

The Platonist.

"Platonism is immortal because its principles are immortal in the Human Intellect and Heart." The Esoteric doctrine of all religions and philosophies is identical.

"THE PERFECT WAY:"

THE ANCIENT MYSTERIES AND PERFECTIVE RITES.

BY

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The Myth, the Drama, and the Initiatory or Perfective Rite, are our legacies from the Archaic World. They have, indeed, been transformed into newer legends and observances; nevertheless, somewhat of their aroma and spirit is preserved in the folk-lore and traditions which have retained their hold in popular remembrance. These were accordingly no idle tales with which to amuse children, but receptacles of the faith and aspirations of serious-thinking men; and therefore the vitality which abides in them still has kept them from perishing. "All the eastern nations," says Origen—"the people of India, the Persians, the Syrians, conceal sacred mysteries under their religious myths. The sages and philosophers of all religions penetrate the true meaning; while the ignorant see only the exterior symbol—the bark that covers it."

Secret rites and mystic observances, however, were not peculiar to Eastern nations alone, nor to particular races of human beings. They existed every where, in

Egypt and China as well as in India and the countries of the Euphrates, with the Skyths of Northern Asia as well as the more cultured nations of the South. The various peoples of America had their arcana and sacred emblems, and even now the tribes of the African continent are found also with analogous symbols and observances. However much they differ in form, they have curious resemblances in idea.

The modes of interpretation are twofold. The physical scientist reasons from the external appearance, and so evolves every thought and symbol from the vilest inceptions. The philosopher considers the sources and mainsprings of existence, and perceives the divinity in every manifestation. The former accumulates his facts and labors after the manner of Sisyphos to deduce their order and principles; the latter contemplates the scenes from a higher altitude and divines the laws, purposes and relations of every thing. These methods are essential to each other, curious as it may appear; and it is just, therefore, while adopting the superior view to receive what of truth and advantage is offered by the conjectures and deductions of the materialist.

The thinkers and worshippers of the Archaic World, we may reasonably take for granted, never left their homes at stated periods to engage in absurd ceremonies void of further meaning. A farce will exhaust the patience of its witnesses; but a drama full of sense, which every spectator realises in his own experience, will always attract a multitude. Thus the Kabeirian temples were thronged when the mystic service began in the uncomprehended dialect, the Eleusinia were observed for centuries till arbitrary power forbade it, and the Mithraica, beginning nobody knows when in the distant East, conquered their way over Africa and Europe, and continued to exist long after Pontiff and Emperor by crusade and inquisitorial torture had sought

their extirpation. A faith to which its votaries adhere so tenaciously must have its roots deeply set and intertwined closely around the innermost things of human impulse, thought and action.

We have all read the tale of Cinderella, admired it, and wondered how it could have been imagined. It is told, we are informed, in the language of every country of Europe, and is found in very ancient Hindu legends. We learn that the beautiful maid was the aurora or night-cloud, whose feet are so small as to be invisible, and that Mithras, the Sun-god, seeks her by the lost slipper which fits no other foot, and finds her at the eventide. Let it be so; for human life is figured and written out in the sky. But know, too, that the human soul is the cinder-girl who is foully clad and employed in menial offices, but has a fairy godmother, the *Nous* or Spirit, to fit her out bravely and meet for a bride to the King's son. Why, we ask, does the latter interpretation chime so well with the former? Because, unlike as they may seem, "the dream is one."

Doubtless, the Egyptian legend of Asa and Asar, and the Lady and Lord—better known to us as Isis and Osiris—belonged originally to the same category. They are introduced to us as the twin children of Seb and Nout, the divinities of the Foreworld; and Horos was their son. Primevally Osiris is the Great God, the "One," and after that the "Creator;" finally becoming Osiris, the Lord of the earth, upon the appearance of mankind for whose benefit, both in this mode of being and the next, he manifested himself.

Making the tour of the earth to diffuse enlightenment and the knowledge of the liberal arts, he leaves Egypt under the charge of Isis; and on his return is treacherously put to death by Seth, his brother, being enclosed in an ark or coffin and cast into the river Nile. Directly after, Isis sets out in quest of his body, and af-

ter innumerable wanderings and hardships finds it, and brings it home. The murderous Seth, however, comes upon it while hunting by moonlight, rends it into fourteen (some say twenty-six) pieces, and scatters them. Isis again sets out in a boat, recovers them, and buries them where she finds them. After this Horos fights with the usurper, makes him prisoner, and delivers him to her to be put to death. She, however, sets him at liberty, and he makes his escape into Palestine.

This legend, like other tales of our folk-lore, is susceptible of numerous interpretations, according to the mental condition, and fancy of the expounder. This was a peculiarity of the ancient myths. Doubtless the framework of the story was a delineation of an important period in Egyptian history. Osiris appears to have been unknown in the archaic period; his name was first inscribed on the monuments when the Shepherds, probably the Kyklopes of mythology, first came into Egypt. Seth the tutelary divinity of the northern Nile-country was worshipped and probably introduced by them. After a time they usurped the government, and held it for centuries. They were finally overcome and expelled from the country; after which period Egypt entered upon a new and prosperous career.

The public and arcane worship of Osiris appear to have been adopted subsequent to these events. Like every other religious observance, it was for centuries strictly confined to Egypt, and no foreigner permitted to participate. When, however, the country was opened by conquest to foreigners, it was found that the worship was common to that of Asiatic countries, although learning which anciently was always cultivated within the limits of the religious orders, appeared to be profounder and more extensive there than elsewhere, except perhaps in Babylon and India. After the Roman period, Egypt was no more an exclusive territory, and its divinities,

with rites greatly modified, were worshipped in Greece, the Mediterranean islands, and even in the imperial city itself.

Plutarch, in his invaluable treatise *On Isis and Osiris*, has given us many of the later interpretations of the myth. Those who explained it by the theory of natural occurrences had abundant confirmation for their conjectures in the fact that the festivals of Isis and Horos were held when each event took place. Some made Osiris to denote the river Nile, and Isis to signify the land which it overflows and renders fertile. Seth, or Typhon, as the Greek writers name him, was the Sea which drew the river within its own power and scattered its waters abroad. Others went further, and explained Isis as representing the world of Nature, and Osiris as the moon whose prolific light caused fertility; while Typhon was the tropical Sun, whose intolerable heat withered and destroyed all vegetation. Plutarch, after giving a summary of these various opinions, remarks "that each of them apart is not in the right, but that all together are." He rejects, however, the concept which would assign the sun to Typhon, and the parching drought to his operation. The winds and waters which are not duly tempered, the chaotic and unorganised principle, stifle and suppress the wholesome exhalations of the earth. They who say plainly that Osiris is the sun and Isis the moon utter what has a show and semblance of reasonableness. Not simply drought, wind, sea, or darkness, but every thing hurtful or destructive belongs to Typhon, he declares; while the spiritual nature, the higher intellect, is Osiris, and every thing orderly and beneficial in the earth and sky is his manifested likeness. "The passionate, Titanic, irrational, brutal part of the soul is Typhon; and whatever in the world of nature is adventitious, morbid, and disturbing, is his incursions and devastations."

The philosophic interpretation of the Osirian myth is not so incongruous as it may seem, with the expositions which have been indicated. Mystics and philosophers do not clash; they believe alike, arriving at the same goal by different routes and different faculties, with the same spirit. We may understand by Osiris the first cause, by Isis the faculty of reception, and by Horos their effect. Accordingly Osiris denoted permanent being, the intellective principle, the absolute Good. Isis his sister and consort represented the feminine and passive quality, identical with the *tithone* or material receptacle which Plato has set forth; and hence she was worshipped in the arcane rites as the Great Mother of the sentient universe. By Horos, therefore, as their son, we may understand the cosmic universe, which comes into existence but is not of the eternal world, or incorruptible, but continues its life by constant changing and spiral motion. This is the genesis of the philosophers: the Goddess being eager for divine qualities and principles, becomes mingled and pregnant with them, and so evolves them into external nature. In this way the philosophers of whatever country taught that the human soul proceeded from the Divinity, by the genesis or commingling with the spirit of the universe, which was itself somewhat debased by the principle of Matter. The Supreme Intelligence produced Man in his own likeness, say the Hermetic Tablets; but Man willed to be a creator likewise, and descended from the contemplation of the Father into the sphere of cosmic life. "The mind that is in us," says Philon Judaios—"let it be called Adam—meeting with the outward sense, according to which all living things *appear* to exist—and that is called Heva—having conceived a desire for the connection, is commingled with this outward sense."

The philosophic view of life in this mode of existence

was taken accordingly from the standing-point of the eternal world. Descending from the sublime condition in which divine beings and pure souls subsist to become involved in the meshes of sublunary life, was to die. Hence in mystic usage, Hades, Hell, or Amenti did not so much signify the Underworld of classic mythology as the life of this present world. Herakleitos distinctly affirms, therefore: "We are living what is to them as death, and have died to their life." Clement of Alexandria says: "The ancient theologians and mantics testify that souls are yoked to the body for the sake of punishment, and are buried in the body as in a tomb." Paul the Apostle, taking a similar view, demands: "Who will deliver me from this body of death?"

Hence "the restitution of all things," the restoration of the soul to the life eternal of the celestial world was considered as the great problem of the universe. It became the function of the ministers of religion, of teachers and hierophants, to impart this sublime knowledge. To do this, some made use of symbols and allegories of obscure meaning and doubtful import, while others, especially at later periods when it was safer, used language of more obvious meaning. Thus, the hero-myth of Osiris, which constituted the theme of the arcane Egyptian worship, represents him as having been slain, and coming to life in the eternal region, to be the lord of all who died. Yet this was only an accommodating of the doctrine to feeble understandings. Hence the true apprehension of its meaning, which those attained who had got beyond these fanciful, mixed, and various things, was far different. The pure and immutable truth is as expressed in the Synoptic Gospels: "God is not a god of the dead, but of the living;" and, intrinsically, there is no death.

"The doctrine which the priests darkly hint to us," says Plutarch,— "that Osiris is governor and prince of

those that are dead, being not taken in its true sense, disturbs the minds of the many, who thus suppose that he lives within and beneath the earth. But he is actually at the remotest distance imaginable from the earth, being unstained, unpolluted, and clear from every thing liable to corruption and death. But men's souls, encompassed here with bodies and passions, have no communication with God, except what they can reach to in conception only, by means of philosophy, or by a kind of obscure dream. But when they are released from the corporeal condition and have removed into the unseen, invisible, impassible and pure region, this God is then their leader and king. They then, so to speak, depend upon him entirely, beholding without weariness and ardently admiring that beauty and excellence which cannot be expressed or uttered by men."

The Orphic theologians who gave the Eleusinian and Bacchic rituals their last revision accordingly taught the doctrine that the soul is incarcerated in the corporeal life as in a prison; and their poems set forth its sufferings, the steps and transitions by which it passes to the higher state—its gradual purification and enlightenment. The highest idea of classic antiquity was thus set forth, that of a just person proving his integrity by suffering, (PLATO: *Politeia*, ii.) The hero-myths that make up archaic literature, and much of classic mythology, turn upon this idea as their pivot; and so do all the *dromena*, the *erga* or Labors, and the dramas which were performed or recounted at the Initiatory and Telestic Rites.

