

# THE SHRINE *of* WISDOM

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## THE ELEMENTS OF THEOLOGY

PROCLUS\*

CONCERNING PRODUCING CAUSES AND THINGS  
PRODUCED

### PROPOSITION VII

*Every thing productive of another is more excellent than the nature of the thing produced*

For it is either more excellent, or less excellent, or equal. Hence, that which is produced from this, will either also itself possess a power productive of something else, or will be entirely unprolific. But if it is unprolific, according to this very thing it will be inferior to that by which it was produced. And through its inefficacy it is unequal to its cause which is prolific, and has the power of producing. But if it also is productive of other things, it either likewise produces that which is equal to itself, and this in a similar manner in all things, in which case all beings will be equal to each other, and no one thing will be better than another, that which produces always giving subsistence in a consequent series to that which is equal to itself; or it produces that which is unequal to itself, and thus that which is produced will no longer be equal to that which produces it. For it is the province of equal powers to produce equal things. The progeny of these, however, will be unequal to each other, if that which produces, indeed, is equal to the cause prior to itself, but the thing posterior to it is unequal to it. Hence, it is not proper that the thing produced should be equal to its producing cause.

\* For the previous section see *Shrine of Wisdom*, Vol. XVII, No. 65, p. 130.

Moreover, neither will that which produces ever be less than that which is produced by it. For if it imparts essence to the thing produced, it will also supply it with essential power. But if it is productive of all the power which that posterior to it possesses, it will also be able to produce itself such as that posterior nature is. And if this be the case it will also make itself more powerful. For impotency cannot hinder productive powers being present, nor a defect of will; since all things naturally aspire after good. Hence, if it is able to render another thing more perfect, it will also perfect itself before it perfects that which is posterior to itself. Hence, that which is produced, is not equal to, nor more excellent than, its producing cause. The producing cause, therefore, is in every respect better than the nature of the thing produced.

## CONCERNING THE FIRST GOOD, WHICH IS CALLED THE GOOD ITSELF

### PROPOSITION VIII

*That Which is primarily Good, and Which is no other than The GOOD ITSELF is the Leader of all things that in any way whatever participate of Good*

For if all beings aspire after good, it is evident that the Primal Good is beyond beings. For if It is the same with some one being, either being and *The Good* are the same—and this particular being will no longer be desirous of good, since It is *The Good* Itself; for that which aspires after anything is indigent of that after which it aspires, and is different from it—or, being is one thing and the good another. And (if some one being and *The Good* are the same) being indeed will participate, and that which is participated in being will be *The Good*: hence, the good is a certain good inherent in a certain participant, and after which the participant alone aspires, but is not That Which is simply Good, and Which all beings desire; for This is the common object of desire to all beings, but that which is inherent in a certain thing, pertains to that alone which participates of it. Hence, That Which is primarily Good, is nothing else than *The Good* Itself: for whatever else you may add to It, you will, by

the addition, diminish *The Good*, and will make It to be a certain good, instead of That Which is simply Good. For that which is added, not being *The Good* but something less than It, will by its own essence diminish *The Good*.

## CONCERNING THAT WHICH IS SELF-SUFFICIENT

## PROPOSITION IX

*Every thing which is self-sufficient, either according to essence or energy, is more excellent than that which is not self-sufficient, but has the cause of its perfection suspended from another cause*

For if all beings naturally aspire after good, and one thing supplies well-being from itself but another is indigent of something else, the one indeed will have the cause of good present, but the other, separate and apart. By how much the nearer, therefore, the former is to That Which supplies the object of desire (that is to *The Good*), by so much the more excellent will it be than that which is indigent of a separate cause, and externally receives the perfection of its hyparxis, or its energy. For since that which is self-sufficient is both similar and diminished, it is more similar to *The Good* Itself (than that which is not self-sufficient); but is diminished because it participates of *The Good*, and thus is not the *Primal Good*. Yet it is in a certain respect allied to It, so far as it is able to possess good from itself. But to participate, and to participate through another, are more remote from That Which is primarily Good, and Which is nothing else than Good.

## PROPOSITION X

*Every thing which is self-sufficient is inferior to That Which is simply Good*

For what else is the self-sufficient than that which from itself and in itself possesses good? But this is now full of good, and participates of it, but is not That Which is simply *Good*: for That is better than participation and plenitude, as has been demonstrated. If, therefore, that which is self-sufficient fills itself with good, That from Which it fills itself will be more excellent

than the self-sufficient, and will be above self-sufficiency. Neither will That Which is simply Good be indigent of any thing, for It does not aspire after any thing else; since aspiration denotes a deficiency of good. Nor is That Which is simply Good, self-sufficient, for thus It would be full of good, and would not be primarily *The Good*.

## CONCERNING CAUSE

## PROPOSITION XI

*All beings proceed from one First Cause*

For either there is not any cause of beings, or the causes of all finite things are in a circle, or the ascent is to infinity, each thing being caused by a prior thing and the pre-subsistence of essence will in no respect cease. If, however, there is no cause of beings, there will neither be an order of things second and first, of things perfecting and perfected, of things adorning and adorned, of things generating and generated, and of agents and patients, nor will there be any science of beings. For the knowledge of causes is the work of science, and we are then said to know scientifically when we know the causes of things.

But if causes proceed in a circle, the same things will be prior and posterior, more powerful and more impotent: for every thing which produces is better than the nature of that which is produced. It makes, however, no difference to conjoin cause to effect, and through many or through fewer media to produce from cause, for the Primal Cause will be more excellent than all the intermediate natures of which It is the cause; and the more numerous the media, the greater the causality of the cause.

And if the addition of causes is to infinity, and there is always a cause prior to another, there will be no science of any being, for there is not a knowledge of any thing infinite. But causes being unknown, neither will there be a science of the things consequent to the causes.

If, therefore, it is necessary that there should be a cause of beings, and causes are distinct from the things caused, and there is not an ascent to infinity, there is a First Cause of beings, from Which, as from a root, every thing proceeds; some things indeed

being nearer to, but others more remote from It. For that it is necessary there should be One Principle has been demonstrated; because all multitude subsists posterior to *The One*.

