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THE CELESTIAL HIERARCHIES

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CHAPTER IV

The Meaning of the Name "Angels"

Since, in my opinion, the nature of a hierarchy has been adequately defined, we must proceed to render honour to the Angelic Hierarchy, intently gazing with supermundane sight upon the holy imagery of it in the Scriptures, that we may be uplifted in the highest degree to their divine purity through that mystical representation, and may praise the Origin of all hierarchical knowledge with a veneration worthy of the things of God, and with devout thanksgiving.

In the first place this truth must be declared, that the Superessential Deity, having through His Goodness established the essential subsistence of all, brought all things into being. For it is the very nature of that God Which is the Supreme Cause of all to call all things to participation in Itself in proportion to the capacity and nature of each.

Wherefore all things share in that Providence Which streams forth from the Superessential Deific Source of all; for they would not be unless they had come into existence through participation in the Essential Principle of all things.

All inanimate things participate in It through their being; for the "to be" of all things is the Divinity above Being Itself, the true Life. Living things participate in Its life-giving power above

* For Chapters I-III see *S.O.W.* Vol. XV, No. 58.

all life; rational things participate in Its self-perfect and pre-eminently perfect Wisdom above all reason and intellect.

It is manifest, therefore, that those Natures which are around the Godhead have participated of It in manifold ways. On this account the holy ranks of the Celestial Beings are present with and participate in the Divine Principle in a degree far surpassing all those things which merely exist, and irrational living creatures, and rational human beings. For moulding themselves intelligibly to the imitation of God, and looking in a supermundane way to the Likeness of the Supreme Deity, and longing to form the intellectual appearance of It, they naturally have more abundant communion with Him, and with unremitting activity they tend eternally up the steep, as far as is permitted, through the ardour of their unwearied divine love, and they receive the Primal Radiance in a pure and immaterial manner, adapting themselves to this in a life wholly intellectual.

Such, therefore, are they who participate first, and in an all-various manner, in Deity, and reveal first, and in many ways, the Divine Mysteries. Wherefore they, above all, are pre-eminently worthy of the name Angel because they first receive the Divine Light, and through them are transmitted to us the revelations which are above us.

It is thus that the Law (as it is written in the Scriptures) was given to us by Angels and, both before and after the days of the Law, Angels guided our illustrious forefathers to God, either by declaring to them what they should do and leading them from error and an evil life to the straight path of truth, or by making known to them the Divine Law or, in the manner of interpreters, by showing to them holy hierarchies, or secret visions of supermundane mysteries, or certain Divine prophecies.

Now, if anyone should say that God has shown Himself without intermediary to certain holy men, let him know beyond doubt, from the most holy Scriptures, that no man has ever seen, nor shall see, the hidden Being of God; but God has shown Himself, according to revelations which are fitting to God, to His faithful servants in holy visions adapted to the nature of the seer.

The divine theology, in the fulness of its wisdom, very rightly applies the name *theophany* to that beholding of God which shows the Divine Likeness, figured in Itself as a likeness in form of That Which is formless, through the uplifting of those who

contemplate to the Divine; inasmuch as a Divine Light is shed upon the seers through it, and they are initiated into some participation of Divine things.

By such Divine visions our venerable forefathers were instructed through the mediation of the Celestial Powers. Is it not told in the holy Scriptures that the sacred Law was given to Moses by God Himself in order to teach us that in it is mirrored the Divine and holy Law? Furthermore, theology wisely teaches that it was communicated to us by Angels, as though the authority of the Divine Law decreed that the second should be guided to the Divine Majesty by the first. For not solely in the case of higher and lower natures, but also for co-ordinate natures this law has been established by its Superessential Original Author: that within each Hierarchy there are first, middle, and last ranks and powers, and that the higher are initiators and guides of the lower to the Divine approach and illumination and union.*

I see that the Angels, too, were first initiated into the Divine Mystery of Jesus in His love for man, and through them the gift of that knowledge was bestowed upon us: for the divine Gabriel announced to Zachariah the High-Priest that the son who should be born to him through Divine Grace, when he was bereft of hope, would be a prophet of that Jesus Who would manifest the union of the human and Divine natures through the ordinance of the Good Law for the salvation of the world; and he revealed to Mary how of her should be born the Divine Mystery of the ineffable Incarnation of God.

Another Angel taught Joseph that the Divine promise made to his forefather David should be perfectly fulfilled. Another brought to the shepherds the glad tidings, as to those purified by quiet withdrawal from the many, and with him a multitude of the heavenly host gave forth to all the dwellers upon earth our often-sung hymn of adoring praise.

* "The progressions of beings, however, are completed through similitude. But the terminations of the higher orders are united to the beginnings of second orders. And one series and indissoluble order extends from on high through the surpassing goodness of the First Cause and His unical Power. For because indeed He is *One* He is the supplier of union; but because He is the *Good* He constitutes things similar to Him prior to such as are dissimilar. And thus all things are in continuity with each other. For if this continuity were broken there would not be union.—Proclus, *Theology of Plato*. Book VI, Ch. II.

Let us now mount upward to that most sublime of all Lights celebrated in the Scriptures : for I perceive that Jesus Himself Who is the Superessential Head of the Supercelestial Beings above Nature, when taking our nature while still keeping His own immutable Divinity, did not turn away from the human order which He arranged and chose, but rather submitted Himself obediently to the commands given by God the Father through Angels, by whose ministrations the Father's decree touching the flight of His Son into Egypt, and the return from Egypt into Judaea was announced to Joseph. Moreover, through Angels we see Him subjecting Himself to the Father's Will; for I will not recall to one who knows our sacred tradition the Angel who fortified Jesus, or even that Jesus Himself, because He came for the good work of our salvation to fulfil the law in its spiritual application, was called Angel of Good Counsel. For He Himself says, in the manner of a herald, that whatsoever He heard from the Father He announced unto us.

