

moisture are generative and creative elements; hence the ancients, says Proclus, deemed Jupiter, and Venus, and the Moon to have a good power; Saturn and Mercury, on the other hand, had an evil nature.

Other distinctions of the character of the stars are enumerated, equally visionary, and suggested by the most fanciful connections. Some are masculine, and some feminine: the Moon and Venus are of the latter kind. This appears to be merely a mythological or etymological association. Some are diurnal, some nocturnal: the Moon and Venus are of the latter kind, the Sun and Jupiter of the former; Saturn and Mars are both.

The fixed stars, also, and especially those of the zodiac, had especial influences and subjects assigned to them. In particular, each sign was supposed to preside over a particular part of the body; thus Aries had the head assigned to it, Taurus the neck, and so on.

The most important part of the sky in the astrologer's consideration, was that sign of the zodiac which rose at the moment of the child's birth; this was, properly speaking, the *horoscope*, the *ascendant*, or the *first house*; the whole circuit of the heavens being divided into twelve *houses*, in which life and death, marriage and children, riches and honors, friends and enemies, were distributed.

We need not attempt to trace the progress of this science. It prevailed extensively among the Arabians, as we might expect from the character of that nation. Albumasar, of Balkh in Khorasan, who flourished in the ninth century, who was one of their greatest astronomers, was also a great astrologer; and his work on the latter subject, "*De Magnis Conjunctionibus, Annorum Revolutionibus ac eorum Perfectionibus*," was long celebrated in Europe. Aboazen Haly (the writer of a treatise "*De Judiciis Astrorum*"), who lived in Spain in the thirteenth century, was one of the classical authors on this subject.

It will easily be supposed that when this *apotelesmatic* or *judicial* astrology obtained firm possession of men's minds, it would be pursued into innumerable subtle distinctions and extravagant conceits; and the more so, as experience could offer little or no check to such exercises of fancy and subtlety. For the correction of rules of astrological divination by comparison with known events, though pretended to by many professors of the art, was far too vague and fallible a guidance to be of any real advantage. Even in what has been called Natural Astrology, the dependence of the weather on the heavenly bodies, it is easy to see what a vast accumulation of well-observed facts is requisite to establish