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THE DIVINE PYMANDER* OF HERMES TRISMEGISTUS

(2) THE SECOND HEAD,—THE COSMOLOGICAL

The Cosmos, which is the Second Head or Fundamental Principle of the Trismegistic writings, not only embraces what is usually understood by the Solar Universe but, as previously stated, it signifies the Order by which all things proceed from their producing causes, are made manifest, and are related to each other and to the End for which they exist.

The perfect Cosmos gives expression to the Word or Logos of God, and, in this sense, is not only objective but also subjective. Considered from below and from without, it is manifested, but so far as it is above and beyond objective perception it is unmanifested. Moreover, like the Theological Head, of which it is said to be an Image or Reflection, it also has a Manifest-and-at-the-same-time-Unmanifest aspect. A remembrance of this fact assists in the explanation of many obscure points.

But it must be admitted here that in the Trismegistic fragments concerning the Cosmos there is much that requires considerable elucidation. This can be only very partially attempted in these brief articles, which have for their object the emphasis of the more primary and important fundamental truths contained in the Corpus Hermeticum rather than the full explanation of secondary points and the reconciliation of all the real or apparent inconsistencies.

* More accurately "Pœmander," but the work is better known as "Pymander," and therefore this name is adopted throughout these articles.

"The Pymander is a book most choice for the elegance of its language, most weighty for the abundance of its information, full of grace and propriety, full of wisdom and mysteries. For it contains the profoundest mysteries of the most ancient theology, and the arcana of all philosophy, which things it may not be so much said to contain as to explain."—Cornelius Agrippa, Hermetist.

In the contemplation of the great Cosmos is to be seen an all-comprehending Unity, which is behind and above its manifested omnifarious multiplicity.

This Unity is the One integral cosmological Idea, or Truth, or Head, of which all the branches of Cosmic Science are partitive expressions. It is the One eternal and immutable Archetype, out of which all the forms, that give design to the Cosmos, appear. It is also the One cosmological Order, from and to which a stupendous System of Orders are suspended and related.

The inherent Oneness of the Cosmos reveals the Oneness of its Ultimate Source.

The Manyness of the Cosmos is revealed in the working-out of this Unity in an infinite multitude of finite manifestations,—of existences, of lives, of intelligences, of substances, of powers, of laws,—in all of which there is harmony, utility, and beauty, as well as the unmistakeable Seal of the Design of the Demiurgus or Great Cosmic Architect.

The orderly sequence of the cosmological progression of the unmanifest into the manifest is unfolded in a wonderful speech by the Pymander to Hermes.

The Pymander, or Nous : “Forbear thy speech, O Hermes-Trismegistus, and call to mind the words that have been uttered.”

Hermes-Trismegistus : “Many men have affirmed many and diverse things concerning the Cosmos and God, but I have not learned Truth; therefore, O Lord, make plain these things to me, for I will trust Thee alone.”

Pymander, or Nous : “Hear, then, my Son, how these things are of God and the Cosmos.

1. God; Eternity; the Cosmos; Time; Generation.
2. God maketh Eternity;
Eternity maketh the Cosmos;
The Cosmos maketh Time;
Time maketh Generation.
3. The Substance, or Essence, as it were,
—of God, is the Good, the Beautiful, Blessedness,
and Wisdom.
—of Eternity, is Identity and Sameness;
—of the Cosmos, is Order;

- of Time, is Change;
 - of Generation, is Life and Death.
4. The Operation, Energy, or Activity
 - of God, is in Nous and Soul;
 - of Eternity, is in Permanence and Immortality;
 - of the Cosmos, is in Integration and Re-integration;
 - of Time, is in Augmentation and Diminution;
 - of Generation, is in Qualities.
 5. Therefore, Eternity is in God;
 The Cosmos is in Eternity;
 Time is in the Cosmos;
 Generation is in Time.
 6. Eternity abides with God;
 The Cosmos is moved in Eternity;
 Time is accomplished (*i.e.*, has its limit) in the Cosmos;
 Generation takes place in Time.
 7. Therefore, the Source and Foundation of All is God,
 but the Essence or Substance is Eternity; and the
 Matter is the Cosmos.
 8. The Power of God is Eternity; the Work of Eternity is
 the Cosmos, which is unmanifest and also ever being
 made manifest by Eternity.
 9. Therefore the Cosmos shall never be destroyed, nor the
 things in it perish, for Eternity is indestructible, and
 the Cosmos is contained and encompassed by
 Eternity."—XI. 1-3.

Since Eternity is in God, and the Cosmos is in Eternity, there must necessarily be an unmanifested aspect of the Cosmos, regarded from the standpoint of the realms of Time and Space. But since Time is in the Cosmos, and Generation is in Time, there is a manifested aspect. Further, in so far as these two aspects can be regarded simultaneously as inseparable from each other, there is a manifest-and-at-the-same-time-unmanifest aspect of the Cosmos. The mystery of cosmic beginnings and endings is in this Paradox, the solution of which is to be sought in a consideration of the relationships of Generation to Time, of Time to Eternity, and of Eternity to God.

ETERNITY*

"The Image of God is Eternity : the Image of Eternity is the Cosmos."—XI. 15.

Eternity, as the Image, or Reflection of God, is the Logos ; hence the Cosmos, as the Image of Eternity, is the Expression of the Logos, or of the Word by which God created it.

Eternity is the unmanifested causal Essence of all things, that are, have been, or ever will be. The Cosmos, considered as Matter to Eternity, is the out-expression of this causal Essence, as well as the recipient and field of all manifestations, embracing every plane of existence and subsistence.

Eternity is the principle of all eternal natures, just as Time is the principle and measure of all things that have a temporal subsistence.

Since the Essence of Eternity is Sameness and Identity, eternal natures always possess their fullest possible being or essence : they are not subject to increase. For this reason Eternity itself is said to be the Pleroma or Fullness of God, compared with which all else is emptiness. And for the same reason, the Cosmos is said to subsist in pure perfection, ever in fuller and fuller prime of life.

"This whole Cosmos—the great Image of the Mighty ONE, united unto Him and conserving the Order and Will of the Father—is full of Life. And there is nothing therein, through all Eternity, neither of the whole nor of its parts, which doth not live. For not a single thing that is, or has been, or shall be in this Cosmos, is dead. For the Father willed that it should be a living thing, and therefore it must needs be of God. How, therefore, O Son, can there be anything dead in God, in the Cosmos, the Image of the Father in the Fullness of Life ?"—XII. 15.

That which *is*, is manifested ; that which has been or shall be, is unmanifested, but not dead ; for Soul, the eternal activity of God, animates all things.

"That which is ever-living differs from that which is Eternal ; for the Eternal is unbegotten (and unmanifest). The Eternal, in that it is the Eternal, is the All. The Father Himself is Eternal of Himself ; but the Cosmos becomes eternal and is immortalized by the Father."—VIII. 2.

* Eternity is here understood in the original Platonic and Hermetic sense ; it is not identified with the Æon Doctrine of Gnosticism, although there may be some similarity in significance.

For the activity of Eternity is to eternalize that upon which it operates; and the Soul of Eternity is God, just as the Soul of the Cosmos is Eternity.

