

THE SHRINE *of* WISDOM

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PLOTINUS ON THE DESCENT OF THE SOUL

Often when by an intellectual energy I am roused from body, and converted to myself, and being separated from externals, retire into the depths of my essence, I then perceive an admirable beauty, and am then vehemently confident that I am of a more excellent condition than that of a life merely animal and terrene. For then especially I energize according to the best life, and become united to a nature truly divine: being established in this nature, I arrive at that transcendent energy by which I am elevated beyond every other intelligible, and fix myself in this sublime eminence as in a divinely ineffable harbour of repose. But after this blessed abiding in a divine nature, falling from intellect into the discursive energy of reason, I am led to ask myself how my soul can now be descending and how formerly she became intimately connected with a corporeal nature; since in this deific state she appears such as she is in herself, although invested with the dark and ever-flowing nature of body.

Heraclitus therefore exhorts us to inquire into the cause of this descent, and places certain necessary vicissitudes from contraries into contraries; he likewise speaks of a path upwards and downwards, and of this progressive change as a rest; obscurely intimating, that to labour perpetually in the same pursuit produces intolerable weariness and fatigue. But in the course of this inquiry he seems to speak in metaphor, and thus refrains from unfolding his meaning clearly to our view; so that it is perhaps requisite to inquire within ourselves, in the same manner as he by inquiry obtained the object of his pursuit. Besides Empedocles, when he asserts that there is a law appoint-

ing offending souls to fall into these inferior regions, and when he says of himself,

I fled from Deity and heav'nly light,
To serve mad discord in the realms of night,

he delivers as much on this subject in enigmas, as is usual with Pythagoras and his followers, as well in this as in other inquiries of difficult investigation; to which we may add, that Empedocles becomes more obscure through his poetical composition.

But the divine Plato next presents himself to our view, who has spoken many beautiful things concerning the soul and its descent into body, so that we may reasonably hope to receive from him some clear information in this arduous affair.

What then does this philosopher assert? Indeed he does not appear to be everywhere consistent in his assertions, and on this account his meaning is not obvious to all. But in the first place he everywhere despises the whole of a sensible nature, and condemns the commerce of the soul with body; asserting that it is confined in bonds, and buried in body as in a sepulchre. He likewise venerates the saying which is delivered in the arcana of sacred mysteries, that the soul is placed here as in a prison, secured by a guard. And again, a cave with Plato, as a cavern according to Empedocles, signifies, so it appears to me, this visible universe; where a release from these bonds, and an ascent from these depths, is, says he, in the soul a progression to an intelligible nature.

In the *Phaedrus* he considers the loss of the wings to be the cause of the soul's descent to this terrestrial abode; and there are certain periods which bring the soul again to earth, after it has ascended to its pristine and proper abode. Likewise divine judgments, lots, fates, and necessities, cause other souls to descend.

In all these he appears to blame the connection of the soul with body, as falling away from the true perfection of its nature. But in the *Timæus*, discoursing concerning the universe, he both praises the world and calls it a blessed god, and asserts that soul was given to the universe by its beneficent artificer, that the whole of things might possess an intellectual condition;

since it is requisite that the world should be intellectual, which cannot take place without the intervention of soul. Hence soul was infused into the universe by the Demiurgos on this account; and each of our souls was in a similar manner inserted into body, as necessary to the perfection of the whole. For it is requisite that as many and similar genera of animals should be contained in the sensible, as abide in the intelligible world.

So that while we inquire of Plato concerning our soul, we are necessarily led to investigate how soul became connected with body, and what we ought to assert concerning the nature of the world, in which soul is placed for the sake of dispensing corporeal affairs, whether spontaneously, or by compulsion, or according to some other mode of subsistence.

It is likewise necessary to inquire concerning the Fabricator of these, whether He acts in a manner perfectly right, or after the manner of our souls, which perhaps are necessarily obliged, while governing inferior bodies, to penetrate profoundly into their essence, in order to vanquish their resisting and ever-flowing condition. For every particular body is of a dispersed nature, and tends to a certain place as its appointed habitation: but in the universe all things are naturally established in their proper receptacle, as in an immutable bond. Besides, our bodies require an abundant and anxious attention, as subject to a variety of foreign events, as exposed to a multitude of wants, and as requiring perpetual defence from the extreme difficulty and danger to which they are necessarily exposed. But the body of the world being perfect and self-sufficient, and suffering nothing contrary to its nature, is governed by the most easy attention and command, and perpetually abides in a condition agreeable to the will of its informing soul; so that it is neither excited by desire, nor agitated by any perturbations; for nothing departs from its nature, nor again accedes to it, as if indigent of necessary good.