## PROPOSITION XII

*The Principle and First Cause of all beings is The Good*

For if all things proceed from One Cause (as has been demonstrated) it is requisite to call that Cause either *The Good*, or That Which is more excellent than *The Good*. But if It is more excellent than *The Good*, is any thing imparted by It to beings, and to the nature of beings, or nothing? And if, indeed, nothing is imparted by It, an absurdity will ensue, for we shall no longer retain It in the order of cause, since it is everywhere requisite that something should be imparted by cause to things caused, and especially by the First Cause from Which all beings are suspended, and on account of Which every being exists. But if something is imparted by It to beings, in the same manner as there is by *The Good*, there will be something better than Goodness in beings, imparted to them by the First Cause. For if It is more excellent than, and above *The Good*, It can never bestow on secondary natures any thing subordinate to that which is imparted by the nature posterior to Itself. But what can be more excellent than Goodness? Since we say that the more excellent itself is that which participates of a greater good. Hence, if that which is not good cannot be said to be more excellent than, it must be entirely secondary to, *The Good*. If, likewise, all beings aspire after *The Good*, how is it possible that there should be something prior to this Cause? For if they also aspire after That Which is prior to *The Good*, how can they especially aspire after *The Good*? But if they do not aspire after It, how is it possible that things which proceed from It should not desire the Cause of all? Hence, if It is *The Good* from Which all beings are suspended, *The Good* is the Principle and First Cause of all things.

## PROPOSITION XIII

*Every good has the power of uniting its participants, and every union is good; and The Good is the same with The One*

For if *The Good* is preservative of all beings (on which account

It is desirable to all things), That Which is preservative and connective of the essence of every thing, is *The One*; for all things are preserved by *The One*, and dispersion removes every thing from essence; *The Good*, then, will cause those things to which It is present, to be one, and will connect and contain them according to union. And if *The One* is collective and connective of beings, It will perfect each of them by Its very presence. Therefore, it is good to all things to be united. If, however, union is of itself good, and good has the power of uniting, the simply Good and the simply One are the same, uniting and at the same time benefiting beings. Hence it is that those things which after a manner fall off from *The Good* are, at the same time, also deprived of the participation of *The One*; and those things which become destitute of *The One*, being filled with separation, are after the same manner likewise deprived of *The Good*. Hence, goodness is union, and union is goodness, and *The One* is That Which is primarily *Good*.

(*To be continued*)

## LIBERATION FROM SAMSARA\* BY CONTROL OF THOUGHT

FROM THE *MAITRI UPANISHAD*

“As a fire without fuel becomes quiet in its source, so does thought, when mentation ceases, become quiet in its source.”

The cessation of mentation here referred to signifies the stilling of the activities of the lower mind through which it is related to particulars, and which, when uncontrolled, produce disquietude, and bind to transient existence.

Mind, in its essential nature, is perpetually active, internally, but not necessarily externally.

“Quiet in its source, because the mind is turned to Truth. But when it turns to things of sense, there may arise delusions resulting from its former acts.

\* Samsara—the world of change and limitation.

“For thoughts of sense alone bind one to Samsara; let a man strive to purify his thoughts: what a man thinks, that he becomes; this is an old secret.

“By serenity of thought a man is freed from all actions, whether good or bad. Dwelling within the Self with serene thoughts he obtains imperishable happiness.”

The freedom here indicated is freedom from attachment to actions and actions' fruit.

“If the thoughts of a man were as fixed on Brahma as they are on the things of the world, who would then not be freed from bondage?”

Brahma is the Creator Lord of the world.

“The mind, it is said, is of two kinds, pure and impure: impure from contact with desire, pure when free from desire.

“When a man, having freed his mind from sloth, distraction and vacillation, into serenity has come, then he has reached the highest state.

“The inordinate activities of the mind must be restrained till it is united with the heart, then are true knowledge and liberty attained, all lower ties but bind to this existence.”

In the Upanishads, the heart is regarded in the mystical sense, as being more unitive than the lower mind, and as closely connected with the Self.

“When by deep meditation the mind has been washed clean from all impurities, and abides within the Self, its happiness cannot be described in words; only inwardly can it be known, by each one for himself.

“Water in water, fire in fire, air in air, no one can distinguish them; likewise with man, when the mind is united till it cannot be distinguished from the Self, liberty is attained.

“Mind only is the cause of bondage and liberty for men: if attached to the world, it becomes bound; if free from the world, that is liberty.”

## JOHANN TAULER

The fourteenth century in Europe was marked by a definite renewal and growth of the teaching and practice of religious mysticism as distinct from the philosophical mysticism of such leaders of thought as Erigena, Albertus Magnus, and Aquinas. The necessity of the individual approach to the Divine, always recognized by the Church, had been intensified in consequence of the prevalent decadent scholasticism, moral corruption, and the lack of real teaching and counsel. The renaissance spirit of individual freedom of thought and action also brought with it an enthusiasm for the mystical life; and devout Christians tended to turn inward rather than outward for guidance.

In Germany, as in the rest of Europe, this century was a period of widespread disintegration and disaster. In 1314 civil war had broken out as a result of the election of two opposing emperors—Louis of Bavaria and Frederick of Austria—and the Pope, taking the part of Frederick, placed under an interdict all the cities supporting Louis. This meant that in many places, including Strasburg, where Tauler spent most of his life, all public religious services were prohibited and no sacraments might be administered except to the dying; consequently all the consolations of religion were withheld, children were unbaptized, and the office for the dead was not celebrated. Many of the civic authorities ignored the interdict, and compelled the priests either to defy the Pope or to submit to banishment.