"Eternity, then, adorns the Cosmos, gives it immortality and imparts permanence to its Matter; for its generation depends upon Eternity, as also Eternity does on God."—XI. 4.

The distinction between Eternity and Eternal natures is analogous to that between a monad and the numerical progression suspended from it.

"Unities give birth to number and increase it; and again being dissolved, are taken back into themselves."—XII. 15.

THE COSMOS.

The unmanifested and the manifested aspects of the Cosmos are its heavenly and earthly, its subjective and objective phases, which constitute that incomprehensible duality with which all things are mysteriously connected.

"Whatsoever is in Heaven is unalterable: all that is upon Earth is alterable."—Excerpt I. 12.

The various Pymander utterances concerning the Cosmos become more full of meaning when it is seen that they imply that the Cosmos embraces, or is the field of, the totality of:—

1. Subjective Essences.
2. ,, Ideas and Types.
3. ,, Operations and Energies.
4. Objective Lives.
5. ,, Forms.
6. ,, Bodies.

The former three refer more to the "heavenly" Cosmos above, which is Eternity; while the latter three refer more to the "earthly" Cosmos below, which produces and contains Time.

In this Cosmic Order all things are perpetually integrated and re-integrated. Nothing is ever absolutely destroyed, but by Divine Order, or Providence, every order of essence, idea, and energy is ultimately turned to good.

"Every Essence is Immortal. Every Essence is unchangeable. Everything that exists is double."—Excerpt I. 8.

"Of things that are, some are in essence, some in ideas, and some are in activity (operation)."—Excerpt I. 14.

"There is nothing in it, that the Cosmos does not beget or bring forth alive. By its motion it makes all things live, and it is at once the place and the operation of life."—IX. 6.

"The Cosmos is all-formed,—not as having forms external to itself, but as changing them itself, within itself."—XI. 16.

"Whether you speak of Matter, of Body, or of Essence, all these are Acts of God.

Materiality is Matter's activity.

Corporeality is the Body's; and

Essentiality is that of Essence."—XII. 22.

"Divine Activity, or Operation, is Providence: the Activity of Eternity is Necessity; the Operation of the Cosmos is Nature.

Providence is the Divine Order. Necessity is the Minister of Providence. Fortune is the effect of that which is without Order."—Excerpt I. 15.

"Eternity comprehends and preserves the Cosmos by Necessity, or by Providence, or by Nature."—XI. 5.

"All things are generated by Nature and by Fate, and there is no place destitute of Providence, which is the self-sufficient Reason of God."—Excerpt XII.

"Necessity and Providence and Nature are the Organs or Instruments of the Cosmos, and the Order of Matter. Of Intelligible things, each is Essence; and Sameness or Identity is their essence; but of the bodies of the Cosmos each is many; though possessing (inherent) Sameness, these composite bodies preserve their identity while changing one into another of themselves."—XII. 14.

"The Cosmos, as a whole, is unchangeable, but all the parts thereof are changeable. Yet nothing is corrupted or destroyed."—XII. 18.

"Living things do not die, but, as compound bodies, they are dissolved. But dissolution is not death; living things are dissolved, not so that they may be destroyed, but that they may be made anew" (*i.e.*, re-integrated).—XII. 16.

"Whatsoever things belong to Operation, or Workings, are in bodies.

Operations or Workings are not carried upward, but are downward tending.

Things on Earth do not benefit those in Heaven, but all things in Heaven benefit things upon Earth.

Heaven is the container of Eternal Bodies. Earth is the receptacle of the corruptible.

Earth is irrational : Heaven is rational.

The things of Heaven are under it : the things of Earth are above it.

Heaven is the first Element : Earth the last of elements.”
—Excerpt I. 14-15.

“ Everything that acts or operates is stronger and rules, but that which is actuated or operated upon is weaker and ruled. That which rules, directs, and governs, is free : but that which is ruled, is subservient.

Operation is the name for whatsoever is, or is made, or is generated, and, of necessity, there are always many things being acted upon, nay, rather, all things.

For the Cosmos is never bereft of any of the things that are, but is perpetually being conceived and moved within itself, and is in labour to bring forth the things that are.

Know, therefore, that every kind of energy or operation is perpetual, no matter what it is, or in what body. But some acts or operations are Divine ; some are of corruptible bodies ; some universal ; some particular ; some are integral, and some are of the parts of every genus.

The Divine acts are those which exercise their energies through everlasting bodies, and these are perfect acts, in that they operate through perfect bodies.

But partial acts are those which operate through separate individual living beings ; and special acts are those which energize through each one of existent things.

Therefore, all things are full of energies and operations.”—
Excerpt VIII. 7-10.

TIME.

Even as the Cosmos is said to be in Eternity and to be produced by it, so Time is said to be in the Cosmos and to be produced by it. Not because there ever was a time when Time was not, but because by its very nature Time depends upon superior principles.

“ For from the past, the present comes, and from the present the future goes. The past, itself, does not pass into

the present, and the future does not exist; while even the present does not abide. Time, therefore, has no power to stand by itself."—Excerpt VI. 2.

In the *Timæus*, Plato defines Time as an everlasting flowing image of Eternity; while Proclus says it is the measure of life and motion.

The Essence of Time is Change, as distinct from the Permanence of Eternity. Its Operation or Activity is increase and decrease, or augmentation and diminution; therefore it is said to produce generation, which in turn, depends upon Time for its accomplishment. For it is not possible to speak of generation, or of creation and manifestation, without introducing, at once, the idea of Time.

Hence the generation of Time by the Cosmos (through the Power of Eternity) is synonymous with the beginning of Cosmic Processes by which subjective and undifferentiated essences, ideas, and energies are made manifest, and become objective bodies, forms, and lives. "There was darkness without limit in the abyss (*i.e.*, void) and water (*i.e.*, moist essence) and subtle intelligent spirit (*i.e.*, nous); these were the powers of God in Chaos (*i.e.*, the unmanifested). Then the Holy Light (*i.e.*, Logos) arose, and, within its sphere, (*i.e.*, the Subjective), collected the elements from out of moist essence; and all the Gods distributed the Seeds (*i.e.*, types) of Nature.

All things were undefined and as yet unmade. The light (subjective) things were divided on high, and the heavy (objective) things were founded beneath the sphere of Light. All things were then terminated and bounded by Fire (*i.e.*, Energy of God), being sustained and carried by the Spirit."—III. 13.

This appearance of the manifested out of the unmanifested, which must be characterized by Time, as the generation of lives, forms, and bodies in the formless void of chaos. All this is augmentation.

But since all things that are generated in Time are in a state of constant motion, change, or flux, they cannot abide immutable in one condition; therefore, as soon as they reach fullness, the operation of Time causes augmentation to be changed into diminution. Manifestation is thus perpetuated by the continual alternation of these two processes.

"All that is in the Cosmos is moved, either according to augmentation or diminution."—XII. 16.

"All things that are, are in motion; that alone which is not (*i.e.*, the unmanifest), is immoveable.

Every body is changeable, but not all bodies are dissolvable. Some bodies only are dissolvable.

That which can be dissolved is also corrupted. That which always abides is unchangeable. That which is unchangeable is eternal.

That which is continuously being generated is always being corrupted, but that which is generated *once*, is never corrupted, nor becomes anything else."—Excerpt, I. 7.