CHAPTER V

Why all the Celestial Beings in Common are called Angels

This, so far as we understand it, is the reason for the name Angel in the Scriptures. Now I think we should investigate the reason why theologians give the general name Angels to all the Celestial Beings, but when explaining the characteristics of the Supermundane Orders they specifically give the name Angel to those who complete and conclude the Divine Celestial Hierarchies. Above these they place the choirs of Archangels, Principalities, Powers, Virtues, and those other Beings who are acknowledged by the traditional Scriptural teachings to be of higher rank.

Now we maintain that in these hierarchies the higher orders possess the illuminations and powers of the lower ranks, but the lower do not participate equally with those above them. Hence the theologians call the higher of these spiritual orders Angels because they, too, show forth the Divine Radiance; but we can find no reason for calling the lowest choirs of the Celestial

Intelligences Principalities, or Thrones, or Seraphim, for they do not manifest in the same degree that supremely excellent power;* but just as they guide our inspired hierarchs to the Divine Brightness known to them, so do those most holy Powers which are above them lead to the Divine Majesty those ranks which complete the Angelic Hierarchies.

And this also may be added, that all can rightly be called Angels in respect of their participation in the Divine Likeness and Illumination both in the higher and lower ranks.

But now let us proceed further into detail, and with singleness of mind examine the particular sacred characteristics of each of the Celestial Orders which are set forth for us in the Scriptures.

CHAPTER VI

Which is the First Order of the Celestial Beings, Which the Middle, and Which the Last?

I hold that none but the Divine Creator by Whom they were ordained is able to know fully the number and the nature of the Supermundane Beings and the regulation of their sacred hierarchies; and furthermore, that they know their own powers and illuminations and their own holy supermundane ordination. For we could not have known the mystery of these Supercelestial Intelligences and all the holiness of their perfection had it not been taught to us by God through His Ministers who truly know their own natures.

Therefore we will say nothing as from ourselves, but being instructed will set forth, according to our ability, those angelic visions which the venerable theologians have beheld.

Theology has given to the Celestial Beings nine interpretative names, and among these our divine initiator distinguishes three

* "Everything which proceeds in the divine orders is not naturally adapted to receive all the powers of its producing cause. Nor in short, are secondary natures able to receive all the powers of the natures prior to themselves, but the latter have certain powers exempt from things in an inferior order, and incomprehensible by the beings posterior to themselves.—Proposition CL. Proclus *Metaphysical Elements*.

threefold orders.* In the first rank of all he places those who, as we are told, dwell eternally in the constant Presence of God, and cleave to Him, and above all others are immediately united to Him. And he says that the teachings of the Holy Word testify that the most holy Thrones and many-eyed and many-winged Ones, named in the Hebrew tongue Cherubim and Seraphim, are established immediately about God and nearest to Him above all others. Our venerable hierarch describes this threefold Order as a co-equal unity, and truly the most exalted of the Hierarchies, the most wholly Godlike, and the most closely and immediately united to the First Light of the Godhead.

The second, he says, contains the Powers, Virtues, and Dominions, and the last and lowest choirs of the Celestial Intelligences are called Angels, Archangels, and Principalities.

CHAPTER VII

Of the Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones, and their First Hierarchy.

In accepting this order of the holy Hierarchies we affirm that the name of each of the Celestial Choirs expresses its own Godlike characteristic. We are told by Hebrew scholars that the holy name Seraphim means "those who kindle or make hot," and Cherubim denotes abundance of knowledge or an outflowing of wisdom.† Reasonably, therefore, is this first Celestial Hierarchy administered by the most transcendent Natures, since it occupies a more exalted place than all the others, being immediately present with God; and because of its nearness, to it are brought the first revelations and perfections of God before the rest. Therefore

* "There are nine Orders of Angels, figures of the nine Archetypes in God; and each one obtains a name corresponding to the property in God which it exhibits."—Colet.

† Cherubim "who may be called loving Wisdoms, as those first may be called wise Loves. For there is in each both love and wisdom. But in the first, inasmuch as they are nearer to God, the very Sun of Truth, this exists in a far greater degree. . . . Such then is the difference between these Orders: namely, that in the latter is knowledge proceeding from love; in the former is love proceeding from knowledge."—Colet.

they are named "The Glowing Ones," "Streams of Wisdom," "Thrones," in illustration of their Divine Nature.

The name Seraphim clearly indicates their ceaseless and eternal revolution about Divine Principles, their heat and keenness, the exuberance of their intense, perpetual, tireless activity, and their elevative and energetic assimilation of those below, kindling them and firing them to their own heat, and wholly purifying them by a burning and all-consuming flame; and by the unhidden, unquenchable, changeless, radiant, and enlightening power, dispelling and destroying the shadows of darkness.

The name Cherubim denotes their power of knowing and beholding God, their receptivity to the highest Gift of Light, their contemplation of the Beauty of the Godhead in Its First Manifestation, and that they are filled by participation in Divine Wisdom, and bounteously outpour to those below them from their own fount of wisdom.

The name of the most glorious and exalted Thrones denotes that which is exempt from and untainted by any base and earthly thing, and the supermundane ascent up the steep. For these have no part in that which is lowest, but dwell in fullest power, immovably and perfectly established in the Most High, and receive the Divine Immanence above all passion and matter, and manifest God, being attentively open to Divine participations.*

This, then, is the meaning of their names, so far as we understand it: but now we must set forth our conception of the

* "In the third rank are those who, from their unity, simplicity, constancy, and firmness, are sometimes called Thrones, sometimes Seats; who themselves also are wise and loving. But from their simplicity, they have the attributes of unity, power, strength, fortitude, steadfastness. Which very attributes the Cherubim and Seraphim also possess. . . . Steadfastness comes from simplicity, simplicity from purification. For when each object is purified back to its own simple nature, then, being uncompounded, it remains indissoluble through its unity. Whence it is clear that purification is assigned to the Thrones. Moreover, when a thing is purified, it is illumined, and after it is illumined, it is perfected. This last office is given to the Seraphs, the other to the Cherubs. Among them all, in every threefold manner, there is a striving with all their might to imitate God; Who is Purification Itself, the Parent of Unities; Who is the very Illumination of those unities; Who is lastly the very Perfection of the illuminated. Power cleanses, clear truth makes serene, finished love makes perfect."—Colet.

nature of this Hierarchy, for the object of every Hierarchy, as I think we have already sufficiently shown, is a steadfast devotion to the Divine assimilation in the Likeness of God; and the whole work of a Hierarchy is in the participation and the imparting of a most holy purification, Divine Light, and perfecting knowledge.