In addition to being forced into political quarrels, the Church was also divided against itself; for the Pope, yielding to the pressure of a section of the cardinals and the French king, had agreed to the removal of the Papal Seat from its traditional site at Rome to Avignon. Here the Pope was surrounded by a number of officials who lived chiefly for pleasure, extorting large sums from the unfortunate people in the districts under their supervision and neglecting their duties. Their example was followed by many of the clergy and by religious communities in all parts of Europe, and the disorder culminated in a war between rival popes. A number of heretical sects had arisen, some of which



considered themselves exempt from all authority, while others were little more than bands of wandering beggars. There was also serious social disorganization, for the poverty produced by the tyrannical extortions of the ruling classes was increased by famine and plague. These conditions were a cause of great anxiety to the faithful servants of the Church, who in the face of great difficulties upheld and taught the true spirit of its doctrines, and who burned to reform the many evils of the times.

In Germany this spirit was represented particularly by the remarkable group of people called the Friends of God. This was not an organized body: it consisted of a number of men and women, laymen as well as religious and clerics, who had dedicated themselves to the service of the Ideal and were following the mystical path of the inner life, the aim of which is the conscious union of the soul with its Divine Source. Prominent among them were Henry of Nördlingen, Rulman Merswin, Nicolaus von Löwen, Henry Suso, Jan Ruysbroeck, Margaret and Christina Ebner and, chief among them, Johann Tauler. Many of them wrote books dealing with the mystical life; among these is an anonymous work which describes the manner in which a "Master in Holy Scripture," who as yet was not following the mystical path, but was unaware of this, was converted to the true life in God by a "Friend of God from the Oberland." This instructive and interesting treatise was for several centuries supposed to refer to the spiritual history of Tauler, who on this account has been called "Master Johann Tauler"; but more recent research has shown the lack of evidence for this assumption, and the treatise is not now generally believed to refer to him.

Johann Tauler was born at Strasburg about 1300. His parents, respected citizens of moderate means, allowed him, about the age of fifteen, to enter the Dominical convent at Strasburg where Eckhart was Professor of Theology, and throughout his life Tauler remained in that Order. After ten years, on account of his outstanding ability, he was sent to the Studium Generale at Cologne, where he remained for four years. Here the degree of Master of Theology could be gained; he would have an opportunity for meeting and studying under some of the greatest scholars of the day, and would have access to the works of the great philosophers, theologians, and mystics. At Cologne as well as at

Strasburg he must have come under the influence of Eckhart—an influence which is clearly shown in his sermons. After leaving Cologne he may have visited Paris, but there is no evidence that he ever took the Master's degree, and in fourteenth-century manuscripts he is referred to as Brother Johann Tauler. He probably returned to Strasburg about 1329, when the city was under an interdict. The civic authorities expelled many priests who obeyed it, and one party among the clergy pronounced it invalid, but the majority of the Dominican convents submitted. Tauler's attitude is a much disputed question. Legend tells that he continued to hold public services; but in one of his sermons he says: "Again, if the Holy Church were to refuse us the Holy Sacrament externally, we must submit; but in a spiritual sense no one can take it from us. We must be ready to give up all without murmuring or answering again."

During the year 1338 Tauler worked and preached in Basle, where the interdict was less rigidly enforced, and where the Friends of God had great influence. Of this period Henry of Nördlingen writes: "God is daily working a great and marvellous work through Tauler in the hearts of men and women at Basle." Here Tauler formed lasting friendships with many of the Friends of God with whom he afterwards corresponded. He returned to Strasburg, and in 1348, when the Black Death reached the city and all who could do so fled from the plague, Tauler chose to remain and help the sufferers, and until his death in 1361 he continued to live and work there. His ministry brought him a large and devoted following, and his influence extended far beyond his own city.

Of his personal life and character there are few details. Henry of Nördlingen in 1347 says: "Tauler is passing through deep suffering because he is teaching the whole truth as nobody else teaches it, and furthermore, his whole life conforms to it." From one of his own sermons his humility is apparent: "Therefore, my dear children, learn from my weaknesses to know your own and rid yourselves of them. Take all my words, not my works, as from God, for I have studied them all in the book of my transgressions; take them earnestly to heart as a gentle warning, not as an instruction, for I know that I need really to be taught by you and all men." A warm love and a deep and sympathetic understanding of the needs of human nature are evident from his

sermons, which show clearly his own inner experience of the spiritual Reality of which he taught. He wrote nothing, but records of his sermons remain in which are reflected the theological teachings and symbolism of Eckhart as well as the spirit of the Neo-Platonic school of which he was an exponent. Tauler also had evidently studied the Platonic philosophy; for when speaking of the inner centre of the soul, he says: "This pure ground was hidden from the heathen; therefore they despised all temporal and transitory things and went in search of it. But afterwards the great masters such as Plato and Proclus arose and gave a clear description of it. Therefore St. Augustine said that Plato had fully taught the holy gospel: 'In the beginning was the Word' even to the words 'there was a man sent from God'; but this was in veiled words." Tauler also quotes from Proclus and from many Christian writers whose teachings embodied the Neo-Platonic tradition—Dionysius "the Areopagite," whose *Via Negativa* has an important place in his teachings, St. Augustine, St. Gregory, St. Bernard, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, and Hugh and Richard of St. Victor.

His sermons do not deal primarily with the philosophical foundations of Christianity, although these are implied in many of his utterances. He uses symbolical explanations of scriptural passages and gives much practical guidance as well as instruction of a mystical and paradoxical nature. He teaches that God is immanent in the soul and in the world and also is the transcendent Creator in Whom the universe subsists eternally before the material creation of the world; and he speaks of Christ as the Divine Word uttered according to the Ideal Type or Pattern dwelling for ever in God, and also as the Trinity of Love, Wisdom, and Power in the soul which is thus led back to God. "He is the Word of the Father, in which Word the Father utters Himself and all the Divine Natures, and all that God is, so that in that He perceiveth It, He also is It, and He is perfect in His perception and in His Power. When He uttereth this Word He uttereth Himself and all things in another Person and giveth that Person the same nature which He Himself hath, and speaketh all rational spirits into being in that Word, in the likeness of the same Word according to the Type or Pattern Which abideth continually in Him. And thus the Word shines forth in man, according as each word exists in God; yet is he not in all respects like this same

essential Word; but rather the possibility is granted him of receiving a certain likeness by the grace of this Word, and of receiving the Word as It is in Itself.

