the year Dee is starting to make his preparations for his homeward departure. On the 4th of December he gave Kelley his "glass, so highly and long esteemed of our Queen and the Emperor Rudolph" adding "The letter of 500,000 ducats required." The telescope was likely intended to be part of a deal by which Dee was to looking to receive financial aid for the journey, as a week later he recorded that Kelley had passed it on to Rozmberk who in turn has presented it to the Emperor. On the 14th Edmund Hilton returned to Trebon from England, perhaps having been sorting out the necessary arrangements. Dee travelled to "the new-made city Kaiser Rudolf Stadt, by Budweis" to see what progress was being made on a coach he was having built by Joachim Reimer. In the New Year it is becoming increasingly evident that Rozmberk is impatient for him to be gone. Kelley showed him a letter he had received which left no doubt. "where he writ that of me he heard no more of my going hence, and if Menschik hath not performed as he willed him, that if I send him word he will so despatch me that thereby I shall not need to stay. Marry, as he had confidently [i.e. in confidence] heretofore warned Mr Kelley, so he now did request him to take leave of me at my departure." Just to make things crystal clear Kelley tells him that "my Lord his desire was that I [Dee] should not have come hither, from the very beginning of our coming." Further letters arrived from Rozmberk and on the 25th of January, Maius, the Earl of Schwarzenberg's treasurer arrives, staying for five days before leaving, presumably having concluded all the necessary financial arrangements. Dee, having made an agreement to settle his affairs and leave within forty days sent Edmund Hilton to begin to assemble the necessary transport for Dee, his family, books and possessions. Hilton went firstly to Zacharius Mathias at Budweis to buy coach and saddle horses for 300 dollars and then on to Prague from where he returned with nine "Hungarish" horses. In early February Dee gave Kelley

what he had of the alchemical equipment: "the powder, the books, the glass and the bone for the Lord Rosenberg: and he thereupon gave me discharge in writing of his own hand: subscribed and sealed." On February 16th, 1589 Kelley, John Carp, Hilton, Henry Garland, Thomas Simkinson and Lodovick set off for Prague. That was the last that Dee ever saw of his one time companion, skryer and possibly deceiver and betrayer. On the 11th of March he sets out himself, leaving Bohemia behind forever.

For the time being we will leave John Dee, disillusioned, dejected and dispirited, as begins his long journey back to an uncertain welcome in England and follow the exploits of Edward Kelley who is now well on the way to achieving his life's ambition of attaining fame and fortune.

THE RISE AND FALL OF EDWARD KELLEY, 1586-c.1597

"Nothing is more ancient, excellent, or more desirable than truth, and whoever neglects it must pass his whole life in the shade."

Edward Kelley, *The Stone Of The Philosophers*

Kelley's exploits in Bohemia after Dee's departure can be traced through several sources. There are letters available, exchanged between him and Cecil and between Burghley and his informants and agents. Some of these were recorded by Strype in his *Annals* and others are held in the collection of English State Papers. In more recent years a number of articles have been written by historians from documents which have now come to light in the Czech archives. Kelley's life in this period has been covered comprehensively by Jan Backlund and Michael Wilding amongst others and their works provide a most useful reference. In addition there are the records of his alchemical activities which are to be found in the entries in Dee's *Diaries* and in the works attributed to Kelley himself.

Apart from the ludicrous alchemical recipe dictated by a spirit at Cracow in 1585 the next record of Dee and Kelley's exploits in this area takes place at Trebon at the end of 1586 when on the 19th of December Dee enters in his *Diary* that "to please Master Edward Garland and his brother Francis, E.K. made a public demonstration of the philosophers' stone in the proportion of one grain (no bigger than the least grain of sand) to 1oz and a 1/4 of common mercury and almost 1oz of the best gold was produced. When we had weighed the gold, we divided it up and gave the crucible to Edward at the same time." An incident which

has far more to do with chicanery than alchemy. Stories about their alchemical activities began to circulate. Lord Willoughby, the English Ambassador at Prague was believed to have brought back a frying pan with a section cut out which Kelley had transmuted into gold and claimed to have seen him make gold rings out of twisted wire. Many years later the stories were given credence by Dee's son. In a letter from Sir Thomas Browne to Elias Ashmole dated 1674 he says Arthur had told him that he had seen "projection made, and transmutation of pewter dishes and flagons into silver, which the goldsmiths at Prague bought of them. And that Count Rosenberg played at quoits with silver quoits made by projection as before. That this transmutation was made by a powder they had, which was found in some old place, and by a book lying by it containing nothing but heiroglyphicks." He adds that Kelley left Dee, taking most of the powder with him but that afterwards Dee presented a little of the powder to Queen Elizabeth who after testing it attempted to get Kelley back to England. By the time Ashmole wrote his *Brief Lives* some twenty years later the story had become that Arthur reported seeing the philosopher's stone several times and the quoits had become made of gold.

Their prowess as alchemists was obviously spreading as in the New Year a Dr Reinholdt of Saalfeld arrived on the 14th of January hoping for some of the action: "His suit of the salt." Kelley gave him 3oz of a material denoted by Dee as a combination of the symbols for mercury and gold and their visitor left six days later, presumably well pleased with his acquisition. A week later, for reasons best known to himself, Kelley persuaded Dee that spiritual assistance was required. Apparently he had had a visitation at Prague at the beginning of the month and was unsure as to whether this had been divine or diabolical. There had been some instruction regarding the remaining 2 ounces of the powder and on his return Kelley discovered that he was half an ounce short. Should he make up the missing half ounce? It was the common belief that once obtained the Philosopher's Stone could be increased by carefully feeding it by means of continuing alchemical operations but this was fraught with danger and a mistake would destroy what had taken so many painstaking months if not years of work to prepare. Kelley sees words appear which they interpret that to say that the instruction is indeed divine and that that which was closed should stay shut. Not a very helpful response.

The same month Dee begins a series of cryptic entries, starting on the 27th and relating to experiments with materials which he labels as A, B and C which are being placed in hermetic equipment for processing: A on the 27th; B at night on the 4th of January; C on the 11th in a vessel which is then heated with fermenting horse dung (giving a gentle heat) on the

13th as was A on the 15th. On the 25th he records that there were "Three put in," on the 28th "Two put in" and the following day a new material D was also given the dung treatment. There are no more details as to the intent or outcome of these endeavours but it is safe to assume that supported by funds from Rozmberk; Kelley is engaged in full time alchemical activities and Dee is now being relegated to the role of his assistant. In early July he makes a brief note to the effect that "I set the two earths (left of the 28oz of Mercury Animal) with their water again upon them, in horse dung and a little later he makes a reference to combining mercury with "The three."

They are now practicing 'real' alchemy as opposed to multiplying gold by adulteration or trickery. A starting material (or earth) is subjected to chemical processes and then volatile material distilled off. The condensed vapour 'their water' is returned back to the residue in the retort and the distillation repeated *ad nauseam* until the adept considers that he has attained his desired goal. Descriptions of the stages of the alchemical process varied from author to author but a common consensus may be exemplified by reference to *The Compound of Alchemy* written by Sir George Ripley (c1415-1490) which became something of an Alchemist's bible. In it he describes the twelve 'Gates' or steps in the process of preparing the Philosopher's stone.

1. *Calcination.*

Reduction of the primary material by the addition of other materials such as acids, followed by distillation to remove volatiles producing a dry residue or earth. The starting material was of course the great secret but was usually a metal such as lead which was going to be purified or it could be silver or gold from which the metallic spirit could be separated and used as a seed.

2. *Solution.*

The collected distillate is returned to the vessel.

3. *Separation.*

Further distillation of volatiles.

4. *Conjunction.*

Addition of fresh materials such as derivatives of sulphur, mercury, silver or gold. Usually referred to as a 'chemical marriage,' i.e. the combination of masculine and feminine attributes.

5. *Putrefaction.*

Prolonged heating of the material until it is black in colour.

6. *Congelation.*

Further processing results in a white solid – the White Stone, the end of the first work.
7-12. *Preparation of the Red Stone.*

Steps 2 to 6 are repeated as many times as are necessary until the Red Stone is achieved, followed by *Projection*, the addition of this to other substrates such as mercury or base metals to convert them to gold. Starting with a vegetable *prima materia* could result in the Philosophical Elixir, which would cure all ills, reduce the ravages of old age and bequeath eternal life. Heating and cooling were a constant headache for the practitioner. Imperfections in the glass apparatus would result in cracks if the temperature changed too rapidly, resulting in the loss of days or weeks of work. Heating methods ranged from the moderate warmth of decomposing manure, through the water or steam bath and up to heating over an open fire although in the latter case a vessel of pottery or iron would be used. Constant attention was required both day and night, usually by employing a trustworthy assistant. This was not always entirely satisfactory as Thomas Charnock, a contemporary of Dee, found when he discovered that his servant was prone to falling asleep, letting the fire die down and then throwing on tallow to make it burn which produced too much heat.

By September, it would seem that they had achieved some form of product as he records that "I delivered to Mr Ed. Kelly (earnestly requiring it, as his part) the half of all the Mercury Animal which was made; it is to wit 20 ounces: he weighed it himself in my chamber: he brought his weights purposely for it. My Lord had spoken to me before for some: but Mr Kelly had not spoken." The term 'mercury animal' would seem to be peculiar to Dee and presumably refers to a form of this material which in some way they believe had been activated or possibly treated in such a way that on addition to say silver it would impart a gold colouration. Alchemical processing would now seem to be in full swing. Life was not without incident however and in December a fire started by Kelley caused some alarm. "After noon somewhat Mr Ed. Kelly his lamp overthrew, the spirit of wine being spent too near, and the glass being not stayed with bricks about it, as it was meant to be. And the same glass so falling on one side, the spirit of wine spilled out, and burnt all that was on the table where it stood, linen and written books." The ruined books included alchemical works by Denis Zacaire, Philippus Rouillaschus, and Kelly himself.

By 1588 Dee appears to have little involvement in Kelley's alchemical activities who is now operating mainly on his own. In February "Mr E.K. at 9 of the clock after noon sent for me to his laboratory over the gate: to see how he distilled sericon, according as in time past and of late he heard of me out of Riplay, &c. God lead his heart to all charity and brotherly love." The reference to sericon is taken from "*The Bosom Book of Sir George Ripley*" of

which Dee obviously had a copy. Ripley describes using "Sericon or Antimony" as one of the starting materials in making the Philosophers Stone (in this context 'antimony' is almost certainly in the form of its ore, stibnite, antimony sulphide). It is dissolved in strong vinegar (acetic acid), filtered free from solids and evaporated to give a green gum (Ripley's Green Lyon) which is then heated strongly to produce a distillate "like drops of blood... our blessed Liquor" which is used for further steps in the work. Kelley must have assumed that he had reached the final stages by August as Dee says "I saw the divine water, by the demonstration of the magnificent master and my incomparable friend Mr Ed. Kelly, before midday: in the space of three hours." There is an ambiguous note on the 7th of December when Dee records "Great friendship promised for money and 2oz of the thing i.e. the red alchemical powder" but who is offering who is unknown. Could it be that Dee was desperately trying to obtain some of Kelley's product? Eleven days later he writes "Mr Ed. Kelly gave me the water, [i.e. mercury], all 30 oz. Water, earth and all: 27 water, 3 earth." As we have already seen by this time Dee and Kelley are going their separate ways and Rozmberk is pressing Dee to leave Bohemia. Before he goes Kelley demanded the return of all the materials in Dee's possession: "I delivered to Mr Kelly the powder, the books, the glass and the bone for the L. Rosenberg: and he thereupon gave me discharge in writing of his own hand: subscribed and sealed." It may well have been the case that Kelley was anxious that Dee should not be able to return to England with any of his alchemical materials, possibly because he was not prepared to have them examined too closely.

Although Kelley was ostensibly now in the service of Rozmberk it becomes clear that Rudolph was more than interested in employing Kelley's assumed expertise for himself. Evans cites a letter from the Emperor to Rozmberk, dated October 27th requesting in friendly terms that Kelley be released on a temporary basis to supervise a difficult alchemical work which was in progress and which needed expert assistance. "The most important piece is missing: the Mercurius Solis. Without it, the process cannot be performed. Therefore I recommend that Edward should come here to remedy this shortcoming." Mercurius Solis (described in detail in a paper by R. Werner Soukup in 2010), was a term which had only come into vogue in the early 16th Century and the preparation of this substance, a conglomeration of gold chloride, gold oxide and the colloidal metal, became the goal of all aspiring alchemists. It was described as a heavy, grey powder believed to possess great transmutational properties and accredited with the power to cure all serious illnesses including leprosy and in being more efficacious than ordinary mercury in treating syphilis. Rudolph spent considerable sums of money in the pursuit of this miraculous substance and it

was believed that he had achieved this, keeping the product in a special silver canister covered in red velvet. We will return to this subject below, when we look at some of Kelley's writings on alchemy in which he describes the processes for the preparation of such a material.

The year in which Rudolph wrote the letter is not recorded but may well have been 1588 as Kelley evidently impressed him to such an extent that the following year he was made a citizen of Bohemia and created a knight, claiming descent from the ancient Irish nobility of the Ui Cheallaigh (O'Kelleys). The record is in the Czech archives (Foreign Houses - CHARTER I. 1286-1826- SRA Trebon) dated June 14th 1589 recording the decision of the Landtag and giving his title as Sir Edward Kelley of Imaimy, in the county of Connaught, Ireland. This was confirmed in a letter from Dee to Walsingham, written in August 1589 after his departure, telling him that Kelley was "now in a most favourable manner created a Baron of the kingdom of Bohemia with the grant of a coat of arms." Rozmberk, no doubt keen to retain Kelley, gave him two fiefs with their villages at Liberice and Nova Liben and in addition he is understood to have either been given or to have purchased a small castle, nine villages and two houses at Prague. Kelley had finally realized his wildest dreams. His encouragement of Dee's evangelism, his promotion of Laski's ambitions, the backward and forwarding between Cracow and Prague had all paid off with riches and power of previously unimaginable extent.

It should not be imagined that Kelley was the only alchemist at Prague. Rudolph's widely known obsession with the esoteric acted as a magnet, drawing in not only serious practitioners of the art but also, as Woolley puts it, quoting a contemporary visitor, a host of "charlatans, knaves and blowhards, drawn to the city's gates by the promise of rich pickings and lax regulation." Waite in the preface to his collected works of Edward Kelley says of Prague that "There all men talked of Alchemy, numbers practiced it, half the world credited the marvels concerning it, and supposed processes were more numerous than even the adepts themselves." Both Rozmberk and Rudolph operated a number of laboratories and there is no reason to believe that these were understaffed. It would be wrong to think however that these were devoted only to alchemy. They would have been akin to the research and development sections run by any modern chemical industrial organization and would have employed a similar range of skills. Given their employers' interests these would have included exploring better methods of extracting and purifying metals from their ores and testing the products. Alchemy would not have been seen as being particularly magical but rather the attempt to develop practical methods of synthesis based on contemporary theories of the composition and nature of matter. Adepts who were considered to be skilled in the Art would obviously be

key employees. Both the Emperor and Rozmberk had a vested interest in gold and silver production from their mining operations and if an alternative method of producing these precious metals was going to be developed then they needed to be aware of it and better still it should be done by someone in their own employ.

There are a number of alchemical writings attributed to Edward Kelley, collected together by A. E. Waite and published in 1893. Although some of these can be dated to Kelley's time at Prague others may have been written earlier. In *The Theatre Of Terrestrial Astronomy* he provides an overview of the theory and practice of alchemy. This is accompanied by some rather crude woodcuts, intended to give visual illustration of the alchemical processes, which although given some descriptive accompanying text on the whole are not particularly useful. He undoubtedly drew on earlier material such as the collection of works attributed to Geber (Abu Musa Jabir), the 12th century *Turba Philosophorum*, the works of Sir George Ripley in the 15th century, such as his *Compound Of Alchemy* and the compilation of alchemical works known as the *Rosary Of The Philosophers* (from which Kelley quotes) published in 1550 with a Czech translation being made in 1578 and no doubt in the collection of Rudolph II.

Kelley begins "Many books have been written on the art of Alchemy, which, by the multiplicity of their allegories, riddles, and parables, bewilder and confound all earnest students; and the cause of this confusion is the vast number and variety of names, which all signify and do set forth one and the same thing. For this reason I have resolved in my own mind to loosen and untie all the difficult knots of the ancient Sages" a most worthy endeavour. By way of introduction he says that the Sages all agreed that knowledge of the Art was first revealed to Adam by the Holy Spirit who being told that the world would be purified by water had a summary of the physical arts engraved on stone tables. These were found by Noah after the Flood at the foot of Mount Arrat. (In an alternative version the legendary Hermes Trismegistus found them in the Valley of Hebron). The Art found its way into Persia and Egypt and then into Chaldea from where it evolved into the Jewish Cabbala. He recapitulates the basic theory of nature as set out by Aristotle by which matter is composed of the four elements with their four qualities. Air and Fire, light and active; Earth and Water, heavy and passive. Metals are composed of two underlying principles; the watery, which is Mercury and gives them substance and the earthy, which is Sulphur, giving them their form. The seven planets influence the 'purity' of these two components so as to create the seven metals which are ranked accordingly. Thus gold, the most perfect, is composed of "pure, clear, red Mercury, and of pure, fixed, red, incombustible Sulphur."