And now I pray that I may speak worthily of those most exalted Intelligences, and as their Hierarchy is revealed in the Scriptures.

It is clear that the Hierarchy is similar in its nature and has close affinity with those First Beings Who are established after the Godhead, Which is the Source of Their Being, as though within Its Portals, transcending all created powers, both visible and invisible. Therefore we must recognize that they are pure, not as having been cleansed from stains and defilements, nor as not admitting material images, but as far higher than all baseness, and surpassing all that is holy. As befits the highest purity,* they are established above the most Godlike Powers and eternally keep their own self-motive and self-same order through the Eternal Love of God, never weakening in power, abiding most purely in their own Godlike identity, ever unshaken and unchanging. Again, they are contemplative, not as beholding intellectual or sensible symbols, nor as being uplifted to the Divine by the All-various contemplations set forth in the Scriptures, but as filled with Light higher than all immaterial knowledge, and rapt, as is meet, in the contemplation of that Beauty Which is the super-essential Triune Origin and Creator of all beauty. In like manner they are thought worthy of fellowship with Jesus, not through sacred images which shadow forth the Divine Likeness, but as truly being close to Him in that first participation of the knowledge of His Deifying Illuminations. Moreover, the imitation of God is granted to them in a pre-eminent degree, and as far as their nature permits they share the Divine and human virtues in primary power.

In the same manner they are perfect, not as though enlightened by an analytical knowledge of holy variety, but because they are

* "The peculiarity of purity is to keep more excellent natures exempt from such as are subordinate."—Proposition CLVI. Proclus, *Metaphysical Elements*.

"In the Divinities purity is likewise a primary good, guardianship, and everything of this kind."—*Ibid*.

wholly perfected through the highest and most perfect deification, possessing the highest knowledge that Angels can have of the Works of God; being Hierarchs not through other holy beings, but from God Himself, and since they are uplifted to God directly by their pre-eminent power and rank, they are both established immovably beside the All-Holy, and are borne up, as far as is allowable, to the contemplation of His Intelligible and Spiritual Beauty. Being placed nearest to God, they are instructed in the true understanding of the Divine Works, and receive their hierarchical order in the highest degree from Deity Itself, the First Principle of perfection.

The theologians therefore clearly show that the lower ranks of the Celestial Beings receive the understanding of the Divine Works from those above them in a fitting manner, and that the highest are correspondingly enlightened in the Divine Mysteries by the Most High God Himself.* For some of them are shown to us as enlightened in holy matters by those above them, and we learn that He Who in human form ascended to heaven is Lord of the Celestial Powers and King of Glory. And Angels are represented as questioning Him and desiring knowledge of His Divine redemptive work for us, and Jesus Himself is depicted as teaching them and revealing directly to them His great goodness towards mankind. "For I," He says, "speak righteousness and the judgment of salvation." Moreover, I am astonished that even the first rank of Celestial Beings, so far surpassing all the others, should reverently desire to receive the Divine enlightenment in an intermediate manner. For they do not ask directly, "Wherefore are Thy garments red?" but first eagerly question one another, showing that they seek and long for the knowledge of His Divine Words, without expectation of the enlightenment divinely granted them.

The first Hierarchy of the Celestial Intelligences, therefore, is purified and enlightened; being ordained by that First Perfecting Cause, uplifted directly to Himself, and filled, analogously, with

* "For all things concur with each other through similitude, and communicate the powers which they possess. And first natures, indeed, impart by illumination the gift of themselves to secondary natures, in unenvying abundance. But effects are established in their causes. An indissoluble connection, likewise, and communion of wholes, and a colligation of agents and patients, are surveyed in the world."—Proclus, *Theology of Plato*, Book VI, Chap. IV.

the most holy purification of the Boundless Light of the Supreme Perfection, untouched by any inferiority, full of Primal Light, and perfected by its union with the first-given Understanding and Knowledge.

But to sum up, I may say, not unreasonably, that the participation in Divine Knowledge is a purification, an illumination, and a perfection. For it purifies from ignorance by the knowledge of the perfect mysteries granted in due measure; it illuminates through the Divine Knowledge Itself by which it purifies the mind which formerly did not behold that which is now shown to it by the higher illumination; and it perfects by the self-same light through the abiding knowledge of the most luminous initiations.

This, so far as I know, is the first Order of Celestial Beings which are established about God, immediately encircling Him: and in perpetual purity they encompass His Eternal Knowledge in that most high and eternal Angelic dance, rapt in the bliss of manifold blessed contemplations, and irradiated with pure and primal splendours.

They are filled with divine food which is manifold, through the first-given outpouring, yet one through the unvaried and unific oneness of the Divine Banquet; and they are deemed worthy of communion and co-operation with God by reason of their assimilation to Him, as far as is possible for them, in the excellence of their natures and energies. For they know pre-eminently many Divine matters, and they participate as far as they may in Divine Understanding and Knowledge.

Wherefore theology has given those on earth its hymns of praise in which is divinely shown forth the great excellence of its sublime illumination. For some of that choir (to use material terms) cry out as with a voice like the sound of many waters, "Blessed is the Glory of the Lord from His Place"; others cry aloud that most renowned and sacred hymn of highest praise to God, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabbaoth, the whole earth is full of Thy Glory!"

