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MAHAYANA BUDDHISM

I. HISTORY

I. ORIGIN

Buddhism, like other great world-religions, is divided into many sects and sub-sects, but its two most important divisions are the Mahâyâna and the Hînayâna Groups.

The aspects of Buddhism with which the Western world is most familiar are those included under the Hînayâna division, and it is only in recent years that Mahâyâna Buddhism, with all its extensive ramifications, has received much serious attention from Occidental scholars.

The teachings of Buddha were not written down until a hundred years or more after he had entered Nirvâna, but even at that time the sects began to develop, for the monks of one branch wrote in Pâli, and emphasized the ethical aspects of the teaching, while the other monks, who concentrated more upon the metaphysical and speculative elements, wrote in Sanskrit, which, like the Latin of the Middle Ages, was then the language of the learned.

From the former branch was derived the Southern School of Buddhism, which is now the religion of Ceylon, Burma, and Siam; while from the latter branch the Northern School became established, which, with its variations, is now the religion of most of China, Nepal, Tibet, Mongolia, and Japan. The Buddhism of Japan, which has developed differently from that of Tibet, is sometimes called Eastern Buddhism.

In the early days of the Buddhist religion both schools flourished side by side in India, but gradually the separation became more and more definite, geographically as well as doctrinally, and ultimately the Northern School distinguished their teaching by calling it Mahâyâna, and at the same time designated that of the Southern School by the name Hînayâna. *Mahâ* means "great," *Hîna* means "little," and *Yâna* means "vehicle."

There has been some controversy as to the relative authenticity of these two schools. The Hînayâna has been more conservative, and, no doubt, has preserved the teaching of the Buddha as it was originally given out; but the Mahâyâna has been more progressive and has developed the elementary principles into a much broader intellectual horizon, while, at the same time, adhering to the spirit of the essential teachings. This development has been quite logical and philosophical, and most of its elements are traceable to the fundamental principles which are common to both systems. They are implicit, if not explicit.

The utterances of the Buddha, like those of other Great Religious Founders, were characterized by a real universality which permits of an endless particularization and adaptation to meet the changing needs of times and peoples. The fact that this progressive development takes place is evidence of the real vitality of any religion, preventing rigid dogmatism and even fossilization, as well as other evils such as formalism and its resultant intolerance and prejudice against tradition.

The early philological distinction of the two schools—Pâli and Sanskrit—was not maintained, for the Hînayâna texts are not exclusively in Pâli, but are also to be found in Sanskrit, Chinese, and Singalese; while the Mahâyâna texts were largely translated into Chinese, and many of the original Sanskrit texts have since been lost. There is a vast collection of philosophical works in Chinese awaiting translation into English.

II. Mahayana Sects

(1) *India* was the original home of Buddhism, but it has long since ceased to be the religion of that land, although it is still commonly associated with India in the Western mind.

During the period between 400 B.C. and 400 A.D. the religion of the Buddha practically dominated the whole of India, but during the last ten centuries Buddhism has been banished from its native home, although its influence remains, and there are modern movements endeavouring to revive it. In its exile, however, it has won greater triumphs than it could ever have achieved in the land of its origin. It has created a literature and a body of religions for more than a third of the human race, and has profoundly affected the

beliefs of most of the other two thirds. At the present time about 500 millions of human beings still follow the Buddha, a number that exceeds the adherents of Christianity or Islam.

The primitive Buddhism of India (485 B.C.—450 A.D.) was neither Hînayâna nor Mahâyâna, but in time the division between these two schools became more and more pronounced, one section following the Elders (Sthavira) and the other following the Great Council (Mahâsânghika). The attitude of the Elders was conservative, and the preservation of the various texts then extant was their chief concern; but the advocates of the Great Council were, on the contrary, liberal and progressive; they were not literal or formal transmitters of the scriptures, but continually developed and modified the tradition as a result of the speculative methods of their expositors. Out of these liberals came the first Mahâyânists, though little is known concerning them, owing to the characteristic disregard by the Indians of all forms of history.

