

PETROLEUM  
PETROLEUM

*A Prophecy*

by  
*Gustav Meyrink*

translated by  
*George Scivani*

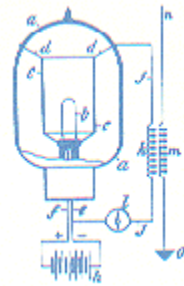
AKASHIC BULLETIN NUMBER 1



Akashic from the Sanskrit AKASH – Towards the shining (manifestation), etheric, sky speech, the hidden meaning of the hidden meaning, the Psychic Keep, the unwritten history of humankind – past, present & future, God's Book of Remembrance, the Universal Radio, the Subliminal Cassette, the Cloud Doctrine, Diaries of the Radar ect.

The Akashic Records are nothing less than human thought preserved as are radio waves in the ether. An adept or receiver sufficiently tuned to these vibrations would then theoretically be able to read these records, even listening in to past or future thoughts or conversations. From Poetry to Prophecy. From light – Clairvoyance!

*I.C.*





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*To insure that certain  
prophecies I made come  
to the public notice,  
I submit the following  
tale which was written  
in 1903.*

*Gustav Meyrink*

It was noon Friday as Dr. Kunibald Jessegrim slowly emptied a solution of strychnine into the stream.

A dead fish bobbed in the water, belly up.

“That might have been you,” Jessegrim said to himself and stretched, glad that he’d rejected all thoughts of suicide when he’d thrown away the poison.

He’d looked death in the face like this three times, and each time he’d found himself chained to life by the vague notion that he’d been called to greatness, to a wild and total revenge. The first time he’d wanted to take his life was after someone had stolen one of his discoveries; again, years later, when he’d been driven out of his profession for refusing to stop denouncing and persecuting that thief; and now, because... because...

Kunibald Jessegrim groaned as the contemplation of past misery became real once again.

Everything was over, everything on which he depended, everything that had once been all he’d loved and believed in. The blind, senseless, smallminded hatred of a certain group had done this to him, a mafia inspired by mere slogans who pitted themselves against anything that wasn’t born of cliché.

What hadn’t he conceived, proposed, attempted?

Yet no matter what he tried, he always came up against that “Great Wall of China:” the darling horde of eggheads and their favorite slogan, *but!*

“God’s hostage! Yes, that was the solution! Father in heaven, Almighty One, make me a destroyer, an Attila!” Rage blazed up in Jessegrim’s heart. Tamerlane, Genghis Kahn, slouching across Asia with his yellow Mongolian horde, turning Europe’s fertile fields to desert, the leader of the Vandals who found peace at last upon the rubble of Roman art – they were his true ancestors – strong, uncouth brothers born in the eagle’s nest. A monstrous, boundless love for these creatures of Siva awoke in him. He felt the presence of their ghosts, that another type of being walked inside him, lightning-like. Had he looked in the mirror at that moment, the miracle of the Transfiguration would have made perfect sense to him.

This is the way the Dark Power of Nature falls into the blood of man – deep and quick.

Dr. Jessegrim was in possession of profound knowledge. He was a chemical scientist, getting on in life was no problem for him. In the Americas such men succeeded. No wonder, then, that he too had money, was rich even. He’d settled in Mexico, in Tampico, and through a flourishing trade in mescal, a new narcotic and anaesthetic he’d learned how to prepare, he’d managed to make millions. Vast acres of land in the vicinity

of Tampico were in his control and an enormous supply of oil under that land promised to increase his fortune unimaginably.

Yet this was not what his heart yearned for.

The New Year approached. "Tomorrow it will be January 1, 1951, and the lazy Creoles will have another occasion for a three day festival of drinking and Fandango dancing." So though Dr. Jessegrim as he looked out over the sea from his balcony. "And in Europe things won't be much better. By now the daily newspapers in Austria have already come out, twice as thick as yesterday's and three times as ridiculous. The New Year as a naked child, brand new calendars with floating women holding cornucopias, noteworthy statistics: on Tuesday at precisely the eleventh hour, thirty-fifth minute, sixteenth second exactly nine million seconds will have elapsed since the discoverer of double bookkeeping closed his eyes to a well deserved and eternal rest, etc., etc."

Dr. Jessegrim continued to stare at the motionless mirror of the sea as it shimmered so peculiarly in the starlight, until it struck 12.

Midnight!