Three mystic institutions appear more prominent in Grecian history: the Kabeirian, the Eleusinian and the Bacchic or Dionysiac. Every country and people had its own ethnic and local religion, which were rigorously exclusive. It was long regarded as treason and even sacrilege to adopt the worship of a divinity belonging to

another commonwealth; each god being regarded as supreme only with his own people and in his own territory. "Wilt thou not possess that which Chemos thy god give thee to possess?" reasons Jephtha with the king of the Ammonites, and then adds: "so, whomsoever Yava our god shall drive out before us, them will we possess." (*Judges*, xi. 24.)

There seems however to have been greater latitude finally in the arcane religions. The Kabeirian rites were "Turanian" or Ethiopic, and were celebrated by the Pelasgians, who evidently belonged to that period of human development. There were many sanctuaries devoted to their worship, but the one most famous was at the "Holy Island," Samothrakeia. The diffusion of these rites was somewhat remarkable, considering the characteristic exclusiveness of former times; they were celebrated in Egypt and Phœnicia, as well as in the several countries of Greece and the islands of the Archipelago. Grecian writers in their narrow egotism attempted to show that the oriental worship, the Phrygian rites of the Great Mother, the Korybantic observances, and other orgies were derived from those of Samothrake. Later research however discloses the fact that they all pertained to "the great Dionysiak Myth," and differed in no essential respect from the arcana of the Syrian Goddess, Salambo, and others.

The Eleusinia, which finally became the most famous of all the Grecian Mysteries, were evidently parallel to the Samothrakian worship, if not an outgrowth from it. The various legends of their origin, and what we know of the ceremonial, indicate as much. Herakleitos the philosopher assigns their first establishment to Eumolpos, whom Clement of Alexandria describes as a leader of the Shepherds that were expelled from Egypt, and Plato in turn as having led an army of Amazons to Athens. All these traditions are consistent with the

further one that Eumolpos was the "son" of Poseidon, who was an Asiatic or Libyan divinity. (HERODOTOS: ii.50.) Poseidon was associated with Demeter in her various temples in the Peloponnesos as well as at Eleusis; and was represented as the father of Despoina, better known as Kore and Persephoneia. Kadmos, the founder of Thebes, was the reputed grandson of Poseidon and Libye. Bochart attributes the introduction of the Eleusinian rites to the Phœnicians, and supposes that the Gephyraians instituted them at Eleusis. This seems the more probable as there had been an Eleusis in Kadmean Boiotia at an earlier period. After the period of Theseus, who is chronicled as slaying many sons, or rather priests of Poseidon, the worship of Olympian Zeus became general, and the Eleusinia were known as the Festival of the Mother and Daughter. They were afterward revised under Peisistratos, and modified by additions from the Bacchic and Aklepiad worship. They continued to be observed till the burning of the temple by Alaric the Goth in the fifth century.

The Dionysia are generally considered to have been of later introduction into Greece. The Pelasgians knew nothing of Bacchus, indeed, till they acquired the knowledge from the Phœnicians. The rites were unequivocally Asiatic. The ivy or *kissos* employed in the worship affords a rebus to show its earlier seat in Kissoia or Asiatic Æthiopia; and the name Zagreus at once suggests the Zagros mountains in that country. Even the Titans that are said to have murdered the "bull-horned child" were an Euphratean race. "Occult Symbolism has frequently availed itself either of two words of similar sound or one word of manifold meaning." (*Robert Brown, jr., Poseidon, xxiv.*)

However unlike the various worships may have been during their earlier history they become more or less amalgamated at the last. We have the statement of

Herodotos that the Eleusinian Demeter was the same as Isis, and Bacchus as Osiris. The Egyptians venerated their divinity as the *Rot-Amenti*, the ruler and judge of the world of souls, and we recognise him as the classic Radamanthys. Bacchus received his other name of Dionysos from the Assyrian designation *Dian-Niqi*, the judge of mankind. "The rites called Orphic and Bacchic are in reality Egyptian and Pythagorean," says Herodotos; thus in a single sentence identifying the various arcane worships and the profounder philosophy as one and the same.

The festival of Isis and Osiris, he also affirms, "is celebrated almost exactly as Bacchic festivals are in Greece." This will be perceived by a comparison of the description of the procession of Isis, as given by Apuleius (*Metamorphosis* xi.), and that of the *Dionysia Megala* at Athens. (See *Great Dionysiak Myth.* vi. i. i.) The Mysteries were preceded by the washing and sacrifice of a pig by each worshipper and householder, as was done at the Eleusinia, Dionysia, and rites of the Syrian Goddess. This animal does not appear to have been recognised in Egypt till after the expulsion of the Shepherds, and even then it was abhorred. It seems to have typified the slayer of Osiris, as in Asia and Syria it was the animal that killed Stys and Adonis. In Syria, near the sanctuaries and tombs where raving worshippers performed the rites of the dead, herds of swine were reared for the sacrificial worship. (*Mark* v. 1-13.)

The Secret Orgies were celebrated on the circular lake in the province of Sa or Sais. They always took place by night. "On this lake" says Herodotos, "the Egyptians commemorate the sufferings of him whose name I refrain from uttering; and they call this representation their *Mysteries*. I know well the whole course of the proceedings in their rites, but they shall not pass my lips." It is evident that he had been deterred by

the most solemn oath and perhaps a corresponding penalty, from telling what he had seen and heard; and it is more probable that he knew but an inconsiderable part of the whole matter. We are forcibly reminded of the parallel statement of Paul: "He was rapt into the paradise and heard things ineffable (*ἀρρητα ρημᾶτα* — *arreta remata*) which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

In these initiations the candidate was required to undergo severe tests in order to ascertain his mettle. The description in Moore's *Epicurean*, highly colored as it appears, had a substantial basis of fact. In the Mithraic rites, which were largely like the others and in a great degree finally superseded them, we are told that "the believers were admitted by the rite of baptism, they had a species of Eucharist, whilst the courage and endurance of the neophyte were tested by twelve consecutive trials called *Tortures*, undergone within a cave constructed for the purpose, before he was admitted to a participation in the Mysteries." Something of this kind seems to be indicated in the account of Jesus and his temptations, as described in the Synoptic *Gospels*. He was first baptised and then conducted into the wilderness "and he was there *forty days*, tempted of Satan, and was with the wild beasts, and the angels ministered to him." This very accurately represents the *Tortures* or *Probations* which were undergone in the Telestic Cave. At the entrance the spiritual father presented the candidate to the Hierophant, who offered him a garland on the point of a sword. This he refused, and was then baptised, clad in the sacred tunic, invested with the girdle of chastity, and obligated by a solemn oath to maintain strict silence in regard to the Mysteries, and to devote himself to the service of the god. He thus became a "soldier," and as more women than men belonged to this grade, we have in this fact the source of the

ancient legends in regard to the Amazons. The second grade was that of Bromios or the Buffalo, the symbol of water and the genesis, which the candidate was required to overcome. The third grade was denoted by the Lion, the symbol of fire. The initiate again engaged in conflict with this new foe, and with other wild animals that appeared as his assailants. The victors were represented with the forms of the animals that they had overcome; and so we have the *kerubs* or sphinxes of the inscriptions. The next degrees required an overcoming of the powers of the Air. The Vulture represented the *fourth*: the Ostrich the *fifth*; and the Raven the *sixth*. They symbolized the progress of the soul from death to the ulterior judgment. The vulture devoured the body, the ostrich carried the soul onward with the swiftness of the wind, and the raven led it to the region of light. At the entrance of the *seventh* grade was the Bridge of Judgment, guarded by a kerub, an eagle-headed lion. The *eighth* was characterized by the Mystic Ladder with seven steps,—the planetary worlds—reaching to Mount Alborj. Gorgons and Empousai infested this region, which was the hero-grade. Hence special sanctity was imputed to the number *eight*. The next was the grade of the sun; and the condition of admission was absolute purity. The *tenth* bore the designation of the *Father-Eagle*, and admission to it was an apotheosis. The soul of Herakles, it will be remembered, ascended from the pyre in the form of an eagle; which was a symbol of Mithras himself. The *eleventh* degree was that of the *Father-Hawk*, which was the representation of Ahmmazda, and the symbol of life. The *twelfth* was that of the *Father of Fathers*.

The Roman worship to which Patricians only were admitted, was closely in resemblance to that of the valley of the Euphrates. A few terms which have escaped from the secret rites are of Assyrian origin, and what

we know of the symbolism is oriental. Many of these have passed into the ritual of the church; and the astrological features which have made many believe the eastern nations to have been worshippers of the heavenly bodies, are as distinct now in the festivals and other stated observances. The names have been changed; the things which they represented still remain.

The Eleusinia have been most carefully delineated of all the Ancient Rites. Every Sciolist seems to "know all about them." Creuzer, Thomas Taylor, Porphyrios, regarded them as symbolic and philosophic to the highest degree: Lobeck and all his school as a superficial and insignificant display. It may be that fancy has discerned too much in the ceremonies and sublime *theama*; but it is sheer ignorance approximating brutality that sees in them only a farce. The first rites were external, as all life-experiences are. The candidates were required to fast, and to enter having "clean hands and a pure heart." They were sworn to inviolable secrecy, and whoever divulged the rites or symbolism was outlawed and made liable to all the penalties of sacrilege. The Hierophant read to them the Golden Sentences from the *petromu*. and then each was required to confess whether he had been guilty of homicide, unchastity, or any other offense which would unfit them for participation in the sacred rites.

There were beforehand, on the Mystic nights, exercises to prepare the candidates for the sublime visions. They were assembled outside of the *telesterion*, where in profound darkness they waited the apocalypse. Plutarchos says: "they wander about at first; they enter upon wearisome deviations; they walk about full of suspicion and uncertainty; and the nearer they approach the goal, the more terrible everything becomes: there is nothing but trembling, shuddering, sweating,

and stupor." The door was finally opened, and the torch-bearer led them into the Mystic *Sekos* or cavern. Here in a dazzling light they beheld the image of Dimeter brilliantly decorated, and every thing to ravish the senses—"wonderful illumination, elegant decoration of the place, songs and dances, which tempered the majesty of the sacred words and of the holy apparitions."

"In the second initiation," says Lenormant, "that which was presented to the contemplation of the *epoptai* (seers) must have consisted of myths more complicated and foreign to the public religion,—myths to which was attributed a deeper meaning, giving a further insight into the conception of the inward nature of the gods. Hence its name of *epopteia*, and above all the more significant one of *autopsia*, which indicates so clearly that the *epoptai* were reputed to see the gods face to face in their very essence."

Iamblichos has given a very plain outline of analogous performances at the rites of the Egyptians. At the *epiphamis*, he remarks, the autoptic statues appeared in different degrees of radiance according to the rank of the divinities themselves. The statues of the gods exhibited a glowing light; those of the angels were luminous; those of dæmons a turbid fire. His work cannot be studied too carefully by those who would understand the ancient worships and philosophy.