Now we have already expounded to the best of our ability in the treatise on Divine Hymns these most sublime hymns of the Super-Celestial Intelligences, and have sufficiently dealt with them there. For the present purpose it is enough to recall that this first Order, having been duly enlightened by the Divine

Goodness in the knowledge of theology, gave to those below it, as befits Angelic goodness, this teaching (to state it briefly) that it is meet that the most August Deity, above praise, and all-praised, worthy of the highest praise, should be known and proclaimed, as far as is attainable, by the God-filled Intelligences. For, as the Scriptures say, being in the Likeness of God, they are divine habitations of the Divine Stillness; and again, the teaching that He is a Monad and Tri-subsistent Unity, providentially pervading all things through His Goodness, from the Supercelestial Natures down to the lowest things of the earth; for He is the Super-Original Principle and Cause of every essence, and holds the whole universe superessentially in His irresistible embrace.

(*To be continued*)

SEED THOUGHTS

The more of any material thing one man has, the less of it there is for others; whereas the more peace or knowledge or love one man has, the more there is for all the others.

—*Dante.*

Truth, that is, the Reality of things, being Eternal, Absolute, and Independent upon any particular mind; the very Essences of things not only always *are*, but always have the *same manner* also of being, that is uniform and invariable, not subject to differences and changes of any thoughts concerning them, and indeed seated above the comprehension or the reach of any particular minds. Our ideas, when true, are the exact copies or perfect images of these: and when we know them so to be, and can resolve them into their Principles, then have we true Science. It is the nature of the human soul to have these ideas generated in her, and to partake of Mind Eternal and Immutable. Hence she is the offspring and the image of the Divine Nature: and hence by participation of That, which is Eternal, and whose Principle is Unity, she is herself indissoluble and immortal.

—*Floyer Sydenham.*

JEWELS FROM THE DHAMMAPADA

All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him.

Those who imagine truth in untruth, and see untruth in truth, never arrive at truth, but follow vain desires.

If a man's thoughts are unsteady, if he does not know the true law, if his peace of mind is troubled, his knowledge will never be perfect.

Knowing that this body is fragile like a jar, and making this thought firm like a fortress, one should attack Mara (the tempter) with the weapon of knowledge, one should watch him when conquered, and should never rest.

As the bee collects nectar and departs without injuring the flower, or its colour or scent, so let a sage dwell in his village.

Like a beautiful flower, full of colour, but without scent, are the fine but fruitless words of him who does not act accordingly.

But, like a beautiful flower, full of colour and full of scent, are the fine and fruitful words of him who acts accordingly.

Long is the night to him who is awake; long is the mile to him who is tired; long is life to the foolish who do not know the true law.

If you see an intelligent man who tells you where true treasures are to be found, who shows what is to be avoided, and administers reproofs, follow that wise man; it will be better, not worse, for those who follow him.

As a solid rock is not shaken by the wind, wise people falter not amidst blame and praise.

Good people walk on whatever befall, the good do not prattle, longing for pleasure; whether touched by happiness or sorrow wise people never appear elated or depressed.

There is no suffering for him who has finished his journey, and abandoned grief, who has freed himself on all sides, and thrown off all fetters.

In a hamlet or a forest, in the deep water or on the dry land, wherever venerable persons dwell, that place is delightful.

If one man conquer in battle a thousand times thousand men, and if another conquer himself, he is the greatest of conquerors.

Is there in this world any man so restrained by humility that he does not mind reproof, as a well-trained horse the whip?

Like the well-trained horse when touched by the whip, be ye active and lively, and by faith, by virtue, by energy, by meditation; by discernment of the law you will overcome this great pain of reproof, perfect in knowledge and in behaviour, and never forgetful.

By oneself evil is done, by oneself one suffers; by oneself evil is left undone, by oneself one is purified. Purity and impurity belong to oneself, no one can purify another.

Let no one forget his own duty for the sake of another's, however great; let a man after he has discerned his own duty, be always attentive to his duty.

Better than sovereignty over the earth, better than going to heaven, better than lordship over all worlds, is the reward of the first step in holiness.

Not to commit any sin, to do good, and to purify one's mind that is the teaching of all the awakened.

The gift of the law exceeds all gifts; the sweetness of the law exceeds all sweetness; the delight of the law exceeds all delights.

Rouse thyself by thyself, examine thyself by thyself, thus self-protected and attentive wilt thou live happily, O Bhikshu.

GOOD AND EVIL

FROM THE DHAMMAPADA

If a man would hasten towards the good, he should keep his thoughts away from evil; if a man does what is good slothfully, his mind delights in evil.

If a man commits a sin, let him not do it again; let him not delight in sin: pain is the outcome of evil.

If a man does what is good, let him do it again; let him delight in it: happiness is the outcome of good.

Even an evil-doer sees happiness as long as his evil deed has not ripened; but when his evil deed has ripened, then does the evil-doer see evil.

Even a good man sees evil days, as long as his good deed has not ripened; but when his good deed has ripened, then does the good man see happy days.

Let no man think lightly of evil, saying in his heart, It will not come nigh unto me. Even by the falling of water-drops a water-pot is filled; the fool becomes full of evil, even as he gathers it little by little.

Let no man think lightly of good, saying in his heart, It will come nigh unto me. Even by the falling of water-drops the water-pot is filled; the wise man becomes full of good, even as he gathers it little by little.

Let a man avoid evil deeds, as a merchant, if he has few companions and carries much wealth, avoids a dangerous road; as a man who loves life avoids poison.

SIMPLICIUS ON PROVIDENCE

FROM HIS COMMENTARY ON THE ENCHIRIDION OF EPICETUS*

The next point was that it is God Who provides for and orders the universe; which, though it has been proved, I think, in what has already been said, yet may well admit of special consideration.

There are some who think that there are Divinities, and that They are, as has been shown, good, and have supreme Power, and the most perfect Intelligence; but they suppose Them to despise human affairs as being small and mean and unworthy of Their care.

This opinion is caused by what seems to them the injustice of human affairs; for they see the apparently wicked with power and riches and health, living prosperously to a great age, and sometimes handing down their prosperity to their sons; while the good they see irreparably harmed by the wicked, and no retribution, it seems, follows their evil deeds.