Plato asserts, therefore, that our souls, when they are perfectly established with the soul of the world, will be likewise perfect, reign on high, and govern the universe itself: for when they are neither absent from the world, nor yet profoundly merge themselves in body, nor are any longer of a partial condition, then becoming, as it were, the intimate associates of the world-soul, they govern the universe without labour and

fatigue. So that it is not evil for the soul to confer, in a certain respect, being, and a blessed state of existence on the body: for providential attention to inferior natures does not prevent the provident inspector from persevering in the best condition of being; since the providence of the universe is twofold, namely, universal and particular.

The universal indeed adorns all things with an authority free from anxiety, and with a government truly royal and supreme; but the particular providence operating as it were with a manual artifice, fills the artificer with the condition of his work, and contaminates him with its natural weakness and dispersed subsistence.

The divine soul always governs the universe in such a manner as to transcend an inferior nature, and at the same time transmit an ultimate progression of power into the recesses of that which is subordinate. Hence no one can accuse Divinity, as if it had placed the universal soul in that which is abject and base. Consider also that soul will never be deprived of this natural employment, since it possessed it from eternity, and will continue to possess it through all the following periods of existence; and this not as an employment contrary to its nature, since it is ever present to the world, without any temporal origin of its providential exertions.

Plato likewise asserts that the souls of the stars are related in the same manner to their subject bodies as the soul of the world; for he considers the motions of their bodies as subsisting according to the circulations of soul, and at the same time he preserves to them a felicity appropriate to their natures: for there are two particulars through which he condemns the commerce of the soul with body; one, because it becomes a hindrance to the soul's intellectual energies, and the other because it fills the soul with a destructive rout of pleasures, desires and griefs. But neither of these inconveniences can happen to the soul which has not merged herself in the dark penetralia of body, nor passed into a private and limited condition; on the contrary, a soul of this exalted kind becomes connected with a body which is neither exposed to indigence nor suffers any defect; on which account it neither irritates the soul with desire, nor disturbs it with fear; for nothing dreadful relative to such a body can ever become the object of anxiety to the

soul; nor can any employment verging to inferior concerns draw it down from a more exalted and blessed contemplation; but it is perpetually elevated to divine natures, and at the same time governs the universe with a power free from all anxiety and fatigue.

But our present business is to speak of the human soul, which is reported to suffer every evil through its connection with body, and to lead a miserable life, oppressed with sorrows and desires, with fears and other maladies; to which the body is a bond and a sepulchre, and the world a cavern and a den. And these different opinions of the soul are not discordant, since descent is not the same in each; for, in the first place, since every intellect abides in the region of intelligence, total and universal, which we denominate the intelligible world; and since intellectual powers, and particular intellects reside there comprehended in divine union (for there is not one intellect alone, but one and many) it is likewise requisite that there should be one general, and many particular souls; and that from one there should be many, distinguished by peculiar diversities, like species from a certain genus, some of which are more excellent, and others of an inferior nature; and some of which are more intellectual, and others subsisting with a diminution of intellectual energy: for there in intellect one intellect subsists as comprehending all others in capacity, like a mighty animal, while at the same time other intellects have each a distinct subsistence in energy; each comprehending the others in capacity. Just as if a city should be animated, comprehending in itself other animated beings; for in this case the soul of the city would be more perfect and powerful than the rest, and yet nothing would hinder other souls from being of the same nature with this general soul: or as if from universal fire one should be a vast and another a diminutive fire: while in the meantime all the various gradations would proceed from universal fire, or rather from that which is the source of this general fire.

The employment of the more rational soul is certainly intelligence, nor yet intelligence alone, for how in this case would it differ from pure intellect? But exclusive of an intellectual energy, assuming another attribute according to which it possesses its peculiar hypostasis, it does not remain intellect alone. It possesses, however, a destined employment accommodated

to its nature; and when it surveys things prior to itself it understands; but when it contemplates itself, it preserves its peculiar essence; and when it verges to that which is posterior to itself, it adorns, administers, and rules over its fluctuating nature: for it is impossible that all things in the intelligible world should abide in perfect inactivity; an ability at the same time subsisting of producing beings in continued succession, which must indeed be consequently diminished in perfection, and yet at the same time necessarily exist, as long as that which is superior to these continues to subsist.