The Fathers of the church professed to be shocked at the symbolism and the peculiar rites; but they evidently did not apprehend or correctly represent their mystic under-meaning. By the Sacred Nuptials were denoted the including of men under the personality of the god, and of women under that of the goddess, and their becoming eternally at one in the world beyond the present. The scene was pure when pure eyes witnessed it; but different to the vision of the unclean.

The noblest writers of the ancient world are eloquent

when they speak of the initiations. "The mystic sense of the Holy Rites" says Strabon, "is homage to Divinity, and the imitation of its virtue, which is hidden from the senses." "Blessed is he who has beheld the sacred vision of the Underworld" says Pindaros: "he knows the goal of life, he knows its divine beginning." "He who arrives in Hades purified and perfected" says Plato, "shall dwell with the gods." "You are initiated" said Andokides, when appealing to his judges, "you have become seers of the sacred visions, in order that you may punish those guilty of impiety, and protect those who seek defense from injustice."

The darker side of the Mystic observances was a necessary accommodation to the weakness and wickedness of human beings. The cloud when viewed from beneath is black and seems to shut away the sky. But from above it exhibits a vision of golden light dazzling to the eyes and ravishing to the senses: the Sun itself is reflected there. It is in like manner, as has been said of the Eleusinian worship, the honor and glory of the Mystic Rites, that although errors of doctrine and other aberrations were associated with them, the energetic affirmation was maintained from first to last, of the divine life after death, and the immortality of the human soul. More than this was also inculcated. It was their unequivocal testimony that those who were truly "perfected" should be and live as gods upon the earth, as well as beyond it.

Contributed.

THE WAY AND THE WISDOM-TEACHERS.

The present revival of mysticism, more especially the return of many modern Christians to the beliefs of the Neoplatonician "heretics," is largely a mere reaction from the cold, barren dogmas of modern science. The "cultured" people who, in their first elation over a few

scientific discoveries and inventions, cried out that "the sun of science has ripened more blessings in a single year than the moonshine of mysticism in eighteen centuries,"* having thus reached the full beat of the pendulum in the direction of materialism; so-called, have now swung back from the physical plane to the intellectual, where they amuse themselves with the scholastic study of classic mysticism; this backward swing will have exhausted itself only when the emotional plane is reached, where the personal god is devoutly believed in, and reason is obscured or even utterly quenched by the emotional vagaries and bigotry of religion.

If the angelic proposition of one of the "adepts" of the primitive Christian church, that "all those persons calling themselves Christians, who could not by laying on of hands cure the sick or even cast out demons, should be put to death as imposters," were enforced against the numerous "occultists" and students of the "mysteries" as revealed in the writings of the Neoplatonists and Kabbalists, few of them would survive such a distinctively Christian measure. For it is even more sad than ludicrous to see the many self-styled occultists and philosophers who imagine themselves, through poring over musty books, to be well versed in divine mysteries, when in reality they know nothing practically of even those subtle forces of nature lying just beyond the material world—"occultists" whose health-forsaken bodies would not pass muster at an army recruiting office! Not having knowledge even to keep their own bodies in passable repair,—blind even to astral sight,—deaf even to astral sounds; unable to "excite the latent and secret virtues of the soul," as the occultists of the Agrippa type expressed it, sufficiently to even mesmerize the ordinary people of this dark, slumbrous age; living in and defending the organized selfish-

*Oswald's "Secret of the East."

ness of Christian social and industrial institutions; hearing not the deep behest uttered by the Great Heart of All;—they yet, in the true spirit of priestcraft, assume to expound the writings of theurgists and *illuminati*, and, under the mistaken notion that “esoteric” doctrines may be learned from such writings, revel in Greek philosophy and those Jewish traditions retained and dissipated among the people by adepts who, we are told by one versed in holy mysteries, possessed high powers, but by prostituting those to selfish ends, fell like stars from heaven. Mystics of this class, who regard with veneration the Initiate Plato, and study his writings because that is conventional and indicative of scholarship, yet see in the greater Initiate Paracelsus* merely a seeker after forbidden knowledge, of high aspiration and lofty genius. If such a Great Soul were to come among these modern “occultists,” who among them would have eyes to see the great light in his heart, the glory about his head? Yet we have *occultists*—plenty of them—who are so deeply in earnest that they even live on a vegetable diet—even though, being fearful of the *sinfulness* of eating flesh and doubtful of the nutritiousness of vegetables, they do sometimes compromise ignominiously on eggs! Truly, we are in the midst of a revival of occultism; even the “esoteric christians” and mind-curists have in their own opinion pierced that veil which of old time was rent only at the last hour of the crucifixion!

In sober truth, the mysteries are as closely veiled from the uninitiated as ever they were, and that veil can never be penetrated by the study [alone] of the works of the Neo-platonists, the Kaballa, or any books ever

*This is true, we apprehend, only as to initiation on the *physical plane*.—
EDITOR.

penned.* To study such works from the standpoint of the mere man of letters is to become lost in a maze of absurdities and contradictions. "The small old path stretching far away" on which the "sages who know Brahman move on to the heavenly place, and thence higher on, entirely free,"† cannot be found by intellectual study; it is not found by the philosopher any more than by the religionist. Scholarship and religious sentimentalism may prove impediments instead of aids to the seeker for truth. One who has attained more than any in this country says: "We seek only for wisdom. Our first preparation is to realize that *all* we know is false; that we know nothing, have been taught untruths, and desire knowledge whatsoever it may be." "The way lies through the heart," not through the intellect.

It is, of course, possible for any man to "raise himself by himself;"‡ but who, in this dark age, has strength and courage to face and conquer the dread forces that contest each step of upward progress? In this age he who seeks wisdom can attain it only through the "wisdom-teachers" of the East. The aim of one who desires wisdom should be to attain to "the state in which learning becomes possible."§ For the real seeker after Truth is no more satisfied with philosophical systems than he is with religious dogmas, but intuitively recognizes that beyond all sense-perception, whether on the physical, intellectual or emotional planes, is the real knowl-

*This is unquestionably true. As Taylor the Platonist significantly says: Let no one therefore deceive himself by fancying that he can understand the writings of Plotinos by barely reading them. For as the subjects which he discusses are for the most part the objects of intellect [intuitive intellect or spirit] alone, to understand them is to see them, and to see them is to come into contact with them; but this is only to be accomplished by long familiarity with, and a life conformable to, the things themselves. For then, as Plato says, "A light as if leaping from a fire will on a sudden be enkindled in the soul, and will then itself nourish itself." See Plato's 7th Epistle.—
EDFROR.

†Yajnavalkya.

‡Bhagvat Gita.

§Light on the Path.

edge that alone will satisfy his higher aspirations, and that in the scale of consciousness above him are men who will teach him this higher knowledge if he can but find the way to reach them. Having the right motive and the desire he will find that way. And "he who has in truth experienced the 'mysterious event' stands forever in awe, is set apart from the world in his own soul. No one who knows it can speak or speculate; there is no doubt, but an awesome conviction."*

Of great importance in the first steps toward self-knowledge is the study of magnetism in all its branches. "In magnetism lie all the magic powers of occultism. The purified soul has the highest grasp of them, itself a magnetic force. But the mind may stimulate the memory of the soul. The continued urgency with which the moral aspect of occult teaching is presented is not for 'mere moral effect', but because such a spirit *alone* alchemizes the *fire* to the *light*—the highest principle of akasa—pure spirit."†

INTERPRETATION OF THE TIMAEUS OF PLATO.

Translated from the German of Dr. Gottlieb Latz

BY

JULIET BURDETT GRAHAM.

Concluded.

P. 40: καὶ τὰ μὲν ἄλλα ἤδη μεχρι κ. τ. λ.

The World-creature here becomes a representation of the gods: one class of gods is represented by the circle of the head, another by the circle of the abdomen, a third by the tail.

The circle of the head represents οὐρανός (Heaven), and Heaven is a god. The fixed stars are likewise gods, according to Plato.

*From a private letter.

†From a private letter.

The circle of the abdomen represents $\gamma\tilde{\eta}$, and $\Gamma\tilde{\eta}$ is the first and oldest of the gods. The tail represents the sun, moon, and planets to which the Greeks gave the names of gods. The gods of the tail are called by Plato *δαίμονες* (dæmons.) Specially referring to the dæmons Plato says: "The children of Ge and Ouranos were Okeanos and Tethys." Now here Ge and Ouranos are the circle of the abdomen and head. The tail of the World-creature is conceived as the genital organ. So the sense is that the dæmons have a genital relation to Ge and Onranos; *i. e.* are their children. From Ouranos and Ge likewise came Phorkys, Kronos, Rhea, and others. From Kronos and Rhea sprang Zeus and Hera and others. The seven dæmons, specially mentioned, Okeanos, Tethys, Phorkys, Kronos, Rhea, Zeus, and Hera, refer to the seven circles of the tail. They represent also the sun, moon, and planets. Here Okeanos ranks as the sun, Tethys as the moon, Phorkys as Ares, Hera as the morning-star. Zeus and Kronos represent the planets named after them. Rhea ranks as Hermes, which is strange, as Mercury is a man and Rhea a woman.

P. 41. *ἐπεὶ δ' οὖν πάντες κ.τ.λ.*

The World-creature is now conceived as a man. The circle of the head is the human head, the circle of the abdomen is the trunk, and the tail is the genital organ. The extended sides of the square and the diagonals are the arms and legs.

As has been pointed out the Timæus is divided into two parts. The first part sets forth the *κόσμου γένεσις*, (alchemy); the other part the *ἀνθρώπου φύσις* (nature of man.)

The *φύσις ἀθρώπου* follows alchemy, because the arcana serve to restore the health of sick men. The object of this work is to deal with Alchemy and not with the application of the arcana to the sick-bed, and therefore we will not now specially examine that part

of the *Timæus* which treats of the *φύσις ἀνθρώπου*, but only so far as may be necessary.

The Demiurg charges the junior gods with the duty of making men. He supplies the immortal soul, leaving the formation of the mortal body wholly to them.

The parts of the soul are thus distributed: knowledge (*αἴσθησις*) to the circle of the head, courage and fear to the circle of the abdomen, love to the tail. If man governs these passions he will be deemed righteous, but if he is governed by them he will be deemed unrighteous. The righteous man returns after a fully completed span of life to the star with which his soul is associated. On the contrary, the unrighteous man passes through a metamorphosis. The type of the righteous man is that of one who has the distinguishing mark of masculinity, the genital organ, just as the World-creature has a tail. By the first metamorphosis the genital organ is lost.

Then, from the masculine World-creature the feminine nature, the woman, is derived. By the second metamorphosis the arms are lost; then the bird-nature enters, for the birds have wings instead of arms. By the third, the circle of the head is lost; then the nature of the land-animal enters. These animals are not indeed headless, but they bear the head bent toward the earth, but raised toward heaven like that of man. * *

In the third metamorphosis, not only the legs but the circle of the head are considered. If one should classify by the legs alone, the multipeds would have no place in the third metamorphosis, because the World-creature had only four feet in the beginning. Moreover the animals would not fall to the third metamorphosis, but to the fourth in which the legs of the World-creature disappear altogether. After the disappearance of the legs only the circle of the abdomen remains, resembling an oyster.