Silver is similar but its Mercury is white and so it is "a little wanting in fixation, colour and weight" and so on down the list of metals, tin, lead, copper, iron to the most impure, metallic mercury which is "wanting in fusion, purity and weight, abounding in fixed, impure Sulphur and combustible terrestrity." From all of the metals "a perfect Medicine," (the Salt of Nature or the Ore of the Philosophers) may be made which will transmute the remaining metals into gold and silver. From this can be produced a Mercurial water or acid by means of which the tincture may be obtained. Kelley gives a number of names for this substance including that of the Green Lion. As he rightly remarks, alchemists have always used the same name for different substances and vice versa but the Green Lion is commonly taken to relate to aqua regia, the combination of nitric and hydrochloric acids, which will dissolve gold. The tincture, he reminds us, can only be prepared from gold by extracting its 'soul', the essence which gives the metal its form as gold. "To corrupt the gold, to dissolve and volatilize it while still preserving its form, is our great object." Silver is then to be treated in a similar manner by dissolution, presumably in aqua fortis (nitric acid). The next stage is the 'Alchemical Wedding,' the conjunction or mixing of the masculine extract of gold (hot and dry) and the feminine extract of silver (cold and moist) which is followed by their union, brought about by evaporation to dryness. "The red male must be digested in union with his white wife till both become dry, "producing a black mass, the Raven's Head, signifying putrefaction. This 'death' releases the metallic soul. Kelley describes it as being accompanied by a fetid smell but qualifies this by admitting that "the odour is rather intellectually than sensuously perceptible." Further working (by returning the evaporated liquid to the vessel and distilling it off again a number of times) produces a sequence of colour changes in the substrate: "Flowers of all the colours of a Peacock's tail begin to spring up in the Sage's vessel" until, after a slow and gradual process, a white material is obtained which on cooling becomes at first a hard gum and finally a crystalline stone which will transform other metals into pure silver. Kelley names this as the Virgin's milk, the everlasting water, the water of life and the White Queen "who by increasing the fire becomes the Mighty King, the white transforming into yellow and saffron, and at last into a deep ruby colour" i.e. the Red Stone which will make gold.

In a tract known as *Sir Edward Kelle's Work*, he begins by taking a poke at those who think that alchemy is just stewing up a hodge podge of materials following recipes set out by the likes of Geber (Abu Musa Jabir, the legendary 8th century alleged author of numerous medieval tracts which became the medieval alchemists' text books.

"All you that faine philosophers would be,
And night and day in Geber's kitchen broyle,
Wasting the chipps of ancient Hermes' Tree,
Weening to turn them to a precious oyle,
The more you worke the more you loose and spoile:
To you, I say, how learned soever you be,
Go burne your bookes and come and learne of me."

He goes on to say that he is following on the footsteps of Raymond Lully an acknowledged adept and that the secret must be learned by grace. "Magnesia...wife to purest gold" is to be the starting point, (but like most of the terms used by alchemists this is not necessarily to be taken literally). It is first to be decomposed "by leprosie made pure" before it can be processed. He then deals with the dual principal of masculine and feminine, central to most alchemical works, from whose conjunction is produced the Philosopher's Stone. These he defines as Sulphur and Mercury "but not the common certainly: But Mercury essentiall is trewly the trew wife, that kills her selfe to bring the child to life." He equates the working together of the two principles with baking bread "Call Mercury water, imagine sulphur meale.....Bake them by craft, make them together dwell." Then "in the aire our child is born" which is to say as the product of distillation. "For after death reviv'd again to lyfe, This all in all, both husband, child and wife." The result is the "True Mercury" not the common material. Again Kelley quotes from Ripley for the final stage in the process. The material "Which will be gummous, crumbling, silken, soft" must be ground with Mercury until the colour changes from black to white and "soft as starch." This is the white stone which is to be used with silver. Further processing (not revealed here by Kelley) will produce the red stone which is for use with gold. He concludes:

"And thus our greate secret I have reveled,
Which divers have seene, and Myself have wrought,
And dearly I prize it, yet give it for nought."

Interesting as all this is it doesn't really give an insight into whether or not Kelley had actually made any progress with his alchemy as it is only a summary of extant alchemical works which he no doubt had as a reference. It is followed by a short tract entitled *Sir Ed. Kelley Concerning The Philosopher's Stone, Written to his especiall good freind [sic], G. S.*

Gent. couched in extremely vague and abstruse references which reveals nothing of any insight Kelley might have had into practical alchemy and would have left G. S. (whoever he was) somewhat bewildered.

In a letter dated 20th of June 1587 Kelley tells the recipient that "As you are willing to take my advice, I will partially reveal to you the Arcanum." The gold and silver of alchemy, he explains, are not those which can be held in the hand, "but a certain silver and golden hermaphroditic water." Extraction of this from any "perfect or imperfect metallic body" will give "The Water of Life, the Asafoetida and Green Lion, in which are all colours, ending in two – white and red." He then adds that the actual starting material, the earth, is not important as long as it is fixed, i.e. reduced by chemical action, producing an "indestructible metallic water." If this is produced from gold then it will result in the white stone "but it is foolish to do by much what you can do by little" a strong indication of Kelley's personal philosophy. There is a second letter of the 9th of August the same year in which he explains that the Stone is Mercury which, after suitable treatment, has been given 'life.' It is a viscous water, extracted from Jupiter (i.e. lead), which is moist and wets the finger. If "the body of the Sun" (gold) is added it will dissolve into "an exceedingly limpid mineral water...This compound is living Mercury, from which alone spring all colours...[it] does not moisten the finger but is viscous and living." While it is true that gold will react with mercury to form an amalgam it is difficult to see how anything could be derived from lead which would have the same effect. In a further letter of November 15th 1589 he sums up his instruction as "Mix water with water, digest with a vaporous cloud, and you will not easily make a mistake."

Beside these fragments Kelley produced a number of more substantial works. His *Humid Path or Discourse On The Vegetable Menstruum Of Saturn* is an exercise in self-promotion in which he sets out to demonstrate that he has a depth of arcane knowledge which sets him above those alchemists who only have a basic understanding of nature and simply follow the recipes of others. Philosophers, he says, have long sought to understand the underlying essence in which "all the forces and virtue of Nature meet." If the elemental composition of this were understood, then its elements could be separated, purified and recombined to produce a body free from impurities and imperfection. This essence, the alchemical 'mercury', is contained in all matter, vegetable, animal and mineral. Extraction from the first two is difficult, but not so from the third. He begins by describing the nature of the physical world, based on the ideas of Aristotle, developed through the writings attributed to Geber and recently enhanced by Paracelsus and which would have been the common view accepted by his contemporaries. All matter is composed of four elements; fire and water

which are active and earth and air which are passive. The "arrangements and proportionate mixture" of these "constitutes the differences between one species and another." Moreover, these elements have inherent properties, fire, heat and dryness; water, moisture and coldness; earth, dryness and coldness and air, heat and moisture. The balance between these two properties varies for each element. Earth and water being visible and tangible give a body its substance; Fire and air are invisible and intangible and contribute to its nature. The elements can only combine with each other by means of the properties they have in common. Kelley then introduces the concept of the triumvirate of Mercury, Sulphur and Salt which had been proposed by Paracelsus (Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim, 1493 –1541) and his followers. Paracelsus accepted the notion of the four elements, but developed the idea that, on another level, the cosmos is fashioned from three spiritual substances: Mercury, Sulphur and Salt, broad principles that gave every object both its inner essence and outward form. Kelley provides an explanation of this. Fire and Water combine with Earth by means of their dryness and coldness and with Air by means of their heat and moisture. For example a substance in which the element of Earth is predominantly dry will merge with Fire, which being intangible will be invisible at its center, whereas Water, being driven nearer to its surface, will be more evident. In this case the substance will be watery (fluid), cold and dry. This then describes common mercury (quicksilver) but also represents the spiritual essence of Mercury in other bodies with the same sort of elemental composition. Physical processes can upset the balance of the elements. The application of heat for instance will allow Fire to outweigh Water and start to interact with the surrounding element of Air with which it has the property of heat in common. The combination will subdue the Air's humidity and "impress upon it a new form of excessive dryness. The preponderance of fire will cause the colour of that element to tinge the whole substance, and thus we have that which is commonly called sulphur" (or the essence of Sulphur). If on the other hand the element of Water preponderates then it will combine with the humidity of the Air and the effect will be "a coldness which will result in the substrate becoming of an icy whiteness which is called salt," i.e. the essence of Salt. In summary, "These three (Mercury, Sulphur, Salt) are necessarily the first substances of all minerals and every mineral must be generated from one, two, or all of them" (the three terms relating to alchemical principles, and not physical substances). Kelley then goes on to provide an example which unfortunately illustrates the great problem the alchemists had in being unaware of the reality of chemical composition. The element of Fire within a body will throw out rays from the center and penetrate the whole body with its sulphureous nature. If common mercury is heated then the

"innate fire, being drawn towards the circumference, changes in a few weeks that mercurial crudity into red sparkling sulphur." The observation is correct but the product is mercuric oxide produced by chemical reaction with air and not by the separation of an alchemical principle. The colour of substances was associated with the balance of the elements within them. Blackness with Earth, whiteness with Water. Air has no proper colour but is tinged by heat to give shades of lilac and yellow, while naturally Fire is associated with redness. Thus the importance of monitoring the progress of the alchemical processes by physical observation of the on-going form and colour changes.

Kelley then goes on to demonstrate why his grasp of alchemical principles is far above the average practitioner by addressing the question as to what governs the balance of the elements. The adept must "know the conformation of all metals and the heavenly influences by which all earthly things are generated, made and disposed." The secret is that "The Mercury must be fixed by means of its own inherent Sulphur, acted on by external heat." For metals this 'heat' is provided by the heavenly bodies which govern the degree of the element of fire within them, thus the use of the alchemical symbols to represent both the metal and its associated planetary influence, Saturn with lead, Jupiter with tin, the Sun with gold and the Moon with silver, etc. Subjecting a metal to the influence of a different planet will produce a corresponding change. Moreover the position of the planet within the Zodiac will alter its effect. Saturn for instance in Aquarius is cold and dry, in Capricorn, hot and dry. Kelley develops this argument into a theory of considerable complexity deriving concepts of "longitude, latitude and depth" according to the balance of the elemental properties inherent in each of the planets. To understand silver for instance the worker must know "the influence of the Moon in producing its form, the sphere in which it revolves, the rate of its velocity, the causes of its numerous apparent irregularities, of its shifting position with regard to the Sun and the Earth, of the eclipses and so on." Gold "is begoten of a single parent, the Sun...hot and moist, cold and dry, evenly tempered throughout...no gold is generated suddenly in its ore, but out of its own seed and first principle, which we call fire, acting on Mercury in every part...this elemental fire, this first substance exists in all inferior metals, though in different degrees of development. Hence all these inferior metals in their inner being are potentially gold...[and can] be brought to the perfection and excellence of gold, if the heavenly rays...can be brought to bear on them." Mercury, being the lowest of the celestial spheres cannot affect the others, "Saturn, on the other hand, includes within its circle the spheres of all the rest: by its virtue lead is produced, and it also has caused the metallic water to contain within it all

essential properties. For not only can the Stone be prepared from lead, as we have shewn, but lead itself may become the Stone. Its water will be a menstruum [solvent] to all the rest."

Kelley concludes by discussing the means of preparing a menstruum by solution. Solution he says "is the action of any body, which, by certain laws of innate sympathy, assimilates anything of a lower class to its own essence. But among metals there is no form more vigorous or powerful than that of Saturn, and therefore the solvent of Saturn must be sought in the vegetable world." Unfortunately there is no further explanation for this assertion. Lead he says is the least mature of the metals, maturity is associated with sweetness and thus immaturity with sourness, therefore the required menstruum or solvent will be a sour, vegetable water. It would seem a reasonable guess that by this Kelley means acetic acid (produced by fermentation and concentrated by distillation) which will react with lead oxide to produce a solution of lead acetate. He somewhat confuses things however by going on to cite two other solvents having the characteristics of gold and silver which can dissolve these metals, the greater menstruum for gold (aqua regia, nitric and hydrochloric acids) and "The menstruum of Saturn they call the smaller, because it has no power over gold" which would suggest he was describing aqua fortis, nitric acid, which will also dissolve lead.

As a finale Kelley says he will describe "the method of reducing metals to a more remote substance, viz., quicksilver." He then sets out by way of illustration an astrological explanation that any intending student would have been hard put to follow. "Take Venus, or copper, the subject on which you desire to operate, and remember that you are trying to render visible a part which in its very nature is close to the centre. Ask under what sign of the horoscope Venus rises, and you will find that it is under the sign of Taurus in the fifteenth degree, at a right angle to the rising Sun; turn your eyes to the west, and you will see the Scorpion in the same degree, before which is the surface of Mars, naturally cold and dry, directed toward the earth. Note these things down. In the third point of the sky and in the tenth house, you will find the Lion. Now the Lion is the animal of the Sun, which you need under the given angles as an intermediate substance. Follow the guidance, and imitate these heavenly relations in your terrestrial astronomy, i.e. take the menstrual water of gold, purify twice or thrice from the earth, or the calx of iron, pour drop by drop on the body of Venus, which has first been melted, and it will in a few moments become liquid Mercury, as our Art requires. Take the water of lead stiffened with the earth of iron (Mars), to dissolve the Sun, and so with the rest. Moreover, the Sun according to this rule, while the Lion ascends will be opposite Saturn in Aquarius, whose surface imitates the nature of water; in their middle, as it

were, or in the middle of Heaven, will be the Tabernacle and House of Mars. In this way every mineral is reduced to the nature of its second component part." He concludes with a rather whimsical paragraph, perhaps intended to convince his readers that he was sufficiently gifted as to have been able to complete the manuscript in a single day. "But do not say too much, Kelley; for already smoke ascends in the distance from the roofs of the houses, and the shadows of the hills begin to lengthen."

He follows this by giving some rather more specific examples. In *An Easy Way Of Making The Tincture* he begins by dissolving gold in aqua regia (mixed nitric and hydrochloric acids) and distilling off the excess nitric acid to give a complex solution of gold chloride. Spirit of Saturn (possibly a solution of lead acetate) is then added and more volatile material distilled out. Hereafter the instructions are far from clear but appear to involve heating the residual material with mercury for five or six weeks which would produce an amalgam of gold with mercury, gold and lead chlorides which Kelley describes as a snow white powder. Heating this in a furnace in a 'pelican,' a vessel constructed so as to condense and return distilling material back into itself, produces first a yellow and then a black powder. Whether it was intended that this should then be subject to further processing or was to be used for transmutation is not revealed.

In a longer tract entitled *A Way Of Making Potable Gold* he defines potable gold as either the Elixir, the stone liquefied into oil, or as the calx of gold with the red oil of Saturn. In essence it is gold in solution or suspension. Reaction of gold chloride (strictly chloroauric acid as produced by the action of aqua regia) with a suitable reducing agent will produce a deep red or purple suspension of colloidal gold and this may explain many of the observations made by the alchemists. He begins by concentrating oil of lead until he obtains crystals of lead acetate and acetic acid which is distilled off. This is added to a preparation made by amalgamating gold with mercury and evaporating out the mercury to give finely divided gold mixed with "calx of gold" which may mean the gold powder obtained by heating gold chloride obtained from dissolving gold in aqua regia. The mixture is digested for twelve days and then evaporated to dryness and calcined. The resulting gum, a mixture of impure gold, mercury, lead and their chlorides, according to Kelley is "potable and no longer reducible into a body." He then takes his 'purified' gold and says it is dissolved in distilled vinegar for three days. Gold is not soluble in acetic acid so by this he may mean that soluble material is separated from the gold by dissolution as the next stage is to filter off the liquid and evaporate it to give a gum which is then heated until a white vapour is seen. This is condensed into water and the product distilled to produce a flammable liquid, presumably

concentrated acetic acid. The residue left behind in the distillation vessel is "the oil of Mercury, in which the Sun can be dissolved.....This is the preparation of the true mercurial water, or the female." It is difficult to see that this is other than an impure mixture of the decomposition products of lead and mercury acetates. If this contained sufficient metallic mercury it is possible that it could form an amalgam with gold, i.e. an apparent dissolution.

The next stage is the preparation of the male component. "Transfer the pure, unmixed body of gold into Mercury." This is done as follows: "Take menstruum of Saturn and add calcined Jupiter in an iron spoon: strain, reduce to powder and dissolve with the menstruum of Saturn; rectify once and again and add thin crocus (sulphur) of Mars." The interpretation of this is of lead acetate solution mixed with tin oxide, evaporated to dryness, more lead acetate solution added, evaporated and iron sulphide added. This is melted to give a reddish liquid which is distilled off and concentrated, being presumably acetic acid coloured with volatile sulphur products. The residue, identified by Kelley as "black earth of lead" is strongly heated until it becomes yellow (iron, lead and tin oxides) and the concentrated distillate from the previous stage added, giving the metal acetates, and then distilled off again. Finely pulverised gold is added and the mixture heated to produce "Mercury," the alchemical substance rather than the common variety. This is heated on a sand bath for forty days then combined with the female product made earlier in an oval vessel (the alchemical womb) and warmed for a further forty days. Its colour will pass through all the shades required to produce the Stone, black, white, yellow and finally a deep red. The result can be multiplied by mixing it with gold and digesting with oil of Saturn. This can then be used for further multiplications but will gradually lose its effectiveness.