This leads some, as has been said before, to be bold enough to deny the very Being of God; others, because of the beliefs common to man, acknowledge His Being and Nature, but disbelieve in His Providential Care of human affairs, especially when they have suffered misfortunes of their own; for they say there would not be such unfairness, the wicked would not remain unpunished and the good unavenged, if they were in the care of Divine Providence. This also must be dealt with more generally and universally by inquiring into the several heads of the argument. For if there are Divinities, but They do not provide for men, either They do not know that there is need for Providence, or, if They know, They do not provide because They either cannot or will not. If They cannot, it is because things here are too great for the Divine Power, or because they escape Its Providence through their smallness and meanness: if They can, but will not, it is either because They neglect human affairs through Their own indulgence and slackness, or again because even though They have the power, They scorn their smallness and meanness.

* Translated from the Latin of Fred. Dübner by the Editors of the *Shrine of Wisdom*. See also *S.O.W.* 47.

These being the divisions of the argument, we must, for the moment, deal with all the heads together. If the Deity is such as has been assumed, having the most perfect Intelligence, the mightiest Power, the most beneficent Purpose, and creating from Himself all that is, He cannot be ignorant that the things which He has created must be cared for (this could not be so even in the most stupid of unreasoning animals, for they care for their own young); nor is it reasonable to suppose that He has not the power, either because they are too great to receive His care (but how could the created be greater than the Creator?) or because they are too mean (if they were such, why should they have been created at all?). Neither can His Will be blamed, as being neglectful through indulgence or slackness; for these are weaknesses of men themselves, and bad men at that, since it is not natural even for unreasoning animals to neglect their young through indulgence and laziness; nor can He despise as mean those things which He thought fit to create. Thus it is in every way impossible for what God has created not to be provided for by God.

It remains to answer those who realize the Divine pre-eminence, or seem to realize it, but belittle human affairs, and think them unworthy of Divine Providence. Now man and human affairs are not among the meanest things in the world; for man is a living creature and has a most precious and rational soul, and of all living things has the most reverence for God: so that man is not an unhonoured or mean possession of God, neither are human affairs which are the works of a rational soul. And even if anyone did suppose man to be a small thing, he would have to allow that to care for him would be all the easier; for while larger things are more easily grasped by the senses than smaller things (for example, it is more difficult to see or hear smaller things than larger), on the other hand strength can bear smaller things more easily, and master them more readily than the larger (it is easier to carry a mina than a talent, and to plough or dig half an acre than an acre). Consequently, the smaller a thing is assumed to be, the easier must be its care; and moreover, if God cares for the whole universe, He must necessarily also provide for its parts. This is so with the arts; for a doctor, undertaking to care for the whole body, would not neglect the parts; so with a general, or a householder, or a states-

man: for if the parts are neglected the ordering of the whole must suffer. So God could not be shown to have less care for His own possessions than have men who in one and the same art care for both the parts and the whole—not only for the sake of the parts themselves, but chiefly for the sake of the whole. It is we who are discontented, as has been said, at certain things that befall us, being ignorant in what way these also contribute to the whole.

If anyone should think that God's Providential Care for human affairs, confused and inconsistent and passionate as these are, gives trouble to God and distracts Him from His own Blessedness, he is evidently supposing the Greater Ones to be like human administrators, and is ignorant of the manner of His Care, thinking that, as with ourselves, so God too in caring for anyone, must wait upon him individually, and accompany each one of His actions, having no leisure for anything else. Such a one does not consider how in a city a lawgiver makes laws ordaining what is due to him who does or suffers anything, and appoints these laws to provide even for the smallest things; while he himself lives his own life in his own way and, as long as the laws are kept, provides for the city through them. Nor does he consider how in a far prior and greater degree God, the Supporter of the whole universe, seeing that our actions spring from the soul, and have in them much that is good, and much that is bad, has devised what is due to each one according to what he becomes; ordaining to what places, worse or better, he should go, and with what souls he should consort (for those who become worse join the bad, those who become better, the good); and what each must do to the other, according to his deserts, or suffer from the other. Yet the causes of our becoming good or bad, of our receiving this reward or that, God has left to the will of each one of us: for whatever we choose to be, that we become through the freedom of choice in our souls, and because virtue and vice are equally in our power. Moreover, God has set over us powers which allot us our due, even in our smallest actions.

And He has not, having devised these things once in the beginning, ceased at any time from His Providential Care, as a man might be satisfied with his institution of laws. For the Divine Goodness, by which all things are made good, has no

beginning because it always *is*; nor is God sometimes present and sometimes absent, for these are corporeal things. He is always present to all things, exempt from all things; and His Providence, because It is always the same and everywhere, and because It is Good, enfolds all beings according to the appointed distribution of what is due to each. And just as all things are illumined by the light of the sun, so that some see, some are seen, some grow, some give birth, some grow white, others black, some grow hard, other melt, each according to its own capacity partaking effortlessly in his one and abundant goodness, while the sun toils not at all to produce any of these effects, nor is distracted from his own blessedness, so much the more in the Goodness of God, Which bestowed even the sun upon the world, do all things effortlessly partake, and are made good according to their own capacity, while God toils not for this, nor is distracted. For He does not suffer in acting, as natural things do, nor is His Goodness acquired, so that it weakens in being spent; and His Nature not being to do one thing at one time, another at another time, as with our soul, He is not sometimes incapable of provision for the world, nor of that upliftment to the Good, which is the exempt perfection of the world. For if the human soul, when perfected and exalted to God, is said to dwell on high and to order the whole world, how much more will God, the Supporter of the soul, provide without distraction for those things which He has created?

Again, those things which befall those men who seem to be good or bad are not sufficient to disturb our faith in Providence: for there is no truth in our opinion that the good are sometimes unfortunate and suffer harm, while the wicked are fortunate and happy, if what we showed before is true, and not a mere vain declamation, that "he is good who counts human good and evil among the things in our own power; and such a one can never miss what he aims at nor meet with what he would avoid." If this is so, no evil can ever befall him; for those who make this objection call it evil to miss what we aim at and meet with what we avoid: so that a good man is never unfortunate, as man, nor suffers evil.