Here the nature of the water-animal enters. In this

metamorphosis, which is expounded on pp. 90, 92, Plato had the reconstruction of the World-creature in view. First he develops his figure-scheme. He begins with the circle of the abdomen, to this adding the circle of the head, the square, whose prolonged diagonals are the arms and legs, and the tail. Then he strikes out all but the circle of the abdomen. (Compare Genesis, V. 26.)

P. 46. *καὶ ὁ μὲν δὴ ἅπαντα ταῦτα διατάξας κ. τ. λ.*

The junior gods now begin the work assigned them. They join the parts of Fire, Earth, Water and Air together and distribute the *ψυχή* among the circles of the head, abdomen and the tail. * *

The passion seated in the genital organ brings confusion into the whole World-creature. And as Plato is at his best in his delineation of confusion, he now introduces those speculations about Alchemy, which present so many difficulties to the beginner. But with right instruction and a sound understanding he will surmount these obstacles. But he who scorns these things will stumble through life and again pass into Hades aimless and wanting in understanding.

P. 44. *τὰς μὲν δὴ θείας περιόδους κ. τ. λ.*

Proceeding with the creation of man, the gods join the head-circle of the World-creature to the head of man. To this is joined the circle of the abdomen as body. Then come the extended sides and diagonals of the square: Arms, (answering to hands), and legs (answering to feet): The eyes are set in relation to the first and second ideal elements of the head-circle. Therefore we have Fire and Light representing sight, opposed to which the ideal element Air of the head-circle represents darkness and blindness. To the eyes Plato joins the eyelids, and to the eyelids sleep, as the lids are then closed. As Plato deals now with the sight and with what he joins to it, for physiological reasons he now comes to the discussion of reflections, in which

right is left and left right, and so arrives again at his reversed scheme. From the reversed scheme he passes again to his figure-scheme. He thinks that the greatest use of the eyes is for man to view his World-creature. Through alchemy his figure-scheme is given a form which man perceives by means of his eyes. * * *

P. 47. *δι' ἀνάγκης γιγνόμενον.*

Plato now comes to the arcana. Like Empedokles, from whom he obtained the four elements, Plato posits elements and arcana of like natures opposite each other. Opposite water he places Acid. Sulphur, opposite Earth salt, opposite Air Liquor hepatis, and opposite Fire Pulvis solaris.

Contrary to the World-creature, the head-circle represents the elements, the circle of the abdomen a sort of arcanological basis, the improved sub-stratum for the elements. The tail represents the arcana themselves, that is the sum of this basis and the elements. That stands on the one side. On the other the head-circle represents the 1st and 2nd arcana, the circle of the abdomen the four Greek arcana, and the tail the seven arcana.

If we place the four arcana as follows: Natron Earth, Acid, sulphur Water, Liquor hepatis Air, Pulvis solaris Fire, we have the form in which they were arranged by Empedokles.

If, however, we use the single arcanum as the single element=Fire, all the arcana=Fire. If we use the double arcanum, as the double element=Fire and Air, two arcana=Fire and two arcana=Air. If we hold to the seven arcana, Pulvis solaris niger is associated with Pulvis solaris ruber.

Then we have as Fire, not only Pulvis solaris ruber, but also Pulvis solaris niger, or if we prefer to take Pulvis solaris niger as Earth, we will have as earth both Pulvis solaris niger and Natron. Also, in dealing with

the seven arcana, Acid. sulphur and Ferrum=Water; or Ferrum may enter into Earth. In the latter case Natron nitricum as well as Natron carbonicum=Earth. So on the one side, there is a change in the distribution of elements to the arcana, and on the other the extension of one element to several arcana. Here there exists nothing like stability. On the other hand, the arcanological principle is fixed. It is always the same, only being modified, as one or another element, from which arcana spring, enters it. In regard to these the arcanological principle is not fixed. It is formless. It appears as Fire-arcanum after it has absorbed the element Fire, as Air-arcanum after having absorbed the element Air, and so on, analogously as concerns the other arcana. According to the foregoing exposition Plato distinguishes a triplicity 1) τὸ γιγνόμενον, what becomes, 2) τὸ ἐν ᾧ γίγνεται, that in which it becomes, 3) τὸ ὄθεν ἀφομοιούμενον φύεται, that to which the what becomes is finally like. The first is the arcana, the substratum for the elements which are absorbed, (in other words the arcanological principle,) the third, the elements. In reference to the World-creature, the first is represented by the tail, the second by the circle of the abdomen, the third by the circle of the head. As this representation has taken form in the World-creature, Plato compares the γιγνόμενον to a child, the ἐν ᾧ γίγνεται to a mother (comparing also the arcanological principle to a nurse) and the ὄθεν ἀφομοιούμενον φύεται to a father.

Having formed his figure-scheme, in which the circle of the head contains the elements, the circle of the abdomen the logical principle, and the tail the arcana, Plato expounds the connection between the circle of the head and the double arcana, the circle of the abdomen and the four Greek arcana, and the tail and the

seven arcana. He conceives the single and double arcana as idealities, the four arcana as a reality but as a reality which is surpassed by the reality of the seven arcana. He reckons by the four and not by the seven arcana. Moreover the four arcana in their relation to the World-creature are shoved to the foreground. Thus the World-creature is rendered doubly real. In the first realization the arcana are represented in the tail; the elements in the circle of the head; and the arcanological principle in the circle of the abdomen. Now as the tail consists of seven circles, if it be conceived as arcana, the seven arcana are pushed into the foreground. As the seven arcana were prominent in the former exposition of the World-creature, it is not necessary to bring them into the foreground a second time. They now surrender their position to the four arcana. The circle of the abdomen takes the place which the tail occupied before. The four arcana are plainly conceived as stereometric bodies, the square with diagonals in corporeal form. That corresponds to the "stepping forward, the making prominent" of the four arcana over the seven. As they are brought forward their reality is so great that they can be grasped with the hands, in opposition to which the seven arcana have that which Plato specifies came "neither from earth nor heaven," or as he expresses it, did not come *ἐν γῆ* nor *κατ' οὐρανόν*. Here *γῆ* represents the circle of the abdomen and *οὐρανός* the circle of the head of the World-creature. *Κατὰ* with the accusative means also "along," so *κατ' οὐρανόν* means not only in heaven, as in the above reading, but *along* the heavens, *i. e.* the tail of the World-creature is along the circle of the abdomen, not along the circle of the head. If we do not interpret *ἐν γῆ* as "on the earth," but as "in the earth," the meaning is: the tail, which represents the seven arcana, is

not *in* the circle of the abdomen but *along* the circle of the abdomen. The passage has a double meaning. On the one hand it describes the figure-scheme; on the other, it so forces the seven arcana into the background that they become mere "dream-figures," (*ὁ βλέποντες ὄνειροπολοῦμεν.*)*

*LIVES OF THE PHILOSOPHERS AND
SOPHISTS.*

BY

EUNAPIOS.

Translated from the original Greek.

LIFE OF MAXIMOS. (*concluded.*)

While in Athens Julian associated with this divine hierophant, and eagerly imbibed wisdom from him. However, Julian did not remain there long as he was soon summoned by Constantius, raised to the dignity of a Cæsar, and made one of the rulers of the empire. At this time Maximos was in Asia—Aidesios having departed from this sphere—and augmenting his store of omnifarious wisdom by cubits, so to speak. So Julian obtained all the wisdom he could get, but not all that he wanted. For he was speedily sent to Gaul, not that he might govern that country, but that he might come to an untimely end. However, contrary to every

*NOTE.—Olympiodoros truly says that the meaning of Plato "cannot be apprehended without great difficulty, because his writings, like those of Homer, must be considered physically, ethically, theologically, and in short, multifariously." We have given the greater part of Dr. Latz's alchemical or physical interpretation of the *Timaios* as a curious specimen of what some investigators have found in the Platonic text. It has a certain interest and value, but does not of course express the esoteric sense of this sublime and profound dialogue. By far the best commentary on the *Timaios* is that by the famous Proklos, which may justly be termed a vast treasury of ancient wisdom. Compared with this exhaustive exposition all *modern* interpretations are shallow and puerile.—EDITOR.

expectation, his life was saved by the favor of the immortal gods, all being ignorant that he worshipped the Gods. Conquering all enemies because he honored the Gods he passed the Rhine and subdued all the barbarous nations of interior Germany, and escaped all the plots and machinations prepared for his destruction, as is fully described in his life. He sent to Greece for the Hierophant above referred to, and after privately consulting together they determined to destroy the tyrannical government of Constantius. Oribasios of Pergamos, and Evemeros of Africa alone were admitted to their confidence, and knew of this momentous determination. The execution of their design is fully set forth in detail in the life of Julian. After the overthrow of Constantius, Julian dispatched the hierophant to Greece, considering him as a god who had appeared to him and aided him to do whatever he wished. He sent with him royal gifts, in order that he might restore the Grecian temples and sacred places. Then he sent for Maximos and Chrysanthios, dispatching to them a joint invitation. On receiving the imperial invitation they thought it necessary to consult the Gods as to whether it should be accepted or declined. They were both learned and experienced Theurgists, and they united their skill, so to speak, and performed the theurgic operation with the greatest possible care and circumspection. The signs which appeared were of an evil and mournful character. Having both inspected them Chrysanthios with a dejected countenance at once exclaimed: "I must not only remain here, my dearest Maximos, but should also conceal myself in some den or cave." Maximos replied, in a confident tone: "It seems, O Chrysanthios, that you have forgotten, what we learned even in childhood, that it behooves Hellenists of our standing, skilled in the theurgic science, not to depend upon the first signs which present themselves, but rather by persist-

ance to influence the deities to favor our designs." Chrysanthios replied: "*You* are perhaps skilled and courageous enough to do this, but I will not contest with these tokens," and departed. Maximos, however, continued his efforts and finally produced signs apparently favorable to his wishes. But Chrysanthios remained as immovable as a statue, determined to abide by his first judgment, nor could reasons or persuasions induce him to change his mind.