It is necessary therefore, that particular souls employing an intellectual appetite in a conversion to their origin, and possessing besides this a power of governing subsequent natures, similar to light suspended on high from the sun, and at the same time communicating its illuminations without envy to things posterior to itself: it is requisite, I say, that such souls should be preserved from injury and molestation, while they abide in the intelligible world, together with universal soul. And that, besides this, in the celestial regions they should govern the world, in conjunction with the world-soul, like so many kings associating with the governor of all things, and becoming his colleagues in the general administration of the world; and this without descending from the royal abodes, as being then in the same establishment with the sovereign king. But when they pass from their situation with universal soul, so as to stand apart, and to subsist by themselves, as if weary of abiding with another, then each recalls itself to the partial concerns of its own peculiar nature.

When, therefore, any particular soul acts in this manner for an extended period of time, flying from the whole and apostatizing from thence by a certain distinction and disagreement, no longer beholding an intelligible nature, from its partial subsistence, in this case it becomes deserted and solitary, impotent and distracted with cares: for it now directs its mental eye to a part, and by a separation from that which is universal, attaches itself as a slave to one particular nature, flying from everything else as if desirous to be lost. Hence by an intimate conversion to this partial essence, and being shaken off, as it were, from total and universal natures, it thus degenerates from the whole, and governs particulars with anxiety and fatigue; assiduously

cultivating externals, and becoming not only present with body, but profoundly entering into its dark abodes.

By such conduct the soul is said to lose her wings, and she becomes fettered with the bonds of body, after deserting the safe and innoxious habit of governing a better nature, which flourishes with universal soul. The soul therefore, falling from on high, suffers captivity, is loaded with fetters, and employs the energies of sense; because in this case her intellectual energy is impeded from the first. She is reported also to be buried, and to be concealed in a cave; but when she converts herself to intelligence, she then breaks her fetters and ascends on high, receiving first of all from reminiscence the ability of contemplating real beings; at the same time possessing something super-eminent and ever abiding in the intelligible world.

Souls therefore are necessarily of an amphibious nature, and alternately experience a superior and inferior condition of being; such as are able to enjoy a more intimate converse with intellect abiding for a longer period in the higher world, and such to whom the contrary happens, either through nature or fortune, continuing longer connected with these inferior concerns. And this is what Plato occultly signifies when he distributes souls from the second Crater, and causes them to become parts; for then also, he says, it is necessary that they should fall into generation, after they have thus obtained a partial subsistence. But when he says that souls were sown by the Demiurgos, we must understand his meaning in the same manner as when he introduces the Mundane Artificer speaking, and, as it were, delivering an oration to the junior Gods: for whatever subsists in the common nature of the whole, is thus figuratively said to be generated and produced, for the purpose of unfolding, in successive order, things which were eternally generated and had a perpetual subsistence.

The assertions therefore are by no means discordant with each other which declare that souls are sown in generation, and that they descend for the sake of causing the perfection of the universe; likewise that they are condemned to suffer punishment, and are confined in a cave: and again that they possess a necessary and spontaneous motion; since *necessity has that which is voluntary united with its nature*. Nor again is the saying discordant which asserts that the soul is situated in evil while

it is invested with body : nor are the flight and wanderings from Deity which are taught by Empedocles, nor guilt and consequent punishment, nor the rest taught by Heraclitus as implied in the flight, nor the voluntary and yet involuntary condition of descent, by any means repugnant to the truth ; for whatever passes into an inferior condition does not spontaneously descend ; yet at the same time it proceeds according to its own proper motion, becomes passive to inferior circumstances of being, and is said to suffer just punishment for its conduct ; since thus to suffer and act is necessary from the law of an eternal nature. But if any one should assert that *descending from on high becomes useful for some other purpose*, and that *on this account the descent is produced by Divinity*, such a one will neither dissent from truth, nor from himself ; for the extremes are necessarily referred to the principle from which the intervening particulars proceed, however numerous the mediums may be by which they are connected. But since *guilt is twofold*, and one part subsists in *the cause of descent*, but the other in *the commission of evil in the present life*, the soul suffers on both these accounts through its descent. But it is the mark of a less punishment to enter other bodies, and this more swiftly from the decisions of a judgment determining according to the merits of the offence ; and this taking place by a divine appointment is signified by the name of judgment. But an immoderate form of evil is considered as worthy of a greater punishment ; I mean a subsistence under the government of avenging demons, and experiencing by this means the extremity of affliction and pain.