The first period of the Mahâyânistic movement in India, which lasted until about 300 A.D., was that dominated by Nâgârjuna, Arya-Deva, and Rahula, who were its three chief expounders, with scriptural bases for their system of thought, which was known as the Mâdhyamika School.

The second period, which lasted until about 400 A.D., began with Maitreya, Asanga, and Vasubandhu. Historically Maitreya has been regarded as a mythical personage created by Asanga, who represents him as a Bodhisattva in the Tusita Heaven, who came to earth to teach Asanga. If this is so, then Maitreya is the real founder of the Vijñânamâtra or Yogâcârin School of Mahâyâna Buddhism.

The third period, which lasted until the middle of the seventh century, was marked at first by a controversy between the schools of the first two periods, but later by an eclectic spirit and even an attempt at reconciliation between the rival systems.

The fourth period, beginning about the middle of the seventh century, continued the process of the third, but marked the growth of the mystic mantra School of Buddhism, which developed into heterodoxy and superstition, and has been called the Mantrayâna: it was followed by a further development of symbolism and esotericism which is sometimes called Tantrayâna; these two schools gradually superseding

the real Mahâyâna, until, in 1203 A.D., the Buddhist centres of thought and scholarship were destroyed and Buddhism in India ceased to exist as an active external religion.

(2) *China*. Simultaneously with the decline of the Mahâyâna in India began its first great conquest in China, through the instrumentality of the genius Bodhidharma, the son of a king in Southern India, who travelled by sea to China early in the sixth century, and was received with honour. He taught that religion was not to be learnt merely from books, but that man should seek and find Buddha in the heart. He was the founder of the Great Dhyâna Sect or the Zen Shu of China and Japan. The term "zen" (*Chan* in Chinese) is an abbreviated form of "zenna" or "channa," which is the Chinese equivalent of Dhyâna or Jhâna, meaning Contemplation.

Bodhidharma, or Ta-mo, as he is affectionately known in China, was called the White Buddha. He reached Canton in 520 A.D. bringing with him the sacred bowl of the Buddhist Patriarchate. He was the last to hold the office of Patriarch in the west and the first in the east.

Just before his arrival Chinese pilgrims journeyed to the Indian Seats of Buddhist culture: Fa-Hien in 400 A.D., and Sung-Yun in 518 A.D. The latter was sent to obtain Buddhist works and remained there two years, returning with 175 volumes.

In 400 A.D. Kumârajiva came from India to China and produced a translation of several Buddhist works, and so likewise did Kâlayasas in 424 A.D.

In 629 A.D. the great Hsüan Ts'ang (or Yuan-Chwang) began his long and adventurous journeys in India and Central Asia, returning in 649 A.D. with 657 Buddhist books, of which he began the translation into Chinese.

Thus began the re-birth of Buddhism in China (and later in Japan), and the real Great Vehicle or Mahâyâna, which outgrew the Little Vehicle or Mother Church of the Theravâda or School of Elders.

From the eleventh century onwards Buddhism in China has enjoyed a comparatively uninterrupted immunity from attack or restriction and now covers China from end to end. There is not in the world any literary production of such magnitude as the Chinese scriptures of the Mahâyâna. The

Canon is 700 times the size of the Christian New Testament, and the Hsüan Ts'ang translation of the "Prajna Paramita" is 25 times as large as the whole Christian Bible.

There have been numerous Mahâyâna sects in China, as well as some that have had Hînayâna aspects. The earliest were the Sanron Sect, which was a Chinese counterpart of the Mâdhyamika School, and dates back as far as 409 A.D., and the Hossô Sect which came into being when Hsüan Ts'ang (Genjô) returned from India, and represented the Yogâcârya School.

The Nehan or Nirvâna Sect was another of the early ones, but was later incorporated in the Tien-tai Sect.

The Jôdo or Sukhâvatî sect, which was founded by Bodhiruci about 510 A.D., became one of the strongest both in China and Japan.