Kelley then goes on to describe *The Secret Of The Four Waters Of Perfection*. He begins with a mixture of vitriol (sulphuric acid), Alum (iron and potassium aluminium sulphates), saltpetre (potassium nitrate) and aqua fortis (nitric acid). This, he says, will dissolve silver, calcine mercury and blacken the skin. The second water is prepared from this by adding "salt armoniac", (ammonium chloride), thus forming aqua regia contaminated with sulphuric acid and metal sulphates, which will dissolve gold and mercury, stain the skin orange and "sublimes sulphur." Addition of mercury to this brew and heating with hot ashes gives the third water which will give copper the colour of silver, presumably by imparting a surface amalgam of the mercury, and "reduces all metals to their first matter." Kelley claims that this water will burn with "a white and fetid flame, against which you must be on your guard." It is possible that under reducing conditions hydrogen sulphide may have been generated which is flammable and poisonous at very low concentrations. Addition of yet

more mercury and warming in horse dung for a fortnight produces a "blue and yellowish" colour. Distillation over a gentle fire results in the "virgin's milk." This "reduces all calcined and pulverised bodies to the first matter and is called the clear and living water...it is sharp, strong and bitter; if one drop falls on copper it perforates it, and it forms white crystals. If any metallic filings are calcined, pounded with salt, covered with oil of tartar (aqueous potassium tartrate), heated for eight days, the solids dried, added to this fourth water and heated the powder "melts into mercury." Given the amount of this substance worked up in the preparations this is perhaps not unexpected. Washing with hot salt solution and filtering through a cloth will produce "our magesterial, corporeal Mercury of signal perfection." This can then be multiplied by the addition of more metal filings.

As word of Kelley's alchemical prowess spread so to did William Cecil's interest in him. If he could indeed produce cheap gold, then he should be doing it at home to the benefit of Elizabeth's coffers, depleted by rising inflation and the never-ending costs of fending off Spanish aggression. He had continued to keep up-to-date with the activities of Dee and Kelley through his many contacts and through letters. On the other hand it is difficult to determine just how much communication Kelley maintained with England after he and Dee left there in 1583. It is probable that he talked to visiting merchants and fellow travelers and there was obviously the opportunity to pursue contact through the likes of the Garland brothers and Edward Dyer. Presumably Walsingham also made use of his network of informants to report on what was happening in Prague. The first evidence we have for a direct contact between him and Kelley arose out of a strange encounter between Kelley and a Christopher Parkins. Parkins (or Perkins) had joined the Jesuits in 1565 and was ordained in 1575 but on account of his troublesome behaviour had been dismissed from the Society in 1581 although apparently not abandoning either his priesthood or his allegiance to the Church of Rome. Towards the end of June 1589, Kelley was visited at Trebon by two Englishmen, Robert Tatton and George Leicester. While they were with him he told them a strange story about a meeting he had had with Parkins, who had arrived in Prague from Rome and at a meeting with Kelley in an inn had secretly told him of a plot by the Pope to murder Queen Elizabeth, listing no less than seven possible methods by which this could be achieved. The intention was for Parkins to travel to Danzig, disguise himself as a merchant and make his way to England. Kelley told his visitors that when he reported this to Lord Rozmberk he was told that Parkins was "the right hand, or chief man to the king of Spain and the Pope, in all their treacherous enterprises against England." Rozmberk had then shown Kelley a letter, written from the Dutch authorities, asking Rudolph, (as Holy Roman Emperor) to intercede

between them and Spain and to provide some help in getting rid of the English forces there, in return for which a substantial sum in gold was being offered. Tatton and Leicester set this story out in a letter to Cecil, claiming Dee's servant Edmund Hilton as a witness. Dee himself noted (somewhat ambiguously) in his diary on the 5th of August that "Edmund Hilton went toward Stade, to go toward England, with my letters to disclose the treason of Parkins. There were in his company two English travellers, Mr Robert Tatton and George Leister."

Presumably Dee had learnt of the incident from his visitors as this was after he had parted company with Kelly in February. By September Parkins had made his way to England, seemingly a strange thing, for a Jesuit priest and self-confessed regicide, to choose to do at a time just a few years after the ill-fated Babington plot to depose Elizabeth, when Catholic agents were being hunted down, tortured and often met an extremely unpleasant end. In fact Parkins had been able to use his influence when Lord Burghley's grandson got himself into trouble with the Inquisition in Rome in 1585 and it would seem that through this he had become an informant for Sir Francis Walsingham. It is possible that his trawling of assassination plots in Prague had been a rather clumsy initiative on his own part to winkle out genuine Catholic infiltrators and the innocent Kelley had been drawn into his net. Certainly Kelley's newfound association with the Jesuits would have been noted by Walsingham. On his arrival Parkins was taken into custody. Walsingham then sent a letter to Kelley trying to get at the truth of the matter as Parkins wrote to Walsingham in May 1590 saying that he hoped that if Kelley would "deal sincerely" with him all would be well. "But if he be an evil meaning man as common fame reporteth, what conjuring will be sufficient to make him deal sincerely; specially if he follow the counsel of his friends and ghostly fathers the Jesuits" and producing in his defence a letter from Sigismund III, king of Poland.

Walsingham in turn replied that without clear evidence from Kelley, he did not doubt that Parkins was armed with "the innocence of a clear conscience." Some light may be thrown on Parkins' relationship with Walsingham when it evolves that by 9th May he had been exonerated, presumably had recanted his Catholic beliefs and been taken into the employ of the English government, serving on numerous diplomatic missions throughout the early 1590s, acting as special ambassador to Poland, Denmark, and the Hanseatic cities and going on to a distinguished career, being admitted a member of Gray's Inn, elected as MP for Ripon and knighted by James I.

On October 1st 1589 Edward Dyer was sent to try to persuade Kelley to return. Dee, now back at home, noted that Dyer was back in England by March 14th 1590. Dyer brought with him a letter from an English merchant, William Fowler, who reported that on March 7th

he had been entertained by Kelley in Prague who told him he was intending to return and gave him a present to take back to Cecil "a box with the ore and order of the silver mines...with this letter here enclosed." Kelley, he said was "a good subject and to be accounted of." Burghley in his reply (undated) to Kelley's letter started by saying that while he liked the sentiments expressed he would much prefer to be able to meet him face to face. Although Kelley expressed a desire to return to his native country "and your mind draweth you towards your gracious sovereign" it was noted that he had not come back with Dyer and as a result there were rumours circulating that he was unwilling to return for a number of reasons: he was allowing himself to be enticed by England's enemies; because he was a Catholic; that his claims were false and he was an imposter "as many heretofore, both here and in other countries, have been proved." Burghley reassured him however that because of the good reports he had from Dyer he didn't believe any of this. He has been expressly commanded by the Queen to confirm that, as in her previous letters, should Kelley return, he would be "singularly favoured....to the comfort of yourself and all yours" and he urged him to come back to England. He ended by thanking him for the "mountain or rock that you sent" which he had placed in his house with his other objects of rare workmanship. This is assumed to refer to a working model of a mine or something similar. His final line of "wishing I might enjoy some small receipt from you, that might comfort my spirit in mine age, rather than my coffers with any wealth: for I esteem health above wealth" is possibly no more than asking that Kelley would give him a more positive assurance of wanting to return or may be construed as an invitation to send him some product of his alchemical experiments as proof of his accomplishments..

At much the same time, Cecil, in writing to Sir Horatio Palavincino on government business on March 8th, attempted to learn more of what Kelley was up to, ending his letter "I pray you learn what you can, how Sir Edwd. Kelly's profession may be credited." Sir Horatio was an Italian scion of a family which had amassed a fortune speculating in the alum market, an essential ingredient in the cloth dyeing trade, an involvement which brought him into the sphere of England's entanglement with the Netherlands. An anglophile, his contacts among the international merchant community made him an invaluable source of intelligence to the English government, an arrangement which was reinforced when he was condemned by the Inquisition *in absentia* and his goods seized. An intimate of both Cecil and Walsingham, he was granted residency and knighted by the Queen in 1589. In March 1590 he was attempting to negotiate with the German princes in their conflict with France.

Kelley wrote back to Cecil on the 24th of July 1590 refuting the allegations that Burghley had suggested were being made against him. He was not being 'enticed' merely rewarded for his services and he would not be so weak as to provide any help to the enemies of his Queen or country for towards these he had a "true and sincere love, duty and obedience." As for those who found fault with his religion "If they be such as love God themselves, care for honesty, hate pride and covetousness and the filthy sin of lechery.....then I am of them." Regarding anyone who reports him as an imposter "I will not be abashed to say he is a knave and that he lies in his throat and will maintain it with my sword upon his carcase wheresoever I can." He goes on to explain (perhaps with some exaggeration) his situation in Bohemia. He owns land with an income of £1500 yearly, he has an expectation of being offered a place on the Privy Council "not yet sworn for the love I bear unto my sacred Queen and country" and he is chief regent "in and over all the lands and affairs of the Prince Rozmberk." His honour as a knight would not allow him to "easily or honestly depart, much less so steal away." He then makes his position clear. If Elizabeth will guarantee him the equivalent in lands, income and honours then he would be prepared to take his leave of Rudolph and Bohemia and return home. He would also require that "the injuries done against me heretofore" should be redressed, although whether this refers to problems with the authorities before leaving England or to subsequent allegations is unclear.

In a further letter to Burghley, dated the 10th of August 1590, presumably as a follow up to another attempt by Cecil to persuade him, Kelley spells out his position without mincing words. "I am not so mad to run away from my present honour and lands to shove for a new....to deal plainly I find myself well at ease. And can well content myself with my present state and will not remove but upon greater reasons than I yet find." At about the same time Burghley received a response from Palavincino who somehow in his attempts to obtain information on Kelley had attracted the attention of the still malicious Francesco Pucci. He forwarded a long letter, sent to him from Prague, in which Pucci relates (probably with a fair degree of veracity) how he had parted from Kelley who was "ever more inconstant in matters of religion and piety....long in promises and words but short in deeds, finding him over long months and years vain and intolerably haughty." He returns to their old quarrel, claiming that Kelley owed him money and relates a dispute that had arisen between him and a Count Scotto, an Italian alchemist who had just arrived in Prague. It has been suggested that at some point Scotto discovered that Kelley's ears had been cropped and used this to cast aspersions on Kelley's character, as a result of which Kelley had offered to meet him in a duel "with weapon in hand" something which Pucci thought was likely to end in bloodshed.

Having failed to persuade Kelley to return, Cecil sent the long suffering Dyer back to Prague to try at least to obtain a sample of the famed alchemical tincture, a quest in which he was unsuccessful. He reported back on October 31st "I used all my best means to have gotten some medicine to have satisfied her Majesty by her own blissful sight: but Sir Ed. feared to consent thereto, lest the report thereof being blown over, it might be an occasion to kindle jealousy here, whereof he being now of the Emperor's privy council, he has more regard than in times past." At the same time Kelley sent Cecil a letter in which he said that although he was glad that the Queen had seen and was pleased with his letters he was unable to "make some demonstration in the principal point.....of my science" because the requests to do so and the offers of reward came not from her but from Burghley and until such time as Elizabeth herself made the situation clear "I thought it fit to take a pause....being settled and contented already with sufficient reputation and living."

Edward Dyer was again in Prague in November where he found Kelley so entangled in Rudolph's court that it was impossible for him to leave. Ever resourceful he hit upon a plan; he persuaded Kelley to let him stay with him and practice alchemy together, thus hoping to learn the secret of preparing the tincture. This must have been a difficult thing for Kelley to accede to for it exposed him to a closer inspection of his activities than he would have wished. They did in fact work together, at least as far as the first stages of the process, as evidenced by a letter that Kelley wrote to Dyer some time afterwards, in September 1595, saying "what delight we took together, when from the metals simply calcined into powder after the usual manner, distilling the liquor so prepared with the same we converted appropriate bodies (as our astronomy inferior teaches) into mercury their first matter." Although refusing to return it would seem that Kelley tried to maintain a good relationship with Cecil, writing to him on the 18th of February "I had forgotton to let you understand in my last letter that I would shortly send you that some good thing you desired for your health." Burghley responded the following month thanking Kelley for his "good, kind letter sent to me by our countryman, Mr Royden: who maketh such good report of you (as doth every other man that hath had a conversation with you, (as that I am comforted to hear their reports" but regrets that "none of them can give me any good assurance of your return hither." He tells Kelley that he has written to Dyer in some detail and will leave matters in his hands "wishing such success without further delay." He then asks for something "to strengthen me afore the next winter against my old enemy the gout" which he explains is made worse by a poor digestion although the main cause is "oppression of affairs, and lack of liberty" for which no medicinal cure can be found. He would therefore "be glad to make much of any receipt you

shall send me, with your assurance that it shall do me no harm and so I pray God to direct you to bestow your gifts...upon your own prince and country, than upon strangers." A rather unsubtle suggestion that Kelley should send him some example of his alchemical expertise for evaluation while acknowledging that Kelley is constrained in what he is able to do.

Wilding identifies Mathew Roydon the letter carrier as being a member of the Sidney circle, a friend of Christopher Marlowe the playwright and probably part of the shadowy network of spies and informers operated by Burghley and Walsingham.

Strype has included a copy of Cecil's letter to Dyer in his *Annals*. He confirms that he has received two letters from him in which he continues to hold a good opinion of Kelley who "for his perfect love towards her majesty you think there cannot be found better in any man." He is now confident of Dyer being able to persuade Kelley to change his mind and "without all scruples to return to his native country; to honour her majesty, as a loyal natural subject, with the fruits of such great knowledge as God hath given him. And thereby to yield her some aid to withstand her enemies." Kelley ought not to be dissuaded by "evil speeches here, or of disgraces uttered against him, yea, or of mortal threatnings, as you write, that come hither every fortnight" but return and enjoy the honours that the Queen would reward him with. Dyer should assure Kelley, that contrary to rumours which he might have heard, the Lord Chancellor, Sir Christopher Hatton, had not been blackening his character and trying to set the Queen against him. While others might disbelieve Kelley's claims, believing that the transmutation of metals into gold was impossible and that those who alleged that they had seen it were deceived, all he had to do was return and demonstrate the "fruits of his knowledge" to confound them. If Dyer cannot persuade him to come back to England "then one of these two things, according to my present opinion, which I have, must needs follow; either that I must certainly think that he cannot perform that which you conceive of him, but that by some cunning, or, as they say, legerdemain, both you and all others have been deceivedor else I must in my heart (which I would be most loth to do) condemn him, as an unnatural born man to his country, and a very disloyal subject to a most vertuous godly lady, his sovereign." He ends by telling Dyer that if Kelley won't come back then he should "for maintenance of your credit, procure some small, tho' very small portion of the powder, to make a demonstration, in her majesty's own sight, of the perfection of his knowledge. I wish he would, in some secret box, send to her majesty for a token some such portion, as might be to her a sum reasonable to defer her charges for this summer for her navy, which we are now preparing to the sea, to withstand the strong navy of Spain, discovered upon the

coasts between Britain and Cornwall within these two days." The Armada might have been defeated but Spain remained an ever constant threat and drain on England's finances.

Just when everything seemed to be going so well for Sir Edward Kelley disaster struck. The news of his arrest on the 30th of April 1591, by order of the Emperor, is recorded by Strype in a letter from an English merchant (identified by Wilding as Henry Wotton) to his brother Edward. On a visit to the Leipzig market Wotton had arrived in Prague where he found many Englishmen to be present. Learning that Dyer was lodging at Kelley's house he had proposed to call to see him but his plans were disrupted when he learnt that Rudolph had ordered Kelley's detention. In view of Kelley's status as a councillor the guard were reinforced by the captain and lieutenant of the castle, the provost of the town and the secretary of state of Bohemia. Their mission proved to have been in vain, a friend at court had tipped Kelley off and the bird had flown the night before without even his own family knowing of his disappearance. In his absence his servants were bound and paraded through the town on their way to prison. His brother Thomas was also seized and it was rumoured tortured and the house sealed up. Dyer and his servant were placed under house arrest. Rudolph was less than pleased to learn of the escape, "cursed in the Dutch manner," gave orders for the highways and the town to be searched and sent word to Lord Rozmberk that if Kelley made his way there he was to be handed over "upon his allegiance to the crown of Bohemia." To curse 'like a Dutchman' was to wish for the offender to suffer by catching an unpleasant disease, - something along the lines of "I hope you get the pox and die in agony" – a practice which is still in common usage in the Netherlands.

Not un-naturally rumour commenced to fly thick and fast. The Emperor's reaction was taken to imply that the crime was a serious one and possibly involved Rudolph directly as the attempted arrest had come so quickly without any sort of warning. There was speculation that Kelley was heavily in debt, owing some 32 thousand dollars to some jewel merchants although Wotton doubted this given the wealth and lands which Kelley was thought to possess and that no court proceedings had been put in place to recover any money owing. Kelley's rise to fame had obviously created many enemies, both at court and in the alchemical fraternity and it is possible that he had fallen foul of a quarrel between Rozmberk and his enemies. There were suggestions that Kelley had finally been revealed as an imposter. He had been extracting gold from ore using mercury and pretending that it had been obtained by alchemy and embezzling the gold supplied to him for his alchemical experiments. It was said that the Duke of Bavaria had told Rudolph that Bragadini, a fraudulent alchemist who had just been executed, had confessed to being in league with Kelley.

Marco Bragadini had been born in Cyprus in c.1545 but had fled with his family to Venice after the invasion of the island by the Ottoman Empire. While there he had learned the secrets of alchemy and the tricks of pretending to make gold. He embarked on a career as a confidence trickster, depriving the Grand Duchess Bianca Cappello in Florence of 40,000 scudi by falsely promising to heal her infertility with the Philosopher's Stone. He subsequently became a monk in a Capuchin monastery at Rome but returned to a secular life, and is rumoured to have visited England and France. Returning to Italy the renegade monk fell foul of the Inquisition. To protect himself, Bragadini made numerous influential friends with his claims for making gold by alchemy. The most prominent of these was the Duke of Mantua who paid 25,000 scudi to him. In November 1589 the Republic of Venice invited its former citizen back as an official guest hoping to profit from his abilities. Unable to make good his claims he was forced to flee once more and headed to Padua, arriving in August 1590 where he gained the trust of William V, Duke of Bavaria by promising not only to make copious amounts of gold to erase the Duke's debts, but also by offering to cure the Duke's severe headache. He failed on both accounts and this time suffered the consequences, having his head hacked off by an incompetent executioner on the 26th of April 1591 in Munich's public square.