GENERATION.

The operation of the Cosmos, which is the cause of integration and re-integration, is above Time and Space. It is subjective and eternal, hence immoveable, considered from below. But with the operation of Time, Motion is produced. This, when applied to Generation, causes life and growth as it increases, but death and decay as it decreases. These effects or Qualities of Generation are the last stages in the processes of manifestation, for that which follows generation is corruption.

"There cannot be generation without corruption; for corruption follows every generation in order that it may be generated again. For the things generated must necessarily be generated from those that are corrupted; and the things generated must necessarily be corrupted in order that Generation itself should not cease."—Excerpt, III. 7.

Everything that has a beginning in Generation necessarily has two mutations, namely, of growth and of decay, together with all the Qualities that accompany these.

The end of one mutation is maturity; the end of the other is corruption, dissolution, and death. But this death is not absolute annihilation, but only a change of condition; for corruption itself generates new life.

"That which is sown is not invariably brought forth; but that which is brought forth must have been sown.

Of a dissolvable body there are two 'Times,'—one from the sowing to the birth or generation, and one from the generation to the death. But of an everlasting body, the Time is from generation only."

“Matter is altered into contraries; namely, corruption and generation; but Eternal Matter into itself or its like.”—Ex. I. 13.

Although there is increase and decrease in the Temporal Cosmos there can be none in the Eternal Realms, for neither integration or reintegration imply any essential and real increase or decrease. Therefore, Generation, which is only a secondary principle to Time and Eternity, obviously cannot cause any substantial increase to the Integral Cosmos, neither can corruption cause any diminution. Hence, that which is corrupted does not actually pass from existence into non-existence; neither does generation mean the creation of something from nothing.

“Generation is not a creation of life, but only the production or manifestation of sensible things. Neither is change death, but simply oblivion (or unconsciousness).”—XII. 18.

“The Motion of Time in the Cosmos, stirring up Generation, makes Qualities.”—IX. 5.

“The Motion in the Cosmos is not caused by things external to it, but by natures interior to the exterior, such as Soul and Nous.”—II. 8.

“The Swiftiness of Motion in the Cosmos produces the variety of Qualities of Generation; for the Breath (spirit) extends qualities unto bodies with One Fullness, which is Life.”—IX. 7.

“All that is subject unto generation and change, is not true (or permanent); but, being brought into being by the Progenitor, the Matter of it is true.”—Ex., III. 6.

“Matter is the receptacle of Generation, but Generation is the mode of operation of the unbegotten and pre-existing, which is free from the necessity of Generation. Matter, therefore, receiving the seed of Generation, becomes subject to change, replete with types, and takes form.

The unborn state of Matter, then, is formlessness, but, by generation, it is brought into activity.”—Ex. V.

Thus does the Unmanifest become the Manifest, and yet all are One.

For the Manifested pre-exists in the Unmanifested in its eternal integrality; while the Unmanifested exists (*i.e.*, stands out) as the Manifested in its temporal actuality; and thus, in so far as one is inherent in the other, all things are in certain senses Manifested and also at the same time Unmanifested.

PROCLUS ON MYTHOI

“THE contemplation of Mythoi is mystical, for they elevate the Soul to sublime speculations.

He who has established Intellect (Spirit) as the leader of his life, such a one will most opportunely participate in the illuminations concealed in mythoi; but he who is devoid of instruction cannot safely engage in their speculation.

Mythology is divided into that which contributes to the proper tuition of youth; and into that which is subservient to the sacred and symbolic invocation of a divine nature. And the one, namely the method through images, is adapted to those who philosophize in a genuine manner; but the other, which indicates a divine essence through recondite symbols, to the leaders of a more mystically-perfective operation.

Mythoi inspire the hearers in an all-various manner to the investigation of Truth; attract us to arcane knowledge; so that we are not content with superficial conceptions and apparent probability, but are impelled to penetrate the inner significance of mythoi, to explore the veiled purpose of their authors, and to survey the natures and powers which they intended to signify to posterity by means of such mystical symbols.”

—*From Proclus' "Apology for the Fables of Homer."*

“HERMES TRISMEGISTUS”

Was he one or many, merging
Name and fame in one,
Like a stream, to which, converging,
Many streamlets run?

Who shall call his dreams fallacious?
Who has searched or sought
All the unexplored and spacious
Universe of thought?

Who in his own skill confiding,
Shall with rule and line
Mark the border-line dividing
Human and divine?

Trismegistus! Three times greatest!
How thy name sublime
Has descended to this latest
Progeny of time!

—*Longfellow.*

SACRED MYTHOI OF DEMIGODS AND HEROES

I.—PROMETHEUS

(Epitomized, with suggestive lines of interpretation.)

Narrative. In the legends and mythoi of all nations there appear great characters, heroes, demigods, and immortals, who stand out for all mortals to behold as the personification of sublime ideals, profound truths, and grand purposes.

Howsoever diverse, they yet have some element in common, because all are aspects of that supreme archetype of humanity, who, in a mysterious manner such as only a myth could portray, is at once human and divine.

The mythos of Prometheus repeats this mystery of the divine incarnation.

He, and his brother Epimetheus, were sons of one of the Titans, the offspring of Uranus and Gaia.

The youngest of the Titans, Cronus (or Saturn), eventually sat in the throne of his father Uranus, and his reign was the blissful Golden Age,—the Saturnalia of the First Race of men.

Rhea, the spouse of Cronus, brought forth a mighty babe and called his name Zeus. In due time the sceptre of Cronus passed into the hands of Zeus, who became King of the Gods. In the struggle with the Titans, Prometheus, because of his wisdom and fore-knowledge, was the chosen counsellor and companion of Zeus.

By his advice Zeus hurled the Titans into Tartarus. But Prometheus, who possessed something of the spirit of the Titans, was not wholly in sympathy with Zeus, and when, in the Silver Age which succeeded the Golden, the Second Race of men began to do evil in the sight of Zeus, so that he would fain destroy them, it was Prometheus who took up their cause. It was Prometheus, too, when this race of mortals had passed away, who created the Third Race of men out of moist red clay, and breathed into them the Breath of Life.

These men, of the Bronze Age as it was called, at first were but witless creatures, and when Prometheus saw their wretchedness he had compassion for them and left Olympus

(the Home of the Gods) to take up his abode with mankind in order to teach them.

Under Promethean guidance mankind became cultured and civilized; for, on their behalf, he stole the Fire of Heaven and taught them its use, so that they were able to subdue all irrational creatures and turn them to their service.

This aroused the wrath of Zeus against Prometheus, and he forthwith commanded Hephæstos—the Divine Smith—to make a female form of great beauty, upon which all the Gods were to bestow a gift. She was called Pandora and was taken by Hermes—the Messenger of the Gods—to Epimetheus, who received her as his bride and also the casket or jar she brought for him from Zeus. He did this although Prometheus had warned him against blindly accepting these gifts. Epimetheus, however, bade Pandora—the first Woman—not to open the casket; and, although promising obedience, when left to herself she removed the lid. Then did all manner of cares and woes and diseases escape to afflict mankind. Only one little form remained,—Hope—which Prometheus had caused to be shut up in the jar.