He pulled out his watch and wound it until his fingertips came up against resistance in the spring. He applied pressure, first lightly and then with increasing strength. There – a light cracking sound, the spring broke, the watch was still.

Dr. Jessegrim laughed scornfully, "I'll break your springs too, good people."

An awesome explosion startled the city. Its rumble came from far off to the south and sailors reckoned that it must have originated near the peninsula, somewhere between Tampico and Vera Cruz.

No one saw any flames; the lighthouse gave no signal.

Thunder? Now, and under a clear sky? Impossible! Probably an earthquake. Everyone crossed themselves. Only the saloonkeepers cursed the situation because their regular customers had all tumbled out of the taverns and taken themselves to higher ground where they told each other weird tales.

Dr. Jessegrim paid this no heed. He sat in his study humming something like, 'Ade, mein Land Tyrol'. He was in excellent disposition. He brought out a map from a cabinet, drew a circle on it, checked with his notebooks and was satisfied to see that everything tallied. As far north as Omaha, perhaps even further, lay the oil fields. This much he knew. And he knew that the total petroleum underground must form a lake as big as Hudson Bay. He was certain. He'd figured it all out, calculations he'd worked on for the last twelve years. It followed, in his opinion, that the entire land mass of Mexico must be honeycombed with caves that, at least as far as the oil was concerned, were connected to that supply. It had become his life's obsession to eliminate, bit by bit, the wall that stood between those two bodies of oil. All year long he'd employed whole armies of workers to this end. And the money it cost! Everything he'd made in the mescal trade had gone to it. And were he once to come across oil in the process, his plan would be ruined. Naturally the government was quick to lay the detonations for him, since they were against the whole undertaking anyway.

This evening the last walls were being breached, the one that led to the sea, on the peninsula, and the one further north near St. Louis de Potosi. A preconceived and irreversible sequence of events had led to these explosions.

Dr. Kunibald Jessegrim pocketed his last few thousand dollars and headed for the station. At four o'clock in the morning an express train was leaving for New York. Why should he stay in Mexico!

There it was in all the newspapers, the original telegram from various points on the Gulf of Mexico, written in the abbreviation of the International Cable Code: EPHRAIM CALF-KIDNEY BERRYSLIME, which translates approximately as: Surface of the Gulf completely covered with oil STOP Origin unknown STOP Everything far and wide stinks STOP The Governor of the State.

The Americans were very interested. For them the event would doubtless make a powerful impression on the Stock Exchange, and oil futures in particular. Fluctuation in the price of goods is, after all, half of life! Bankers on Wall Street, when asked whether the latest developments would cause a rise or a drop in activity, shrugged their shoulders and refused to give an opinion, since the causes of the present phenomenon were still unknown. After all, if anyone chose to go against the decisions of the Stock Exchange, against what reason demanded, he stood to make himself a lot of money.

The news made no particular impression on the temper of Europe. Tariffs were secure and recent laws had been enacted aimed at enflaming patriotism and improving methods for inducting souls into military service through the planned, so-called 'three year voluntary lottery' conjoined with the abolition of the first names of all male citizens.

Meanwhile, just as Dr. Jessegrim had calculated, the oil flowed relentlessly from the underground basin of Mexico into the Gulf, and built on its surface an opalized layer that continued to expand and, driven by the Gulf Stream, soon threatened to cover the entire ocean.

The shores were desolate; the populace pulled back inland.

Shame on the greatness of cities!

The aspect of the ocean took on a terrifying beauty – the immense surface of the spill glittered and shimmered in every color: red, green, violet, and then deep, deep black – like fantasies out of a fairytale star-world. This particular oil was thicker than had ever been seen before, and through contact with the salty sea, showed no signs of change other than a gradual loss of some of its odor.

Scholars were of the opinion that a thorough investigation of the origins of this bizarre occurrence would be of high scientific value. And so, at last, Dr. Jessegrim's talents came to be recognized, since he was noted for his practical knowledge in the field and as an expert on the Mexican oil store. They couldn't disregard his opinion now, yet they had great difficulty in fathoming what it was precisely that he was trying to say. He was brief and to the point, but the implications of what he was saying were far beyond what they expected:

"If the oil continues to flow at its present rate, by my calculations in 2729 weeks every ocean in the world will be covered and rain will cease to fall, since no water will be able to evaporate. At best, all we'll be getting is a petroleum rain."