Another rumour regarding Kelley's downfall was that as a result of their enmity the Italian alchemist Scotto had denounced him to Rudolph and when the Emperor had called him on several occasions to come to court to demonstrate his ability Kelley had declined, pleading illness. Others said that he had been asked to prepare medicine for Rudolph who "long had a throbbing of the heart" and this had been shown to have been a poison. Both Rudolph and Rozmberk indulged in alchemy themselves, employed alchemists in their laboratories and would have been well aware of the time scale and uncertainty of the search for the Philosopher's Stone. It is unlikely that it would have taken them very long to spot an imposter or for fraudulent practice not to have been identified by other fellow employees. Kelley would not just have been engaged to produce the Elixir but to carry out the equivalent of modern day research and development for their mining activities and other chemical activities. Of all the reasons, the most likely is that Rudolph had finally had enough of Burghley's never ending attempts to lure Kelley back to England. Possibly Kelley himself had been bragging about his offers from Elizabeth and perhaps rashly had shown Cecil's letters to others. As already described Rudolph was known to have had a quick temper and to act impetuously and any of the malicious accusations made by Kelley's enemies may have been the trigger point at which he determined to tackle his alchemist's hubris head on.

Kelley was tracked down to the town of Sobislav, some twelve miles from Prague and owned by the Rozmberk family. Kelley resisted arrest, pulling rank as a councillor on the officer trying to detain him, denied that he had run away and offered the excuse that he was on his way to see Lord Rozmberk as was his right. A courier was sent back to Prague for instructions and in short shrift Kelley was taken back to Purglitz castle. Meanwhile Dyer had been summoned to the castle. Wotton relates that "at his return from the court, where he made his answers before the counsellors, was not fully free, as far as I could hear." The Emperor's intentions in the matter were unknown. Wotton doubted that there would be a public execution because Rozmberk would object and Rudolph depended too heavily on him for his personal security. It was however possible that "Secretly in the castle it might be done, and the Earl not know otherwise than he liveth, or is dead by disease: almost grown now to be a common practise in the empire, and in the palatine especially noted that way." Wotton concluded his letter by expressing his relief that he had not been drawn into the affair: "for my part, I had rather be quiet and still."

It is illustrative of the extent of Kelley's fame that news of his arrest spread far beyond Bohemia. William Cecil received a steady flow of letters reporting fact and rumour. Matthew Greensmith, writing in early June thought that he had already been hung and left hanging in a gilded chain. Thomas Page, writing the next month, suggested that Kelley had been caught up in a scam by a Portuguese who had sold him some cups supposed to have been made of agate which proved to be no more than polished horn. When Kelley refused to pay the merchant complained to the Emperor, supported by the Spanish ambassador and the Papal legate. Rudolph had only been intending to summon him to court to answer these charges, but Kelly had panicked.

The Fuggers had also been taking an interest in Kelley's affairs. They were a German family of international mercantile bankers and venture capitalists controlling much of the European economy who by the 16th century had accumulated enormous wealth. The production and trade in gold was of particular interest and like others they kept a close eye on the implications of alchemy. They too had their own informants who painted a grim picture of Kelley's imprisonment. He was in the depths of despair, refusing food, imprisoned in an airless cell with only a small opening. His wife and servants were still under house arrest. Through their banking affairs the Fuggers were able to access private financial arrangements and estimated that Kelley had cost Rozmberk over 300,000 florins and Rudolph nearly 1000 Rhenish guilders.

Meanwhile attempts were being made to extricate Dyer. One of Burghley's couriers, a minor courtier, Thomas Webbe (or Webb) was sent to Bohemia with letters from Elizabeth to Rudolph, the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse in an attempt to secure his release and to discover Kelley's fate. He reported back on June 26th but could add little to the stories already in circulation. Scotto had been involved but now had fled. Kelley had been accused of debt or trying to poison Rudolph. That he had persistently pleaded illness when summoned to the court. Rozmberk was now saying that Kelley had not fled but had been on his way to keep an appointment with him. Kelley's lands and goods had been seized but on Rozmberk's intervention had been restored. Webb had not been able to contact Dyer who had been questioned at length but understood that he had managed to answer his accusers and was now being treated more favourably although was still not entirely free of restraint. Webb's intervention was successful and he returned with Dyer in July 1591.

Campbell relates that Cecil's agents, determined to learn something of Kelley's abilities, searched for others who may have been in contact with him. An Englishman, Thomas Page, recently returned from Prague with alchemical equipment was hauled in and interrogated. He assured Burghley that he had nothing of any interest, only "mercury the lyke wherof every shop doth afford" and that his business with Kelley had been to try to involve him in financing an attempt at a north-east passage to China, perhaps in the hope that he had retained some of Dee's navigational materials. However his admission that he had been at Kelley's house at the time of the arrest and that his precipitous flight back to England had been "wythe as much speed as I coulde to comfort Kelley's mother in England" inevitably raised the suspicion that he had been more of an acquaintance of Kelley's than he was suggesting.

Whatever Kelley's transgressions, Rudolph showed no signs of having relented and he remained a prisoner. To add to his troubles Lord Rozmberk died at some point in 1592 leaving him without a protector. Back in England, in the same year, Lord Burghley, now aged 73 had suffered a stroke and his role had been taken over by his son Sir Robert Cecil who had little interest in alchemy or, for that matter, in Edward Kelley. Christopher Parkins, now in the employ of the English diplomatic service reported in July 1593 that opinion regarding Kelley was still divided. Some thought that he had never made gold or indeed managed any sort of transmutation but had only practised deception while others thought that he might have achieved some such effect but only at a financial loss which had lead him into debt. As a result he had attempted to raise money by buying jewels on credit and pawning them to the Jews, robbing Peter to pay Paul. At last his creditors complained to Rudolph at which point Kelley made a run for it, possibly to ask Rozmberk for help to pay off his debts.

Parkins thought that this was compounded by growing irritation by the Emperor with Kelley's inability to give a clear demonstration of his gold making ability. A day had been set for him to make good his promises but he had failed to turn up and had only offered a feeble excuse for his absence. There was now a stalemate. Rudolph would release him if he could make a proof of his claim but Kelley refused to do so unless he was set free first. Parkins reported that all this information had been related to him by Rudolph's councillors who also questioned him about a letter found in Kelley's possession in which he was being asked to return to England and which they wanted to know if it had been written by Elizabeth herself. In addition they asked if Parkins could give "any account of the diminishing of one of his ears, or of his good or evil behaviour in England." Parkins points out that he was probably not the best person to be asked this of a man "who has so grievously and falsely offended me, yet setting aside all passion....I would refer what I knew only upon the ground of common report. And so I did." Unfortunately he failed to include what his answer was. Presumably the state of Kelley's ear had been confirmed by physical examination and so (unless it was a congenital defect) would seem to substantiate the widely held rumour that it had been inflicted as a punishment for coining and as such perhaps had a bearing on the charges currently being levelled at him. In a subsequent note to Robert Cecil, Parkins expresses the view that as far as the Queen is concerned the matter can now be considered dead and buried.

Parkins would seem to have had some of his information from a Seth Cockes (or Cox) who in a letter of the 28th of July 1593 enlarges on the story about the jewellery using a parody of alchemical terminology. "I find that the philosopher's stone has been nothing else than the provision of 6,000 ducats of the Baron of Rozmberk, together with the extraction of certain jewels which by the credit he had of the Lord Rozmberk he took up of a Portingal (Portuguese) and a French jeweller, out of which being pawned to the Jews he distilled to the value of 16,000 ducats, whereof he melted many and sent the wedges to be sold to the goldsmith, which gave such opinion of his skill that it was thought there would not be lead enough in the country for the operation of his powder, and thus he lived for a while in liberty." Somehow or other the situation was resolved and by Autumn Rudolph had relented and Kelley was free. An Abraham Faulkon in a letter from Bohemia set his release as the 16th of October and reported him as being "in good health, fat and merry." He was taken by Thomas Kelley to meet him at Leben where he was royally entertained and Kelley, still an enthusiastic angler "did fish a pond" and gave him a supply of fish to take home with him. Dee records the news in his *Diary* a few weeks later and on December 9th Seth Cocks reported that Kelley was "in great credit with the Emperor."

Little is known regarding Kelley's activities in the ensuing years. From entries in Dee's *Diaries* there would seem to have been a periodic exchange of letters. Messages from Kelley and his brother on the 28th May 1584, brought by Francis Garland and Dee's replies to them both going on the 18th of September together with one from Dyer and another from Kelley received on the 24th of November. Francis Garland seems to have been a frequent visitor to Prague as Dee notes that he returned from there on the 23rd of November. Although the government's interest in Kelley was much diminished there were still occasional reports. Seth Cocks writing to Robert Cecil in April 1595 from Cracow telling him he intended to pass through Prague to see Kelley "who they say enjoys his former favour with the Emperor." So it would seem, as Dee had a letter from him in August of that year in which Rudolph invited him to come back into his service. Rather wisely Dee didn't take up the offer as within a year Kelley was back in prison. Again the circumstances are unclear but sources suggest an involvement in a duel in which he had killed an Imperial Officer called Jiri Hunckler compounded by further problems of debt. This time he was incarcerated at Most. To raise money his wife, now of course Lady Kelley, was forced to sell some of his estates, one of which was bought by a fellow alchemist Michael Sendivogius. Another alchemist, Oswald Croll, visited him in jail hoping to learn some of his secrets. During his imprisonment Kelley wrote a further treatise on alchemy, *The Stone Of The Philosophers*. It was dedicated "To The Most Potent Lord Of The Holy Roman Empire, RUDOLFUS II., King of Hungary and Bohemia, etc., His Most Gracious Master." Presumably the intention was once again to win favour but here and there in the text Kelley's arrogance peeps through. In his preface he begins by saying "Though I have already twice suffered chains and imprisonment in Bohemia, an indignity which has been offered to me in no other part of the world, yet as my mind, remaining unbound, has all this time exercised itself in that study of that philosophy which is despised only by the wicked and foolish, but is praised and admired by the wise.....Furthermore, as during the preceding three years I have used great labour, expense, and care in order to discover for your Majesty that which might afford you much profit and pleasure, so during my imprisonment – a calamity which has befallen me through the actions of your Majesty – I am utterly incapable of remaining idle. Hence I have written a treatise, by means of which your imperial mind may be guided into all the truth of the more ancient philosophy, whence, as from a lofty eminence, it may contemplate and distinguish the fertile tracts from the barren and stony wilderness. But if my teaching displeases you, know that you are still altogether wandering astray from the true scope and aim of this matter, and are utterly wasting your money, time, labour, and hope. A familiar acquaintance with the

different branches of knowledge has taught me this one thing, that nothing is more ancient, excellent, or more desirable than truth, and whoever neglects it must pass his whole life in the shade. Nevertheless, it always was, and always will be, the way of mankind to release Barabbas and to crucify Christ. This I have – for my good no doubt – experienced in my own case. I venture to hope, however, that my life and character will so become known to posterity that I may be counted among those who have suffered much for the sake of truth. The full certainty of the present treatise time is powerless to abrogate. If your Majesty will deign to peruse it at your leisure, you will easily perceive that my mind is profoundly versed in this study." In fact the work is little more than a summary of the alchemical principles laid out in his earlier writings, bolstered with quotations from the works of others and as such unlikely to have impressed Rudolph in the slightest.

Like the beginning of his life his end remains shrouded in mystery. Dee recorded that he learnt of his death in November 1595 but this would seem premature as there are documents suggesting that he was still alive as late as 1597 or even 1598. The common theme of all the reports of his demise have him attempting to escape from either prison or house arrest by clambering down a wall. Overweight and hampered by his deformity, he fell, breaking a leg and dying from his injuries sometime afterwards. He was survived by his wife Lady Joanna Kelley and two step children, a son John Francis Weston and a daughter Elizabeth Weston, who achieved much fame as a poetess. She refers to Kelley in a poem written on the death of her mother in 1606 as "Sir Edward Kelly of Imany, distinguished and well-born knight, councilor of his sacred imperial majesty....Heaven gave me a step-father, and him I loved as a second father," - probably the kindest obituary Kelley was to receive.

END OF DAYS, 1588-1609

*Blow, blow, thou winter wind
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude.*

*Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky
That does not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot.*

William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Act II, sc 7.

We left John Dee at Trebon at the end of 1588 making his preparations to return to England. He records that on the 23rd of December he went to the "new-made city Kaiser Rudolf Stadt, by Budweis, to oversee what Joachim Reimer had done about my coaches' making." Progress was slow and during the following month Rudolph sent him messages urging him to make haste and making arrangements for the necessary funds through Jacob Menschik. Edmund Hilton was despatched with 300 dollars to buy coach and saddle horse, returning after a few weeks with nine "Hungarish horses." Dee was later to provide much detail of the costs involved in his journey, in the *Compendious Rehearsal* which he presented to the Queen in 1592. He lists twelve Hungarian horses to pull his three coaches and another three Wallachees as saddle horses at a cost of £120. (It is possible that Dee was guilty of a little creative accounting in these matters). He adds a further £60 for the cost of the coaches, made especially for the journey, and for saddles and harnesses for the horses. They set out on the 11th of March 1589, travelling eastward through Nuremburg to Frankfurt am Maine. Fenton then traces their route north where they stayed with William IV, the Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel, an old acquaintance. Here Dee met Christopher Rothmann, the Court Astronomer and they discussed his and Digge's findings on the nova of 1572 and their use of parallax. Rothmann later passed the information to Tycho Brahe. From Kassel they travelled on to Diepholz. From there, as protection against an ambush by a troop of horsemen who had been waiting for them, he had an escort of twenty four soldiers. These were hired "by vertue of the Emperor's passport" and contributed towards the £600 which he claimed for the total cost of his journey. For the final leg, from Oldenburg to Bremen he was supplied with six harquebusiers and musketeers which the Earl of Oldenburg lent him from his garrison after a warning of "an ill minded company, lying and hovering for me in the way which I was to pass." Travel in those days was obviously not for the faint-hearted! Elizabeth must have relented somewhat towards her errant philosopher and had also provided him with "her most princely and royall letters of safe conduct for me, my companions, and our families to all forraine Princes and Potentates." It is possible of course that this was because she thought that he was bringing Kelley back with him.

They arrived at Bremen on the 9/19th of April. In anticipation of their return Dee was now using both Gregorian and Julian dates for his diary entries and the old dating system will be used hereafter. Here they settled into rented accommodation for nearly a year, putting out their saddle horses to grass in the Town meadow "for 9 dollars till Michaelmas." The twelve "Hungarish" horses were sent back to the Landgrave on the 12th of May. Dee as usual recorded the comings and goings through the town. On the 26th of May he noted that Thomas

Kelley, his wife, Francis Garland and Rowles had passed through Stade on their way to England. The next day he had a visitor who he identifies as "Dr Henrich Khunrad of Hamburg." This was presumably Heinrich Khunrath (c.1560 – 1605) the physician, hermeticist, philosopher and alchemist who had just recently obtained the degree of Doctor of Medicine from the University of Basel. He would go on to stay at the Imperial court at Prague and in September 1591 would be appointed physician to Count Rozmberk at Trebon. No doubt he was eager to learn as much as possible about his intended destination from Dee.

On the 6th of June Edmund Hilton set out for Prague. Although nominally Dee's servant it is difficult to know just what his role was by this time and he seems to have had pretty much a roving commission. He returned two weeks later leaving for England on the 26th with letters from Dee. As already recounted he had with him the two English travelers, Robert Tatton and George Leister with their account of Parkin's treachery as told to them by Edward Kelley. These were perhaps uneasy times for Dee, he had a nightmare on the 2nd of August that Kelley was stealing his books and the following month he wrote that "I sank into low spirits because of the ingratitude imagined from the words of my wife and maidservant Mary." He was in contact with English sources, sending letters by courier in late August and again in October for Justice Young and Edward Dyer. On the 31st of August he noted "Roger his serviceable letters of the L. Rosenberg." Possibly this is his one time assistant Roger Cook who is also believed to have travelled to Bohemia to seek his fortune. Another of his servants, John Hammond gave him notice that he was leaving to go to Italy but that he would first travel to Prague to find Kelley "of whom he hoped to have good help." Finally at the end of September his landlord, Dr Witichindi gave him notice to quit. At the end of October he had news that Edmund Dyer who had been sent by Elizabeth on a commission to Denmark (Dee says as an ambassador) was returning to Stade. In early November Edmund and his brother returned from England, possibly bringing some good news to Dee who resolves "to go into England, hoping to meet Mr E. K. at Stade going also into England. And that I suspected upon Mr Secretary Walsingham his letters." This was of course at the time when Cecil was trying hard to persuade Kelley to return and Kelley was making vague promises to do so. Edmund left for Stade on the 8th of November, presumably to arrange for their passage to England and Dee and his family followed on the 16th, meeting Dyer "in the middle of the town" the next day. Dee gives more details of his departure from Bremen in his *Compendious Rehearsal*. It should be noted that in that document, written some three years afterwards, he refers to travelling to Staden which was a town in West Flanders as opposed to his diary entries which name his destination as Stade, in Lower Saxony near to Hamburg,

which, sitting on the Elbe estuary, was a convenient shipping point for traffic in and out of Europe. Dee's recollections of his departure from Bremen were certainly happy ones. He received "a friendly farewell (delivered unto me by the speech of one of their secretaries at my lodgings)...The excellent learned theologian, the Superintendent of Breme, Mr Dr. Christopher Pezelius" had penned some verses the night before and these were delivered to Dee and handed out to a crowd of students and citizens assembled as a farewell party. In addition he was provided with four horsemen - "Swart-Ruiters" to accompany him by "the noble consuls and senators of Breme." This was not for free however as he recalls that it cost him 30 dollars to cover their expenses. Dee lodged at Stade for just two days, shipping out on the 19th of November. Ever conscious of the costs he estimated that the charge for "my freight (freight) and passage from Staden (sic) to London; for my goods, my selfe, my wife, children and servants - £10." He claimed that there were other costs involved at Bremen "to further some of her Majesties services" such as 70 dollars given or lent to one Conrad Justus Newbrenner and about another 40 dollars to send over some letters "of great importance....to our Sovereigns right honourable Privy Council in due tyme."