By the order of Zeus, Prometheus was chained to a rock on Mount Caucasus, and an eagle or vulture perpetually gnawed away his liver, which was renewed each night. There he was doomed to remain until an Immortal should voluntarily enter Hades for his sake.

In the course of his travels Hercules at last came to Caucasus; slew the vulture, and released Prometheus. By the aid of the Centaur Chiron, who renounced his immortality in favour of Prometheus, he once again ascended Mount Olympus.

Exegesis (suggestive).

Prometheus, according to Olympiodorus, denotes that providential energy which is the inspective guardian of the descent of rational Souls. He might be regarded as an aspect of the Higher Self, or the Spiritual-Soul as distinct from the purely rational Soul. His name signifies “man of fore-thought,” in contradistinction to Epimetheus, who is “the man of after-thought,” and therefore the inspective guardian of the descent of irrational Souls.

The Fire of Heaven symbolizes the elevative and perfective tendency implanted in the rational Soul by Divine Foresight; for the pure Soul naturally pursues things on high, even as fire ever tends upwards. The fact that the fire is stolen implies that it is transferred from its proper place to one that is foreign. This is contrary to the will of Zeus, who is unwilling for the fire to descend, but rather wishes the Soul to ascend. But it is requisite for the Soul to leave its child-like state in the Supernal Realms, for the sake of experience; therefore, it is necessary that Divine Providence should provide for the Soul's needs while it is sojourning in the far country; even although, through ignorance (and after-thought) the Soul can invert and pervert providential energy so that it may appear to be productive of evil rather than good. For the Promethean gift to man has a dual aspect: it is his potential conscious creative power and immortality which enables him to energize as a free-agent; it is the awakening of his noble latent Soul-faculties which is accompanied by the power that allows him to act contrary to the Divine Law.

Prometheus is an aspect of Divine Grace which freely inflows to bless the Soul that is open to receive it. Moreover, by the Promethean gift, the progressing Soul can enter the Inner Sanctuary and learn the mystery of the Creative Fire of the Gods; and such a Soul can take the Kingdom of Heaven by violence.

Pandora, the Hellenic Eve, is the irrational Soul, wedded to the lower-mind or after-thought. She is also the medium whereby the rational Soul (or Soul proper) is conjoined to Body and is able to enter the realms of duality. She is "all-gifted" because she is that passive aspect of Soul which acts as the matrix between creative mind and Matter in the "informing" process of the body which depends upon the powers of all the Gods. Her beauty causes the Soul to forget the Beauty of the Gods, and thus to experience the ills that afflict mankind as a consequence. But Divine Providence, as "Hope," is still with the Soul.

Uranus and *Gaia* denote Eternal, Spiritual Heaven and Earth. They are the First Parents who embrace all things, from the highest heaven to the lowest earth. Their Offspring, the Titans, are Spiritual Forces which the Creator Zeus hurls

to the furthestmost extremes of the universe, in order to fabricate forms for the down-coming life.

Cronus, or *Saturn*, is Static Demiurgic Intellect, as distinct from *Zeus*, who is Active Creative Mind. As *Saturn* he also signifies Time in its primary abiding aspect. Hence under his reign the Soul enjoys its Golden Age and is not yet conscious of the proceeding and flowing condition of Time in the Sea of Generation.

The Races of Men—of the various “ages,” Golden, Silver, Bronze, Iron—suggest, among other things, successive types of bodies employed by the Soul in its descent from on high.

Caucasus, with its cold pure snows which quench the power of heavenly fire, is symbolical of the Rock of Matter, upon which Prometheus is chained in order to redeem it.

It is also significant of the chilling hardening effect of the lower material nature generally.

The Vulture is an offspring of *Echidna*,—the half-human and half-serpent mother of nearly all the evil monsters of Greek mythology. The circumstance connected with the vulture is perhaps one of the most occult parts of this profound mythos, and will repay deep reflection.

When providential energy is drawn down to the lowest and densest regions of Matter, its nature is changed. This perversion causes pain and that indescribable gnawing sensation in the inner parts which is continually renewed and cannot be cured until the Soul frees herself by the aid of Higher Powers. The inherent creative power of Prometheus cannot fulfil its proper function while he is bound to the rock; hence he becomes an object of prey to evil entities who, to a large extent, are perpetuated by man’s misuse of his Promethean energies.

Chiron is half human and half animal. He is said to be one of the most civilized of all Centaurs, and thus is appropriately instrumental in the Promethean re-ascent to Olympus. For he stands for the triumph of man over his own animal nature, the reward for which is immortal life,—by losing life in order to gain Life.

Hercules stands for all the redemptive powers which the Soul must learn to exercise in order to free herself from all her bonds.

HYMN

OUR WONDROUS GOD

O Light Beyond! O Silent Joy!
My Soul wings through the Courts above,
Constrain'd to sing in clarion tones—
O what a wondrous God to love!

Give me the wings of Seraphim
To hover o'er Deific deeps,
To brood o'er everlasting seas
Where God's own sunshine never sleeps.

Give me the eyes of Kerubim,
To drink in deeply endless draughts
Of Beauty's Self, and see Heav'n's Hills
Gleam radiant with celestial shafts.

Give me the feet of Ophanim
To run, and find each anxious ear,
And whisper in a still small voice—
O what a wondrous God is near!

God spake; and in that utter'd WORD,
He who Himself is Unity,
Show'd forth His Splendours, for behold,
The Fullness of the Gods we see!

Not only in the Courts above
Doth God His wondrous might display;
In all the endless suns and worlds
God has a home and scepter'd sway.

His joy shines through th'unwearied sun,
His smile rests on each darling flow'r;
He walks the winds; He treads the meads;
He thrills the heart from hour to hour.

O Silent Joy! O Light Beyond!
My Soul hath found her heav'nly wing;
I shout with all the "Birds of God,"*
O what a wondrous God to sing!

—O.A.W. Hymn, No. A 18, by "Stephanus." Air: *Vexilla Regis*.

* *Dante's term for the Angels.*

SYMBOLS

(Brief expositions on the nature, significance, and utility
of Symbols used in religion, philosophy,
science, and art.)

§ 1. SACRED SYMBOLS.

Iamblichus, in his book on the "Mysteries," affirms that the Divine is present to whatever is adapted and in sympathy with God and His Celestial Hosts.

And it matters not how slight may be the degree of sympathy and adaptation, it still may serve as a point of contact for supernal influences.

A Sacred Symbol is a connecting or focussing point, the effectiveness of which increases with its continued proper use.

In the absolute sense, neither the divine influence, on the one hand, nor the human soul, on the other hand, is dependent upon any external symbol for the manifestation of sacred sympathy. Therefore, religious symbols are not absolutely necessary. But in the relative sense the Soul stands in need of an outer medium through which to actualize its inner relations with the Powers Above. Hence, in so far as Symbols serve this purpose, they are relative necessities.

Real Sacred Symbols are not merely arbitrary, accidental, and conventional, but they possess a universal and natural significance which is independent of any particular and artificial meaning arising from the association of time, and place, and circumstance. This is because such symbols are intrinsic as well as extrinsic.

A true Symbol is an extrinsic expression or representation of an intrinsic idea; using the word "idea" in its Platonic connotation, signifying a subjective, causal paradigm, type, or image. Hence to know this idea is to know the inherent meaning of a symbol, and *vice versa*.