This frivolous prophecy called forth a storm of disapproval, yet with each succeeding day it seemed to become more of a possibility. The invisible flood of oil refused to exhaust itself. On the contrary, it grew inexplicably larger, and as it did a horrifying panic gripped mankind.

Hourly there were new reports from observatories in America and Europe. Yes, even the observatory in Prague, which up until now had concerned itself entirely with

photographing the moon, cast a troubled eye on this singular phenomenon. No one in the Old World talked anymore of the new military master plan, and the father of that bill, who was serving in the new European forces, a certain Major Dressel, Ritter von Glubingen ab Zinski auf Trottelguen, was entirely forgotten.

As usual in periods of confusion, when signs of doom stand plainly in the heavens, the voices of the restless in spirit grow loud. Those who are never satisfied will dare to test the typical reverence everyone has for the status quo.

“Down with the military! It eats, eats, eats up all our money! Build machines, come up with a plan to save despairing mankind from the petroleum!”

But this can't be done, warned the discerning. We simply can't drop so many millions of soldiers on the unemployment lines all at once! “What do you mean ‘unemployed’? Enlisted men need only be pensioned off. Everyone will have learned something from the experience, and it will be the simplest thing to pull off,” came the answer.

“Oh great! The enlisted men! But what about the officers?”

A weighty objection indeed!

For the longest time opinion wavered from one side to the other and no party could get the upper hand, until a coded cablegram arrived from New York: PORCUPINE POUNWISE PERITONITIS AMERICA, which translates as: Oil flow remains constant STOP Situation of the utmost gravity STOP Telegraph immediately whether the stink is as unbearable for you as it is for us STOP Heartfelt greetings STOP America.

That was the last straw!

Someone who speaks the language of the people – a wild fanatic – arise! A mighty one, like a rock in the surf – fascinating – who through the power of his words will goad the people on to rash deeds!

“Let the soldiers go free! Away with this farce! At least once let's make the officers useful. We'll give them new uniforms, if that will make them happy! How about frog-green ones with red polka dots! Then off to the shores they go to daub up the petroleum with enormous pieces of blotting paper, while mankind meditates on how this terrifying menace is dealt with!”

The crowds rejoiced!

The notion that such measures could not possibly make a difference, that it would be altogether saner to struggle with chemical substances to combat the oil, found no ear.

“We know! We know everything!”

*(But what should be done with the officers next?)*



## Postscript

Gustav Meyrink, one of the best kept secrets of the twentieth century, was born in Vienna in 1868. A great occult writer whose satirical works were banned in Austria as early as 1917 and whose books were among the first to be burned in Nazi Germany, Meyrink was a pacifist who scoffed at so-called patriotic values in favor of a spiritual reality grounded in mystical disciplines. Though he never encouraged adulation, he was hailed as a seer by the Rosicrucians throughout Europe & was in fact the Grand Master of Germany. His short stories and novels often deal with possession and rely on his deep knowledge of alchemy, the Kabbala, yogic practice and Sufism. Yet almost none of his works has been translated into English save his celebrated novel, *The Golem*, much admired by Jorge Luis Borges. Meyrink, who died in 1932 while meditating in a pool of sunlight pouring through his window, wrote *Petroleum, Petroleum* in 1903 as a prophecy. When I first read this story in French some ten years ago I was living in the Himalayas. I was so struck by its prophetic qualities and by its wonderful melodramatic and satirical style that I began to look for someone who would translate it for me. It took until 1991, 88 years since its original publication, to get a final copy in English, thanks to the efforts of George Scrivani, who between trips to India on behalf of Hanuman Books, delivered to me this finished manuscript. Once before when reading about a perilous flow of oil into the Gulf of Mexico, I thought – here it is, Meyrink’s prophecy! But now that our planet veers ever closer to ecological disaster in the light, or should I say darkness, of the recent contamination of the Persian Gulf by billions of gallons of oil and the burning oilfields which are poisoning the desert skies, we face the promise of a black greasy rain starting from the cradle of our civilization. How ironic that General Schwarzkopf translates to General Blackhead and that Saddam Insane should arrive as a karmic instrument of a world debased by materialistic greed. As we prepare to drill for oil off the coast of Alaska, Kunibald’s dream becomes a reality and there will be no blotter big enough to account for our human infamy. The slouching beast, the reeling birds, spell no second coming but a knell of death. Donkey ears for the human race. Midas, get thee hence!

Ira Cohen



*And a crust of earth concealed the core of the flame.*