Maximos' departure for Court put all Asia in motion. All the magistrates and persons of the greatest distinction, including senators of the highest class, hastened to honor him. The common people greeted him with loud applause, acclamations, and every demonstration that was usual in solemn receptions or on festive occasions. The wife of Maximos received the visits of the women, who flocked through a private door to pay their respects to her. They congratulated her on her happiness, and entreated her to condescend to remember them. And she seemed so learned in philosophy that her husband appeared, compared with her, to have but an elementary knowledge of this science. Thus Maximos, honored by all Asia, journeyed to the imperial Court. But Chrysanthios remained at home, and a deity appeared to him in his sleep and reminded him of Homer's verse,—

Whoso gives ear to the Gods, to his prayer will the Gods be propitious.*

Maximos accompanied by a triumphal escort reached Constantinople, and quickly attained great eminence; both the Emperor and the highest officers of the government being with him continuously, night and day, esteeming such felicity to have been sent by the Gods. In the course of time Maximos grew haughty and difficult of access, and adopted a more sumptuous apparel than became a philosopher,—but the Emperor was igno-

*Iliad, Lib. I. 218. Dart's version.

rant of this change in his conduct and costume [because it was not shown in his presence]. The Emperor and Maximos desired the aid of Priskos and Chrysanthios, so they were both sent for, Priskos from Greece, and Chrysanthios from Sardis in Lydia. So greatly did the divine Julian depend on the society of Chrysanthios, that he wrote to both of them as necessary friends, and petitioned them as if they were deities, to come to him. And understanding that Chrysanthios had a wife, Melita by name (a cousin to the writer), he wrote privately to her with his own hand, entreating her with all the persuasive words at his command to urge her husband to grant his request. He enclosed the letter to Melita and that to Chrysanthios in the same envelope, and himself securely sealed it, and these letters were taken as one by the messenger; the Emperor likewise sending such verbal messages as he thought would effect his purpose:—

Whereby Achilles' lofty mind might be persuaded.*

Priskos came, and his conduct was that of a modest, unobtrusive man. Flatterers were not wanting, nor those who would have made him prominent, but he remained immovable, was not affected by the attractions of the imperial Court, but sought to reform it and make it more philosophic. Chrysanthios refused to come, resisting all entreaties and devices employed to change his determination. Placing implicit faith in the Gods, and believing that their will was immutable, he obeyed them and declined the invitation. He wrote to Julian that he remained in Lydia for the sake of their common cause, and that he did this by the advice of the Gods. The Emperor, though chagrined by the refusal of his invitation, appointed Chrysanthios Chief Pontiff of Lydia, and likewise his wife Melita, and gave them authority to select the subordinate sacerdotal officers. About

*Iliad, Lib. IX. 184.

this time war with Persia was declared, and Julian determined to invade the enemy's country. He marched, accompanied by Priskos and Maximos, and a great number of court followers, a crowd of men who vehemently prated of their virtues because the Emperor declared that he honored and associated with virtuous persons alone. But when this glorious expedition, undertaken with the highest expectations of success, came to a deplorable end—a full account is given in the life of Julian—Jovianus who succeeded Julian as Emperor continued to honor and patronize these philosophers,* but his reign was short, and he quickly followed his predecessor, if he† went to the majority and not rather to the Gods. Valentinianus and Valens his brother next ascended the throne. Then Maximos and Priskos received a summons very different from the one sent to them by Julian: *that* was festive and complimentary, and led to extraordinary honors—*this* was *prima facie* perilous and void of hope, and disgrace and punishment were plainly in view. Against Priskos no charge could be brought; the testimony of the public proved him to be an upright man, and he was permitted to return to Greece. At this time the writer was a boy, attending school. Maximos, however, was furiously and repeatedly denounced to the Emperor, both in public and private, and he was generally admired for the constancy and equanimity which he exhibited amidst such troubles and dangers. The clamor of the rabble prevailed and Maximos was arrested, charged with speculation, speedily convicted, and sentenced to pay an enormous fine, an amount of money that was simply unknown even by hearsay to a philosopher,—the judges apparently believing that he had acquired the possessions of all men. At length the fine was reduced to a

*i. e. Maximos and Priskos.

†i. e. Julian.

more moderate amount, though it was still excessive, and he was sent to Asia in order that he might collect the money. The sufferings which Maximos experienced there passes all tragedy, and there is no one even though he rejoices in the misfortunes of others, who can adequately describe the miseries of this great man. The infamous tortures inflicted by the Persians and Artabri are more lenient than those to which Maximos was subjected. His wife, a truly admirable woman, did not abandon her husband. When it seemed as if his afflictions would never end he requested his wife to purchase a poisonous drink by means of which he might free himself from the physical evils which he suffered. She procured it and went to him. When he asked for it she drank it herself, and immediately expired. Her body was consigned to a sepulchre by her friends. But Maximos continued to endure his afflictions.*

And now neither the greatest eloquence nor the highest poetical skill will suffice to adequately express the generous acts of Klearchos. He was a citizen of Thesprotis, and of a wealthy and illustrious family. When the condition of affairs was changed, and Valentinianus assumed the government of the western empire, and Valens the emperor of the east was in great danger of losing not only his empire but his life—for Procopios was in open rebellion against him, and with a large force pursued and attacked him in every direction in order that he might destroy him—Klearchos at this time was governor of all Asia, and his jurisdiction extended from the Hellespont through the territories of Lydia and Pisidia to Pamphylia. He governed well and justly, and was among the first to take the field against the rebellious prefect of the Court, which distinction was

*Valentinian was particularly severe on the philosopher Maximos, who in Julian's time had caused him to be punished for the neglect of sacred things, on the ground of Christianity.—Zosimos, lib. IV.

not unknown to the Emperor. The praetorian prefect was Sallustius, a man of prominence during the reign of Julian, but now incapable of prompt and effective action on account of old age,, wherefore Klearchos called him Nikias, saying that Sallustius should nourish and strengthen his mind by the study of military tactics and historical experience. After the suppression of the rebellion Valens advanced Klearchos to a higher position, creating him proconsul of Asia. His jurisdiction extended from Pergamos along the coast to the mainland of Caria, and mount Tmolos defined its boundaries with reference to Lydia. It is the most illustrious of the provinces, and not subject to the control of the Court prefect, but its affairs were now in a disturbed and confused condition on account of recent events. Klearchos, having restored order in Asia, discovered there Maximos, prostrated by tortures and barely alive. And now it is necessary to chronicle a divine act, for an act contrary to all human probability and expectation should be attributed to no other than Deity. Klearchos banished all the satellites who had been concerned in the torturing of Maximos, released him from prison, cured his body, and invited him to his table. Such confidence did the Emperor have in Klearchos that he ratified all his acts. And [by the advice of Klearchos] Sallustius was deposed, and Auxonios put in his place. Klearchos punished all the military torturers and robbers, who had taken advantage of the civil war to commit great crimes, by heavy fines or death. And it was the common talk that he was another Julian as it were to Maximos. In a short time Maximos delivered some declamations but as he was not naturally fitted for the public stage they added little or nothing to his reputation. He soon therefore resumed his vacation as a teacher of Philosophy. Much of the property which had been stolen from him he re-

covered; his wealth increased, and he soon became rich as if he had lately been called to Julian's court. Once more famous he went to Constantinople, and was there honored by all when they saw that his star was again in the ascendant. He was tried on a charge of practicing magical rites and acquitted, and this increased his fame. Here again, in his case, from much fame resulted savage suffering. For a band of conspirators about the Court hearing of a peculiar prophecy which was in circulation, the meaning of which it was very difficult to ascertain, and not agreeing among themselves as to its signification they took it to Maximos, requesting him to interpret it, and likewise desiring to learn whether he was the author of it. It was indeed a common belief that Maximos alone knew the counsels of the Gods, and could reveal them to others. Giving the prophecy a careful and critical examination he quickly discerned the hidden meaning of it, and interpreted it as truly as the oracle itself was true. He declared that the prophecy indicated the destruction not only of him and those who heard him, but of many others who would be unjustly put to death. He added, drawing the information from the arcane recesses of the oracle, so to speak, that after the multiform destruction of large numbers the Emperor himself, the cause of the calamity, would perish in a strange and unusual manner, and be deprived not only of a solemn and legal funeral, but even of a sepulchre. And all these things happened exactly as predicted, a full and correct account of which may be found in our History. The conspirators were apprehended and executed. They were seized and destroyed here and there throughout the land, like so many fat capons plucked for a great popular feast or banquet. Among others Maximos was arrested, and taken to Antioch where the emperor then was. At his trial all the charges brought against him were successfully and

wholly refuted. He proved that his accusers perjured themselves, and demonstrated that he foresaw all things accurately. The government were afraid and ashamed to punish him, believing that if they did they would punish a certain deity or divine spirit in Maximos' body, and therefore sent him to Asia in the custody of one Festus, who was appointed Proconsul, a murderous, infamous character ready and willing to commit any crime. On taking possession of his official post the new Proconsul proceeded to indulge his blood-thirsty appetite by arresting and murdering every one even suspected of the slightest disaffection toward the government. After killing many others he at length put the great Maximos to death.* Thus the prophecy was fulfilled

*Fortunatianus, the treasurer of the Emperor, had ordered stripes to be inflicted on a soldier for sorcery. The man being put to the torture, and compelled to accuse others who were his accomplices, the cause was transferred to Modestus, the prefect of the court, because some persons were implicated who were not subject to the jurisdiction of the former officer. Valens was extremely incensed, and suspected all the most celebrated philosophers, and other persons of learning, as likewise some of the most distinguished courtiers, who were charged with a conspiracy against their sovereign. This filled every place with lamentation; the prison being full of prisoners who did not merit such treatment, and the roads being more crowded than the cities. The guards, who were appointed to the care of the prisons in which these innocent persons were confined, declared that they could not secure those who were under their charge, and were apprehensive that they would on some occasion escape by force, the number being so great. The informers in this affair were subject to no danger, being only compelled to accuse other persons. All that they accused were either put to death without legal proof, or fined to the extent of their estates; their wives, children, and other dependants being reduced to extreme necessity. The design of these nefarious accusations was to raise a great sum of money for the treasury. The first philosopher of note who suffered was Maximos, the next was Hilarios of Phrygia, who had clearly interpreted some obscure oracles; after these, Simonides, Patricius the Lydian, and Andronikos of Caria, who were all men of extensive learning, and condemned more through envy than with any shadow of justice. An universal confusion was occasioned by these proceedings, which prevailed to such a degree that the informers, together with the rabble, would recklessly enter the house of any person, pillage it of all they could find, and deliver the wretched proprietor to those who were appointed as executioners without suffering them to plead in their own justification. The leader of these wretches was a man named Festus, whom the Emperor, know-

as to himself, and all the other things predicted ultimately came to pass. For the Emperor in a great battle with the Scythians disappeared in such a strange way that not even a bone remained to be buried.* And now the dæmon of Fortune brought about a still more wonderful thing. For Festus—the writer had personal knowledge of what he will relate in this connection—being removed from his office, visited the new Emperor, Theodosios. (He had lately married an Asiatic lady of great wealth, and high rank). In order that he might publicly display his riches and Oriental luxury, and efface the memory of his infamous deeds, he announced a magnificent and regal banquet to which he invited all the nobility and distinguished men. The banquet was given on the third day of January [probably A. D. 379] and the number of guests in attendance was very large. At the close of the feast Festus accompanied by many of his guests went into the temple of the Nemeses (not that it was his custom to worship the gods, for he had put many to death for doing this). There he related to them a certain dream, and wept as he spoke. His dream was, that Maximos drew him to Hades by a halter to answer before Pluto for his crimes. His guests were moved to grief and, remembering the former life of Festus, implored him to pray the Goddesses for pardon and peace. This he did. But as he went forth from the temple his feet gave way, and he fell to the
 ing his expertness in every species of cruelty, sent into Asia as proconsul, that no person of learning might remain alive, and that his design might be accomplished. Festus, therefore, leaving no place unsearched, killed all whom he found without form of trial, and caused the remainder to fly from the country.—Zosimos, Lib. IV.