When Dee landed in England, six years after his surreptitious departure, it was not the triumphal return that he had enjoyed in 1551 as a young man brimming with novel ideas, full of enthusiasm to spread the gospel of the new concepts of Natural Philosophy, nor was it as the potential new ruler of the kingdom as predicted by the spirits but much as he had left it, someone who had been made use of and let down by others.

England at this time was an uneasy place. It had survived the Great Armada but was impoverished as a result. The Catholic onslaught was now a more subtle thing. The Jesuit College in Rome had been founded in 1579 by William Allen with the agenda of training Jesuit priests to infiltrate and bring succor to those Catholics who resisted the oppression of the English Government, which, in the aftermath of the Babington plot and the execution of Mary Queen of Scots in 1587, was still ever fearful of their plotting. Although forbidden to instigate open rebellion or attempt schemes for the forceful removal of Elizabeth, these priests, making their clandestine way around the country, from safe house to the homes of wealthy Catholics, hidden in secret priest holes nevertheless at times acted as catalysts for schemes and plots aimed at the restoration of the 'old religion.' They were relentlessly hunted down, captured, imprisoned, often tortured and usually sent to meet their end at the gallows or the stake by the likes of Dee's friend Justice Richard Young. At the other end of the scale the newly emergent extreme forms of Protestantism such as the Puritans were also experiencing the intolerance and repression of the government. Elizabeth, now aged 56 was

getting older and more infirm. Past the age of childbearing, she was subject to unending pressure from her advisors to name an heir. Tales which had percolated back of Dee's predictions of an apocalypse and an overthrow of the world order would have been most unwelcome to a government striving to maintain stability.

Dee landed at Gravesend on the 22nd of November 1589. It would seem that he had made arrangements to stay with Justice Young at Stratford while he sorted out the position with regards to regaining his property at Mortlake. There is a very terse entry in his *Diary* that on the 9th of December he was "At Richmond with the Queen's Majesty." which would imply that his reception was not particularly a welcoming one. The following day he reached an agreement with his brother-in-law, Nicholas Fromond that he could return to Mortlake as a tenant, something of a come-down, and reached there on the 15th. It would be interesting to know what sort of a state he found it in. Subsequently he obtained better terms "I resolved of the order to be offered for agreement with Nicholas Fromonds for my house and goods." After his departure it had been invaded by his creditors who had seized what they could in lieu of his debts and by his friends who had, no doubt on the pretext of looking after his possessions, also appropriated whatever they could carry away. One at least tried to make amends, Adrian Gilbert called to see him and offered "as much as I could require at his hands both for my goods carried away, and for the mines." Thomas Kelley arrived from Brainford just before Christmas with the news that his brother was thinking of returning and offered a loan of ten pounds in gold which he sent over that evening in Hungarian ducats by John Crocker. Seemingly all of Dee's funds had been spent on his journey home. The 25th of February saw the birth of a daughter, Madimi Newton Dee, named in honour of his one-time spirit guide. He was still sufficiently respected that Sir George Carey (a distant relative of Queen Elizabeth, to be created a baron in 1596 and Lord Chamberlain the year after), the Lady Cobham and Lady Walsingham agreed to be godparents. Sir George came to visit Dee at Mortlake two weeks later when Dee no doubt took the opportunity to further his efforts at advancement.

Dee settled down into a semblance of domesticity, sending his children to the local school for which he paid the schoolmaster £4 for his house rent and 40 shillings yearly to teach his three sons and his daughter. The following month he learnt of the death of Francis Walsingham. A visitor, John Spenser, possibly one of Burghley's spies, just returned from Venice told him of "the Venetian philosopher and the goodness of his gold." This will have been Marco Bragadini who was to cause Kelley so much trouble. Thomas Kelley would also seem to have become part of Burghley's travelling band of couriers as Dee gave him letters

for his brother when he called at Mortlake in April with Francis Garland wishing "God send them well hither and thither again." Part of his magnetic stone, which had been broken up in the disposal of his goods was restored to him at the start of May. He was still keeping in touch with the fraternity of explorers and Richard Cavendish and his nephew Thomas called at Mortlake on the 18th of May. Thomas Cavendish had completed a circumnavigation of the world between 1586 and 1588 and was contemplating a second voyage. He was to leave in August 1591 accompanied by John Davis on what was to be an ill-fated expedition which led to his death and the loss of most of the crew to starvation and illness. Dee was now making efforts to improve his position. He notes that on the 8th of May he received 20 marks from Sir Richard Long of Long Lednam and possibly this prompted him to try to regain the two parsonages of Upton and Long Ledenham which he had lost, recording on the 20th of May that after dining with Justice Young they both went to see John Whitgift, the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth "about the parsonages" and were apparently well received. Despite their long acquaintance and the help he had provided this was the last time that Young is mentioned by Dee. The meeting with the Cavendish's was presumably also to enlist their help as he records good news at the end of May about Richard's efforts with the Queen, the Archbishop and Sir George Carey in obtaining "the agreement for Eton College." Dee had sought to win the Provostship of the College with the help of his friends at court in the mid-sixties and was now once more pursuing the same objective. Cavendish sent him a gift of a hogshead of claret and the Lady Cobham sent some sugar and pepper for Jane. Dee visited the Archbishop again in July and "talked with him boldly of my right to the parsonages." Possibly the Archbishop had a passing interest in alchemy as they also discussed Kelley's treatise on the subject. Dee continued to make overtures to improve his situation recording that on the 15th of July "Mr Gawyne Smyth spake friendly for me to the Queen, and she disclosed her favour toward me." On July 25th Dee wrote a letter of thanks to Lord Burghley, sending it by Edmund Hilton, together with letters from Brunswick by the Lord Chancellor (Sir Christopher Hatton) "of Conrad Nesselbrenner his ill behaviour." This was the man who Dee claimed in his *Compendious Rehearsal* to have been given 70 dollars at Bremen. All very strange.

July the 22nd saw the start of a rather unpleasant domestic upheaval. His nurse, Ann Frank became unhinged. She had "long been tempted by a wicked spirit: but this day it was evident, how she was possessed of him." Over the next few days Dee attempted to effect a cure and "anointed (in the name of Jesus) her breast with the holy oil" on several occasions. In August the distraught woman attempted to drown herself in a well but was pulled out by

Dee before she succumbed. After this it would seem he appointed a maid to look after her but she slipped away and cut her throat and was only found when the maid "heard her rattle in her own blood."

Dee continued to maintain in contact with Kelley writing to him on the 2nd of June, sending his letter by a Leadenhall merchant, William Fowler. Three days later he recorded the arrival of Thomas Simkinson and Antony his servant from "beyond the seas." This is presumably the same Simkinson who had arrived at Trebon with Garland's offer of employment from the Tzar of Russia in 1586. Why Antony should have remained behind when Dee left Bohemia and now be travelling with Simkinson is something of a mystery. What they had to tell him must have been something of a shock for he writes "Terrible ill news of open enmity of Sir Ed. Kelly against me: and of the higher powers their ill opinions conceived of me." Perhaps it was only now that he began to realise just how badly Kelley had treated him. Letters from Kelley arrived on the 8th of July but Dee reveals nothing of the contents.

Dee continued to enjoy a good relationship with the Cavendish brothers, giving Richard a copy of Denis Zacaire's twelve letters (a work on alchemy) written in French by himself and making him promise "before my wife never to disclose to any that he hath it: and that if he die before me, he will restore it again to me: but if I die before him, that he shall deliver it to one of my sons, most apt (among them) to have it." This is presumably the copy which was damaged in the fire started by Kelley in 1589 when his lamp overturned and evidently much prized by Dee. Later in the year Cavendish sent money to Dee and his wife, £20 via Edmund Hilton and then 40 shillings and £10 in ryalls and angels. Money was obviously a continuing problem for Dee and his *Diary* is filled with entries regarding his financial transactions, recording such items as payments to the children's schoolmaster and to Madimi's nurse. There were payments to Goodwife Tyndall for lodgings for Antony his servant "for eleven weeks due at his going away, 5s 6d, and before she had for seven weeks." It seems strange that his servant would be in staying in a lodging house rather than with Dee. A dispute arose with the father of a John Pritchard over money he claimed was owed him which Dee said had been repaid in part and the rest accounted for by the costs of his son who had been with him at Mortlake for three years "and having also his learning free." Somewhat frightened, Jane gave Pritchard some money but he still threatened to take them to court. Despite all these outgoings Dee also recorded in May that he "lent to Goodman Dalton, the carpenter, 20s for a month."

In November the Queen came to stay at Richmond and sent for Dee promising to "send me something to keep Christmas with." It must have been at this time that he began his formal request for help which culminated in his *Compendious Rehearsal* as he records that on December 1st Elizabeth commanded John Herbert, Master of Requests, to write to the commissioners on Dee's behalf and promised to send Dee 100 angels via Richard Cavendish. A few days later Elizabeth passed by his house and called him out. It would appear that the Queen was dressed for the revels as "she graciously putting down her mask, did say with merry cheer: 'I thank thee, Dee. There was never promise made, but it was broken or kept'" which he took to mean the offer of money. A few days later she sent £50 with an assurance of a further £50 to come. As always Elizabeth was good on promises but poor on delivery and Dee was to relate later in his *Compendious Rehearsal* that "what is become of the other fiftie, truly I cannot tell. If her Majestie can it is sufficient." She did however give him her authority to continue in his esoteric studies. "Mr Candish received from the Queen's Majesty warrant by word of mouth to assure me to do what I would in philosophy and alchemy, and none should check, control, or molest me."

Dee's good fortune didn't last long and in the New Year he was "Utterly put out of hope for recovering the two parsonages by the L. Archb. and the L. Treasurer." By March he was pawning his plate for £20 to pay Thomas Hudson for wood and corn (£14) and Goodman Bedell for "billet, bales, and loose faggot" (£4) with an additional 12s to Goodwife Welder, Madimi's nurse. His fortunes took a mend however in May when Sir Thomas Jones unexpectedly offered him his castle at Emlyn in Wales "to dwell in so long as he had any interest in it (whose lease dureth yet 12 years) freely: with certain commodities adjoining unto it: and also to have as much mow land for rent, as might pleasure me sufficiently" confirming the offer before John Herbert, Master of the Requests. Understandably Dee was only too pleased to accept the offer although strangely he makes no further mention of either visiting the castle or of receiving any income from it.

Earlier in the year a Mr Beale had sent him the hand written copy of *Famous and Rich Discoveries* which Dee had published in 1576 and which he says he had given to Andreas Fremonsheim in 1583. Fremonsheim (who catalogued Dee's library) was the English agent for the Birkmans, the leading book importers and sellers of the time, with a shop in St Paul's Churchyard. Dee had been a good customer of theirs but a poor payer and when he left England in 1583 had run up a debt of some £63. As a result of this Fremonsheim sued Dee's brother-in-law Nicholas Fromond, which may well explain why there was no love lost between them. The Birkmans went out of business in 1580 and Dee's debt was taken over by

a John Norton who finally came to an arrangement with him in 1595 when he relates in his *Diary* that on the 23 December "I paid to John Norton, stationer, 10 pounds in hand: and was bound in a recognisance before Dr Hone for the payment of the rest; £10 yearly: at Christmas and midsummer £5, till £53 more 14s 8d were paid." Dee records that in June 1591 he lent a manuscript copy of *Chronica Hollandiae Magna* (an anonymous work from the second half of the fifteenth century) to Beale "which Mr Webb lent me." As noted previously Thomas Webb had been sent to Bohemia following the arrest of Edmund Dyer in an attempt to free him and to determine the fate of Edward Kelley. As we shall see, the name of Webb re-occurs in Dee's *Diary* entries for the next three years. Indeed, the next month he recalls that "Mr Dyer sent me 20 angels by Mr Thomas Webb and a few days later he mentions spending the best part of two days with Dyer and then leaving to go by boat to "Mr Webb's lodging at Rochester House."

Early in 1591 The Hickmans put in a reappearance. Back in 1579 Dee had recorded that he had been visited by Mr Richard Hickman and his nephew Bartholomew on the recommendation of Sir Christopher Hatton and "The crystal-gazers did their work." In February Bartholomew came to visit him at Mortlake, returning in May bringing his daughter Joan with him who Dee apparently took into his service for he wrote that two weeks later the girl was sent to Goodwife Tyndall's to learn to knit. Bartholomew was at Mortlake again on the 31st of July, staying until the 3rd of August. Dee makes no mention of Hickman's business but in the light of subsequent entries it would seem that a resumption of the seances had started with Bartholomew as skryer and that he would use this position to exert a hold over Dee.

The end of the year saw a glimmer of hope. In December he "had a gentle answer at the L. treasurer's hand....at the Court at Whitehall.....that the Queen would have me have something at this promotion of bishops at hand." Dee was hoping that in a reshuffle of ecclesiastical benefices a vacancy might occur which he could fill. This will become clear later in the year in the details of his *Rehearsal*.

On the 1st of January 1592 Jane was delivered of a baby girl, Francys, born exactly as the sun was rising. She was christened on the 9th (although the Godparents are this time not named) and put out to a wet nurse at Barne Elms. Most of the family suffered illness. Arthur "fell into a quotidian (recurring) gentle ague" and Jane also suffered from sickness. Subsequently Arthur and his sister Katherine were taken up to London to be bled. Arthur seems to have recovered and now aged thirteen was sent away to Westminster School. Fenton quotes from a letter that Dee sent to one of the masters, William Camden, that Arthur

"is of an exceeding great and haughty mind" and urges him to "alter this natural courage to true fortitude." Jane, no doubt like all mothers fretted and fussed, sending with him "some more apparel, and furniture in a little chest with lock and key, yea and with some towels to wipe his face on." Dee himself now became plagued with poor health. In July he suffered pain from a kidney stone and was eased by a "glyster" (clyster – enema) administered by his doctor but the problem re-occurred in August followed two weeks later by pains in the calf of his left leg "as if a stone had hit me" and then in September in both legs "as if the veins or arteries would have broken." Dee treated himself with purges and medicine for the kidney stone.

Money problems continued, Dee noting in March "Mistress Ditton – 50 shillings remains of 10 pounds" and a few days later "I paid £10 to Nicholas Fromonds.....when he most abominably reviled me." He seems to have arrived at some accommodation with his brother-in-law in early April during a two day meeting "at Mr Webb's." The next month he records a quarrel between "Mr Webb and Mr Morgan with one eye, for £4 left unpaid upon a bill." The same month he borrowed £10 from a Master Thomas Smith. Items missing since his departure with Laski were still trickling back and his "great sea compass" was returned to him but without the needle. In August there are records of further sums, "Mr Herriot 40s....Auditor Hill £4." The next month a Mr Livesey promised him ten sheep and four quarters of wheat although the circumstances were not recorded. No doubt Dee was making every effort to obtain an income by providing legal and astrological advice and by providing some form of schooling as he used to do before. In September he notes that "Robert Webb came from Mr Pontoys to write and is come again within three weeks." Possibly a relative of Thomas Webb engaged to copy manuscripts for Dee. Webb himself was recorded as coming to Tooting at the end of December. John Pontoys appears to have been a merchant whom Dee may have met in his travels abroad and who had remained in contact with him.

There are continuing hints that Dee was involved in spiritual activity. Bartholomew Hickman and his brother Ambrose came to see Dee at Mortlake at the start of the year and there are two cryptic entries in his pseudo Greek script, one in April "About treasure, a book, Maria" and in following month "Maria came again at 7 in the afternoon." Whether Maria was corporeal or spiritual is unknown. As evidence of the relationship Dee had formed with the Hickman's he offered to stand as a bondsman for them writing on 7th Sept that "Robert Charles of Northamptonshire and Goodman Warren of Market Harborough in my house at Mortlake promised me to help Barthilmew Hickman with £12 to pay on Michaelmas Day

next to discharge the bond for his brother-in-law. This they promised upon condition I would be bound to them to see them repaid again."