And again all would agree that those men are bad who live contrary to their nature as men. These, forgetting that power and freedom of choice which is the characteristic of human nature,

place human good and evil among things outside themselves; the good in bodily health, riches, power, birth, luxury, and the like; the evil, in the opposites of these. Therefore they aim at what seems the good in these things and avoid the others as evils. But in these external things, since they are not in our power, one must of necessity miss what is aimed at, and meet with what is shunned, and neither of these things is good, even according to those who object, but bad. So the bad, falling as they often must into evil, if they consider coolly will realize that they are not fortunate nor happy, but the reverse. And if any suppose that they are either generally or permanently fortunate in external things, they are even more unfortunate: for when they gain these things they strain still more after a condition contrary to their own nature as men, and to everyone what is contrary to his nature is evil and unhappiness.

Now, since it is necessary not merely to constrain my hearers by inevitable proofs, but also by persuasion to win them to accept my statement about what seems to be good and evil in external things, I remind them again of what was said before; that it is not those things that are said to be evil that are evil, even if they cause trouble and annoyance; nor those said to be good that are good in reality. So-called evils are both remedies to the ailing and exercise for the sound; and good things themselves are bestowed according to the needs and deserts of those who receive them or lose them. Wealth is given to him who can use it wisely, both for his own comfort and for the opportunity of doing good to others, and to increase his goodwill; to the evil it is given for retribution and chastening: for the avaricious, toiling all their life long for gain, in discouragement and sleeplessness and ever-impending fear, have no joy of their possessions. What punishment could be juster and more fitting than this? The extravagant, again, are poorer than beggars; some in their luxurious living are ruined by their own wealth and fall into many dangers and fail to take due care of themselves; they neither learn anything good through their riches, nor seek for nor practise the life which naturally befits a man. So also even health and power are actually harmful to the wicked; they are given sometimes as chastening, sometimes as retribution: so that, surfeited with the excess of their appetites, they may cast aside their passions, and become fitted thereafter for chastening and purgation. For the care of

Him Who provides for souls is not that the soul should check its passionate energies through fear or through other passions, but that the evil state of the soul should itself be got rid of.

Let us now, with the Saviour to guide us, come to the third argument against God, which acknowledges that there are Divinities, and that They care for human affairs; but asserts that They are turned aside by gifts and offerings and distribution of small change, as people think nowadays; so that wrong-doers, and the grasping and rapacious, by making a small expenditure for this purpose, and giving to those who profess to pray and persuade God, can both compound for continuing in the same course, and escape the penalty of their wrong-doing.

Some of them think it worthy of the Divine Goodness to indulge and connive at sins: I consider that they neither speak nor think with sufficient care. What then shall we answer to this argument? It is twofold, and must be divided into the wrong-doer and the wronged; we must consider what this indulgence and connivance does to the wrong-doer, and how it affects the wronged.

If it is good and expedient for the wrong-doer to have his sins condoned, and not to pay the penalty, perhaps this indulgence might come from God; for every good thing comes from God. But if it is the greatest evil for him to be helped in his wrong-doing, and pay no penalty for his sins, how could God be the cause of this? He has been proved by many arguments to be the cause of all good things, and not the cause of evil. Wrong-doing therefore and rapacity and license and excess, being states of the soul contrary to nature (if their opposites are natural), are obviously diseases and shames and evils of the soul. He who increases these by his indulgence, or leaves them unremedied, clearly extends the evil. And if he does this through bribery, he must surely be considered worse than the ordinary man: for who, being appointed to care for something, would take bribes to allow it to become bad? Would any reputable doctor be so influenced by gifts or prayers as willingly to allow a man who is made ill by certain foods and drinks to take these harmful things as he likes, and even to help him to get them? When a man needs surgical treatment or cauterization, would a doctor be induced by bribes to leave him untreated? If then God's work is the healing of evil, how can it seem inferior to human medicine?

Moreover, as He is said to provide for those who are wronged, and to care for them, let us see how He treats them and whether He can be induced by presents to assist the wrong-doers. What general, even if his standard of conduct be no higher than the average, would betray his army to the enemy for a bribe? What shepherd would give up his sheep to the wolves? Why, let alone the shepherd, would the sheep-dogs, if the wolves allowed them a share of the sheep they stole, let them carry off the rest? What an impious argument to attribute to God what is unworthy even of dogs! In short, how can it be reasonable to argue that God is won over by the bribes of wrong-doers. God does indeed often accept gifts from the righteous, but it is clear that He is not in need of the gifts; those who offer them are uplifted to Him, as in their souls, so also through external things; and if the wicked offered gifts wishing to receive judgment and healing, perhaps God would accept the gifts even from them; but if they offer them that they may be allowed to become worse than before—how could there be reason in that? For even if we did no other sin, the expectation of beguiling God with presents would be enough to alienate His Friendship.

What then is this commonly-held belief, and whence does it arise, that the Divine Purpose can be turned by gifts and offerings, prayers and benefactions, and by supplications, to pardon sinners? Perhaps there is some ground for it. It cannot, stated simply in this way, be accepted as righteous or holy; but if sinners are truly penitent, these things contribute to their turning to God, being proofs of their repentance and of their submission to Him in body as well as soul, as they bend the knee and prostrate themselves, as they offer up external things, and spend their money on things pleasing to God: for when we sin, God does not turn away from us, nor is angry, nor departs from us; neither if we repent does He turn to us, nor approach us because we are good to Him. These are human things far removed in every way from God's Immutable Blessedness. We, rather, debased through our falling away from our true nature, and losing our likeness to the Divine Goodness through our wrong-doing and unrighteousness and folly, withdraw ourselves from Him. We can never escape His Providence which pervades all things; but as if sick through our own fault, we give access to judgment, the medicine of wickedness, making ourselves suitable objects of

this Providential Care of God. Then being restored to our own nature, and made like to Him (likeness to God is to be just and holy, with wisdom as our guide), we approach Him and enter His Friendship. We speak of our turning to Him in this way as if it were He Who turned to us; we are like men who fasten a rope to a rock on the shore, and hauling on it, bring their boat and themselves up to the rock, thinking in their ignorance that it is not they who come to the rock, but the rock that gradually comes to them. Repentance and supplication and prayer and the like correspond to the rope, for it is through these things that conversion comes to those who have been separated from God—not in word, but in deed, when we do service to those whom we have wronged or insulted, or in any way ill-used, making reparation to them or to their descendants; when we hate wrong-doing, and when, turning away from wrong-doers, we dwell with those who honour the right, punishing ourselves. And until we are thoroughly purged, we must do thus constantly, without intermission or relaxation, and be our own judgment.