Thus the soul, though of divine origin, and proceeding from the regions on high, becomes merged in the dark receptacle of body : and *being naturally a posterior divinity, it descends hither through a certain voluntary inclination, for the sake of power*, and of adorning inferior concerns. Hence, if it swiftly flies from hence it will suffer no injury from its revolt, since by this means *it receives a knowledge of evil, unfolds its latent powers, and exhibits a variety of operations peculiar to its nature*, which by perpetually abiding in an incorporeal habit, and never proceeding into energy, would have been bestowed in vain. Besides, the soul would have been ignorant of what she possessed, her powers always remaining dormant and concealed ; since energy everywhere exhibits capacity, which would otherwise be entirely

occult and obscure, and without existence, because not endued with one substantial and true. But now indeed every one admires the internal powers of the soul through the variety of her external effects, conjecturing the dignity and excellence of the former, from the beauty and multitude of the latter.

(To be continued)

TRUTH AS THE KNOWLEDGE OF CAUSES

From the writings of Thomas Taylor

It is right to call philosophy a science speculative of truth: for the end of speculative science is truth, but of practical science, work: for practical men, if they consider how a thing subsists, yet do not speculate the cause of the thing by itself, but with relation to something else, and as connected with the present time. But we do not know truth without the knowledge of causes; and every thing is in the most eminent degree that, among other things, according to which the synonymous is present with other things: thus fire is most hot; but this is to other things the cause of heat. Hence that is most true which is the cause to posterior natures of their being true; on which account it is necessary that the principles of things eternal should be always most true: for they are not merely sometimes true, nor is any thing the cause of being to them, but they are the causes of being to other things. And hence, such as is the being of every thing, such also is its truth.

THE DIVINE NAMES*

BY DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE

Chapter IX

*Concerning Great, Small, Same, Different, Similar, Dissimilar,
Rest, Motion, Equality*

Now since both greatness and smallness are attributed to the Cause of all, as well as Sameness and Difference, Similarity and Dissimilarity, Rest and Motion, come, let us contemplate these Names of the Divine Splendour so far as they can be made manifest to us.

God is celebrated in the Scriptures both as Great in His Might, and as the soft breeze which reflects the Divine Smallness; and as the Same when the Scripture says "Thou art the Same," and as Different when He is shown in the same Scriptures as having many forms and shapes; and as Similar, being the Principle of similar things and of similitude, and as dissimilar to all things, for there is none like unto Him; and as resting and immovable and established forever, and yet as moving and going forth to all. These and many other similar Divine Names are set forth in the Scriptures.

God, then, is named Great because of His own peculiar Greatness which imparts Itself to all things that are great and overflows and extends immeasurably beyond all greatness, embracing every place, exceeding all number, surpassing all infinitude in Its super-fullness and Its magnificence, and in Its fontal gifts, since these, though all things share in that infinite stream of gifts, are altogether undiminished, having ever the same super-plenitude; nor are they lessened through their distribution, but rather overflow the more.

This Greatness is infinite, without measure and without number, and It is transcendent because of the absolute and all-spreading outpouring of Its incomprehensible Greatness.

But Smallness or subtlety is ascribed to Him as being unconstrained by all bulk and distance and as pervading all things

* For previous sections see *Shrine of Wisdom*, Nos. 96 to 104.

without hindrance. Indeed, the Small is the Cause of the elements of all things, and nowhere will you find the Idea of the Small unparticipated. The Small, therefore, must be taken in Divine symbolism in the sense of passing into and through all things without hindrance; energizing in all and piercing even to "the dividing of Soul and Spirit and joints and marrow," and discerning the desires and thoughts of the heart, or rather of all things, for there is no creature invisible to His Sight. This Smallness is without quantity and without quality, irrepressible, unlimited, boundless, all-comprehending, while Itself incomprehensible.

But the same is super-essentially Eternal, immutably abiding in Itself, according to sameness; having always the same mode of being, present to all things in the same manner, and Itself firmly and purely established upon Itself and through Itself in the most beautiful perfection of the super-essential Sameness; changeless, unailing, unwavering, abiding, pure, immaterial, perfectly simple, unindigent, without increase, without decrease, without origin, not in the sense of being as yet unborn or unperfected or not having come forth from this or that, or as wholly non-subsistent; but in the sense of being wholly and absolutely beyond origin, and eternal, self-perfect, and the self-same, and having from Itself Its Unity and Sameness and shedding forth from Itself sameness upon all things able to participate in it; the Cause of the co-ordination of different things, Abundance and Cause of identity, fore-containing in Itself, according to the Same, even opposite things, as befits the one unique Cause Which transcends the universal sameness.

But the name Different is given because God, through His Providence, is present to all things and, for the sake of their preservation, is All in all; abiding in Himself and not leaving His own Identity, according to the One Eternal Energy, and freely imparting Himself with never-failing Power for the deification of all who turn to Him.