Dee attended the Court on the 6th of August at Nonsuch where the Countess of Warwick gave him to understand that the Queen was looking favourably at finding him a position at the Hospital of St Cross at Winchester, a situation which he particularly coveted. It was followed up with a gift of some venison and an invitation from Lord Burghley to dinner at a Mr Maynard's at Mortlake in the company of his two sons, Thomas and his half-brother Robert. There was another dinner invitation the following day at which Lord Cobham attended who elicited an agreement from Burghley to help Dee in his pursuit of the position at St Cross's. Dee writes that he went with the Cobham's to London a few days afterwards. Finally, on the 9th of November, Dee learnt from his ally, the Countess of Warwick that the Queen had granted his application for commissioners to come to investigate his complaint that his services to the Crown had not been properly recognized and compensated. In due course, on the 22nd, "Mr Secretary Wolley" and his fellow commissioner, identified by Dee as Sir Thomas Gorge "Knight, Gentleman of her Majesties Wardrobe," appeared at Mortlake. Sir John Wolley (a privy councilor, freshly knighted) had assumed responsibility for the routine work of Walsingham's office of Secretary during his frequent bouts of ill health and after his death. They were seated by Dee at a table in the middle of what he calls his "late library-roome," presumably still bereft of much of his enormous collection of books, "and next before them two other great tables, being covered; the one, with very many letters and recordes of fifty years course, and testimonies of my studious lyfe, in and from the most famous places and parties of all Christendome; and the other with such divers books of my making, printed and unprinted, as I had in my foresaid tyme written or devised: then I did begin my declaration, concurring orderly with the text of this booke (his *Compendious Rehearsal*), purposely and by the Commissioners' advise, in some order of method most briefly and speedely contrived against this day."

The rehearsal is a lengthy document occupying some forty pages when printed by Crossley in 1851. It opens:

"Most gracious Quene,

FORASMUCH as the intollerable extremitie of the injuries and indignities, which your most excellent Majesties faithfull and dutifull servant, John Dee, hath for some yeares last past endured, and still endureth, is so great and manifold, as cannot in briebe be unto your Majestie expressed, neither without good proof and testimonie have credit with your

Majestie: and because also, without speedy and good redress therein performed, it is to be doubted, that great and incredible inconveniences and griefes may ensue thereof in sundry sorte; (which yet may easily be prevented) your Majesties foresaid most humble and most zealously faithful servant beseecheth your Majestie, to assign two or mo meete and worthy persons, nobly and vertuously minded, who may and will charitably, indifferently, advisedly, and exactly see, heare, and perceive, at the house of your Majestie's said servant in Mortlake, what just and needeful occasion he hath thus to make most humble supplicacion unto your Majestie: and so of things their seene, heard, and perceived, to make true and full report and description unto your Majestie. And thus your Majestie's foresaid most dutiful servant beseecheth the Almighty God most mercifully, prosperously, and allwaies to bless and preserve your most excellent Majestic royal.

Amen.”

He begins by setting out an autobiography of his life, from his birth in 1542 through his education in England and abroad and the good reputation that he gained in his understanding of legal, philosophical and mathematical matters, culminating in offers of employment from heads of state and the nobility. In support of his good character he quotes letters and testimonials from the nobility, ecclesiastics and eminent universities. As evidence of his good standing with the crown he points out that King Edward had granted him a pension of £100 annually which had been commuted into the income from the rectory of Upton upon Severn. Elizabeth herself had defended him against the adverse comments that had greeted the publication of his *Monas Hieroglyphica*. He points out all the services he has provided for her, casting her horoscope at the request of her companions while she was still a princess, something which had lead to his imprisonment by Mary, giving astrological advice at her coronation, travelling abroad seeking a cure for her illness and soothing her fears over astrological omens and attempted witchcraft. He had spent much time in researching ancient documents and established a historical justification for her claim to lands in the northern latitudes and had set out a vision of a British Empire based on an expanded and improved navy. Finally he reminds her of the numerous times she has visited him at Mortlake and how he had entertained her there. Wisely he makes little mention of his adventures in Poland and Bohemia except to record that in 1585 he had sent her letters “requesting an expert, discreet, and trusty man to be sent unto me into Bohemia, to heare and see, what God had sent unto me and my friendes there at that tyme; at which tyme, and till which tyme, I was chief governour of our philosophicall proceedings; and by both our concentes, there was somewhat prepared

and determined upon to have ben sent unto her Majestie, if the required messenger had been sent by her Majestie unto us. But not long after (so soone as it was perceived, that my faithfull letters were not regarded therein) by little and little I became hindered and crossed to performe my dutifull and chiefe desire; and that, by the fyne and most subtyll devises and plotts laid, first by the Bohemians, and somewhat by Italians, and lastly by some of my owne countrymen. God best knoweth how I was very ungodly dealt withall, when I meant all truth, sincerity, fidelity and piety towards God, and my Queene and country.”

Dee then sets out the numerous times that he had been promised a reward for all his endeavours. Soon after her accession the Queen had indicated that he should have the Mastership of St. Katherine's but he had been denied it by political chicanery. In 1564, at the request of the Lady Marquess of Northampton (who he had escorted back to England), Elizabeth had granted him the Deanery of Gloucester but instead it had been given to another. Not long afterwards the Provostship of Eton was raised by Dee's friends at court and although the proposal was favourably received nothing materialised. Blanche Parry had brought word that he might become owner of any of the bishoprics or deaneries which became vacant but that "*cura animarum annexa*" (connected with the care of souls) was not something he could cope with and although the Queen subsequently said that he might have other ecclesiastical livings and revenues without this duty he "never as yet had any one penny." In 1576 Elizabeth had instructed Edmund Grindal, the then Archbishop of Canterbury, that the income from the two rectories of Upton and Long Lednam should be his for life. This took until 1582 to be authorised at which time Dee was busy with his reformation of the calendar and neglected to have it endorsed by the Great Seal and the benefit was lost. Shortly after his coming home the Queen had asked the present Archbishop, John Whitgift, to "take some order for my present mainteynance...but yet no penny of rent, fee, or revenue is bestowed on me, being now almost two yeares since." In April of this year, at the intercession of Doctor Aubrey (Dee's friend and neighbour, grandfather of John Aubrey, the author of *Brief Lives*) he had been granted the right to propose Dee to the bishop of St. David's for any rectories endowed with vicarages which might become vacant but again nothing had become of it.

Dee recalled another promise which was that twenty years earlier Blanche Parry and Lady Skidmore had obtained the Queen's consent that when the then Master of St Crosse's at Winchester left his post it would be offered to Dee. This had fallen through when a Dr Bennet had been given preference. In 1591 the Countess of Warwick had again asked the Queen that Dee should be granted the Mastership the next time this position became vacant and had been told that he might have it "if it were a living fit for [him]" which Dee

interpreted to mean that Dr Bennet might be offered promotion so as to facilitate matters. The petition had been renewed by the Countess of Warwick. “in respect of my incredible want of due maintenance” and the Archbishop of Canterbury had confirmed several times that indeed the Mastership would be a very suitable position, something that was supported by Lord Burghley who had promised Dee to endorse his application “and moreover willed that a caveat should be entered for me thereupon as a most gracious Queene, for the more assurance of her poor servants releife and comfort.” Since then several bishoprics had become vacant suitable for Dr Bennet’s enhancement but nothing had been done about it. As a result Dee had “began to doubt, that her Majestie hitherto hath not been given to understand fully the truth of my present very hard case and incredible distress, through unseemly want of all things necessary for due mainteynance of me and my myne.” He emphasised the dire straits in which he and his family were now suffering. What he needed was “a sufficient remedy against all inconveniences, otherwise most likely to ensue: the extreme pinch of all manner of want for meat, drink, fewl [fuel], cloth, etc., incredibly tormenting me and myne at this present, after three years continuall my very hard getting and making of provision for our most needeful mainteynance, even to the uttermost and last meanes used therein: always notwithstanding with great good hope (from moneth to moneth) that, in respect of her most excellent Majesties very great favour towards me; and in respect of her most gracious and expresse commandment divers tymes by word of mouth and letter declared therein; I should ere this have been otherwise and more charitably regarded: and so some sufficient and certain reliefe and mainteynance should have been bestowed on me ere this.”

Dee then set out why the Mastership of St Crosse’s would be so suitable for him. He wanted to retire from Mortlake “from the multitude and haunt of my common friends, and others who visit me.” The glasshouses of Sussex would be within easy access for his “exercises in perspective and other works philosophical” and he would be more able to closely supervise the workmen and ensure the confidentiality of his requirements. Fuel, coal, bricks and apparatus were cheaper there than at Mortlake and the availability of rooms and lodgings meant that he could better continue to perform his services for Crown and Country. He could more easily entertain important visitors, “rare and excellent men from all parts of Christendome (and perhaps some out of farder regions).” Its position near the south coast meant that it would be easier for him to send for “things and men very necessary; and for the more commodious place for the secret arrival of special men to come unto me there....some of which men would be loath to be seene or heard of publickly in court or city.” There would be accommodation for artisans to work for him and he would set up a printing press to

publish rare books. The divine services held at St Crosse's would inspire him to inculcate his own family "with that most Christian exercise of prayers" and the nearby school at Winchester would provide suitable education for his four sons and the staff there could be involved in the copying of books for the Queen. The suggestion that he would provide a safe-house for nefarious visitors to England is curious. Was this just a flight of fancy or did Dee really consider himself to be part of the English intelligence operation?

For good measure Dee rounds off his *Rehearsal* with a list of all his publications "My labors and paines bestowd at divers times to pleasure my native country by writing of divers bookes and treatises; some in Latin, some in English, and some of them written at her Majesties commandment." together with "many other bookes, pamphlets, discourses, inventions and conclusions in divers arts and matters." He sets out all the losses and damages he has suffered, listing all the books and properties appropriated from Mortlake after he had left for Poland with their cost which he calculates as £1,510 plus the expense of his return from Bohemia which he sets at a further £796 on top of which he estimates the loss of income, past and future, from the two rectories which he had had to be some £1,200. He was now dependant on his friends for financial assistance having received some £500 or more from them together with gifts of food and clothing yet still being forced to pawn plate and his wife's jewelry, borrow money under bonds of surety and to run up credit with his suppliers to the extent of another £333 (as a rough guide to Dee's financial predicament, £1 in 1590 would be worth approximately £125 today). Unless some remedy could be found he feared that he would be "brought even to the very next instant of stepping out of doors (my house being sold) I and myne, with botles and wallets furnished to become wanderers as homish vagabonds; or, as banished men to forsake the kingdome." Dee then spoils his arguments by admitting that "I and myne" in addition to his wife and seven children included no less than eight servants.

The two commissioners having heard and seen all that Dee had to offer left to make their report. The initial reaction was encouraging. On the 1st of December Dee received word from his patron, the Countess of Warwick, that the Queen was sending him 100 marks (a mark being 2/3 of a £) and that Sir Thomas Gorge "had very honourably dealt for me in the cause." Perhaps Elizabeth suffered some pang of conscience because the money arrived the next day. All he could do now was to wait for her decision. Dee spent the remainder of the year at Tooting with his family at the house of a Mr Livesey returning to Mortlake on the 2nd of January 1593. Despite the money sent to him by the Queen he still felt it necessary to borrow £10 from Thomas Digges.

He continued to keep up a correspondence with old acquaintances, receiving a letter from Albert Laski and writing back to him. Perhaps this reminded him of his time in Bohemia for some time afterwards he dreamed on two nights that Kelley was with him at Mortlake with his wife and brother. By coincidence Francis Garland came to visit him a few days later bringing a letter from Thomas Kelley. While Dee had been at Tooting a servant of the bishop of Leighlin, Richard Meredyth, had arrived and caused some upset over a legal dispute his master had with Dee. Meredyth had been chaplain to the disgraced Sir John Perrot, Lord Deputy of Ireland and had been arrested for complicity in his treasonable insults of the Queen, imprisoned and heavily fined. In February Dee met the bishop at the Tower of London, while dining there with the Lieutenant, Sir Michael Blunt, and an angry exchange took place. The cause of the quarrel would appear to be over what Dee refers to as "The Nangle" the rectory of Angle in Pembrokeshire which Dee was presumably trying to obtain. The bishop claimed that Dee already had "institution and induction" of the living but was told that this was untrue. This sufficiently annoyed the cleric that he called Dee a "spiteful conjuror" not an epithet he was likely to take lightly. Dee responded by calling him a liar and saying that "I would try on the flesh of him, or by a bastinado giving of him if he were not prisoner." The bishop had been imprisoned at the Fleet, so why he should have been at the Tower is unclear. Perrot had been executed there in September of the previous year.

In order to augment his income it would seem that Dee was giving instruction in alchemy as he records in March that he had received £15 in part payment of £100 from a Mr Francis Nicolls with further payments of £100 to be made in June and July for which he was to teach him the conclusion of "fixing and teyming of [silver]" (for which Dee uses the symbol of a crescent moon). There was a further part payment of £50 the next month. Nicolls, like the Hickmans and Webb was to continue to be involved in Dee's life. In April 1593 Bartholomew arrived with Richard Charles and a girl, Lettice, who entered Dee's service. Bartholomew was given £12 to pay to Charles "which he had paid for him at Michaelmas last." Dee noted that Hickman returned in June, recording in his Diary "UR" interpreted by Fenton as meaning the Archangel Uriel, evidence of continuing seances. Bartholomew and Robert Charles were again at Mortlake in September. Dee was apparently on good terms with Sir John Puckering, Speaker of the House of Commons and Lord of the Great Seal of England visiting and dining with him several times at his house at Kew, occasions at which Webb and an unknown "philosopher" were present. Sir John was kind enough to send Jane a gift of 20 angels "in a new red velvet purse" sometime afterwards.

Despite his claims of impoverishment Dee seems to have had sufficient funds to enable him to attempt the purchase an adjoining mansion house from his neighbour Mark Perpoint "with the plate and all appurtenances about it" for £32. The transaction did not progress smoothly. Dee went to London to get the money (possibly as a loan) but on his return Perpoint refused to complete the deal. Nonetheless Dee went ahead and bought a building he described as a hovel in Perpoint's yard from Goodman Welder for 20s, returnable if the purchase of the house fell through. The sale seems to have been finally concluded by September.

There are numerous references to little domestic issues of payment to servants such as Robert Webb, Richard and Lettice. Elizabeth Kyrton who Dee said had been in his service for the last twelve years (and so presumably had been with him in Bohemia) left "upon no due cause known" receiving £4 3s in back wages and further gifts of money from Dee, Jane, Arthur and Katharin. A replacement, Margery Thornton was engaged the next month but soon left to be replaced by Dorothy Legg at wages of 30s yearly. A manservant, John was taken on from the Countess of Cumberland's service. There was something of a tragedy; Jane Dee miscarried in September in the early stages of her eighth pregnancy after three days illness. The episode may well have left her distraught as some while afterwards Dee recorded that she had been "desperately angry, in respect of her maids."

In December Dee learned that Webb had been committed to the Marshalsea, the debtor's prison, had escaped and been recaptured the next day. In the New Year, 1594, he records that officials had sealed up Webb's chest and case of boxes. Dee visited Webb in prison in January and then on March the 10th he was "Upon a flight of fear, by cause of Mr Webb his sending for me to come to him to the Marshalsea: now when he looked to be condemned on the Monday or Tuesday next." Why this should cause Dee such concern is unknown, perhaps he felt he might become implicated in Webb's financial problems.

Dee's esoteric activities continued. On the 20th of January a Dr Walker van der Laen arrived, promising to "come to the work....for the sake of philosophising" and to "begin his work of fixing [silver]" and after some hesitancy started on the 31st. At about the same time a Thomas Richardson "promised me his working of 40 days" which Dee follows with the symbols for gold, silver and mercury. In February "Sir Thomas Wilks' offer philosophical came to my hands by Mr Morrice Kyffin." Bartholomew Hickman was a frequent visitor during the year, appearing at Mortlake in March with his brother William, where he witnessed Dee's payment of a full year's wages to Lettice (presumably another relative) comprising 4 nobles, an apron, pair of hose and some shoes. Hickman was given "the nag

which the lord Keeper had given me" after which the brothers left. On the same day Dee records in his pseudo Greek script "A sudden pang of anger between Mr Nicolls and me." Bartholomew returned in June when Dee discharged his daughter Joan from his service, paying her 20s with the promise of a further 10s. In December Hickman persuaded Dee to recommend him to the service of Lord Willoughby who on taking him on instructed his Fleet Street tailor to outfit him with "his cloth and cushions"

Presumably Dee still had some degree of influence for it is recorded that in 1594 a John Chomley a "chemical distiller" having been accused of practising medicine without a licence confessed to his sins and pleaded guilty with the excuse that it had not been "on many occasions". He was forbidden to commit any further breeches of the law but his previous offenses were overlooked on the petition of John Dee.

Illness seems to have continued to affect Dee and his family throughout the year. In January Madimi was "sickly" and Theodore suffered a severely bloodshot eye for several weeks and then the following month became feverish. Dee himself suffered a recurrence of his kidney stone problem and was unable to urinate "but I drank a draught of white wine and salad oil: and after that, crabs' eyes in powder, with the bone in the carp's head, and about 4 of the clock I did eat toasted cake buttered, and with sugar and nutmeg on it, and drank two great draughts of ale with nutmeg and sugar; and I voided within an hour much water, and a stone as big as an Alexander seed of red solids *etc.*, and had ease. God be thanked." In April he had a problem, like Theodore with a bloodshot eye, in June another kidney stone and in July Dee suffered headaches "and had some wambling in my stomache." Tragically in the same month Michael, aged 9, "became distempered in his head and back and arms" and died a week later.