*The Barbarians resolutely opposed them, and gained so signal a victory that they slew all of the Roman army except a few with whom the Emperor fled into an unfortified village. The Barbarians therefore surrounded the place with a quantity of wood which they set on fire. All who had fled thither, together with the inhabitants, were consumed in the flames, and in such a manner that the body of the Emperor never could be found.—Zosimos, Lib. IV.

ground, He became speechless, and being carried to his room in a short time expired. His destruction was plainly the work of divine Providence.*

PRISKOS.

Of Priskos much has been said before, incidentally, as the occasion offered. Treating specially of his life and genius we may say: he was an acute thinker and had a profound, penetrating mind, and a remarkably powerful memory. He was thoroughly versed in the teachings of the ancient philosophers, and had their thoughts ever on his lips. Physically he was considered a large, handsome man. To some he appeared ignorant, because he could seldom be induced to engage in disputations, and guarded his abstruse ideas as if they were a treasure. He characterized those as spendthrifts who were prompt on every occasion to express their opinions. For he said that the one vanquished in dialectical disputations did not accept his defeat in silence but continued to resist the power of truth, and moved by irrational griefs and vexations became an enemy of reasoning and philosophy alike, and a general disturber. On account of this cause therefore he abstained from expressing himself concerning many subjects. He was reserved and dignified in his manners, even among his friends and associates, and this demeanor characterized him from youth to old age. Chrysanthios once told the writer that Aidesios was genial and popular, and that after his lectures and discussions he was accustomed to walk around in Pergamos with his friends and pupils. And

*NOTE.—The life of Maximos clearly illustrates the trials and dangers which an "adept" generally experiences when he (or she) undertakes to reform corrupt courts or change the frivolous lives of courtiers, officials, and fashionable ladies and gentlemen. No "adept" can mingle with the world and preserve his purity untarnished, and his powers unimpaired. One might as well attempt to work with coal and keep himself clean! Far better would it have been for Maximos if he had, like his friend Chrysanthios, chosen *the better way*.

that this teacher planted a certain harmony and care of the human race in those pupils whom he saw tending to evil, and through haughtiness disdainful of the precepts of wisdom; and those who rashly attempted with larger and weaker wings than Ikaros had to fly aloft he brought down, not to the sea but to the earth and humanity. On one occasion, Aidesios meeting a woman selling vegetables greeted her kindly, and stopping her talked about the price of vegetables and her business in such a way as to greatly benefit the woman; he likewise gave her valuable information about the raising of vegetables. In like manner he benefited a weaver, smith and carpenter. The wiser and more diligent of his associates profited by these things, and especially Chrysanthios and those in the school who were like him. Priskos alone did not spare the Master, but characterized him as a betrayer of the dignity and majesty of philosophy, and as a man knowing inferior reasons excellent for the elevation of the soul to abstract speculations, but of little use in the practical affairs of life. Such a man was Priskos, and after the terrestrial exit of Julian he remained blameless, accused by no one. He endured many innovations made by young men, who with reference to the acquisition of wisdom acted like the Korybantes, running here and there. He, however, everywhere preserving the gravity of his demeanor and laughing at human weakness, lived to an old age in the temples of Greece, being past ninety when he departed from the corporeal life. At this time many others left this life, some through grief, and others were violently freed from the body by the Barbarians, among whom was Proterios of the Island of Kephalenia, considered by all to be a good and upright man. And likewise Hilarios, whom the writer knew, by nation a Bi-

thynian, who lived to an old age at Athens, and had in addition to liberal and philosophic learning such skill as an artist that Euphranor seems to live in him. And through him the writer was led to admire and love the productions of art. Hilarios did not escape the common evil, for he was captured away from Athens—for he had a country residence near Korinth—and slain with his family by the Barbarians. These things, God willing, will be set forth in our History where we will fully describe not only the lives of particular men, but likewise public events and acts. Meanwhile what is here given in relation to private individuals will suffice.

THE TARO.

BY

T. H. BURGOYNE.

CHAPTER II.

CONCERNING THE FOUR ACES.

The four Aces of the sacred Taro has a four-fold significance and interpretation. Thus they in turn represent—the four cardinal signs of the Celestial Zodiac, the four elements of occultism, the four forms of being which represent the four progressive forms of intelligence, and lastly the four primary concepts of the Deity which are the four modes of conceiving Unity.

The four cardinal signs of the (ancient)* Celestial Zodiac are the constellations *now* known as Taurus, Aquarius, Leo and Scorpio.

*It is about 6500 years since the Sun last entered the sign Taurus, and about 4400 years since the Sun *left* this sign,—during this viterol the four signs here mentioned were “the cardinal signs.” It is plain therefore that our Taro has attained a respectable age.

T. H. B.

The four elements of Occultism are Earth, Air, Fire and Water. The four forms of being are Man, Eagle, Lion and Bull. The four primary concepts of Deity are the Truth, the Principle, the Law, and the Word.

THE ACE OF DIAMONDS

represents the soul of the world, the universal fluid, and is the grand magical agent in movement. It indicates to us the *visible unity* in the universal harmonies of nature *i. e.* providence. It corresponds to the element of *Air*, the sign Aquarius, *man*, the truth. It is the final *He* of the divine word. *It is the symbol of Life.*

THE ACE OF CLUBS

is the symbol of the scepter of omnipotence. It gives us the Supreme Unity I, and reveals the phallus of the Egyptians. It is *creative* intelligence, and corresponds to the element of *Fire*, the sign Leo, the Lion, the Principle. It is the *Jod* of the Hebrews. *It is the symbol of power.*

THE ACE OF CUPS (*Hearts*)

is the symbol of fecundency and in its hieroglyphic presents the horizontal line ||—|| and gives us the revealed and revealing unity of numbers. It represents the Feminine principle—Isis, and corresponds to the *He* of the Word. It is *living intelligence*, and is symbolized by the element of *Water*, the sign Scorpio, the Eagle, *the Law (sex)*. *It is the symbol of Love.*

THE ACE OF SWORDS (*Spades*)

of which the hieroglyphic sign *re-unites* the verticle line with the horizontal, thus (⊕) and points out to us the living fecundating unity, the Holy Spirit of the Bible, the Vau of the Word. It is militant intelligence and shows completion which corresponds to the element of Earth, the sign Taurus (the Bull), *the Word*. *It is the symbol of affection.*

In the above analysis we have expressed the four

forms of *Unity*, the four forms of *Intelligence*, the four forms of the *Word*, and the four symbols of *Life*, or motion. That is to say, they are typical conceptions of Unity, Intelligence, the Word and Life, which have been handed down to us from time immemorial, aye, from the very dawn of human existence, and as such they are deserving of close study, presenting as they do the Kabbalistical keys with which the mighty intellects of the first fathers of our race unlocked the mysteries of the kosmos, and stormed the very gates of heaven.

When we seek for realities, we must always penetrate deep below the surface of external appearances. The written letter of any revelation is at best but a very poor medium for the transmission of truth. We have not far to go in order to realize this fact, even in our own day. We use words and attach meanings thereto *undreamt* of by our ancestors, while many of *their* terms have not only fallen into disuse but *we do not now know* what meaning or significance *they* attached to many of our common words, which are considered vulgar to-day, unless we have recourse to some old dictionary. If this transpires within the short history of our present civilization, and is true regarding words that were once in every day use, how much more so is it when we deal with words and languages which are thousands of years older than ours, and with terms the meanings of which were never explained by the lexicographer, or became the common property of the people. We must therefore be extremely careful in our researches, because the different constructions placed upon *the dead letter* are especially important when the subject treated upon belongs to the sacred realm of the Occult. Thus, when we speak of the four elements and try to formulate a true conception of them in their outward parts, as Fire, Earth, Air and Water, we are met face to face with the actual fact that *not one of them is an element at all*, when viewed by

the light of chemical science, and consequently we are in danger of charging the old Alchemists with benighted ignorance. When once this takes foothold within us *our belief* in these pretended powers and wisdom falls at once to the ground, and we relegate all we cannot explain or understand about them to superstitions and delusions, or what is still worse, *direct imposture*. There seems upon *the external surface* very little sense in trying to co-relate the four ancient elements with a Man, a Bull, a Lion and an Eagle, especially when we learn that the Bull represents the inert passive earth. Wherein lies the connection? Thus it will ever be, unless we can penetrate below the plane of external appearances. The Ancients had no more idea of calling the Fire, Earth, Air and Water, actual elements upon the physical plane than the modern chemist has. *It is the interior principle that they intended to represent*. To them the Bull was the perfect symbol of fecundity and procreation, and our passive earth was considered the grand Matrix of the ever moving spirit. It is the union of both which brings forth life.

It is the interior principles then which must always claim our earnest attention; our chief aim being to *realize* that which they represent and trace them to their primal sources as divine emanations of the deity.

What we have said concerning the four elements and their actual interpretation, is also true of every card and key of this Kabbalistical Taro.

The ace of diamonds in its esoteric aspect represents manifested spirit, active, moving and creative, evolving its potencies within the Astral Light. It is Air or the Gases.

The ace of clubs in its esoteric aspect represents a still more *external state*, in the descending scale of creation. It signifies Force, Motion, Light and Heat; in other words, Fire.

The ace of cups in its esoteric aspect represents the entire *fluidic* properties of nature, in which every thing is resolvable, and as such corresponds to Water.

The ace of spades in its esoteric aspect represents the most external form of the creative design. It is matter per se, and as such is fittingly symbolized by the Earth.

✕ Thus do we commence with Spirit and terminate with Matter, as the lowest point of the Arc, from whence we must retrace our steps and ultimately return into spirit. Herein consists the great mystery resolving all things into their pure elemental substance. Another turn of this mystic Rota or wheel, and the alchemist will see *how* to transmute all metals into gold. The secret lies within the few words just stated, and will repay the finder. As a conclusion to this section of the Taro, viz: the 22 keys and the four aces, we give the technical verses of Eliphas Levi upon their *theological meanings*; and the number preceding each line signifies the number of the Key.

- I. All things announce a conscious, active cause, 118.
- II. Vivific Oneness based on number's laws;
- III. Who all containing is by nought confined,
- IV. And all preceding hath no bound assigned.
- V. This only Lord should man adore alone,
- VI. Who doth true doctrine to pure hearts make known.
- VII. But acts of faith require a single chief,
- VIII. Whence we proclaim one altar, law, belief:
- IX. The changeless God will never change their base,
- X. He rules our days and dooms through every phase.
- XI. His mercy's wealth which Vice to nought will bring.
- XII. His people promises a future King.
- XIII. The tomb's a path which to new worlds ascends.
And life through all subsists, death only ends.
Pure, sacred, steadfast truths we here repeat
The venerated numbers* thus complete.
- XIV. The angel blest doth calm and moderate,
- XV. The evil is the fiend of pride and hate.
- XVI. God doth the lightning and the fire subdue;

- XVII. He rules the dew eve and evening dew;
 XVIII. The watchful moon He sets to guard our heights
 XIX. His sun's the source of life's renewed delights.
 XX. His breath revivifies the dust of graves
 or
 XXI. Where crowds descend who are of lust the slaves;
 or The mercy-seat He covers with His crown,
 XXII. And on the cherubs pours His glory down.

The above impressive lines are full of mystic significance when we remember the special Key belonging to each sentence, and they indicate very clearly that Eliphas Levi knew vastly more about the Taro than he cared to commit to writing.