"In the first place He reveals the Father's sovereignty to the soul by declaring His changeless, infinite Power . . . so that it grows powerful and steadfast in all virtues. . . . In the second place the Lord reveals Himself to the soul with an infinite Wisdom which He Himself is. . . . When this Wisdom is united to the soul she is transported into a pure Light Which is God Himself. . . . Then is God perceived in the soul by means of God. Then does she perceive herself and all things, and this Wisdom Itself, and through It she perceiveth the Father's Majesty and His essential Self-subsistence in simple Oneness without distinction. In the third place Christ reveals Himself also with an Infinite Love, sweetness, and richness, overflowing and streaming in a very flood into the heart that is waiting to receive it; and with this sweetness He not only reveals Himself to the soul, but unites Himself with her. Through this sweetness the soul in its essence by grace flows out with power above all creatures back into her first Origin and Fount."

Tauler emphasizes the truth that the soul possesses something essential, uncreated, and akin to the Divine, and that in this "ground" which is the dwelling-place of God, man could be united to Him. In order to accomplish this the body must be subordinated to the soul which must pass beyond all worldly pursuits, all images, all forms, and ascend to the Spirit within. "Seek only for the simple immersion in that bare, unknown secret Good Which is God, denying self and all that may be found in self. He is above all wisdom, all beings, all goodness, all that thou canst receive or know of Him. He is more and higher than anything that man's understanding can conceive. . . . Seek thy rest in this unknown Good, but expect neither taste nor sight."

Tauler also speaks of the birth of God in the soul as a fire which consumes all that is not of God, so that the soul regains the purity of its original life in God. Like Eckhart he compares the pure ground of the soul to a desert empty of all that man regards as fulness. "This ground is so desert and bare that no thought has ever entered there. . . . It is a simple and unchanging condition. A man who really and truly enters feels as though he had been here

throughout eternity, and as though he were one therewith, whereas it is only for an instant. God thus bears witness that man existed in God from all eternity, before creation." And again, "Proclus says, 'When man once enters here, whatever may befall the outer man in sorrow, poverty, or whatever it may be, he heeds it not.'" "A man who verily desires to enter in will find God here, and himself simply in God. God will be present with him and he will find and enjoy Eternity here. This also belongs only to the Divine Abyss of which it is written 'Abyssus abyssum invocat.'" "Then the Holy Spirit Which is the Form of God shines so brightly into the soul that He is like darkness unto the spirit into which He shines, from the exceeding brightness of the Divine Light."

This union is to be sought through prayer, right discipline, love, and knowledge, and Tauler gives many counsels for the guidance of the seeker. Of prayer he says: "Now those pray without ceasing who do all their works alike for the love of God and not for any selfish enjoyment, and humbly bow down before God and let Him work alone. When the highest powers of the soul are thus gathered together in prayer, the soul becomes inspired, and if henceforth the soul cleave to God with an entire union of the will, it is made a partaker of the Divine Nature; and then for the first time does man offer up true worship." "Devout prayer is the uplifting of the mind to God in eternal life. These men are the true worshippers of God who worship God the Father in Spirit and in Truth." "He who prays to God according to his own will shall not be answered in accordance with his own will, but after God's Will." "The inner work is always better than the outward, and from it the outward works of virtue draw all their power and efficacy."

He speaks of the virtues engendered by self-discipline, and of humility he says: "A virgin who is not humble in heart may be known when anything happens to her untowardly, though it be only in word, for she is indignant at once, and begins to excuse herself immediately. She cannot bear anyone to say anything that is insulting to her honour or that would cause her to be despised, yet she wishes to appear humble. All the contempt and scorn that a man is ready to pour out upon himself has no real ground in humility; but when he is despised and scorned by another who is his equal—or still more by one who is his inferior, and he is cut

to the quick—then a man will learn to know how little humble and patient he really is.”

His counsel on the subject of patience is somewhat similar. “True patience is that a man should feel in his inmost soul and thus judge, that no one could or might do him a real injustice, but always remember that he is receiving no less than his deserts, insomuch that he may feel nothing but gentleness and compassion towards all who do him wrong.”

He warns his hearers against the condemnation of others. “Children, beware of judging any but yourselves, as ye love God and your souls’ everlasting happiness, for from man’s judgment upon his neighbours there grows complacency in oneself, an evil arrogance, and a contempt for one’s neighbour.” Although self-judgment may be advisable, self-penance is condemned. “God takes a thousand times more pains with us than the artist with his picture, by many touches of sorrow and by many colours of circumstance, to bring man into the form which is the highest and noblest in His sight, if only we received His gifts and myrrh in the right spirit. There are some, however, who are not content with the myrrh God gives them, but think fit to give themselves some and create evils for themselves and sick fancies, and have indeed suffered long and much, for they take hold of things by the wrong end. And they gain little grace for all their pain because they are building upon stones of their own laying, whether it be penances or abstinences, prayer or meditation. According to them God must wait their leisure and let them do their part first.”

Of love he says: “There is yet another witness in the highest powers, the power of love which is in the will.” “Man must also be filled with active love which must be universal; for he must not think particularly of this or that person, but of all men.” “Further, thou mayest try by this test whether thou hast the right sort of love; namely, whether thou hast a lovely thankfulness for the great benefits which God has bestowed upon thee and all His creatures in heaven and on earth. . . . and this thankfulness shall comprehend all men, even as it shall spring from love to all: in whatever condition of life they be, or whatever be their conduct, thou shalt cherish an honest, true love for them, not a concealed self-love or self-seeking. This real, universal love is a source of measureless benefits. Know ye, children, that where men are true, glorified, friends of God, their hearts melt with tenderness to all

mankind, whether living or dead; and if there were none such on the earth, the world were in an evil plight."

This love must show itself in service. "Seeing that the Love of God is never standing idle, so be ye constantly abounding in good works." "Sloth often makes men fain to be excused from their work and set to contemplation: never trust a virtue that has not been put into practice." "For every art or work, however unimportant it may seem, is a gift of God, and all these gifts are bestowed by the Holy Spirit for the profit and welfare of man."