And the difference of the many Divine appearances in visions may be regarded as symbolizing certain things which are different from the form under which they are manifested. For if someone should represent the soul itself in words as a bodily form, attaching bodily parts to that which is without parts, and we should give to the parts a different meaning suitable to the

impartible nature of the soul and call the head intellect; the neck opinion, as coming between the rational and the irrational; the breast, the vital nature; the belly, the animal desires; the legs and feet, similarly, the characteristic disposition; we should be using the names of the bodily parts as symbols of the soul's powers. In speaking, therefore, of Him Who is beyond all things, it is far more necessary to interpret the different forms and shapes attributed to God by means of reverent, holy, and mystical explanations. And if you wish to ascribe to the intangible and formless God the three dimensions of material things, the Divine Extension symbolizes the Divine Emanation to all things in the universe; His Length symbolizes His Power Which immeasurably flows forth to the whole universe, and His Depth, the Divine Mystery, unknown and hidden from all beings. But lest in our interpretation of the different shapes and forms, we should mistakenly confuse the incorporeal Divine Attributes with the names given to the sensible objects, we have written concerning these matters in the *Symbolic Theology*.

Let us for the present regard the Divine Difference not in reality as being a kind of variation from the super-immovable Identity, but as the Divine One-manness and the unific Emanation of Its all-prolific Nature to all things.

And if God, from His Sameness, must be called Similar, as being wholly and altogether like unto Himself, abiding and indivisible, we ought not to reject this Divine Name of Similar. But the theologians assert that God, in His essential Nature, is similar to none; but that He imparts the Divine Likeness to those who turn to Him, Who is Infinite and Ineffable, and strive, as far as is possible, to become like Him. And it is the power of the Divine Similitude which turns all created things towards their Cause. These things, then, must be said to be in the Divine Likeness by virtue of the Divine Image and Similitude. But we must not say that God is in their likeness, any more than a man is said to be like his own portrait. For in the case of co-ordinate things which are similar to one another, the similarity can be predicated of either, and each is similar to the other through their participation in a higher principle of similarity. But in the case of the cause and the thing caused we cannot assume such correspondence; for the quality of similarity is imparted not only to these things or those, but to all that participate in

similarity. For God is the Cause through which they become similar and He is the Root of the self-subsistent Similarity Itself. And the similar in all things is like a trace of the Divine Likeness which thus completes their unification.

And what should be said concerning this? Scripture itself declares that God is Dissimilar and not to be co-ordinated with any, since He is different from all things. And still more paradoxically it says that there is nothing that is similar to Him. Yet such an assertion is not contrary to the likeness of all things to Him, for the same things are both similar and dissimilar to God: the likeness being in the measure of their imitation of the inimitable; the dissimilarity being proportional to the disparity between the effects and the Cause and the infinitely immeasurable degree of their inferiority.

Now what is to be said concerning the Divine Standing or Seat? Only this: that God remains Himself in Himself, abiding stably in immovable Sameness, transcendently established in His Might, and that He energizes according to His own changelessness from the Same and around the Same, and that He is altogether self-subsistent in His essential stability and wholly immovable in His essential immutability, and is all this super-essentially. For He is the Cause of the stability and rest of all things Who is Himself beyond all stability and rest. And in Him all things are rooted and are preserved in the unmoved stability of their own appropriate good.

But what, then, is meant when the theologians say that the Immovable One goes forth to all things and moves? Must not we understand this also in a sense proper to God? For we must reverently regard Him as moving not in respect to impulse, movement in space, alteration, variation, alternation, or local motion, whether in a straight line, a circle, or a spiral, or whether it be intellectual, psychical or natural; but we must regard God as bringing all things into being, uniting them and providing wholly for them, as present to all, holding them in His irresistible embrace and providing for them.

ment as symbolizing the self-identity of His Emanations and the stability of His Productive Power. And the circular movement as symbolizing His Sameness and the connection of the middle with each of the extremities so that they meet and embrace each other, and the returning to Him of that which has proceeded from Him.

But if anyone should take the scriptural Divine Name of the Same, or the Name of Justice to mean the Equal, we must call God Equal not only as being without parts, and inflexible, but also as going forth equally to all and through all, and as being the Source of Equality Itself in accordance with which He equally permeates all things in the same manner and imparts equally to those who receive according to their capacity, and gives to all that which is due according to their dignity, and because He transcendently and unifically fore-contains in Himself all equality, whether intellectual, rational, sensible, essential, natural, or volitional, by virtue of that all-surpassing Power by which equality is produced.