All things possessing real innate significance are Symbols. Thus, in a certain sense, every "thing" is a symbol, and every symbol is a "thing." But some things are natural symbols, whereas others are artificial. All Sacred Symbols fall into these two classes; the former being more intrinsic in value, while the latter are more extrinsic.

For instance, a Circle is not naturally and intrinsically a symbol of Eternity; but artificially and extrinsically it is one

of the most expressive that could be employed to denote the Beginningless and Endless.

Natural Sacred Symbols.

Nature herself, since she is called the Infallible Book of God, is necessarily a Sacred Symbol, for all that she is, or even can be, expresses some aspect of Divine power. Therefore everything in Nature has some sacred significance, when considered in its relations with the All-wise Creator.

Some examples of Natural Sacred Symbols are :—

(1) *Fire*. In all its forms fire has sacred affinities. Hence the Fire-worshippers of old. And it was not without reason that primitive races regarded the Solar Orb of Fire as Deity itself.

The intrinsic *heat* of fire is significant of the warmth of the deific life and love, without which all creation would perish.

The extrinsic *light* of fire is symbolical of that Light which for ever shines, even in the Darkness. All luminaries are indeed radiations—proximate or remote—from the One Great Light of all lights.

Each of the manifold *colours* of the one light has—intrinsically and extrinsically—a real and natural signification, because the spectrum has septenary correspondences on all planes. In religious use white, which strictly speaking is not a colour but the synthesis of all colours, is associated with purity and joy ; red (rose) with fire and love ; green with hope ; blue with devotion ; purple with penitence ; and so on.

(2) *Water*. Even as the light, heat, and force of physical fire has sacred and spiritual analogies, so too has water its natural symbolical affinities.

It is the ever-flowing vehicle which thrills with divine life, for it is that same primeval moisture of the Deep, over which the Spirit of God moved in the very beginning.

By sacred sympathy, holy water may be efficacious in purifying acts of the devout Soul.

Incidentally, other liquids as well as water have sacred associations—for instance, the religious use of oil.

(3) *Perfumes*. All the fragrant odours of Nature are pregnant symbols. Hence the age-long religious use of Incenses, with which the perfumes ascending from the Soul's

prayers and devotions may intermingle as they rise up to the throne of Deity.

(4) *Substances.* In accordance with the Law of Correspondence, all real substances have both a spiritual as well as a material basis, hence they become sacred when used regularly for sacramental purposes. Thus they are by no means mere empty forms, but in very deed are charged with ineffable influences. The use of sacred corn, consecrated earth (salt), and the sacramental honey of Mithra are instances of the natural sacred symbolism of substances.

Artificial Sacred Symbols.

Because man himself is a Symbol—extrinsically human, but intrinsically divine—his religious works of art are sacrosanct.

The universal worship of God by all peoples, in all times, has produced an immense system of artificial Symbols. They serve mankind as objects, vehicles, or channels for entering into relationship with the Supernal.

Some examples of the utility of these symbols are :—

(1) *For entering the Divine Presence.* Sacred Places by constant usage become representative of the Shekinah, the Holy of Holies, the Tabernacle of God with man, the Altar of the Lord, where the Divine Presence rests and may verily be felt.

Places of worship of every description—with all their beautiful and appropriate adornments and appurtenances—are sacred Symbols. Their innermost sanctuaries inspire reverential awe, for they speak not only to the mind but also to the heart.

(2) *For invoking Divine Power and Protection.* In a similar way various articles, figures, emblems, and vestments become fraught with potent meaning ;—for example the Cross, in all its forms—the Christian Crucifix, the Egyptian Ankh, the Greek Gammadion, the Oriental Swastika, and so on.

(3) *For receiving Divine Life and Grace.* By sacramental acts, not only signs, gestures, and words, but also objects, food, and drink (in religious or in simple domestic life) are made symbolical as means of participating in the Divine Grace ; hence the use of bread and wine, which is not confined to the Christian Mysteries, but has parallels in nearly all the Ancient Mysteries.

PLATONISM AS A DISCIPLINE

“**PLATONISM** is a Method of Discipline rather than the designation of a System. Its aim is to bring out into bold relief that Philosophy which embraces the higher nature of man within its scope, unfolds the mysteries of the interior being, and renders us awake to everything essential to human well-being.

The faith of all ages, the most ancient as well as the present, however diverse in form, has always been the same in essence. In every creed the effort to realize the Truth is manifest; and every worship is the aspiration for the purer and more excellent.

It is therefore only when symbols supersede substance, and external rites veil their own true scope and meaning, that we have any occasion to withhold countenance from them. Even History becomes untrue when its occurrences are described in actual disregard of the inspiring principles of action; and that science is radically at fault which ignores the Supreme Intellect.

If Platonism has seemed to place a low estimate upon what is usually regarded as practical and scientific knowledge, it always contemplates the Truth which transcends it. It gathers the Wisdom of the more ancient schools and nations together with the learning of more modern centuries, with the purpose of extracting what is precious from all. It is a proving as well as a prizing of all things. It teaches how to discriminate the permanent from the changing; that which *is*, from that which *seems*; the mathematic and absolute, from the geometric and relative; mind, in its integrity, from instinct and the lower understanding. It essays to make us acquainted with our true selfhood, to familiarize us with Reason—the raying forth of Divinity into human consciousness; to bring us to the knowledge of Truth, and to awaken in us that longing which is never satisfied except at that Fountain.

It is the province of this Philosophy to place at their true value the whole body of facts accumulated from the world's experience, and to render them useful. The moral sentiments, which have sometimes been described as resting on those

accumulations, like islands on reefs of coral-accretion from the oceans bottom, it proves to be at-one with what our Souls have brought with them from the Eternal World. We have but to winnow away the chaff and foreign seeds in order to have the pure grain.

This philosophic discipline unfolds the interior nature of the Soul; arouses the dormant truth there inhumed; brings into activity the spiritual faculty; and enables us to peruse the Arcana of the higher life. It discloses the absolute identity of Truth as a Divine Presence and manifestation in every people, a pure Ideal in every faith, an overhanging sky over every lofty human aspiration."

—(T. M. Johnson, in "*The Platonist*," January 1884).

JEWELS

"God is the Perfect Beauty which inflicts on the soul an ineffable wound of love."—St. Basil.

"The true order of going to the things of Love is to use the beauties of earth as steps along which one mounts upward for the sake of that other Beauty, going from one to two, and from two to all fair forms, and from fair forms to fair actions, and from fair actions to fair notions until from fair notions he arrives at the notion of Absolute Beauty, and at last knows what the essence of Beauty is."—Plato.

"We have seen Him! We have seen Him!

O! the Beauty of His face!

Moving through the groves, and pouring

Down the treasures of His grace.

Hastening on, He looked upon them—

O! that look! how full of Love—

And the groves became more lovely

With a Beauty from Above."

—St. John of the Cross.

"We can be changed into something better than ourselves. The eye, purged of all discolouring stain, can see God, the Archetype of all Beauty and of all Reality."—St. Gregory of Nyssa.

"When God made the world, because there was nothing better than Himself, He shadowed forth Himself therein, and as far as might be, was pleased to represent Himself and manifest His own eternal glory and perfection in it. When He is said to seek His own glory, it is indeed nothing else but to ray and beam forth, as it were, His own lustre."—John Smith, Cambridge Platonist.