Although Tauler says: "We cannot see God except in blindness, or know Him except in ignorance," this ignorance implies a knowledge that knows itself to be ignorance in comparison with the Divine Knowledge. Of the ascent of the mind to God he says: "We must lift up our minds and learn to soar far above time in the Eternal Works of the Divine Being. Now man may reflect on these Attributes in his mind in a very real way, so that he will be able to see that God is a Pure Being, that all beings are one, and yet that He is none of these things. In all things that exist, in all that is and has any being, there is God. All creatures indeed have some goodness and love, but they are neither Goodness nor Love; but God only is the Essence of Goodness, of Love, and of all that can be named." "Man must consider the attribute of this Oneness of Being; for God is the End of all Unity, and in Him all diversities are united and become one in the One Only Being."

This ascent of the mind is a necessary step towards the union of the soul with God. Tauler speaks of the soul as a temple of God in which the Presence of God should abide; but this state is only reached in its fulness when the soul "loses itself." "Now what is this temple? . . . It is the soul of man which God has created and fashioned so truly in His own likeness; as we read that God said: 'Let Us make man after Our Image.' And He has done so, too, and made the soul of man so like Himself that there is nothing in heaven or earth so like Himself as that is." "If my soul is to perceive God it must be heavenly. Now what will bring my soul to see God in herself and know how nigh God is to her? Consider! The heavens cannot take any imprint from other things, neither can they by any violence or force be turned from their order. In like manner the soul that would know God must be so grounded and built up in Him that neither hope, nor fear,

nor joy, nor sorrow, nor weal, nor woe, nor anything else, can so move it as to force it from its place in Him.

“Nothing hinders the soul so much in its knowledge of God as time and place. Time and place are parts, and God is One: therefore if the soul is to know God, it must know Him above time and place, for God is neither this nor that, like these complex things around us, for God is One.

“If the soul is to know God, she must forget herself and lose herself, for while she is looking at and thinking about herself, she is not looking at and thinking about God; but when she loses herself in God and lets go of all things, then she finds herself again in God. When she comes to know God, then she knows to perfection in Him both herself and all the things from which she has separated herself.”

In dealing with the union of the soul with God, Tauler gives the means for distinguishing between true and false mysticism. “No one can be free from the observance of the laws of God and the practice of virtue. No one can unite himself to God in emptiness without true love and desire for God. No one can be holy without becoming holy, without good works. No one may leave off doing good works. No one may rest in God without true love for God.”

Three stages of the mystical ascent are described. In the first stage there must be strict and unremitting self-discipline whereby the lower powers are brought into submission to the highest reason. “Children this is not the work of a day or a year. Be not discouraged; it takes time and requires simplicity, purity, and self-surrender, and these virtues are the shortest road to it.” Of the second stage he says: “Wilt thou with St. John rest on the loving heart of our Lord Jesus Christ, thou must be transformed into His beauteous image by a constant earnest contemplation thereof.” Of the third stage he says: “It is possible that God may wish to call thee higher still; then let go all forms and images and suffer Him to work with thee as His instrument. To some the very door of heaven has been opened.” But he adds the warning: “Before it can come to pass, nature must endure many a death, outward and inward.”

He beautifully describes the soul united to God. “It should be bare of all things, without need of anything, and then it can come to God in His Likeness, for nothing unites so much as likeness,



and receives its colour so soon: for God will then give Himself to all the faculties of the soul, so that the soul grows in the likeness of God. And thus its union becomes so intimate that it does not work its works in the form of a creature, but in its divine form wherein it is united to God; nay, that its works are taken from it and God works all its works in His form. And then, while it beholds God and becomes more united to Him, the union may become such that God altogether pours Himself into it, and draws it so entirely into Himself that it has no longer any distinct perception of virtue or vice, or recognizes any marks by which it knows what it is itself." And he sums up all in the words: "That man is most truly of God who works all his works out of love and gives up his will to the Will of his Heavenly Father.

"That we may attain thereto, being delivered from all hindrances, may God grant us. Amen!"

## JEWEL

To learn an art which thou knowest not, four things are needful. The first and most needful of all is a great desire and diligence and constant endeavour to learn the art. And where this is wanting, the art will never be learned. The second is a copy or ensample by which thou mayest learn. The third is to give earnest heed to the master, and watch how he worketh, and to be obedient to him in all things, and to trust him and follow him. The fourth is to put thy own hand to the work, and practise it with all industry. But where one of these four is wanting, the art will never be learned and mastered. So likewise it is with this preparation. For he who hath the first, that is, through diligence and constant persevering desire towards his end, will also seek and find all that appertaineth thereunto, or is serviceable and profitable to it. But he who hath not that earnestness and diligence, love and desire, seeketh not, and therefore findeth not, and therefore he never attaineth unto that end.

—*Theologia Germanica.*

## THE THIRD HYMN OF SYNESIUS

(A FRAGMENT)

Giver of intellectual life and fire!  
 Behold me, and regard my soul that cries  
 Which from the earth does upward flights desire,  
 Light up, O King, my heaven-seeking eyes.  
 Cut off all ties; and nimble make my wing;  
 Chains of two lusts, by which false nature binds  
 Our souls to earth, unloose. May I swift spring  
 Up to Thy halls and breast, where my soul finds  
 Its Fount. To earth a heavenly drop I fell;  
 Restore me, flying wanderer, to that well  
 Whence I was pour'd. Grant me in the first-born Light  
 To be full mixed; and that my Father's might  
 May keep me midst the holy choir, until  
 My share in heavenly hymns I may fulfil.  
 O Father, grant that, in the light array'd,  
 No more into earth's vileness I may sink,  
 But, while in Hyle's life I am delay'd,  
 Let me, O Bless'd, of heavenly fountains drink.

From the DINA-I MAINOG-I KHIRAD

PAHLAVI SCRIPTURE

The sage asked the spirit of Wisdom thus:

"Of the rich who is the poorer, and of the poor who is the richer?"