(To be continued)

JEWEL

He has no faith who fulfils not his trust, and he has no religion who fulfils not his promise.

The best of men is he from whom good accrueth to humanity. All God's creatures are His family. He is most beloved of God who trieth to do most good to God's creatures.

Feed the hungry, visit the sick, and free the captive if he be unjustly confined. Assist any person oppressed, whether he be Muslim or non-Muslim.

Let there be no compulsion in religion; the right way is in itself free from the wrong.

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ment as symbolizing the self-identity of His Emanations and the stability of His Productive Power. And the circular movement as symbolizing His Sameness and the connection of the middle with each of the extremities so that they meet and embrace each other, and the returning to Him of that which has proceeded from Him.

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Let there be no compulsion in religion; the right way is in itself free from the wrong.

—*Sayings of Mohammad.*

ANGER*

Let a man overcome anger, let him forsake pride, let him break all fetters. Sufferings do not befall him who is not attached to name and form† and who calls nothing his own.

He who holds back rising anger, as a driver holds back a rolling chariot; him I call a real driver: others are but holding the reins.

Let a man overcome anger by composure; let him overcome evil by good; let him overcome greed by generosity; falsehood by truth.

Speak the truth; do not yield to anger; give to those who are in want. By these three steps men draw near to the Gods.

The wise, who do not injure anyone and are restrained in deeds will approach Nirvana and be freed from sorrow.

Those who are ever watchful, training themselves day and night, with minds bent upon Nirvana, will remove all obstacles.

Not only today, but from of old, hath it been said, 'The silent man is blamed; he who speaks much is blamed; he also who speaks little is blamed.' There is no one in the world who is not blamed.

There never was; there never will be, nor is there now, a man who is always blamed or a man who is always praised.

But he whom the wise praise; whom they have observed day after day to be of good conduct, endowed with wisdom and virtue like an ornament of purest gold: who is justified in blaming him?

Be on your guard against inordinations of the body. Control the body; overcome bodily evils, and practise right bodily actions.

Be on your guard against inordinations of speech. Control the tongue; overcome unwise speech, and practise right speaking.

* Compiled from various translations of the Buddhist Dhammapada Scripture.

† Name and form represent the lower, phenomenal nature of existence.

Be on your guard against inordinations of the mind. Control the mind; overcome wrong thoughts, and practise right thinking.

The wise, controlled in action, controlled in speech, controlled in thought: they verily are well controlled.

SOUL AND BODY

BY RALPH CUDWORTH, CAMBRIDGE PLATONIST

There is nothing of soul and mind, reason and understanding, nor indeed of cognition and life, contained in the modifications and mechanism of bodies; and therefore to make soul and mind to rise out of body whensoever a man is generated would be plainly to make a real entity to come out of nothing, which is impossible.

The ancient philosophers were induced to assert the soul's immortality, together with its incorporeity or distinctness from body. No substantial entity ever vanisheth of itself into nothing. But the soul is a substantial entity, really distinct from the body, and not the mere modification of it; and therefore when a man dies, his soul must still have being.

All the changes that are in nature are either accidental transformations and different modifications of the same substance, or else they are conjunctions and separations, or transportations of things in the universe; the substance of the whole remaining always entirely the same. The generation and corruption of inanimate bodies is but like the making of a house, stool or table, and the unmaking or marring of them again, either different modifications of one and the same substance, or else divers mixtures and separations, concretions and secretions. And the generation and corruption of animals is likewise nothing but the conjunction of natural or irrational souls with such particular bodies, and the separation of them again from one another, and so as it were the anagrammatical transposition of

them in the universe. That soul and life that is now fled and gone from a lifeless carcass, is only a loss to that particular body or compages of matter, which by means thereof is now disanimated; but it is no loss to the whole, it being but transposed in the universe, and lodged somewhere else.

It is further evident that this same principle which thus led the ancients to hold the soul's immortality, or its future permanency after death, must needs determine them likewise to maintain its pre-existence, for these two things were always included together in that one opinion of the soul's immortality, namely its pre-existence as well as its post-existence, they clearly perceiving that if it were once granted that the soul was generated, it could never be proved but that it might also be corrupted. And therefore the asserters of the soul's immortality, commonly began here; first, to prove its pre-existence, proceeding thence afterwards to establish its permanency after death. This was the method used in Plato: *Our soul was somewhere,* before it came to exist in this present human form, and from thence it appears to be immortal and such as will subsist after death.* And the chief demonstration of the soul's pre-existence to the ancients before Plato was this, because the soul is an entity distinct from body or matter and the modifications of it; and no real substantial entity can spring of itself out of nothing, or be made out of any other substance distinct from it, because nothing can be made from nothing either in existing or pre-existing; all natural generations being but the various dispositions and modifications of what was before existent in the universe. But there was nothing of soul and mind, existing and pre-existing in body before, there being nothing of life and cognition in magnitude, figure, site, and motion. Wherefore this must needs be, not a thing made or generated, as corporeal forms and qualities are, but such as hath a being in nature ingenerably and incorruptibly.