A proof and completion of true repentance is to commit the same sins no more, nor even to commit lesser ones. Like sailors, when the ship is out of trim, we must lean to the opposite side. It is evident that true repentance is sufficient for complete purgation, from the fact that God also looks to this end of purgation. For all that befalls us in chastening and punishment, both here and in Hades, has as its end that the soul be brought by its own misfortunes to repent, to hate wickedness and life contrary to its own nature, and to choose goodness willingly, and accept it gladly. The perfecting of the rational soul is sometimes in the paths of knowledge, if a man becomes a judgment to himself; and perhaps he might be sooner set right through choosing of himself to be chastened. And there is need of pain and sorrow for those who sin through luxury and pleasure. For those who truly repent punish themselves with the most bitter pangs of conscience which are more painful than bodily chastening, and wear one down more, and are harder to assuage.

This is the answer to the third argument against God, which is the worst of the three: for it is preferable to suppose that there is no God and no Providence than that He is, and seems to provide, but schemes against those for whom He provides, for this would make Him evil; and we prefer Him not to exist

rather than to be evil. The reason for this is that the Good is higher than Being, and is the Principle of Being; so that It is both the Goal of all things and the Cause of all things. For we accept Being as a Good: that is why when things go ill with us, we would sooner not be at all.

Perhaps I have been led to speak on these questions at greater length than I intended at the beginning; it is because the principle and end of all good life and perfection of the soul is the upliftment to God through the right conceptions concerning Him—that He is, that His Providence is good, and that He directs all things justly—and through obedience and willing acquiescence in His dispensations, as the workings of the Best Purpose; for although the soul is self-motive and self-active and has in itself the principles which enable it to be good or evil, it has this power of self-motivity from God: therefore, while it is rooted in its own cause it is preserved and has its own perfection which God has planted in it; but if it separates itself and uproots itself, as far as it has the power, it withers and wastes away, becoming base and feeble, until it turns again to its Cause and becomes one with It and so regains its own perfection, and it is impossible to turn truly unless these three questions are clearly perceived and distinguished.

For who could wish to be uplifted to what is not? Or, if it is, has no care for us? Or if it is and cares for us, applies this care to evil and harmful ends?

JEWEL

With respect to any final aim or end, the greater part of mankind live at hazard. They have no certain harbour in view, nor direct their course by any fixed star. But to him that knoweth not the port to which he is bound, no wind can be favourable; neither can he who has not yet determined at what mark he is to shoot, direct his arrow aright.

—*S. T. Coleridge.*

EXTRACTS FROM THE WRITINGS OF
FLOYER SYDENHAM

MIND AND MATTER

Whatever form hath a symmetry and harmony of its parts and consequently is beautiful must have been created by some mind:* because mind is the only cause of symmetry, harmony, and beauty. Whatever form of this kind is a work of art, must have been made according to the mind of some master-artist: whatever of the same kind consists in action or in operation, must receive its form from some active or operative mind, conducting or directing it. And every work and every operation of Nature, all whose operations and works are beautiful, is formed by the Mind of Nature. Now, as to the world or universe itself, including all things, if we consider it as one perfect work, it shows one perfect Mind within, to design and form it; and if we consider it further, as a continual and constant operation, as a world either perpetually maintained, or else periodically from time to time renewed, it shows this perfect Mind to be in continual or unfailling energy.

The old physiologers applied themselves but little to the study of Mind. They were contented with having found the necessity of a Mind to dispose all things at the first in that beautiful order which the world exhibits to our view; to endow them also with those several forms and essences, and to give them those several motions and directions by which they might afterwards, of themselves, constantly maintain the same order. But the nature of this Mind, Which is the Cause of all that order, the Origin of all those forms, and the first Spring of all those motions, was very slightly inquired into by men who were immersed in the study of sensible and corporeal things.

Of course therefore they differed in their opinions about it, as men must always do about things of which they have opinions only, and no knowledge.

* The term Mind, as used in this article, has several connotations, signifying the Intellectual and Creative Principle, the Natural and the Human Intelligence, and also the Supreme Mind.

Some amongst them having observed that all order in any works or operations of human art depends on premeditation, design, counsel, and contrivance, in the minds of human artists, and that the carrying of these into execution depends on a fitly prepared subject-matter, previously existing, argued hence by analogy and drew this conclusion—that the works of Nature were produced by the like energies in the Divine Mind; forming what before was a formless chaos, but impotent to resist formation; disposing in order what originally was all confusion, but manageable and ductile; and animating what in its own nature was inanimate, but capable of receiving life.