The spirit of Wisdom answered thus: "Of the rich he is the poorer who is not content with that which is his and suffers anxiety for the increase of anything. And of the poorer he is the richer who is content with that which has come and cares not for the increase of anything."

## HERMES

OR A PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY CONCERNING  
UNIVERSAL GRAMMAR

BY JAMES HARRIS

(Book III\*)

*Chapter IV.—Concerning General or Universal Ideas.*

Much having been said in the preceding chapter about general or universal ideas, it may not perhaps be amiss to inquire by what process we perceive them, and what kind of beings they are; since the generality of men think so meanly of their existence, that they are commonly considered as little better than shadows. These sentiments are not unusual even with the philosopher nowadays, and that from causes much the same with those which influence the vulgar.

The vulgar merged in sense from their earliest infancy, and never once dreaming any thing to be worthy of pursuit, but what either pampers their appetite, or fills their purse, imagine nothing to be real, but what may be tasted or touched. The philosopher, as to these matters being of much the same opinion, in philosophy looks no higher, than to experimental amusements, deeming nothing demonstration, if it be not made ocular. Thus, instead of ascending from sense to intellect (the natural progress of all true learning), he hurries on the contrary into the midst of sense, where he wanders at random without any end, and is lost in a labyrinth of endless particulars. Hence then the reason why the sublimer parts of science, the studies of mind, intellect, and intelligent principles, are in a manner neglected; and, as if the criterion of all Truth were an alembic or an air-pump, what cannot be proved by experiment, is deemed no better than mere hypothesis.

\* For the previous sections see *Shrine of Wisdom*, Vol. XVI, No. 64, p. 102, and Vol. XVII, No. 65, p. 134.

Yet it is somewhat remarkable, amid the prevalence of such notions, that there should still remain two sciences in fashion, and these having their certainty of all the least controverted, which are not in the minutest article depending upon experiment. By these I mean Arithmetic and Geometry.\* But to come to our subject concerning general ideas.

Man's first perceptions are those of the senses, in as much as they commence from his earliest infancy. These perceptions, if not infinite, are at least indefinite, and more fleeting and transient than the very objects which they exhibit, because they not only depend upon the existence of those objects, but because they cannot subsist without their immediate presence. Hence, therefore, it is that there can be no sensation of either past or future, and consequently had the soul no other faculties than the senses, it never could acquire the least idea of time.

\* The many noble theorems (so useful in life, and so admirable in themselves) with which these two sciences so eminently abound, arise originally from principles, the most obvious imaginable; principles, so little wanting the pomp and apparatus of experiment, that they are self-evident to every one possessed of common sense. I would not be understood, in what I have here said, or may have said elsewhere, to undervalue experiment; whose importance and utility I freely acknowledge, in the many curious nostrums and choice receipts, with which it has enriched the necessary arts of life. Nay, I go farther—I hold all justifiable practice in every kind of subject to be founded in experience, which is no more than the result of many repeated experiments, but I must add withal, that the man who acts from experience alone, though he act ever so well, is but an empiric or quack, and that not only in medicine, but in every other subject. It is then only that we recognize art, and that the empiric quits his name for the more honourable one of artist, when to his experience he adds science, and is thence enabled to tell us not only what is to be done, but why it is to be done; for art is a composite of experience and science, experience providing it materials, and science giving them a form.

In the meantime, while experiment is thus necessary to all practical wisdom, with respect to pure and speculative science, as we have hinted already, it has not the least to do. For who ever heard of Logic, or Geometry, or Arithmetic being proved experimentally? It is, indeed, by the application of these that experiments are rendered useful; that they are assumed into Philosophy, and in some degree made a part of it, being otherwise nothing better than puerile amusements. But that these sciences themselves should depend upon the subjects on which they work, is as if the marble were to fashion the chisel, and not the chisel the marble.

Happily for us, however, we are not deserted here. We have in the first place a faculty, called imagination or fancy, which, however, as to its energies it may be subsequent to sense, yet is truly prior to it both in dignity and use. This it is which retains the fleeting forms of things, when things themselves are gone, and all sensation at an end.

That this faculty, however connected with sense, is still perfectly different, may be seen from hence. We have an imagination of things that are gone and extinct; but no such things can be made the objects of sensation. We have an easy command over the objects of our imagination, and can call them forth in almost what manner we please; but our sensations are necessary, when their objects are present, nor can we control them, but by removing either the objects or ourselves.

As the wax would not be adequate to its business of signature, had it not a power to retain, as well as to receive; the same holds of the soul, with respect to sense and imagination. Sense is its receptive power; imagination, its retentive. Had it sense without imagination, it would not be as wax but as water, where though all impressions may be instantly made, yet as soon as made they are as instantly lost.

Thus, then, from a view of the two powers taken together, we may call sense (if we please) a kind of transient imagination; and imagination on the contrary a kind of permanent sense.

It is then on these durable phantasms that the human mind first works, and by an energy as spontaneous and familiar to its nature as the seeing of colours is familiar to the eye, it discerns at once what in many is one; what in things dissimilar and different is similar and the same. By this it comes to behold a kind of superior objects; a new race of perceptions, more comprehensive than those of sense; a race of perceptions, each one of which may be found entire and whole in the separate individuals of an endless and fleeting multitude, without departing from the unity and permanence of its own nature.

Thus we see the process by which we arrive at general ideas; for the perceptions here mentioned are in fact no other. In these, too, we perceive the objects of science and real knowledge, which can by no means be, but of that which is general, and definite, and fixed. Here, too, even individuals, however of themselves unknowable, become the objects of knowledge, as far as their

nature will permit. For then only may any particular be said to be known, when by asserting it to be a man, or an animal, or the like, we refer it to some such comprehensive or general idea.

Now it is of these comprehensive and permanent Ideas, the genuine perceptions of pure Mind, that the words of all languages, however different, are the symbols; and hence it is, that as the perceptions include, so do these their symbols express, not this or that set of particulars only, but all indifferently, as they happen to occur. Were, therefore, the inhabitants of Salisbury to be transferred to York, though new particular objects would appear on every side, they would still no more want a new language to explain themselves, than they would want new minds to comprehend what they beheld. All, indeed, that they would want, would be the local proper names; which names, as we have said already, are hardly a part of language, but must equally be learnt both by learned and unlearned, as often as they change the place of their abode.