(To be Continued.)

*THE CELESTIAL DESATIR: TO THE GREAT
 PROPHET ABAD.†*

Translated from the original Persian

BY

MIRZA MOHAMED HADI.

73) In the name of Yazdan!

Sasan V. says: the Sovereign of the universe pleased to say 'to the great prophet Abad.'

(74) Ye men do not kill the harmless animals like the horse, camel, cow, mule, ass, &c., for these are punish for what they have done, in a different way from the wise and omniscient. For instance, a horse is punished by being ridden on, and a cow and camel and mule and ass by using them as beasts of burden. They are those who used to oppress men by force.

(75) If an adult person kills an harmless animal know-

*The number 13 is, Kabbalistically, the sacred number of completion. It signifies the *latent* trinity of the En Soph, and the 10 emanations. It is the Messiah and the Virgin with their 11 *faithful* disciples, and lastly it is the Sun and his 12 starry mansions.

T. H. B.

†Continued from No. 6, p. 308. This translation was made specially for *The Platonist* by M. Hadi, who is a competent Persian scholar.

ingly, and he is not punished for it immediately by some mysterious agency or by the lord of the land, he will be punished in the next life.

(76) Killing an harmless animal is like the murder of an unintelligent (idiotic), harmless man.

(77) You ought to know that one who kills an harmless animal will incur the displeasure of the Great God.

(78) Fear the displeasure of God, for His chastisement is very severe.

(79) In the name of Yazdan! If a fierce animal kills a harmless animal it is but the punishment inflicted on the one killed. The fierce animals serve to punish and to retaliate.

(80) Killing¹ the fierce animals is proper and laudable and suitable.² For they injure those passing by them and shed blood. They likewise kill innocent people. Those who punish them (fierce animals) shall be rewarded. For to inflict punishment in obedience to the decree of God is virtuous.³ It is evident that the killing of fierce animals is lawful, for it is simply a punishment for their former misdeeds.⁴

(81) In the name of Yazdan!

Those who are without knowledge and guilty of bad conduct and evil deeds will be joined to the vegetable body, and in this way suffer for their ignorance and wrong doing.

(82) And those (still worse) of bad habits and faith will be joined to the mineral body.

(83) Till their expiation for sins is completed by re-

1 The princess and nobles of the East are up to this time very fond of the *Shikar* (chase) of fierce animals. However they do not observe the law of Abad; they kill harmless as well as fierce animals.

The *Brahmans* abstain from killing the harmless as well as the fierce animals.

2 For public well-fare.

3 This passage seems to be added by Sasan V.

4 Transmigration is not believed by the Mohammedans except some of the Sufis, such as Jelaluddin Rumi. (See his *Mesnavi*).

maintaining in several compositions. After they are thus punished they will again be joined to the human body. And whatever they do they will be recompensed accordingly.

(84) In the name of Yazdan!

Any one who has good knowledge but bad faith, after his leaving this corporeal body will never find it again. His soul will not be allowed to come into heaven. His bad character having assumed the form of burning fire and chilling⁵ ice, and of snakes and scorpions and such other things, will afflict him. .

(85) And his punishment for separating from Yazdan, the universal⁶ Origin, and the First Source, and from the angels, will be burning in the fire of despair. And this is the worst state of Dozakh (hell).

(86) Say (O prophet) that Yazdan may⁷ protect you and your friends from this great calamity.

(87) In the name of Yazdan! If you apply your heart to God while you are hungry and vigilant you may separate yourself from the corporeal frame, and see the stars and angels, and behold the sphere.

(88) Then you must⁸ return to the corporeal frame, and on finally leaving the lower material world you will come to the celestial world, formerly seen by you, and will live there forever.⁹

5 Punishment by cold is also in the Moslem law.

6 There is a maxim of the philosophers that every thing tends to its origin—as God is the origin of all. All things tends to Him. And therefore separation from him is the worst of all punishments.

7 The term friend is used by the mystics for a disciple. We (Mosalmans) use the designation 'companions of Mohamed' or 'friends of Mohamed,' never disciples or pupils.

8 For it is not lawful to leave the corporeal frame altogether, *i. e.* to die, before the time appointed by the Almighty for death. On this subject see the Phædon of Platon.

9 According to Mohamed who ever is admitted into Paradise once will never come out of it. This is not the case as regards hell. A guilty person may remain there for a time, and then be liberated from his imprisonment and allowed to come into Paradise.

(89) For prayer you may turn towards any part, but the star and the light are preferable.¹⁰

For one who prays to that essence which is free from the (attribute of) direction may turn towards any quarter: nevertheless it is preferable to pray towards stars and lights. Prayer towards stars and light¹¹ are laudable.

(90) Ye are to get married. Do not look at the wife of another person, nor gaze upon her nor associate¹² with her.

(91) Punish the evil doers.¹³

(92) Do not violate your promise, and do not take a wrong oath.

(93) Whatever a guilty person does, punish him accordingly.

Sasan V. explains the above passage thus:—“He (God) says the punishment must be in accordance with one’s guilt. If one murders a person by stoning him the guilty person must be stoned to death, and if by the sword he should be killed by the sword.

(94) Do not eat or drink¹⁴ any thing which may be productive of intoxication.

(95) The property of an idiot or a minor is to be put in charge of a wise and trustworthy person, until the idiot or the minor attains to the age¹⁵ of reason or puberty.

10 Hence the origin of the light worship of the Parsis.

11 Muſalmans turn for prayer towards Mecca, one of the most sacred and ancient temples in the world.

12 Intercourse of any kind with the wife of another is forbidden.

13 *i. e.* do not forgive them.

14 Drinking wine or other strong liquors in any quantity is absolutely forbidden in Islam. But a moral man may use an intoxicating drug as a medicine, if an respectable physician advises him to do so. In the religion of Abad, I suppose, the intoxicating drugs are allowed as a medicine but not as a luxury.

15 The Holy Koran treating of this matter declares:—“And give the orphans when they come to the age their substance; and render them not in exchange

(96) The legacy of a father or mother must be divided equally among his or her children, and a small share should be allowed to the wife or husband of the deceased.

(97) 'Treat the weak kindly that ye may receive your reward from the great Yazdan.

(98) The great Lord created man a voluntary¹⁶ agent. At his discretion he does good or evil. If he does good he will gain paradise as his reward; if evil, he will have his abode in Hell. To the one who does not listen to the advice of the physician and thereby aggravates his sickness the physician is quite indifferent as regards illness or recovery.

(99) The evil does not proceed from the Lord of being. And He has no intention of doing anything other than good.

(100) In the name of Yazdan! The creatures in the upper as well as the lower world are but gifts of the Giver. They are not separate¹⁷ from Him. They were,

bad for good: and devour not their substance, by adding it to your substance; for this is a great sin. And guard the orphans until they attain the age of marriage: but if ye perceive they are able to manage their affairs well, deliver their substance unto them; and waste it not extravagantly or hastily, before they grow up. Let him who is rich abstain entirely from the orphans' estates; and let him who is poor take thereof according to what shall be reasonable. And when ye deliver their substance unto them, call witnesses thereof in their presence: God takes sufficient account of your actions. * * * Surely they who devour the possessions of orphans unjustly, shall swallow down nothing but fire into their bellies, and shall broil in flames."

16 There are two antagonistic sects among the Mosalman, viz: *Kadrians* and *Jabbarians*. The former deny *Al Kadr* or God's absolute decree, saying that evil ought not to be attributed to God but to man who is a free agent and may therefore be rewarded or punished for his actions. God has granted man a power to do or not to do. The Mohamedans call them *Magians*, because they assert another author of actions besides God. The latter sect (*Jabbarians*) maintain that man has no liberty at all; all actions proceed from God, who is the author of good as well as of evil. However the *Sunnis* and *Shias* take a middle ground, holding that man is partly free and partly not.

17 *i. v.* In point of time. They are posterior to God because an effect is always posterior to cause. This also eternity of the universe. The Mosalman never admit the simultaniety of the universe with God.

they are, and they will [be the same in essence with Him.] Because, what ever a Giver donates He does not recall for *that* is the practice of a miser.

Sasan V says: As the great God has given man the faculty of distinguishing good from evil, therefore if he acts according to the will of God in which there is nothing but goodness and virtue, high Paradise will be his abode. But if he gives himself up to bad habit he will find an abode in hell. It is manifest that good and bad actions are means of obtaining paradise and hell respectively, and the command of the incomparable *dadar* (God) just is like the advice of a physician. Whoever takes the advice of the kind and wise one is liberated from illness, and by a little abstinence restored to eternal health. And as to the predestination of God, it may be said, that it has no influence on the character of man. That which is called predestination is simply a foreknowledge of men's actions.

(101) The universe¹⁸ like the light of the sun did not separate from the essence of the eternal supreme Lord, and it will never separate.

(102) The lower world is under the command of the upper world.

(103) In the beginning the sovereignty of the universe is similar to a slowly moving star.

(104) For a thousand years, he (the sovereign star) rules over the heavenly world without a co-operator.

(105) And in the other millemiums each of the slow-moving stars becomes his co-operator (one by one.)

(106) Finally the moon becomes his co-operator.¹⁹

18 Observe that God is here compared with the sun. This is contrary to the accepted doctrine of Islam. In the beginning there was God and nothing was with Him. He created the universe by his will. The term will (*Iradah* in Arabic) is defined by the Mosalman doctors to be 'a power of doing or not doing an action. God is not a necessary cause or involuntary cause of the universe like fire of burning or the sun of its light. But He is an free agent, like man, of His actions.

19 That is for a thousand years without a co-operator. And in other like periods assisted by a co-operator.

Then the first co-operator (of the first sovereign) succeeds to the sovereignty. For the star which first received the sovereignty we name *the first sovereign*, and the star which co-operates with the first one during the second millenium is called the *second sovereign*.

(107) For he succeeded after the expiration of the reign of the first sovereign.

(108) And the second sovereign reigns similarly.²⁰

(109) Finally the first sovereign whose reign has already expired becomes the co-operator of the second sovereign.

(110) And thus expires the reign of the second sovereign.

(111) And so on for all of them. For, each one of the slowly and quickly moving stars becomes the sovereign and reigns for a millenium without an assistant, for other like periods with the assistant.

(112) When the moon becomes the sovereign and the stars have co-operated with²¹ her (the moon) then her reign comes to an end: one great²² revolution having been completed.

(113) And after this comes again the turn of the first sovereign. And it continues so for ever.

Sasan V. commenting upon the above verse says: For the commencement is with the first sovereign and the end with the moon. By the first sovereign is here (in the commentary) meant Saturn. N. A. KHAN.

(114) In the beginning of the great revolution the commencement of the business of the lower world is undertaken.

²⁰ Because the moon is the lowest of all the heavenly bodies. In our time the moon is the ruler

²¹ There is no distinction of gender in Persiau.

²² This great revolution is something like the "day of Brahma" of the Hindus.

(115) The bodies and the intellects²³ and the punctions similar to those of the last great revolution are produced and manifested afresh.