Others, who came after them, seem to have thought that the former opinion was derogatory to the dignity of the Supreme Mind, and levelled the nature of It with that of human minds, in supposing It to have thoughts and ideas, which arose in time, one after another; a succession, necessary to be inferred from premeditation, counsel, and contrivance. They conceived that such an opinion presumed chaos and confusion to have been co-eval with Mind and consequently to be eternal: for none of the ancients ever imagined a creation out of empty space, or a formation without a subject to form; that it presumed the matter, which at length was formed, to have existed by the necessity of its own nature, distinct from and independent of Mind. They conceived that this ancient hypothesis did not suppose matter to have been of old an immense mass, motionless as well as formless, undivided, continuous, and everywhere the same; for the notion of chaos and confusion contradicted such a supposition: it supposed motion to be essential to matter, equally necessary at least and equally eternal: it supposed infinite diversity in the particles of matter; and in different particles it supposed different degrees of density and rarity or else an absolute breach of their continuity by void space everywhere interspersed; and in consequence of this, it supposed every particle to have bounds and a figure; though by collision with other particles the figure might be subject to variation. They further argued that according to that hypothesis, Mind, before the foundation of the world, must have rested always inactive; or, if it acted at all, did not act methodically, nor according to art; for it produced in things no permanent order, but either sported itself with acting idly, or, not pleased with its own works, wilfully destroyed them to make

better. This way of thinking and reasoning in these later physiologers led them to suppose that Mind eternally acted upon matter; which, though a thing distinct from Mind, was passively subject to it by blind necessity: that the action of Mind was indeed to give form and notion; but that it acted thus by a like blind necessity itself; being without ideas, without knowledge, and without any end in view. For they imagined that wisdom to design and counsel to contrive belong only to minds inferior and particular; that all ideas in the mind originate from the outward senses; and that knowledge is only of things existing previously to, or at least, independently of, the knowledge of them; for that all knowledge hath always for its object *that which is*.

About the same time with these physiologers last mentioned, arose a third sort, who did not conceive it possible that matter could ever have been without form, or without mind within, forming it; for that of itself it had no being at all properly so termed; it was nothing more than a bare capacity of being made something: and if mind was anything out of, above, or beyond, matter, then matter must always have had bounds, and consequently form, contrary to the hypothesis of all the ancient theistic physiologers: for all who held such a thing as Mind in the universe (and such only are taken notice of in this dissertation), supposed It to be the cause of form to matter. But further, the physiologers of this third sort, who differed from those of the two other sorts concerning the nature of this all-forming Mind, conceived it no less impossible that Mind could ever have had being out of matter. For, whether Mind be acknowledged intelligent, and energizing always on its own Ideas, or whether It is supposed unintelligent, without Ideas, and acting upon matter by blind necessity (on which latter supposition it ought to be termed itself blind necessity, and not Mind), in either case it must have been within matter; because otherwise it could have acted upon matter only by outward impulse, which is an action peculiar to body and can neither proceed from Mind nor affect infinite uninformed matter.

But if the former supposition be granted, that mind implies intelligence, and consequently the objects of intelligence, intelligible Ideas, the absurdity of supposing Mind to exist out of matter appeared to them in a more glaring light: for it would

thence follow that Mind, the seat of Ideas inherent in It, might have been without seat for Itself to dwell in. It would likewise follow, that Mind whose essence is intelligence which intelligence consists in Energy, which is always active, and whose ceaseless action is to form, to act, upon, and to put in motion, might possibly be, without any matter for it to form, without any subject on which it might act, without anything to be moved by it. In pursuance of such thoughts and reasonings, they conceived that mind and matter, imagined by the other physiologers to be two principles of things, actually distinct, did not co-exist separately from each other; nor were connected together by some higher principle, a common tie or cement between them (an opinion which some have fancied that Plato favours in his *Philebus* and *Timæus*); but must of necessity be united always together, so as to be but one principle; seeing that a union so entire was necessary to the very being of them both, . . . Plato, the great master in the Science of Nature, did in reality espouse the same notion of that Unity of the First Principle, which is the Cause of the everlasting union of all things. But being no less a great master in the Art of Teaching, at the same time that he himself contemplated the actual and true union of Mind and matter throughout the universe, he saw the necessity of making a distinction between them in speech and in the mind, for the sake of explaining the nature of things the more clearly to his disciples.

Accordingly he treated of matter and Mind separately, and described each of them as distinctly as if each had a separate and distinct being; he spoke of matter as that which gave substance to form, and of form as that which gave essence or being to matter. He described matter as something formless, inert, and lifeless, but susceptible of all kinds of form, and, in receiving form, capable of receiving all degrees of life, and all kinds of (physical) motion: and he discoursed of Mind as pure form; as life itself, the principle of motion; as being itself, giving to every portion and every particle of matter *to be* whatever it *is*; and, by being intimately present to it and energizing within it, producing therein as it were forth from itself, some particular and corporeal form; a form which in Mind considered as apart from matter has a different mode of being—a being abstracted, universal, and mental—an object only of reason or of intellect.

The energies of mind are to contemplate, to love, and to will. The eternal object of mental love is *Beauty*: and the eternal object of mental will is *Good*. Now if mind thus energizing be always seated in matter, those mental energies must be always active within matter: and, if so, matter must everywhere be affected by them. From Mind energizing in general, matter must everywhere receive life and vital motion. . . . From Mind contemplating Truth, that is, all ideal Forms with their relations (for they are all comprehended, united, and summed up in Mind), matter must receive form; every portion of matter, that specific form which is most agreeable to the Order and Beauty of the universe. From Mind willing Good, that is, willing the communication of Good (for itself is in want of no Good, being the very Fountain of all Good, Good Itself), every corporeal and vital form, so organized as to be capable of sensation, must receive the will and desire of some good—good not only for itself but for all other beings too, with which it is connected.

From Mind loving Beauty, every animal form whose organization admits of mind must, so far as it is rational, receive the love of everything which is beautiful, and of Truth above all other things, because Truth is the Fountain of all Beauty and the Beautiful Itself.

We see all animals continually seeking by natural instinct the welfare of their own being, the continuance of their kind, and the preservation of their offspring. And we feel ourselves in the rational part of our nature charmed with the sight of Beauty, and smitten with the love of it. We feel our minds urged on to inquiries after Truth, as it were by a pre-sensation of its Supreme Beauty, and a preconception of its being their own proper Good; impulses so strong that however often they are diverted from such inquiries by the necessities of the body, by fancy and passion or the desire of imaginary good, yet left to the exercises of their own faculties, unhindered and undisturbed, they are always in pursuit of It; tracing It through the natural and necessary connection of Ideas: and when they have found It, are never to be driven away from their attachment to It, so long as they turn their inward eye towards It.