The Kegon or Avatamsaka Sect, which became firmly established in the sixth century, incorporated two early sects, namely the Jiron Sect, and the Shôron Sect, both of which were of the Yogâcârya School.

The Tien-tai, or Tendai Sect of Chih-I, founded 575 A.D., systematized various branches of Buddhism into which it had been split during the Northern and Southern Dynasties, as well as the Kegon Sect of Hôzô (Fa-tsang) (643-712) which flourished in the North. The founders of these Sects were not satisfied with the so-called Mahâyâna Buddhism of India, and as a result Buddhism received a new vitality, and, with the Perfect Doctrine School, the Mahâyâna reached a high degree of development.

The Shingon or Mantra Sect was the last importation from India, about 716 A.D., and became the Chinese aspect of the Mantrayâna School.

(3) *Japan*. After the Yuan Dynasty in China, Buddhism was dominated by the Tibetan Lâmâism, and many of the Zen masters emigrated to Japan, seeking spiritual freedom and a new sphere of activity.

When Buddhism first came to Japan from Korea in the year A.D. 552, the native religion was the Shinto cult, a Chinese word meaning literally "The Way of the Gods" (Kami no michi, in Japanese). During the sixth century Buddhism exerted little influence over the native religion, but two centuries later the cult became Buddhicized by the

missionaries who gave a Buddhist personification and interpretation to some of the "Gods" of Shintoism, a process that had already been adopted in China, so that gradually the original Shinto religion became neglected or modified.

Buddhism, after its introduction into China, soon became divided into two branches: the Northern and the Southern. The former, which was introduced into Japan about 538-597 A.D., became the Tien-tai or Tendai Sect or Perfect Doctrine of the Mahâyâna, which was founded by Chih-I or Chisha Daishi, the Chinese Plotinus; while the latter was subsequently divided into six sub-sects, each of which became represented in Japan. The Hossô Sect was introduced in 658-716 A.D.; the Kegon Sect in 736 A.D.; the Rinzai Sect in 1169 A.D., the Sô-tô Sect, founded by Dôgen, in 1223 A.D., and the Obaku Sect in 1650 A.D. The peculiar form of the Zen School, which still exists in Japan, was given to it by the Chinese Master Hyakujo about 800 A.D.

It was Dengyo Daishi (Daishi—Great Teacher), the Great Reformer of the Heian Era, who carried the Chinese Sect of Tien-tai to Japan, laying a foundation which embraced the mysticism of the Shingon and Zen Schools, and which was subsequently developed by Shinran Shônin, the founder of Japanese Protestantism, and led to the Japanese Reformation in the thirteenth century.

Kobo Daishi was the apostle of the Shingon or True Word Sect in Japan, 774-811 A.D., and Hônen Shônin was the introducer of the Jôdo School or Pure Land Sect in 1153 A.D. The modern Jôdo Sect recognizes eight patriarchs, the first is Asvaghosha, the second Nâgârjuna, then Vasubandhu, Bodhiruci, Donran, Dôshaku, Zendô, and the last, to the Japanese the greatest, Hônen Shônin. His disciple and successor was Shinran Shônin, 1175—1262 A.D., who was the founder of the Jôdo Shin-Shu (commonly Shin-shu) or True Sect of the Pure Land, which is a branch of the Mahâyâna that is now adhered to by a large section of the Japanese people, from whom it has spread into Eastern Siberia, and many parts of China, Hawaii, and other places where the Japanese race has emigrated.

Another great School of Mahayâna is the Nichiren or Hokke Sect, based on the Saddharma Pundarika Sutra, which was founded by Nichiren, 1222—1282 A.D., one of the most striking figures in Japanese Buddhism.

The most powerful sects in Japan at the present day are the Jôdo-shu, the Shin-shu, and the Nichiren-shu, which together claim about three-quarters of all Japanese Buddhists, who number more than thirty millions.