THE TRISMEGISTI

"I CANNOT recite, even thus rudely, laws of the Intellect, without remembering that lofty and sequestered class who have been its prophets and oracles, the high priesthood of the pure Reason, the *Trismegisti*, the expounders of thought from age to age.

When, at long intervals, we turn over their abstruse pages, wonderful seems the calm and grand air of these great spiritual lords, who have walked in the world,—these of the old religion This band of grandees, Hermes, Heraclitus, Empedocles, Plato, Plotinus, Proclus, Synesius, Olympiodorus, and the rest, have somewhat so vast in their logic, so primary in their thinking, that it seems antecedent to all the ordinary distinctions of rhetoric and literature, and to be at once poetry, and music, and dancing, and astronomy, and mathematics.

I am present at the sowing of the seed of the world. With a geometry of sunbeams the Soul lays the foundations of Nature.

The truth and grandeur of their thought is found by its scope and applicability, for it commands the entire schedule and inventory of things for its illustration. But what marks its elevation, and has even a comic look to us, is the innocent serenity with which these babe-like Jupiters sit in their clouds, and from age to age prattle to each other, and to no contemporary. Well assured that their speech is intelligible, and the most natural thing in the world, they add thesis to thesis, without a moment's heed of the universal astonishment of the human race below, who do not comprehend their plainest argument; nor do they ever relent so much as to insert a popular or explaining sentence; nor testify the least displeasure or petulance at the dulness of their amazed auditory.

The angels are so enamoured of the language that is spoken in heaven that they will not distort their lips with the hissing and unmusical dialects of men, but speak their own, whether there be any who understand it or not."

—(Ralph Waldo Emerson's *Essay on "Intellect."*)

THE THEOLOGY OF PLATO FROM PROCLUS

III.—THE BEAUTY OF THE GODS*

(1) *The Immutability of the Gods.* All the things demonstrated, so far, depend upon three common conceptions of a divine nature, namely, on conceptions concerning Its Goodness, Its Immutability, and its Truth.

For the first and ineffable Fountain of Good is with the Gods, from all Eternity, which is itself the cause of a Power that has an invariable sameness of subsistence, and of the first Intellect, which is real being, and the Truth which is in real beings.—Book I., Ch. 16.

Let us survey the Immutability and Simplicity of the Gods; what the nature of each of these is, and how both of them are adapted to the hyparxis of the Gods, according to the narration of Plato.

The Gods are exempt from the whole of things; but, filling them with Good, They are Themselves perfectly Good, each according to his own proper order possessing that which is most excellent, and the entire Race of Gods being at once allotted a predominance according to an exuberance of Good.

But if the First Cause is most excellent, that which is posterior to the First is not so; for that which is produced is inferior to that by which it is produced (Comment 1).

But it is necessary in the Gods to preserve the order of causes unconfused, and to define separably their progressions; for with the unfolding into light of things secondary from those which are first, that which is most excellent must also be surveyed in each of the Gods. Because each of the Gods, 'n his own characteristic peculiarity, is primarily and perfectly Good.

For example, one is allotted this transcendancy and is most excellent as possessing a prophetic power; another as demi-urgic; and another as perfecter of works.

Comment 1.—But inasmuch as the Gods are God, i.e., They are His Manifested Progressions, They are not inferior to Him in essence, although, as His Differentiated Activities, They are secondary to Him.

* The Articles of this Series in previous Issues were: I.—The First Principle and the Gods; II.—The Goodness of the Gods.

Moreover, in the Republic, Socrates very properly observes, when speaking of the Gods, that each of them is most beautiful and most excellent, and for ever retains a simplicity of subsistence in his own form. For each of the Gods being allotted that which is first and which is the summit in his own particular Series, does not depart from his own proper Order, but contains the blessedness and felicity of his own proper power. Neither does he exchange his order for an inferior one, for it is not lawful for that which possesses all virtue to be changed into an inferior condition. Nor does he pass into a better order; for where can there be anything better than that which is most excellent?

It is necessary, therefore, that every Divine Nature should be established immutably, abiding in its own accustomed manner. Hence, from these premises, the self-sufficiency, the undefiled purity, and the invariable sameness of subsistence of the Gods, is apparent. For if they are not changed to a more excellent condition of being, as possessing that which is best in their own nature, they are sufficient to themselves and are not in want of any good.

And if they are not at any time changed into an inferior condition, they remain undefiled, established in their own transcendencies. And, again, if they guard the perfection of themselves immutably, they subsist always with invariable sameness.

We shall next consider, therefore, what is the self-sufficiency of the Gods, what is their immutability, and what their sameness of subsistence (Comment 2).

I. The world is said to be self-sufficient, because its subsistence is perfect, proceeding from principles that are perfect; because it is a whole, coming from perfect wholes; and because it is filled with all appropriate good from its generating Father. But a perfection and self-sufficiency of this kind is partible and is said to consist of many things coalescing in one, and to be filled from separate causes according to participation.

Comment 2.—In order to emphasize the completeness of these three attributes in the Gods, Proclus proceeds to consider what degree of self-sufficiency, immutability, and sameness of subsistence is possessed by the World, by the Soul, and by Intellect, or the Intellectual (Spiritual) World, in comparison with that in the Gods.

The order of divine Souls also is said to be self-sufficient, as being full of appropriate virtues and as always preserving the measure of its own blessedness without indigence. But here likewise the self-sufficiency is in want of powers, for these Souls have not their intellections directed to the same Intelligibles, but they energize according to Time and obtain the complete perfection of their contemplation in whole periods of time. The self-sufficiency, therefore, of Divine Souls, and the whole perfection of their life, is not at once present (Comment 3).

Again, the Intellectual World is said to be self-sufficient, as having its whole Good established in Eternity, comprehending at once its whole blessedness and being indigent of nothing, because all life and all intelligence are present with it, and nothing is deficient, nor does it desire anything as absent. But Intellect is, indeed, sufficient to itself in its own Order, yet it falls short of the self-sufficiency of the Gods, because, although every Intellect is boniform, yet it is not Goodness itself nor primarily Good, but each of the Gods is a unity, hyparxis, and goodness.

The nature of the hyparxis of each divine unity determines its progression of Goodness; for one divinity is a perfective Goodness, another is a Goodness connective of the whole of things; and another is a collective Goodness. But, nevertheless, each is simply a Goodness sufficient to itself. Or, it may be said, that each is a Goodness possessing the self-sufficient and the all-perfect, but not according to participation or illumination, but by being that very thing which it is.

For Intellect is self-sufficient to itself by participation; the Soul is self-sufficient by illumination; while the universe is self-sufficient according to a similitude to a divine nature. But the Gods themselves are self-sufficient through and by themselves, filling themselves, or rather, subsisting eternally as the plenitudes of all Good.

II. With respect to the Immutability of the Gods: of what kind is it?

Is it such as that of a naturally circulating body? For the

Comment 3.—Real self-sufficiency cannot be possessed by any nature which has its activity in Time, because it is perpetually in a process of becoming. But the eternal for ever *is*, and always possesses its fullest possible being: it neither becomes more nor less.

celestial bodies are, in a certain respect, immutable, and not adapted to receive anything from inferior natures, nor to be affected by the mutation arising from generation, and the disorder which occurs in the sublunary regions. Their immutability is great and venerable, but it is inferior to that of the Gods. For every body possesses both its being and its perpetual sameness from other precedaneous causes.