Commentary:—That is, in the beginning of a great revolution, the mixing up of the elements commences anew, and brings forth the bodies possessing the forms and the properties and the functions similar to those of the past great revolution. But the notion²⁴ that He (God) creates the same bodies by bringing forth the things destroyed is not worthy of a wise person. For, why had he destroyed the thing if he was intent upon creating it again? The least wise does not do such a deed as becomes him to repent.

(116) And every succeeding great revolution is similar to the preceding great revolution.

(117) O exalted Abad,²⁵ you and your wife are to survive in the beginning of this (coming) great revolution, and nobody else will remain alive. Now the men will be generated from you.

Commentary: Ye ought to know that at the end of a great revolution only two persons, a man and a woman, remain and all others perish. Now the generation of man proceeds from the surviving pair, and the new (current) generation is of their progeny. Therefore He (God) informs Abad that regeneration of men will proceed from him, and he will be father of all men.

(118) In the name of Yazdan!

(119) The best and happiest of men are your followers, and those who obey your law.

²³ The intellects belonging to the bodies of the lower world, not to the Ten Intellects of the upper regions.

²⁴ The returning of the annihilated is impossible by itself. (See Arabic works on philosophy on this subject where their doctrine is fully demonstrated.)

²⁵ Abad here is identical Adam.

(120) The one who acts according to your commands (legislation) is most honorable before God.

(121) The one who is rejected by you is rejected by God.

(122) You are the leader of men.

(123) Your followers shall be sovereigns of the world, and shall reign for a long time.

(124) The world will be most happy and most comforted during the reign of your followers than in any other reign.

(125) Until men act mischievously, and become sinners, and evil doers, your religion, which is but Divine love, will not disappear from among the chiefs and sovereigns.

(126) One of the calamities of hell to the people of this world is the disappearing of your religion from the rulers.

(127) In the name of Yazdan!

(128) There will appear a sect of good, wise, zealous and best worshippers chief among the devotees of God.

As the word *tapas* occurs in the revealed text the holy commentator thus explains the term. *Tapas* or treading the path of God or devotion to him, is to eat, drink and sleep sparingly. And the man who practices *tapas* is called *tapasbud* or *hartasp*.

(129) The conduct of this sect is blessed.

(130) There will also be a sect possessing 'tolerable' wisdom and good conduct, though not *tapasbud* and *hartasp*. They will investigate the nature and properties of things speculatively. They will not trouble their bodies by devotion and penances.

The holy commentator thus explains the term *sardasp*, which occurs in the revealed text. *Sardasp* is that one believing in God who, without abstaining from eating, drinking and sleeping, and without retiring to solitude, seeks the deity speculatively: Explores secret

things and does not allow the troubling of any animal.

From these two sects come the *Partaviyan*²⁶ and the *Rahbariyan*.²⁷

(131) Then there will appear a sect possessing good wisdom (theory) but bad practice, troubling the animals.

Commentary:—This is about those who, though fond of knowledge and philosophy (theoretical), will act badly and permit the slaughter of harmless animals. They will pollute their mouths with the blood of²⁸ harmless animals and fill their stomachs with their flesh.

(132) There will come another sect who will confound the *saroyram* and the *nairuram* and *jorayram*.

Commentary:—At the time of worshipping God, the notion first reflecting on the mind is called *saroyram*; and what is known speculatively is called *nairuram*; and the thing fancied and that which is contrary to reason is called *jorayram*. The last refers to those who are possessed of a simple 'or crazy' mind.

(133) One of the sects will assert that except the essence of the Supreme Lord there is nothing simple and free.

Commentary:—Means the sect who fancy that all the

²⁶ Partaviyan—plural of Partavi, means literally one belonging to light or reflection. This term is synonymous with the *Ishraqi* of the Arabic meaning a reflective (mystic) philosopher. A Platonist may be called a *ishraqi* or *Partavi* philosopher.

²⁷ *Rahbariyan*—plural of *Rahbari* (*rah*—path, *bar*—a carrier, *i*—belonging to) one treading a path i. e. Perapatetic philosopher: In Arabic we have the word *Mashshai*—(a great walker)—a speculative philosopher. A follower of Aristotle may be called a *Mashshai* or *Rahbari* philosopher.

Abu Ali Sina was a *Mashshai* and Sheikh Maktul an *Ishraqi*.

²⁸ There is a saying of our Lord Ali, Son in law of Mohamed, similar to this: "Do not make your bellies graves of animals." Meaning: "Do not eat meat excessively." Some of the Sufis abstain from using meat. Those who perform certain operations called *amals* wholly abstain from flesh. They even abstain from milk.

angels are corporeal beings. God alone is free from corporeity.

(134) One of the sects will say that God has body.

Commentary:—Means the corporealists or those who assert that God has a body, like man or some other thing.

(135) Some people will maintain that God is nature and habit, which are but forces peculiar to body.

(136) Many persons will believe themselves to be prophets and apostles although they trouble animals.

(137) Without showing mercy to a harmless animal, and without much devotion and severe penances for God's sake, one cannot approach the angels.

(138) These people can not pass the heaven of the Moon, and remain always in the lower regions, and by virtue of a little worship and devotion whatever they witness they assimilate to *other* things. And by this practice their conduct is ruined.

Commentary:—These are persons who take themselves for prophets and apostles. But without much adoration and giving up of bad habits, and possessing of genuine virtue, the chief of which is showing mercy to animals, it is not lawful. And these persons have not yet trodden the path [according to the manner here mentioned]; as they have worshipped for a while, and troubled themselves a little, they behold a few lights below the heaven of the Moon. But as their souls have not yet subjected their imagination they are apt to assimilate these false lights to the *Something Else*. They never find the true essence, and always wander in the region of fancy. Even what their imagination has shown them they cannot apprehend. They devote themselves to the image their fancy has shown them: they go astray, and ruin themselves and their followers.

(139) A sect having observed calamities of men only, think it sufficient not to kill them.

[To be Continued.]

BOOK REVIEWS.

The *Bhagavad Gita*, or the Lord's Lay with commentary and notes, as well as references to the Christian scriptures, translated from the Sanskrit for the benefit of those in search of spiritual light. By Mohini M. Chatterji, M. A., Boston: Ticknor & Co., 1887.

This is a disappointing and unsatisfactory work. The "occult" public was led to believe that Mr. Chatterji's version of the *Bhagavad Gita* would surpass all others in accuracy and fidelity, and that his commentary would be an elaborate and exhaustive exposition of the esoteric sense of the great mystic poem of India. It is now evident that this expectation lacked any substantial foundation. We look in vain for any valuable information on subjects of the highest importance, such, for instance, as the theory and practice of Yoga. The translation is certainly inferior to that by either Thompson or Davies, and some would rank it below Wilkins' which, though the first effort to render this sublime poem into English, is in several respects most admirable. In this connection we may note that Thompson, who was a competent critic, places the Greek version of the *Gita* above all others. He says: "Lastly, we must name with the highest eulogy a most able Greek translation prepared at Benares by the learned Greek Orientalist, Demetrios Galanos, with the assistance of the Brahman Kandadarsa, and printed at Athens, with an introduction by M. Typaldos, in the year 1846. This it will be seen is by far the best translation which exists, while the notes which accompany it are in every respect invaluable." Galanos, an Athenian of great philological learning, devoted the greater part of his life to the study of Oriental languages and philosophy. He went to Benares, the "holy city," and there clothed himself like a Brahmin, as his biographer assures us, "and following their customs, and associating with the most holy and learned of their wise men, in the space of about forty years he not only acquired an extensive knowledge of Indian philosophy, but also was initiated by the most approved teachers into their highest theology. He made such attainments in their virtue and wisdom as to be regarded by the English colonists, and the other Europeans, as well as by the most pious Brahmins and Indians generally, as a most holy and learned man." He died in 1833 at Benares, where there is a monument, with an English inscription, standing over his grave.* It is not strange that Galanos' translation should be deemed the best, for the Greek language in the copiousness, variety and accuracy of its philosophical vocabulary fully equals the Sanskrit, if it does not indeed surpass it.

IAMBlichI DE VITA PYTHAGORICA LIBER AD FIDEM CODICIS FLORENTINI RECENSUIT AUGUSTUS NAUCK ACCEDIT EPIMETRUM DE PYTHAGORAE AUREO CARMINE Petropoli A. MDCCCLXXXIV.

A good, legible edition of this work was badly needed, and M. Nauck is entitled to the thanks of scholars and students of the Pythagoric philosophy for supplying the want. He has given us what may be considered the final edition of this book, at least until the discovery of new and better MSS. Four editions have previously appeared: Arcerius, Hedelberg, 1597; Kuster,

*Vide Baird's Modern Greece.

Amsterdam, 1707; Kiessling, Leipzig, 1815; and Westerman, Paris, 1850. The Greek text as it stands, though much improved by M. Nauck, is still imperfect, and abounds in repetitions. The copyists are evidently responsible for these repetitions, and *not* Iamblichos, as M. Nauck seems to think. It would be hard to overestimate the value of the book itself to all admirers or students of ancient wisdom. It is a storehouse of facts about and relating to the life of Pythagoras, one of the greatest Sages of any generation or country. The philosopher could not have found a better biographer than Iamblichos. A philosopher himself of wonderful genius and extensive fame, he was thoroughly qualified to portray the life and deeds of the "fair-haired Samian." An English translation of this work by the celebrated Thomas Taylor was published in 1818. It is now, however, entirely out of print, and commands a very high price.

There are four excellent indices, vi.: *Index Scriptorum*, *Index vocabulorum*, *Index potiorum rerum ab Iamblichō commemoratarum*, *Index locorum temptatorum*, and a specimen of the Florentine manuscript is given.

PROTEUS, by E. M. W. (For sale by Colby & Rich, Boston).

This is an interesting and thoughtful pamphlet on Evolution. The first page indicates the leading ideas of the writer: "Some twenty-three centuries ago lived Plato, the great thinker of antiquity. His divine imagination gave him a glimpse of truths which science has groped after for two thousand years. In his "Hymn of the Universe," which is the highest utterance, perhaps, that comes to us from the pre-Christian ages, he designates man as the Microcosm, or epitome of the Universe, thereby anticipating one of the sublimest generalizations of modern science.

Agassiz, the leading naturalist of our day, but reechoed the thought of Plato, when he said "Creation expresses the same thought from the earliest ages, onward, to the coming of man; whose advent is already foretold in the first appearance of the earliest fishes."

For creation, from the first, has been in continued effort to put forth the human form. Mineral, vegetable and animal forms, nay, atmospheres, planets, and suns, are nothing else than so many means and tendencies to man, on differing stages of his transit. He stands on the pyramid of being, linked with all below, as the form to which they all aspire. Man is the head and heart of nature. Creation is the coming and becoming of man. The world is, because he is. The reason of everything it contains is written in the book of human nature. He finds that reason physiologically in his body, and spiritually in his soul."

In the January number of our new volume will appear an excellent and valuable paper entitled "The Hall of Seb: a study of the Origin of the Idea of Time," by the distinguished English scholar, Robert Brown jr., author of *Poseidon*, the *Great Dionysiak Myth*, etc., etc. Mr. Brown is a profound student of the fundamental principles of the ancient faiths, and his articles will repay a careful reading.