(4) *Tibet.* The formal introduction of Buddhism into Tibet was begun about 620 A.D. by the ruler Srong Tsan Gampo, the founder of the present Tibetan capital, Lhasa. He was supported by his two queens, Bribsun, a princess of Nepal, and Wen Ching, a princess of China, both of whom were afterwards venerated as saints.

But this Lâmâistic Buddhism became corrupt, and was revived and reformed by Atisha, who came to Tibet 1030—1040 A.D. His Indian name was Dipamkara Sri-jnâna, but he was called by the Lâmâs, Jo-vo-rje-dpal-Idan Atisha, or "The Illustrious Noble Lord Atisha." He was held to be an incarnation of Manjusri, the Celestial Lord of Wisdom, and was sixty years old when he started his movement, which may be called the Lâmâistic Reformation. It retained certain aspects of Yoga and Tantrism, but developed on the purer Mahâyâna System, enforcing celibacy and a high morality, and deprecated the practice of the magical arts.

The chief disciple of Atisha was Brom-ston (Domton) who was the first hierarch of the Reformed Sect, called Kah-dam-pa, or "Those bound by the orders or commandments," which, three and a half centuries later, became the Ge-lug-pa. But Atisha's reformation resulted not only in the Kah-dam-pa Sect with which he was most intimately associated, but also initiated, more or less directly, the semi-reformed Sects of the Kar-gyu-pa and Sakya-pa.

In 1357 A.D. Tsong-Kapa, the Luther of Tibet, was born on the spot where the famous monastery of Kundum now stands. He spent eight years as a hermit in Takpo, Southern Tibet, where the purer teachings of Atisha were still prevalent. In 1390 A.D. he appeared as a public reformer and teacher in Lhasa. In his hands the religion became less ascetic and more highly ritualistic under the title of Ge-lug-pa, or "The Virtuous Style," which is now the dominant sect of Tibet and the established church of Lâmâism. Before the death of Tsong-Kapa in 1419 A.D. there were three huge monasteries with 30,000 disciples, who wore yellow or orange coloured robes and were called

the "Yellow Caps." The voluminous writings of Tsong-Kapa, which adhere to the Mahâyâna doctrines, exist in Tibetan copies but are not yet translated.

In Nepal, as well as Tibet, the Northern Buddhist Tradition, especially on what might be termed its esoteric side, has been strongly represented from the eighth century onwards. The Aisvarika Sect arose in Nepal, as well as the "Red" Lâmâistic Sect, which was followed by the "Yellow" Sect of Tibet.

III. Great Mahayanists

The first expounder of the Mahâyâna was Asvaghosha, who lived between the years B.C. 75 and 80 A.D. He is known as the twelfth Patriarch, and there is a certain element of mystery concerning his life, in fact as many as six individuals of his name are cited by historians. The most celebrated work which is attributed, rightly or wrongly, to him, is "The Mahâyâna Shraddotpâda" or "the Awakening of the Faith in the Mahâyâna," which is a masterpiece of profound synthetic metaphysical Buddhism, and has been translated into English by Teitaro Suzuki. There are eight works, as well as several hymns, ascribed to him, still existing in Chinese translations.

After Asvaghosha the two greatest Mahâyânists in Indian history were Nâgârjuna and Asanga. The former represented the Mâdhyamika School, and the latter the Vijñânamâtra School. Nâgârjuna lived about 250 A.D. and called himself a disciple of Asvaghosha. He is said by some to have been the originator of the term "mahâyâna." His great work was the Mâdhyamika Sastra or Discourse on the Middle Path. There are thirty different works in the Chinese Tripitaka ascribed to Nâgârjuna. His school systematized the old Mahâyâna, and by its vigorous dialectic became one of the most effective vehicles of Northern Buddhism.

Sânti-Deva, who was a follower of the Mâdhyamika School, produced two works—Bodhi-charyâvatâra and Sikshâ-samuchchaya—in which are embodied some of the keenest logic and the highest aspirations of the system. He was the most brilliant disciple of Nâgârjuna.