* Not of course in space and time.

THE ELEMENTS OF THEOLOGY*

PROCLUS

Proposition CXCIV

Every soul is all things, containing indeed sensibles paradigmatically or after the manner of an exemplar, but intelligibles iconically or after the manner of an image

For subsisting as a medium between impartible natures and such as are divisible about body, it produces and gives subsistence to the latter of these, but pre-establishes in itself the causes from which it proceeds. Those things, therefore, of which it is the pre-existent cause, it antecedently comprehends paradigmatically. But it possesses according to participation, and as the progeny of first natures, the causes of its subsistence. Hence it antecedently comprehends according to cause all sensible natures, and contains the immaterial productive principles of things material, the incorporeal principles of things corporeal, and without interval, the principles of things which possess interval. But it contains intelligibles and the forms of them after the manner of an image; so that it receives partly indeed impartibles, with multiplication unical natures, and in a self-motive manner, things immovable. Hence it is all beings, containing such as are first according to participation, but paradigmatically such as are posterior to its own nature.

Proposition CXCVI

Every participable soul primarily uses a perpetual body which possesses an unbegotten and incorruptible hypostasis

For if every soul is essentially eternal, and by its very being primarily animates some particular body, it will always animate this body. For the essence of every soul is immutable. But if this

* For previous sections see *Shrine of Wisdom*, Nos. 65 to 105.

be the case, that which is animated by it is always animated, and always participates of life. That, however, which always lives, by a much greater priority always exists: but that which always is, is perpetual. Hence, that which is primarily suspended from every soul, is perpetual. But indeed every participable soul is primarily participated by a certain body, since it is participable and not impartible, and animates its participant by its very being. Every participated soul, therefore, uses a body which is primarily perpetual, and essentially unbegotten and incorruptible.

Proposition CXCVII

Every soul is an essence vital and gnostic, and a life essential and gnostic, and is knowledge, essence, and life. All things likewise subsist in it at once, the essential, the vital, and the gnostic, and all things are in all, and each is separate from the rest

For if it is the medium between impartible forms and those which are divided about bodies, it is neither so impartible as all intellectual natures, nor so partible as corporeal forms. Since, therefore, essences, lives, and cognitions are divided in corporeal natures, these subsist in souls impartible, unitedly, and incorporeally, and all of them exist at once through their immateriality and impartibility. Since, likewise, in intellectual natures, all things subsist according to union, they are distinguished and divided in souls. All things, therefore, subsist together in these, and at the same time apart. But if impartibles subsist together and in one, they pervade through each other, and if they are separate, they are again divided without confusion; so that each subsists by itself, and all are in all. For in the essence of soul there is both life and knowledge, since every soul would not know itself if the essence of it was of itself deprived of life and knowledge. And in the life of the soul there are both essence and knowledge; for unessential life, and which is without knowledge, pertains to material lives, which are neither able to know themselves, nor are genuine essences. Knowing also, which is unessential and without life, is without subsistence. For all knowledge belongs to that which is vital, and which is of itself allotted an essence.

(To be continued)

A LEGEND OF THE BUDDHA

On Himalaya's lonely steep
There lived of old a holy sage,
Of shrivelled form and bent with age,
Inured to meditation deep.

He—when great Buddha had been born,
The glory of the Sakya race,
Endowed with every holy grace,
To save the suffering world forlorn—

Beheld strange portends, signs that taught
The wise that that auspicious time
Had witnessed some event sublime,
With universal blessing fraught.

The cause exploring far and wide
The sage's vision ranged; with awe
Within a cradle laid he saw
Far off the babe, the Sakya's pride.

With longing seized this child to view
At hand, and clasp, and homage pay,
Athwart the sky he took his way
By mystic art, and swan-like flew;

And came to King Suddhodan's gates,
And entrance craved—"Go, royal page,
And tell thy lord an ancient sage,
To see the king permission waits."

With all due forms and meet respect,
The king received the holy man,
And bade him sit; and then began—
"Great sage I do not recollect

“That I thy venerable face
Have ever seen before; allow
That I inquire what brings thee now
From thy far distant dwelling place.”