It is upon the same principles we may perceive the reason why the dead languages (as we call them) are now intelligible; and why the language of modern England is able to describe ancient Rome; and that of ancient Rome to describe modern England.

Now having viewed the process by which we have acquired general ideas, let us begin anew from other principles, and try to discover (if we can prove so fortunate) whence it is that these ideas originally come. If we can succeed here, we may discern, perhaps, what kind of beings they are, for this at present appears somewhat obscure.

Let us suppose any man to look for the first time upon some work of art, as for example a clock, and having sufficiently viewed it, at length to depart. Would he not retain, when absent, an idea of what he had seen? And what is it to retain such an idea? It is to have a form internal correspondent to the external; only with this difference, that the internal form is devoid of matter; the external united with it, being seen in the metal, the wood, and the like.

Now if we suppose this spectator to view many such machines, and not simply to view, but to consider every part of them, so as to comprehend how these parts all operate to one end, he might be then said to possess a kind of mental form, by which he would

not only understand and know clocks, which he had seen already, but every work also of this sort, which he might see hereafter. Should it be asked which of these forms is prior, the external and sensible; or the internal and mental; the answer is obvious, that the prior is the sensible.

Thus we see there are mental forms, which to the sensible are subsequent.

But further still: if these machines be allowed the work not of chance but of an artist, they must be the work of one who knew what he was about. And what is it to work and to know what one is about? It is to have an idea of what one is doing; to possess a form internal, correspondent to the external, to which external it serves for an exemplar or archetype.

Here then we have a mental form, which is prior to the sensible form; which, being truly prior as well in dignity as in time, can no more become subsequent than cause can to effect.

Thus, then, with respect to works of art, we may perceive, if we attend, a triple order of forms; one order mental and previous to these works; a second order sensible and concomitant; and a third again, mental and subsequent. After the first of these orders the maker may be said to work; through the second, the works themselves exist, and are what they are; and in the third they become recognized as objects of contemplation. To make these forms by different names more easy to be understood; the first may be called the maker's form; the second that of the subject; and the third that of the contemplator.

Let us pass from hence to works of nature. Let us imagine ourselves viewing some diversified prospect; "a plain, for example, spacious and fertile; a river winding through it; by the banks of that river, men walking and cattle grazing; the view terminated with distant hills, some craggy, and some covered with wood." Here it is plain we have plenty of forms natural; and could any one quit so fair a sight and retain no traces of what he had beheld? And what is it to retain traces of what one has beheld? It is to have certain forms internal correspondent to the external, and resembling them in every thing, except being merged in matter. And thus, through the same retentive and collective powers, the mind becomes fraught with forms natural, as before with forms artificial. Should it be asked, "which of these natural forms are prior, the external ones viewed by the

senses, or the internal existing in the mind"; the answer is obvious, that the prior are the external.

Thus, therefore, in nature, as well as in art, there are intelligible forms, which to the sensible are subsequent. Hence, then, we see the meaning of that noted School Axiom, *Nil est in Intellectu, quod non prius fuit in sensu*; an Axiom, which we must own to be so far allowable, as it respects the ideas of a contemplator.

To proceed, however, somewhat farther. Are natural productions made by chance or by design? Let us admit by design and not lengthen our inquiry. They are certainly more exquisite than any works of art, and yet these we cannot bring ourselves to suppose made by chance. Admit it, and what follows? We must of necessity admit a Mind also, because design implies Mind, wherever it is to be found. Allowing therefore this, what do we mean by the term Mind? We mean something which, when it acts, knows what it is going to do; something stored with ideas of its intended works, agreeably to which ideas those works are fashioned.

That such exemplars, patterns, forms, ideas (call them as you please) must of necessity be, requires no proving, but follows, of course, if we admit the cause of nature to be a Mind, as above mentioned. For take away these, and what a Mind do we leave without them? Chance surely is as knowing, as Mind without Ideas; or rather, Mind without Ideas is no less blind than chance.

The nature of these Ideas is not difficult to explain, if we once come to allow a possibility of their existence. That they are exquisitely beautiful, various, and orderly, is evident from their exquisite Beauty, Variety, and Order, seen in natural substances, which are but their copies or pictures. That they are intellectual is plain, as they are of the essence of Mind, and consequently no objects to any of the senses, nor therefore circumscribed either by time or place.

Here, then, on this system, we have plenty of Forms Intelligible, which are truly previous to all forms sensible. Here, too, we see that nature is not defective in her triple order, having (like art) her forms previous, her concomitant, and her subsequent.\*

\* Simplicius, in his commentary upon the Predicaments, calls the first order of these intelligible forms, those previous to participation, and at other times, the transcendent Universality or Sameness; the second order he calls those which exist in participation, that is those



That the previous may be justly so called is plain, because they are essentially prior to all things else. The whole visible world exhibits nothing more than so many passing pictures of these immutable Archetypes. Nay, through these it attains even a semblance of immortality, and continues throughout ages to be specifically one, amid those endless particular changes, that befall it every moment.

May we be allowed then to credit those speculative men, who tell us, "It is in these permanent and comprehensive Forms that the Deity views at once, without looking abroad, all possible productions both present, past, and future—that this great and stupendous view is but a view of Himself, where all things lie enveloped in their principles and exemplars." If so, it will be proper, that we invert the axiom before mentioned and now say: *Nil est in sensu, quod non prius fuit in intellectu.* For though the contrary may be true with respect to knowledge merely human, yet never can it be true with respect to knowledge universally, unless we give precedence to atoms and lifeless body, making Mind, among other things, to be struck out by a lucky concurrence.

3. It is far from the design of this treatise to insinuate that atheism is the hypothesis of our later Metaphysicians; but yet it is somewhat remarkable, in their several systems, how readily they admit the above precedence.