Neither is the impassive and the immutable in the Gods such as the immutability of Souls; for Souls communicate in a certain respect with bodies and are the media of an impartible essence, and of an essence divided about bodies.

Nor, again, is the immutability of intellectual essences equivalent to that of the Gods; for Intellect is, indeed, immutable, impassive, and unmingled with secondary natures, but only on account of its union with the Gods. And in so far as Intellect is uniform it is immutable, but so far as it is manifold it has something which is more excellent and something which is subordinate, in itself.

But the Gods, alone, having established their unions according to this transcendancy of being, are immutable dominations, are primary, and are impassive. For there is nothing in them which is not *hyperaxis* and one. The unities of the Gods unite all multitudes; they deify everything which participates of them, receive nothing from their participants, and do not diminish their own proper union because of the participation. Hence, also, the Gods being everywhere, are similarly exempt from all things, contain all things, and are vanquished by none.

III. In the third place, the universe is said to subsist in a state of invariable sameness, so far as it is allotted an order in itself which is always preserved indissoluble; but, at the same time, it possesses a corporeal form and therefore is not destitute of mutation.

The order of the Soul, likewise, is rightly said to have an essence perpetually established in sameness; for it is entirely impassive in its essence, but it has its energies extended into time, and at different times it understands different Intelligibles.

Intellect is said both to subsist and to understand with invariable and perpetual sameness, establishing, at once, in

Eternity, its essence, powers, and energies. However, through the multitude of its intellections, and through the variety of intelligible species and genera, there is not only a sameness but also a difference of subsistence in Intellect (Comment 4).

Hence a perpetual sameness of subsistence is primarily in the Gods alone, and is especially inherent in them.

The Gods, therefore, possess in themselves the causes of an eternally invariable sameness of subsistence, and guard with immutable sameness their own proper hyparxis.—Book I., Ch. 19.

(2) *The Simplicity of the Gods.* In the next place let us consider what power the Simplicity of the Gods possesses; for, Socrates observes, a Divine Nature does not admit of that which is various and multiform and which appears different at different times, but the uniform and the simple are to be referred to Divinity. Each of the Gods, therefore, remains simply in his own form.

What then shall we conclude concerning this simplicity? It is not such as may be defined as one in number. Nor is it such as that simplicity which is in many things according to an arranged species or genus; for these, indeed, are more simple than the individuals in which they are inherent, but are replete with variety, communicating with Matter and receiving the diversities of material natures.

Nor is it such as the form of Nature; for Nature is divided about bodies, verges to corporeal masses, emits many powers about the composition which is subject to it; and, indeed, although more simple than bodies, has an essence mingled with their variety.

Nor is it such as the simplicity of the Soul; for the Soul, subsisting as a medium between an impartible essence and an essence which is divided about bodies, communicates with both extremes, and by reason of that is multiform in its nature when conjoined with things subordinate, but its head is established on high, and according to this it is allied to Intellect and participates in the Divine.

Comment 4.—For, “every Intellect being a plentitude of forms, one Intellect contains more universal, but another more partial forms; and the superior Intellect contains more universally the things which those posterior to them contain more partially. But the inferior Intellects contain more partially the things which those that are prior to them contain more universally.”—Proposition CLXXVII, “Proclus’ Metaphysical Elements.”

Nor, again, is the Simplicity of the Gods such as that of Intellect. For every Intellect, although impartible and uniform, yet, at the same time, possesses multitude and progression; by which it is evident that it has a habitude to secondary natures, to itself, and about itself. Intellect is also in itself, and is not only uniform, but also multiform, and, as it is said, a one-manniness.

But the Gods have their hyparxis defined in one Simplicity alone, being exempt from all multitude and transcending all division and interval, or habitude to secondary natures, and all composition. They are, indeed, in inaccessible places, extended above the whole of things, and eternally abiding beyond all beings; but the illuminations proceeding from them to secondary natures, being mingled in many places with the participants, which are composite and various, are received according to the peculiarity of each.

But it is necessary that the nature of that Principle which generates things that are multiform should be simple and should precede what is generated in the same manner as the uniform and single precedes the multiform and many.

If, therefore, the Gods are the cause of all composition, and produce from themselves the variety of beings, it is certainly necessary that the unity of their nature, which is generative of the whole of things, should have its subsistence in perfect simplicity. For as incorporeal causes precede bodies; as immoveable causes precede things that are moved; and as impartible causes precede all partible natures; so, after the same manner, uniform intellectual powers precede multiform natures, unmingled powers precede things that are mingled together, and simple powers precede things of a variegated nature.—Book I., Ch. 19.

(3) *The Love of the Gods.* In the next place let us consider the Beautiful; what it is, and how it primarily subsists in the Gods. It is rightly said to be boniform beauty, intelligible beauty, and to be more ancient than intellectual beauty; to be Beauty itself, and the cause of beauty to all beings.

The Beauty of the Gods is separate from the beauty which is apparent in corporeal masses; from the symmetry which is in these; from the elegance of Soul; and from Intellectual

splendour. It subsists in the Intelligible Place of Survey, proceeds from thence to all the Choirs of the Gods, illuminates their super-essential unities, and all the essences suspended from these unities.

As, therefore, through the first Goodness, all the Gods are boniform; and through Intelligible Wisdom They have an ineffable knowledge established above Intellect, thus also, through the Summit of Beauty, everything Divine is lovely.

For from thence all the Gods derive beauty, and, being filled with it, They fill the natures posterior to themselves, inspiring them with love for the divine, and pouring supernally on all things the divine effluxion of beauty.

Such, therefore, is Divine Beauty, the supplier of divine hilarity, familiarity, and friendship. Through this the very Gods are united to and rejoice in each other, in their communications and in their mutual replenishings.

Plato delivers three indications of this Beauty:—in the Banquet, indeed, denominating it the “Delicate”; for the Perfect and that which is most blessed accedes to the Beautiful through the participation of Goodness. He says, in that dialogue: “That which is truly beautiful is delicate, perfect, and most blessed.” One of the indications of the Beautiful, therefore, is the Delicate. But another indication may be assumed from the Phædrus, namely, the “Splendid”; for attributing this to the Beautiful, Plato says: “It was then we were permitted to behold the Splendid Beauty shining upon us”; adding afterwards “Beauty alone has this allotment, to be most splendid and most lovely.”

Another indication of Beauty is that it is the “Object of Love.” In many other places Plato shows that the Inspiration of Love is conversant with the Beautiful, defining and suspending love from the Monad of Beauty (Comment 5).

Because Beauty converts and moves all things to itself, causes them to energize enthusiastically, and recalls them through love, it is the Object of Love, being the leader of the whole amatory series, exciting all things to itself through desire and wonder.

Comment 5.—The Beauty of the Gods is that which “delights the Soul.” As the Delicate it delights the Soul’s spiritual *taste*; as the Splendid, it delights the Soul’s spiritual *vision*; and as the Lovely it delights the Soul’s spiritual *touch*, even as the touch of the lover thrills the being of the loved one.