There was still no news regarding Dee's application to the Queen for help. In May he was summoned to Elizabeth's private garden at Greenwich where he "delivered in writing the heavenly admonition" in the presence of the Countess of Warwick and Sir Robert Cecil. He records that a few weeks afterwards the Queen "sent me again the copy of the letter of E. K. with thanks." Whether this was to or from Kelley is not clear. Dee had certainly been keeping in touch with his former companion by letter and through the visits of Francis Garland and others. A little while afterwards Sir John Wolley "moved my suit to her Majestie. She granted after a sort, but referred all to the L. of Canterbury (John Whitgift)." His friend William Aubrey tried again a few days later but with the same answer. Dee, his wife and the children attended the Queen at Thistellworth and "my wife kissed her hand." Dee dined with Whitgift and invited him to return the visit. At the end of June he had a meeting with the

Archbishop at Croydon. Whitgift told him that he had discussed Dee's petition with the Queen and Burghley at Cecil's country seat in Hertfordshire a few days previously. It was not good news. "After I had heardhis answers and discourses....I take myself confounded for all suing and hoping for anything that was." Later, in October, Dee tried again, sending a letter to Lady Skidmore in his wife's name asking her to intercede with the Queen to allow him to plead his case with the council "or else under the Great Seal to have licence to go freely anywhither." In December Jane intercepted Elizabeth as she was leaving Somerset House on her way to dine at the Savoy and persuaded Lord Howard of Effingham, the Lord Admiral to pass another petition to the Queen. In early December there was the suggestion that Dee might have the Chancellorship of St Paul's which came to nought. Instead at the start of 1595 Whitgift broached the suggestion of the Wardenship of Manchester College. Dee made his application which was presented to the Queen by Sir John Wolley on the 5th of February but as always she dissembled, finally signing it on the 18th of April although it was not until the end of May that it was finalised by "the Signet, The Privy Seal, The Great Seal of the Wardenship." Dee subsequently made his thanks known to Elizabeth through his patroness the Countess of Warwick. The Queen let it be known that she "was sorry that it was so far from hence: but that some better thing near at hand shall be found for me. And if opportunity of time would serve, her Majestie would speak with me herself." Based on his past experiences of such promises it is unlikely that Dee had much hope of any future improvement. The appointment clearly signalled that he was no longer considered to have any value to either the Queen or the court. The Manchester College of the 16th Century has now become the present day Manchester Cathedral, or to give it its full title, the Cathedral and Collegiate Church of St Mary, St Denys and St George. Established in 1422 by Thomas de la Warre under a licence from King Henry V the college was dissolved in 1547 in the reign of Edward VI by the Chantries Act, but then refounded by his sister Mary. Its future became uncertain when Elizabeth succeeded in 1559, but was eventually assured when she granted a new charter in 1578, allowing a warden, four fellows, two chaplains, four singing men and four choristers. Some time after the appointment, letters came from Kelley "of the Emperor's inviting me to his service again." Presumably at the age of 67 and in poor health Dee felt that relegation to the North of England was a better option than the turmoil of Rudolph's court as there is no evidence that he gave the offer any consideration.

While the wheels of bureaucracy turned slowly life continued for Dee and his family much as before. Francis Garland made yet another visit in March and had much to say of what Edward Kelley was getting up to in Bohemia. Bartholomew Hickman was a frequent

caller, staying for a few days before leaving again. For reasons not stated Lettice Hickman was discharged in May, being replaced by an Anne Powell to be paid 4 nobles and a pair of hose and shoes annually. The *Diary* entries record the comings and goings of other servants in the household at Mortlake. There is a particularly interesting entry for the 19th of October which reads "The old reckoning between me and Edmund Hilton made clear. Of his eleven pounds demanded, I showed him of my old note that he had received £6 15s, and after that Sled his 25s and Mr Emery his £3 lent him: as I did show him Sled his letter and Mr Emery his letter of the last month. All these sums make just an 11 pound." Dee's arithmetic would appear to be somewhat awry but presumably these are expenses arising from Hilton's journeys to England and back while Dee was abroad. The reappearance of Charles Sledd is also noteworthy and Dee records a week later that Sledd was asking him for legal help against his father. Funds were still in a precarious state, Dee recording that he had to borrow £3 12s from "my brother Arnold" and that "my cousin" George Broke gave him £50 in gold and 100 angels. Later in the year he had a loan of £6 for 14 days to pay Bartholomew Hickman from "my cousin" William Hetherly. Whether these were actually relatives or just familiar friends is not known. A Richard Western lent him £10 and a Mr Banks £5. There is an uneasy feeling that Dee is now borrowing from Peter to pay Paul.

Despite their advancing ages Dee and Jane continued to procreate, their eighth and final child, a daughter, Margaret, being born on the 14th of August. The godparents were Sir John Puckering, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, Lady Margaret Clifford, the Countess of Cumberland and Frances Walsingham, (daughter of Francis Walsingham, widow of Sir Philip Sidney, now married to Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex). Although happy to give their blessing none of the three chose to attend sending deputies in their place.

Dee began his preparations for the move to Manchester, writing in June to William Stanley, the 6th Earl of Derby (recently married to a granddaughter of William Cecil) who passed the matter on to a Mr Warren at the College, with an ensuing correspondence between Dee and the Fellows. The Earl owned much land and estates in Lancashire including College buildings and Dee met and dined with him on several occasions afterwards. Finally, on the 8th of November, Dee set in motion his move to Manchester, sending on his goods ahead. Settling his affairs at Mortlake took a little longer and it was not until the 15th of February 1596 that he finally arrived at his new position, being installed as Warden on the 20th. It was not to be the comfortable ending to his days that he had hoped for; indeed it was to prove to be a poisoned chalice. His *Diary* entries now record endless days of trying to resolve squabbles over the revenues due to the College, disputes with his tenants, attempts to ensure

the corn-tithes were being paid, arguments over the ownership of college property and legal wranglings. He soon discovered that the buildings were in a poor state of repair (some time after his arrival the college gate and part of the wall fell down). Disputes with local landowners who had appropriated college lands, such as Sir John Byron of Royston, lead him to make a survey of the college boundaries which resulted in open conflict with the locals. A good deal of time was spent in securing supplies, "seventeen head of cattle from my kinsfolk in Wales and twenty three barrels of "Dansk" rye through the good offices of John Pontoys.

The relocation to Manchester had no impact on his meetings with Bartholomew Hickman who continued to visit him both on his own and with his colleagues Francis Nicolls and Robert Charles. Dee noted payments to them of £4 in January 1597 and 40s subsequently. The meetings, clearly carrying on Dee's attempts to communicate with the spirit world, continued for the next three years with varying success, Dee recording on the 11th of July 1600 that he was "in a certain consternation of mind about the discord of the two skryers about the things they saw." It would seem puzzling that there are no extant records of these seances, given Dee's meticulous reporting of the actions undertaken with Edward Kelley. An entry in his *Diary* on the 29th of September 1600 however provides the explanation: "All Barthilimew Hickman's reports of sight and hearing spiritual were burnt. I burned, before Mr Nicholls, his brother, and Mr Wortley, all Barth. Hickman his untrue actions etc. A copy of the first part, which was afterward found, was burnt before me and my wife." Dee had finally realised that he was being duped. The following day they were all sent packing – Francis Nicolls, his daughter Mary (who Dee had obligingly employed as a servant), his brother Mr Williams, a Mr Wortly, Hickman and an Absalon Jones. After they had left, Roger Cook, his old assistant "offered and promised his faithful and diligent care and help, to the best of his skill and power, in the practices chemical." Dee had earlier recorded that "I had a dream after midnight of my enjoying and working of the philosopher's stone with others" and presumably events prompted Dee to abandon his essays in spiritualism and to return to alchemy as a consolation, indeed on the 1st of November he records that Roger had begun to carry out distillations. Their association lasted until February 1601 when Cook left to go to London after making a *pactum sacrum*, a secret agreement with Dee, although just what this entailed is not known. The next month Dee received a long letter from Hickman but its contents were not divulged.

The new situation seems to have done little to improve Dee's finances and he still recorded in his *Diary* sums of money which he was forced to borrow and personal items which he pawned, such as a silver tankard, the gift of the Countess of Hereford to his

daughter Francys, which he placed with Robert Welshman, the goldsmith, using Charles Legh (Leigh), one of the College fellows as an intermediary. Later he noted borrowing £10 from Edmund Chetham the schoolmaster against his silver plates and bowls as security and then £5 from Adam Holland of Newton on a silver salt pot. Dee had still not given up his hopes of regaining his lost rectory of Upton and on learning that it had become vacant made a bid for it only to be thwarted once again by the Archbishop.

Two of the fellows, Oliver Carter and Thomas Williamson were engaged in litigation with each other, and soon both were at loggerheads with Dee due either to resentment of his appointment or his interference in the College administration and finances. His relationship with the Fellows and others soon degenerated into open hostility. There were disputes over his accounts and an initial refusal to grant him his house-rent of £5. He records continuing problems in filling the position of curate and prolonged arguments with Oliver Carter "his impudent and evident disobedience in the church" which led to Dee instituting lawsuits against both him and George Birch another of the Fellows.

There follows a two year gap in Dee's *Diary* entries after that of March 1598 and it would seem that during this period he had returned to the Capital for on the 10th of June 1600 he recorded that he set out from London, with his wife, his two eldest sons Arthur and Rowland, Mary Nicholls and Richard Arnold, arriving in Manchester eight days later. In part at least Dee had been attempting to improve the state of the College and the month after his return a Commission was set up in the Chapter House. Dee summoned the Fellows who were "greatly in doubt of my heady displeasure by reason of their manifold misusing of themselves against me." Dee pointed out to them "The things that I had brought to pass at London for the College good, etc." and this may have helped to ease matters. Subsequently an audit was held "for the two years last past in my absence" at which the participants were named as Oliver Carter, Thomas Williamson and Robert Birch with Charles Leigh acting as Receiver. The Fellows still seemed intent on stirring up trouble for Dee however and on the 11th of September he recorded that "Mr Holland of Denton, Mr Gerard of Stopford, Mr Langley, &c. Commissioners from the Bishop of Chester...did call me before them in the church about 3 of the clock after noon and did deliver to me certain petitions put up by the Fellows against me." Dee gave them what answers he could but was asked to make a written response. He noted that later that night, just to finish off the day, there was thunder, lightning and a hail storm. The continuing stress of life at Manchester inevitably took its toll on Dee's already poor health. He began to suffer what he calls *pulsus intermittens*, an erratic heart beat, rectal bleeding, sciatic pains in his side and sleepless nights " *amaritudo mea circa mediam*

noctem," (my bitterness about midnight). To add to his misery his youngest son, Theodore died in 1601 and some four years later plague took his wife and two of his daughters, Madimia and Margaret.

At the close of the 16th century England was in the grip of rising hysteria over witchcraft. The local officers of the law who found themselves having to deal with such cases found Dee's library a valuable point of reference. He records lending Edmund Hopwood, a deputy-lieutenant and ecclesiastical commissioner, John Wier's *De Pretigiis Daemonum*, and Menghi's *Fustis Daemonum* and *Flagellum Daemonum* and then later on the scarce 1517 edition of the *Malleus Maleficarum*, the notorious Hammer of the Witches compiled by two Dominican inquisitors at the end of the 15th century. His possession of such material coupled with a rumoured dabbling in the esoteric arts continued to haunt him and allegations of satanic practices led him to petition James I on June the 5th 1604 to have him tried in this matter so that he might clear his name. In his submission, reprinted in Ellis's *Letters of Eminent Men*, he asks that he should be "be tryed and cleared of that horrible and damnable, and to him most grievous and dammageable Sclaunder, generally, and for these many yeeres last past, in this Kingdome raysed, and continued, by report, and Print, against him: Namely, That he is, or hath bin a Conjurer, or Caller, or Invocator of divels: Upon which most ungodly and false report, so boldly, constantly, and impudently avouched: yea, and uncontrolled, and hitherto unpunished, for so many yeeres, continuing" and offering himself "to the punishment of Death: (yea eyther to be stoned to death: or to be buried quicke (i.e. alive): or to be burned unmercifully; if by any due, true, and just meanes, the said name of Conjurer, or Caller, or Invocator of Divels or damned Spirites, can be proved to have beene, or to be, duely or justly reported of him." He finishes by asking that when it has been shown that he is innocent of these charges then he "will conceyve great and undoubted hope, that your Majestie will, soone after, more willingly have Princely regard of redressing of said Supplicant his farder griefes, and hinderances; no longer of him possibly to be endured: so long hath his utter undoing, by little and little, beene most unjustly compassed." He followed this a few days later with a petition to Parliament calling for "An Act General against Slander." James, despite his interest in such occult matters evidently had no concerns over the activities of an ancient magician and ignored him as did Parliament. The continuing enmity of the Fellows finally drove Dee from Manchester and he arrived back at Mortlake some time in 1605.

From this time onwards, biographical details of Dee's last years are indeed scarce. His exact whereabouts are unclear but were probably in the London area and at Mortlake.

Somehow Bartholomew Hickman had managed to worm his way back into Dee's favour and there are records of further seances which are included at the end of Meric Casaubon's *True and Faithful Revelation*." They are in stark contrast to the vivid and intricate visions and revelations revealed by Edward Kelley and through them can be seen the evidence that Hickman was no more than a charlatan intent on preying on an elderly and infirm man. Others of a similar ilk are named who also seem to be taking advantage of Dee's gullibility. The first recorded seance took place on the 20th of March 1607 at a Mistress Goodman's house in London. Dee begins by praying "Send your light and your truth, so that they may lead and guide me to your holy mountain and tabernacle." Hickman reports the appearance of the archangel Raphael who tells him that God will make him well again and then "thou shalt have all made known unto thee." While he had retained the Wardenship for its small income Dee is clearly still in dire financial straits and asks for guidance in approaching the Earl of Salisbury (Robert Cecil, Burleigh's son) and the council to make them "privy to my beggary." Raphael suggests he should proceed in this as far as his health allows him. Dee explains that he is afflicted with bleeding "not coming out of my fundament, but at a little, as it were a pinhole of the skin." The angel assures him that God will work with him in heart and mind and in view of his frailty there will be a pause in the actions until after the 10th of April.

It is possible that the records are incomplete, for the next action is dated as the 9th of July and took place at the Three Kings in King's Street, Westminster. Raphael appears only to say that he will be back the following day. Over the course of their relationship Hickman obviously has acquainted himself with the details of Dee's previous revelations and what he was trying to achieve by their means. When Raphael re-appears he unfolds God's intentions. Dee has been promised secret knowledge of the philosopher's stone and the Book of Dunstan. By God's mercy his life will be prolonged so that he might undertake a long journey to go to where he would have all these things explained to him. Firstly he should arrange to set all his worldly affairs in order. To help him in his travels he will be provided with some good friends such as John Pontoys who will come home and be of great assistance. He will leave behind his present life of want and of being beholden to those who do not care for him or wish him well and for performing this service for God his return will be that "when thou diest, and shall depart this world, thou shalt die with fame and memory to the end, that such a one was upon the earth, that God by him had wrought great and wonderful miracles in his service." Not unexpectedly Dee asks where he is to go but Raphael tells him to wait until the following morning for his answer. Naturally Dee comes to the seance armed

with a list of questions. Firstly he again asks what is to be his destination. Raphael is evasive, God will provide for him wherever he decides to go "He that hath commanded thee to take this journey in hand will provide for thee in Germany, or any other country wheresoever thou goest." He asks who are to be his companions and is told that John Pontoys will be one "as thy greatest comfort and special aid," and that "a very honest and well disposed young man" will be sent to him by God (and Hickman no doubt). He should use Pontoys to dispose of his books a few at a time for money towards his expenses.

Dee raises the question of his son Arthur's intended travels. Arthur had been offered an appointment at the Russian court and was making his preparations to depart. Raphael assures him that he should not worry, all will be well. There is the problem of permission to travel abroad; will James provide him with a licence? The angel tells him that there will not be a problem. Will he return to England? "Thou shalt be better able in health and strength of thy body to come to England again, if thou wilt: but thou shalt see and perceive thyself so mercifully provided for, that thou wilt have but little mind or willingness to come into England again, such shall God's great mercies be towards thee." Dee wryly remarks that in that case there will be no reason to retain his house at Mortlake. He had been expecting some money to arrive, sent to him by the Emperor Rudolph via a Hans Bik. "I marvel that it is not yet come hither." John Pontoys, Raphael tells him, will be able to give him information on this. The following day Raphael urges him to make known any doubts he might have on his intended journey but Dee is apparently content to do God's bidding and offers no further qualms. A few days later the subject of a jewel set in gold in Dee's possession is raised by Hickman who when it is handed him reports that he can see Raphael in it who says that he has now taken possession of the stone the better to help Dee in his proposed travels.

The next actions take place at Mortlake, beginning on the 5th of September. Hickman having now appropriated the jewel uses it to summon Raphael who explains that although Dee's enemies have robbed him of his possessions God will not allow them to inflict any hurt on him. The Emperor has been told false stories about him spread by none other than Roger Cook and that is why the expected money has not arrived. Dee asks how much the Emperor had been intending to send but is rebuffed with "John Dee, let it go and speak no further of it." Whether the money was a reality or just wishful thinking is unknown. A cynic might think that if it had indeed been dispatched it might well have been misappropriated. Dee is still uneasy. "As concerning the bereaving me of my own goods, I would gladly understand who hath my silver double gilt bell-salt, and other things here of late conveyed from me." It would seem that both Arthur and his sister Katherine had been forced to take and pawn some

of Dee's dwindling possessions to try to make ends meet. Raphael says that "thy son had it, although he would not, neither will, confess it" to which Dee answers "John Pontoys" but is told "be not too much inquisitive." The remaining time of the sessions deals in the main only with enquiries on the behalf of others for the location of buried treasure and recovery of lost property. It does however emerge that John Pontoys is intending to improve finances "by distillations and alchemical conclusions" but Dee is told not to trouble himself with these matters. Whether or not Dee really had been persuaded that he should once more set out on a pilgrimage to learn with God's help the secrets of nature is a moot point. The books he had entrusted to John Pontoys included his copy of Maginus' *Ephemerides* which he had used for his marginal diary annotations between 1585 and 1601. Against the date of 26th February 1609 Pontoys drew a death's head and the inscription "Jno Dee, hor 3 a.m." Dee had indeed set out on his last and final journey.