For mark the order of things, according to their account of them. First comes that huge body, the sensible world. Then this and its attributes beget sensible ideas. Then out of sensible ideas, merged in matter and at other times, he calls them the subordinate Universality or Sameness; lastly, of the third order he says that they have no independent existence of their own, but that we ourselves, abstracting them in our imaginations, have given them by such abstractions an existence as of themselves. *Simp. in Praedic.*

In another place he says, in a language somewhat mysterious, yet still conformable to the same doctrine: Perhaps therefore we must admit a triple order of what is Universal and the same; that of the first order transcendent and superior to particulars, which through its uniform nature is the cause of that sameness existing in them, as through its multiform pre-conception it is the cause of their diversity; that of the second order, what is infused from the first universal cause into the various species of beings, and which has its existence in those several species; that of the third order, what subsists by abstraction in our own understandings, being of subsequent origin to the other two. *Ibid.*

by a kind of lopping and pruning, are made ideas intelligible, whether specific or general. Thus, should they admit that mind was coeval with body, yet till body gave it ideas, and awakened its dormant powers, it could at best have been nothing more than a sort of dead capacity; for innate ideas it could not possibly have any.

But the intellectual scheme, which never forgets Deity, postpones every thing corporeal to the primary mental Cause. It is here it looks for the origin of intelligible Ideas, even those which exist in human capacities. For though sensible objects may be the destined medium to awaken the dormant energies of man's understanding, yet are those energies themselves no more contained in sense, than the explosion of a cannon, in the spark which gave it fire.\*

In short, all minds that are, are similar and congenial; and so

\* The following note is taken from a manuscript commentary of Olympiodorus, upon the *Phaedo* of Plato.

Those things, which are inferior and secondary, are by no means the principles or causes of the more excellent; and though we admit the common interpretations, and allow sense to be a principle of science, we must, however, call it a principle, not as if it were the efficient cause, but as it rouses our soul to the recollection of general Ideas. According to the same way of thinking it is said in the *Timaeus*, that through the sight and hearing we acquire to ourselves Philosophy, because we pass from objects of sense to reminiscence or recollection.

In another passage he observes: For in as much as the soul, by containing the principles of all beings, is a sort of omniform representation or exemplar; when it is roused by objects of sense, it recollects those principles, which it contains within, and brings them forth.

Pletho writes upon the same subject in the following manner: Those who suppose Ideal Forms, say that the soul, when she assumes, for the purposes of science, those proportions, which exist in sensible objects, possesses them with a superior accuracy and perfection, than that to which they attain in those sensible objects. Now this superior perfection or accuracy the soul cannot have from sensible objects, as it is in fact not in them; nor yet can she conceive it herself as from herself, without its having existence anywhere else. For the soul is not formed so as to conceive that which has existence no where, since even such opinions as are false, are all of them compositions irregularly formed, not of mere non-beings, but of various real beings, one with another. It remains, therefore, that this perfection, which is superior to the proportions existing in sensible objects, must descend to the soul from some other Nature, which is by many degrees more excellent and perfect. *Pleth. de Aristotle et Platonic Philosoph. Diff. Edit. Paris 1541.*

too are their ideas, or intelligible forms. Were it otherwise, there could be no intercourse between man and man, or (what is more important) between man and God.

For what is conversation between man and man? It is a mutual intercourse of speaking and hearing. To the speaker it is to teach; to the hearer, it is to learn. To the speaker, it is to descend from ideas to words; to the hearer it is to ascend from words to ideas. If the hearer, in this ascent, can arrive at no ideas, then he is said not to understand; if he ascends to ideas dissimilar and heterogeneous, then is he said to misunderstand. What then is requisite, that he may be said to understand? That he should ascend to certain ideas, treasured up within himself, correspondent and similar to those within the speaker. The same may be said of a writer and a reader; as when any one reads to-day or to-morrow, or here or in Italy, what Euclid wrote in Greece two thousand years ago.

Now is it not marvellous, there should be so exact an identity of our ideas, if they were only generated from sensible objects, endless in number, ever changing, distant in time, distant in place, and no one particular the same with any other?

Had we not better reason thus upon so abstruse a subject? Either all minds have their ideas derived; or all have them original; or some have them original, and some derived. If all minds have them derived, they must be derived from something, which is itself not mind, and thus we fall insensibly into a kind of atheism. If all have them original, then are all Minds divine, an hypothesis by far more plausible than the former. But if this be not admitted, then must one Mind (at least) have original Ideas, and the rest have them derived. Now supposing this last, whence are those minds, whose ideas are derived, most likely to derive them? From Mind or from body? From Mind, a thing homogeneous; or from body, a thing heterogeneous? From Mind, such as (from the hypothesis) has original Ideas; or from body, which we cannot discover to have any Ideas at all?\* An examination of this kind, pursued with accuracy and temper, is the most probable method of solving these doubts.

\* No body produces mind: for how should things devoid of mind produce mind? *Sallust de Diis et Mundo.*

BUDDHIST JEWELS FROM THE  
VISUDDHI-MAGGA

Since then such blessings manifold  
From noble wisdom take their rise,  
Therefore the understanding man  
Should place therein his heart's delight.

The man who lives for sensual joys,  
And findeth his delight therein,  
When joys of sense have taken flight  
Doth smart as if with arrows pierced.

Respecting this wheel of existence, it is to be understood that the two factors, ignorance and desire, are its root; and that this root is twofold, the root ignorance, deriving from the past and ending with sensation; the root desire, continuing into the future and ending with old age and death. Here the first of these two roots is specified with reference to him who is inclined to heresy, the latter to him who is inclined to desire.

The man whose mind, like to a rock,  
Unmoved stands, and shaketh not;  
Which no delights can e'er inflame,  
Or provocation rouse to wrath.  
O, whence can trouble come to him,  
Who thus hath nobly trained his mind?

What is wisdom? Wisdom is manifold and various, and an answer that attempted to be exhaustive would both fail of its purpose and tend to still greater confusion. Therefore we will confine ourselves to the meaning here intended. Wisdom is knowledge consisting of insight and conjoined with meritricious thoughts.