Again, because it extends to secondary natures, plenitudes from itself, in conjunction with joy and divine felicity, enflaming and elevating all things, and pouring on them illuminations from on high, it is the Delicate.

And because it bounds this triad of indications, and covers as with a veil the ineffable union of the Gods, bathes, as it were, in the light of forms, causes Intelligible Light to shine forth, and announces the occult nature of Goodness, it is denominated the Splendid, lucid and manifest.

The Goodness of the Gods is supreme and most united; their Wisdom is parturient with Intelligible Light and the prototypes; but their Beauty is established in the highest archetypes, is the luminous precursor of Divine Light, and is the more splendid and more lovely to contemplate and to embrace than every luciferous essence, and when it is approached it inspires divine awe and wonder.

As a result of these three indications of the Beauty of the Gods it follows that the natures which are filled with their effects should necessarily be converted to and conjoined with each of the three through kindred media. For different things are filled by this triad through different media, and different powers are converted to different perfections of the Gods. But, as Plato frequently asserts, it is manifest that the cause which congregates all secondary natures to Divine Beauty, which familiarizes them with it, is the cause of their being filled with it and of their derivation from thence, is nothing else than Love, which eternally unites all according to the Supernal Beauty of the Gods.—Book I., Ch. 24.

JEWELS

“As a sculptor is said to have exclaimed on seeing a rude block of marble, ‘What a Godlike beauty thou hidest!’ so God looks upon man in whom His own image is hidden.”—Tauler.

“Thrice I owe Thee, Lord, all that I am. Because Thou didst create me, I owe Thee all that is in me. And because Thou hast redeemed me, I owe Thee even more justly the same debt. And because Thou dost promise Thyself to me as a reward, again I owe myself entirely to Thee. How can I then fail to give myself once to Him to Whom so many times I owe myself?”—St. Anselm.

TO THE SUPREME BEAUTY.

This BEAUTY flourishes by Itself alone,
 The fairest Offspring of the THRICE UNKNOWN,
 Without beginning, and without decay;
 Through deep Eternity diffusing its ray.
 Whence all the Beauty of the Gods arose;
 And where the world itself forever flows.
 For nought such matchless Beauty can impair,
 Which always *is*, and is supremely fair.
 Imagination may attempt in vain,
 The form of Beauty such as this to gain.
 In vain may investigate her passive mind
 Some object beautiful like this to find.
 No shape it owns, nor any mortal grace,
 Nor branching arms, nor mind-illuminated face;
 Nor is this Beauty of a single kind,
 Reason particular, or partial mind;
 Nor in the forms of Nature it resides,
 Nor day reveals It, nor the darkness hides;
 Nor in the earth, nor in the Heav'ns it reigns,
 Nor parts divide it, nor whole contains;
 But in the GOOD's bright vestibule retir'd.
 And by its solitary self inspired,
 To sacred converse, single and alone,
 'Tis only to Itself completely known.

—O.A.W. Chant, No. A 13; *Poetic Paraphrase* by Thomas Taylor, from Plato's "Banquet." Air: *Tonus Perfectus*.

ORDER OF ANCIENT WISDOM

O.A.W. MANUALS NO. 5 & 6.

All First and Second Degree Neophytes are entitled to copies of Manuals 5 and 6 respectively. Those who have not applied for copies are invited to do so at their convenience.

LECTIONS.

A large number of new Lectures are in course of preparation, and for this purpose we are in urgent need of considerable assistance in the work of typing copies for circulation. We shall be very grateful, therefore, for any help that can be given,—and where necessary shall be happy to defray cost of stationery and postage.

HOLIDAY RETREAT.

It is intended to hold a small Partial

Retreat during the Summer Holidays, on similar lines to that held last year:—probably in the months of August and September.

For this purpose we shall require to rent a Furnished House in the vicinity of good country, with accommodation for about a dozen persons at a time.

Readers are therefore invited to send us particulars of any suitable place with which they may be acquainted.

Prospective Retreatants are requested to notify us as soon as possible, stating which period will suit them best, so that arrangements can be made accordingly.

The inclusive Fee will probably be from £2-10-0, to £3-3-0, per week.

An idea of the nature of the Retreat can be obtained from the Report of last year's partial retreat, which was published in the Winter Shrine,—page 54.

EDITORIAL

OUR ARTICLES.

We trust the two new features of the present issue—namely, "Symbols" and "Mythoi," will appeal to our Readers.

Our endeavour with these, as with all other articles, is not so much to present original ideas as to aim rather at Synthesis in such a manner as to give a suggestive basis from which Readers may themselves extend the Subjects further.

Hence, it is not only what is said in these articles that contributes to this end, but also what is unsaid, although implied, which may inspire fresh ideas, and provide food for thought.

We are always happy to receive the views and suggestions of our Readers.

* * *

SYMBOLS.

It has been affirmed that there are two wrong ways of regarding Symbols;—one, when they become a fetish and lead to formalism through considering them as 'ends' instead of as 'means' to ends; and the other way, when, as a result of the revolt against that which is objectionable in the first, the tendency is to ignore and reject them altogether with the view that they are useless and unnecessary.

"The truth is," as Dr. Inge affirms in his *Nature-Mysticism and Symbolism*, "that the need of Symbols to express or represent our highest emotions is inwoven with human nature, and indifference to them is not, as many have supposed, a sign of enlightenment or spirituality. It is, in fact, an unhealthy symptom. We do not credit a man with a warm heart who does not care to show his love in word and act."

Furthermore, understanding the word "sacrament" in its widest sense, there is a great truth in the ancient saying, "God is not tied to sacraments, but *we are*." And they can be to us happy links and burdenless chains by which we are "bound about the feet of God."

* * *

MYTHOI.

If there are erroneous conceptions prevalent concerning Symbols there are even wider and more general misconceptions held as to the purpose and utility of Mythos.

This is due to a number of reasons, such as, the manner in which they have been misrepresented by unsympathetic writers; the extraordinary accretions that have, in some cases, grown around them with the passage of time, which have tended to obscure their original purity and beauty. In this connection there is a great work of restoration waiting to be done.

It has truly been said that the mythoi of the "old ancient days" contain "images of what the Soul longs for and thirsts for," and that their "beauty is the most unforgettable thing in the world."

The best part of a mythos is what one *sees*, but cannot *tell*. Hence Readers must not regard our Exegesis as final in any sense of the term; for it is the very essence of a myth to represent the infinite by the finite, the eternal by the temporal, the abstract by the concrete. It endeavours to express the divine in terms of the human, the ideal by the actual, and the intelligible by the sensible.

Mythology is the handmaid of classical as well as sacred literature, therefore a general acquaintance with important mythoi is more or less essential. But nowadays few can devote sufficient time for systematic study, therefore our brief expositions may be of service.

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BOOKSELLERS.

We have prepared a Schedule of Terms for Re-sale for Booksellers, a copy of which we shall be pleased to send to any Reader who would be willing to approach his local booksellers, with a view to getting them to take up the sale of H.T.S. Literature. This is a direction in which Readers can render most valuable service. A specimen collection of literature will be forwarded free of charge, on Sale or Return, on receipt of requests.

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INDEX TO VOLUMES 1 TO 3.

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