“To see thy babe,” the sage replies,
“I come from Himalaya’s steeps.”
The king rejoined—“My infant sleeps;
A moment wait until he rise.”

“In every grace complete, thy son
Of truth shall perfect insight gain,
And far sublimer fame attain
Than ever law-giver has won.

“He such a wheel of sacred lore
Shall speed on earth to roll, as yet
Hath never been in motion set
By priest, or sage, or god of yore.*

“The world of men and nature bless,
The way of rest and peace to teach,
A holy law thy son shall preach—
A law of stainless righteousness.

“By him shall suffering men be freed
From weakness, sickness, pain, and grief;
From all the ills shall find relief
Which hatred, love, illusion breed.

“His hand shall loose the chains of all
Who groan in fleshly bonds confined,
With healing touch the wounds shall bind
Of those whom pain’s sharp arrows gall.

“His words of power shall put to flight
The dull array of leaden clouds
Which helpless mortal’s vision shrouds,
And clear their intellectual sight.

* Every great religion is unique in its mode of presenting the truth.

THE SHRINE OF WISDOM

“By him shall men who, now untaught,
In devious paths of error stray,
Be led to find a perfect way—
The final calm at last he brought.

“But once, O king, in many years,
The fig tree somewhere flowers perhaps;
So after countless ages lapse,
A Buddha once on earth appears.

“And now, at length, this blessed time
Has come: for he who cradled lies,
An infant there before thine eyes
Shall be a Buddha in his prime.

“Full, perfect, insight faining, he
Shall rescue endless myriads tost
On life's rough ocean waves, and lost,
And grant them immortality.”

LOVE

This is love: to fly heavenward,
To rend every instant a hundred veils.
The first moment to renounce life:
The last step to feel without feet.
To regard this world as invisible,
Not to see what appears to one's self.
“O heart,” I said, “may it bless thee
To have entered the circle of lovers,
To look beyond the range of the eye
To penetrate the windings of the bosom!
Whence did this breath come to thee, O my soul,
Whence this throbbing, O my heart?”

—*Jalálu'din Rumi*

SEED THOUGHTS

There is one mind common to all individual men. Every man is an inlet to the same and all of the same. He that is once admitted to the right of reason is made a freeman of the whole estate. What Plato has thought, he may think; what a saint has felt, he may feel; what at any time has befallen any man, he can understand. Who hath access to this universal mind is a party to all that is or can be done, for this is the only sovereign agent.

—*Emerson.*

Clouds are brought in by the wind and again driven away by the same agency. Similarly, man's bondage is caused by the mind, and liberation too is caused by that alone.

It first creates an attachment in man for the body and other sense objects, and binds him through that attachment like a beast by means of ropes. Afterwards, the self-same mind creates in the individual an utter distaste for these sense objects as if they were poison, and also frees him from the bondage.

Therefore the mind is the cause that brings about man's bondage or liberation: when tainted by the effects of rajas it leads to bondage, and when pure and divested of the rajasic and tamasic elements* it conduces to liberation.

—*Sankaracharya.*

Mind is supreme, and the Universe is but the reflected thought of God.

—*Spinoza.*

* The rajasic and tamasic elements correspond respectively to emotion and inertia, and produce passion and darkness.

Attaining purity through discrimination and renunciation, the mind leads man to liberation. Hence the wise seeker after liberation must cultivate these two.

THE COMPASSION OF THE LORD

(FROM THE INDIAN SCRIPTURE, THE PAÑCHARATRA-RAHASYA)

That ocean of compassion, the Lord, tender to his votaries,
For his worshipper's sake takes five embodiments upon him.
These are called adoration, emanation, manifestation, the
subtle, the interior controller,

Resorting thereto souls attain to successive stages of know-
ledge.

As a man's sins are purged away by each successive act of
worship,

He becomes qualified for worship of each embodiment in turn.
Thus day by day, practising religion, revealed and traditional,
By the aforesaid worship Vasudeva* becomes propitious to
mankind.

Hari,† when worshipped by devotion in mystic meditation,
Soon brings to an end that illusion which is the result of
worldly actions.

Then in souls from which wandering in diversity has ceased
the essential attributes

Are manifested, the auspicious, wisdom, and the rest.

These qualities are possessed in common by emancipated souls
and the Lord;

Universal power alone among them is peculiar to the Deity.

Emancipated souls are not identical with the Infinite and
Absolute,

Who is supremely beyond all that is.

Emancipated souls enjoy all beatitudes through union with the
Lord.

* A title of Krishna. So called from his dwelling in all beings.

† A name of Krishna and Vishnu.