In 1595, before leaving for Manchester Dee sat down and wrote at "my poore cottage at Mortlake" what he entitled as his *Peroratio*. In the absence of any other document it may be considered as his last will and testament.

THE Almightye and most mercifull God, the Father; for his only Sonne (our Redeemer) Jesus Christ his sake: by his holy spirit, so direct, blesse, and prosper all my studies, and exercises philosophicall (yea, all my thoughts, words, and deedes) henceforward, even to the very moment of my departing from this world, that I may evidently and abundantly be found, and undoubtedly acknowledged of the wise and the just, to have beene a zealous and faithfull student in the Schoole of *Verity*, and an Ancient Graduate in the Schoole of *Charity*: to the honor and glory of the same God Almighty, and to the sound comfort and confirming of such as faithfully love and feare his divine Majestie, and unfeinedly continue in labor to do good on earth: when, while, to whome and as they may. Amen."

Many years later, in 1673, John Aubrey the antiquarian and author of *Brief Lives* paid a visit to Mortlake, where his grandfather William had lived and been a friend of Dee's. He learnt from one of its inhabitants, Goodwife Faldo, that her mother had nursed Dee in his last days. He had been buried in the chancel of the local church and his resting place marked with a marble slab. By the time of Aubrey's visit both grave stone and slab had disappeared. Mistress Faldo's recollection of Dee was of his being tall and slender, wearing a gown like an artist's with hanging sleeves. She remembered him as being a "mighty good man," a great

peace-maker who “if any of the neighbours fell out, he would never let them alone till he had made them friend.” Perhaps an epithet as good as any by which to remember him.

IN CONCLUSION

Everyone sees what you appear to be, few really know what you are.
Niccolo Machiavelli.

John Dee came from a moderately well-to-do family. His father, Roland, held a position at Court, albeit a minor one, and had amassed sufficient funds to send the young Dee to Cambridge and to finance his initial travels on the continent. In his early years, armed by a university education and an obvious intelligence, he set out as did many a young man, to conquer the world of contemporary knowledge assembling a vast store of information from which he used his powers of reasoning to distil out and compile new insights. He was not however an innovator in the same sense as say Copernicus, Kepler or Bacon. His father's fall from grace and resulting impoverishment must have come as a severe shock as did his own imprisonment a few years later. The fact that he managed to extricate himself from this predicament and gain a position with Bishop Bonner would indicate that at the time his Catholic credentials were sufficiently acceptable. Like most other contemporaries he was prepared to bend with the wind and by virtue of his patrons achieved a position under the Protestant Elizabeth, being listed amongst the subscribers in Lok's accounts for the Frobisher expeditions as being "of the Court" rather than "of the City."

This must have led him to aspirations to the point perhaps of expectation that he would achieve some recognition for his services with the official title say of "The Queen's Philosopher" but in this he had perhaps too high an opinion of his importance. We have been looking at things pretty much from Dee's perspective but it is clear that he was not the only mathematician, astrologer or philosopher to have the Royal ear and aristocratic patronage and by the 1580's it must have dawned on him that his hoped for position was not going to materialise. He had arrived back from Europe in 1551 filled with the new ideas about natural science and philosophy anxious to convert his fellow countrymen. He became an enthusiastic supporter of exploration, both to the east and the west, not only to expand the sphere of English power but also to bring the Word of God to the heathen. Under Elizabeth his reputation as a scholar blossomed into full flower and he became a source of reference and knowledge for enquirers from all walks of life, casting horoscopes for the rich and famous as

easily as producing navigational charts and sailing instructions for the merchants and adventurers spreading the influence of English sea power throughout the world.

Unfortunately he lacked the political acumen needed to build on his abilities and his contacts at Court to secure the preferment he desired. This resulted in resentment which was reinforced by a growing belief that he was being denied what he considered to be due recompense for his own contributions to society and country. Over and over again he describes how he has travelled across Europe, endured great hardships and spent time and money in unraveling the secrets of nature, not only gaining little in the way of wealth and status in return but suffering the opprobrium of those who through jealous, spite or ignorance branded him a conjuror and magician. At times it seemed that he stood at the doorway of achieving his desires but each time his hopes were dashed. Humphrey Gilbert granted him great swathes of North America but all was lost. He invested time and money in Frobisher's "black gold" only to lose both his investment and credibility in the aftermath. Just before he left England for Poland he had managed to secure a lease on some mines in Devon, only to have this lapse in his absence. He would no doubt have been considerably disconcerted on his return to learn that Adrian Gilbert and others who had taken over the lease had made some £10,000 apiece.

As we have seen he had had on numerous occasions been promised positions which would have afforded him a reasonable income but all of which failed to materialise, leading him no doubt to the conclusion that he was just being made use of. He was becoming suspicious of those he had previously considered his allies – Cecil and Walsingham "hated him.....the Lord Thresorer who was come to my howse to burn my bokes when I was dead." Charles Sledd, a known informer was for some reason frequenting his household. To make matters even worse he had run out of money. They had had to scrape together funds to get a horse so that Kelley could go and search for buried treasure and the final embarrassment came when he had to admit to Dudley that he would have to pawn valuables so as to provide dinner for another visit from Laski.

Just what it was that decided Dee to turn his attention to the spiritual world is uncertain. It may be, as he said, that he had exhausted his efforts in uncovering the secrets of nature and now determined to change his focus to the supernatural. This was accompanied by a slowly growing belief on Dee's part that he was the prophet of an occult revelation destined to play an important part in establishing a new world order. Undoubtedly his anticipation of such an upheaval in the world's affairs was particularly reinforced by his knowledge of Astrology. As we have seen, 1583 was the occasion of a much anticipated rare triple conjunction of the

planets Jupiter and Saturn in opposition to the Sun, signaling the onset of an approaching apocalypse. As he travelled along the path of angelic revelation as laid out by Edward Kelley he discovered his true purpose in life, which was none other than to prepare for the coming Armageddon and its aftermath. He was to be the author of a new book of revelations, the Book of Loagaeth, dictated by divine spirits. His role was to be the means by which the wicked would perish and a new world order cleansed and purified would emerge, a belief which would be seized on and fed by Edward Kelley. It was perhaps this, coupled with his precarious finances and a perceived lack of reward that prompted him to act on the spiritual prophecies that Count Albert Laski was the instrument of God and throw in his lot with this Polish adventurer.

Unlike Dee, there is little reliable information regarding Edward Kelley's early life. Although there are tales of him having been at Oxford there is no proof of this and it is more likely that his education was in the School of Hard Knocks and the University of Life. He was undoubtedly clever and must have developed a reputation for mediumship well before he met Dee, a talent he was no doubt using to support himself, hence his acquaintance with the mysterious Mr Clerkson who apparently acted as a recruiting agent for Dee in these matters. Having learnt from Clerkson that Dee was unhappy with Barnabas Saul, Kelley saw an opportunity to gain access to someone who he presumably regarded as a well known and respected figure, a useful adjunct to better things and also someone from whom he could learn much useful esoteric knowledge, perhaps even the secret of the Philosopher's Stone.

We know very little about Kelley's private life other than what is revealed through Dee. He was not in full time residence at Mortlake but for most of the time lead a separate existence with his own circle of friends and colleagues – John Husey or instance with whom he produced the scroll, written in a strange alphabet for Dee to decipher. Had he been acting as a medium for Husey and dictated the scroll in the same way that he was dictating the angelic conversations to Dee? Were Kelley and Husey partners in a scam to extort money on the pretext of financing a treasure hunt or was it simply a ploy to convince Dee of Kelley's ability as a medium? Was he duping Husey as much as he was Dee? If Kelley was in fact a scoundrel then where did he get his inspiration for the spirits and their instructions for the book, the seals and the sigils which he dictated to Dee? The contemporary world view of the microcosm, "as above so below" was compatible with a visible world controlled by hidden forces and access to these could be gained by such means as symbolism and 'keys' - occult words and phrases with which to command spirits. It can be assumed that he had access to

Dee's library with works such as Agricola's *De Occulta Philosophia*, a work of practical cabala containing details of the elaborate seals and tables of names by which angels could be summoned and Dee's copies of Trithemius's *Steganographia* and of the *Book of Soyga* which both contained similar material. Kelley may well have found these useful as source material, although he later blamed the spirits themselves for copying from Agricola's work. No doubt he and John Dee discussed progress in between the sessions and a clever man could have led an unsuspecting Dee into revealing his expectations.

The question which must be asked is, was Kelley an out and out scoundrel who duped a somewhat credulous Dee who wanted to believe in the possibility of direct communication with God and his angels or did he suffer from a persistent delusion that his voices and visions were real? Remember, Dee never heard or saw anything. His role was to ask questions (which the spirits heard directly, rather than through Kelley as intermediary) and to record the responses and the directions for writing the new book of revelations. If indeed Kelley was no more than a deliberate fraudster then the question must be asked as to why he sustained such an amazingly complex hoax, requiring remarkable powers of invention for over four years and spent so much time in assisting Dee in drafting the complicated tables revealed by the spirits at often tedious length. As D'Israeli in his *Amenities of Literature* remarks "The masquerade of his spiritual beings was most remarkable for its fanciful minuteness." There are episodes in which he is admonished and tormented by the spirits and receives spiritual instructions which he finds repugnant – such as taking a wife and others in which he vehemently denounces them as being devils. He suffers from fainting fits, headaches and loss of memory, an angel attacks him with a sword and others inflict physical damage, he imagines that his belly is full of fire and his bowels burning. Is this just very clever play acting in a complicated game of deception or are they the distractions of a man at the mercy of his own mental aberration? Why would he, against his own inclinations, enter a loveless marriage with a wife he came to hate? Woolley suggests, without offering any explanation, that there might have been a commercial arrangement, but if so why would he take his spouse with him when they left England, especially as they seemed to despise each other?

It would be most interesting to have a psychologist trawl through the seances and Kelley's actions to determine whether the visions and messages were derived from some form of mental illness, such as schizophrenia which is associated with auditory and visual hallucinations, paranoia and the delusion of being controlled by external forces. This could well have been exacerbated by Dee's regime of self purification by abstinence, fasting and

intense prayer sessions before each Action. Perhaps too, Kelley in the grip of his mental aberration was also caught up in Dee's apocalyptic dreams.

By 1583 his affairs seem to have been going badly awry. His wife had left Blockley where perhaps they were living and gone back to her mother at Chipping Norton. He had fallen out with John Husey who now was naming him as a cheat and a warrant was out for his arrest for 'coining', a charge often brought against those suspected of pretending to produce gold by means of alchemical trickery.

We now come to the third player in this drama, Prince Albert Laski. What was in fact the real reason for his visit to England and if this was no more than a private visit why, as a minor noble from a small and distant duchy was he seemingly treated so royally? He was known to have had a keen interest in alchemy and the occult and had financed the first edition of Paracelsus's *Archidoxae Philosophicae Theophrasti* published in Cracow in 1569. Undoubtedly he would have known of Dee's reputation. Remember, Dee had received notification of his coming via North before his arrival in England so there can be no doubt that he intended to visit him. Perhaps this was simply to discuss esoteric matters with an acknowledged expert. Quite possibly he wanted to confer with Dee about the implications of the coming Great Conjunction. Perhaps, if he was nurturing plans for a rebellion, he felt that an astrological consultation would be useful and such being the case then it would have been prudent to seek it from one who lived as far from Poland as possible. If he was suspected of attempting a Polish rebellion which might disturb the equilibrium of Eastern Europe, then he would obviously have been of interest to Walsingham and Burghley and hence the insertion of spies into his retinue. He would also have been of concern as a Catholic and there would have been interest in his contacts in England. Likely Richard Dudley and Philip Sidney, both friends of Dee, were encouraged to befriend him so as to keep a close eye on his meetings and perhaps this is why money for entertainment was so readily available.

It should not be thought that Dee was Laski's only target in England. A. J. Turner suggests that Thomas Allen, a mathematician and astrologer was also invited to join Laski in Poland but perhaps wisely declined to do so. Allen, who had similar interests to Dee lectured at Oxford and counted Sir Philip Sydney and Robert Fludd amongst his pupils. He was also popularly believed to be a necromancer. In his will he left a large concave mirror, given to him by Dee to Sir Thomas Aylesbury.

Woolly supposed that Laski had links with the Family of Love or *Familiae Caritatis*, through his kinsman Johannes a Lasko. The organisation was an heretical sect founded by

Henry Nicholas, a German mystic, in Emden in 1540 with the intention of promoting wider religious reformation in Europe. He had travelled to England establishing colonies of believers in Cambridgeshire, Guildford and Surrey. Ortelius, an old friend of Dee's was known to be a member so it is more than likely that Dee was acquainted with the group's ideas.

It would be worth a great deal to be privy to the discussions which Laski held with Dee and Kelley during his visits to Mortlake. He obviously told them of his intentions. Did this offer an amazing stroke of luck for Kelley? Could he now see the means of an escape from their present difficulties? The appearance of the apparently wealthy prince at Mortlake seeking guidance as to his prospects for the Polish throne is more than likely to have prompted Kelley's agile mind to devise a scheme by which both his and Dee's fortunes could be mended. With sufficient encouragement Laski could be induced to return to Poland taking them both with him. Was this why Laski was so promptly admitted to the seances, something which no one else had been permitted to do? The prince was certainly given just the response that he would have wanted. He would have the throne not just of Poland but of Moldavia as well and would have them with God's blessing as a saviour of mankind. It went without saying that he would need to take his angelic intercessors with him on his return home.

As they travelled across Europe information (and misinformation) from Laski and fellow travelers no doubt provided Kelley with some of the material which was introduced in the seances with Dee such as the news of Dee's house having been ransacked, the whereabouts of Vincent Seve, the death of Sidney and other snippets of news from home. It is also quite possible that he was conducting private seances for Laski behind Dee's back. Unfortunately Kelley's grasp of Polish and European politics would not appear to have been too extensive. On their arrival in Poland he found himself caught up in a maelstrom of local and national intrigue. Bathory having just managed to fend off external threats from Russia and the Ottoman Empire was facing internal dissent from the Polish nobility who constantly intrigued and plotted against him, activities in which Laski would seem to be implicated, making him a dangerous associate. At the same time Rome was making a determined effort to mount a counter-reformation offensive into Eastern Europe and to encourage the support of Bathory and Rudolph for Philip of Spain and to aid him in his invasion of the Low Countries as an offensive against the strongholds of Protestantism and especially England. Kelley found himself out of his depth in such tempestuous waters and struggled to latch onto a suitable patron without burning their bridges as far as Laski was concerned. Hence, while Laski was held in reserve, sometimes in favour, sometimes a lost soul, the spirits sent them

hither and yon, to Rudolph, back to Bathory, then to Bohemia again. Their expulsion from Prague must have seemed a calamity at the time but it can be guessed that by then Kelley had already been selling his abilities as an alchemist to Rozmberk and that this played a major part in their recall.

It is during their time at Trebon that an episode arose which casts great doubt on the picture of Dee as an innocent participant in Kelley's spiritual dealings. This is of course the incident of the angelic records being burnt and then miraculously restored. Dee's complete lack of reaction to the spiritual instruction to destroy the work of so many years can only be construed as either an utterly naive and unquestioning acceptance that this was indeed the will of God or else as the acquiescence of one who was complicit in a fraud which was being played out. In stark contrast his reaction to the angelic demand that he should condone adultery covers many pages in his records and it takes repeated urgings from the spirits before he is able to agree. If Dee was able to participate in this one deception then the question must arise as to whether he was also involved in similar chicanery, perhaps in those spiritual prophecies regarding Laski back in England which opened up the chance for better prospects for both Kelley and himself. What ever the truth of the matter, it is undeniably the fact that Dee had a deep-rooted belief in the possibility of direct communication with the spiritual world and despite his treatment at the hands of Edward Kelley continued his efforts after he returned to England through his association with Bartholomew Hickman and his cronies who proved to be equally unreliable.

Once they had been allowed to return to Bohemia, Kelley lost little time in divorcing himself from Dee whose spiritual evangelicalism was now becoming both an embarrassment and a liability. It is in this callous treatment of his associate of some four years that Kelley's true nature and intentions become fully revealed. In the end it could be considered that Kelley got his just deserts, achieving the wealth and position he craved but losing it all when he was finally revealed as a fraud. At the start of his treatise entitled *De Lapide Philosophorum* Kelley set out the hope that "my life and character will so become known to posterity that I may be counted among those who have suffered much for the sake of truth." A. E. Waite, in the preface to his book *The Alchemical Writings of Edward Kelley* offered the following observation: "The justification thus modestly desired by Edward Kelly has not been accorded him by the supreme court of judgment to which he appealed. Posterity continues to regard him in much the same light as he was looked at by the men of his immediate period, as a fraudulent notary who was deservedly deprived of his ears; as a sordid impostor, who duped the immeasurable credulity of the learned Doctor Dee, and

subsequently involved his victim in transactions which have permanently degraded an otherwise great name; finally, as a pretended transmuter of metals, who was only too leniently treated by the emperor whom he deceived."

Dee on the other hand, while for a time enjoying a degree of fame and recognition for which he had always yearned, lost it all when Kelley abandoned him and he returned to England a disillusioned man, ending his years in miserable poverty but leaving behind him a legacy of intellectual achievement which has lasted down the centuries.

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