Asanga lived a little later than Nâgârjuna, about 300 A.D. His School was the Yogâcârya, and there are eight works of his in the Chinese Tripitaka.

Vasubandhu, the brother of Asanga, was also a Great Mahâyânist. There are seven works of his, which, together with those of Asanga, have been unfolded in various commentaries by their followers.

Bodhidharma is the next Great Mahâyânist, who died November 15th, 535 A.D., and was the founder of the Dhyâna or Zen School. His chief disciples were Shen Kuang and Yeka, who was his successor.

Other great Mahâyâna philosophers, besides those already mentioned, were Sthiramati, of the Mâdhyamika School, who lived after Asvaghosha but before or contemporary with Nâgârjuna; Dignâga, Dharmapâla, and Dharmakîrti, who were eminent representatives of the Yogâcârya School and lived in the fifth or sixth century or later; Bhavaviveka, Chandragomin, and Chandrakirti, of the Mâdhyamika School; Sitabhradra; and Gangyo of Korea, a great commentator on Asvaghosha.

This is only a very cursory outline of the Mahâyâna exponents, but may serve for the present purposes.

In the modern world the most active as well as authoritative representatives of the Mahâyâna System are the Japanese, and the influence of their work is already being felt in the Occident.

Buddhism, after it passed into Japan, quickly became adapted to the ideals of the Japanese people, inspiring them with the teachings of religious ethics and morality common to all great faiths, and, in addition, the love and sympathy, self-devotion and compassion in which Buddhism and Christianity are pre-eminent.

The negative side of Buddhism generally, with its passionless calm and ascetic self-renunciation, has been rather over-accentuated by Western religionists; but the higher mystical and spiritual side, as brought out in the Mahâyâna, has perhaps not received the degree of attention that it merits.

Buddhism is a philosophy as well as a religion. In its highest and most developed aspects it presents a comprehensive system of profound thought which includes psychology in its best sense, as well as metaphysics, dialectic, and logic.

But Japan is the only country at the present time where Mahâyâna Buddhism is seriously studied and taught as a philosophy. There, the Great Temples are still active seats of learning and a modern Buddhist University is an accom-

plished fact. The Japanese have access not only to all the extant Mahâyâna Texts, most of which are now in Chinese, but to the whole corpus of Buddhist Scriptures, in Pâli as well as in Sanskrit.

The Buddhist Tradition that has been preserved and perpetuated in the Chinese language is a veritable storehouse of Oriental Wisdom, which, as far as Occidental students are concerned, has only been drawn from in a comparatively slight measure by a handful of scholars. When the doors of this storehouse are opened, in a linguistic sense, to the Western World, it is certain that many treasures will be revealed, which will quickly take their places in the living thought of civilization, bringing new inspiration and impetus to the imaginative genius of the artist, religionist, mystic, philosopher, scientist, reformer, educationalist, and every idealist who labours for the benefit of his fellow men.

(*To be continued*)

MAHAYANA JEWELS

"He that would make an end of sorrow and come to the bound of happiness must stablish firmly the root of faith and immovably set his thought upon enlightenment."

* * *

"Surrender to all creatures thine whole self and thy pleasures, yea, and Thy righteousness too, in past, present, and future time; guard them and increase thy holiness."

* * *

"Fulfil this work ever by mindfulness. From deep reverence springs mindfulness; and reverence, the glory of the chastened spirit, arises from an understanding zeal."

* * *

"Full many there are who will take from thee. If thou hast but little, what of that? If it gives not full satisfaction, then it must be increased."

* * *

"The rule of right conduct—worship and the like—should ever be reverently observed. Let faith and the like be always practised, likewise brotherly love and the remembrance of the Buddha."

* * *

"In short, the weal of fellow-beings in all conditions, the godly gift without worldly desire, and the thought of enlightment, cause righteousness to increase."

* * *

"To recite the Holy Name of the Buddha of Infinite Light—this is the Great Deed."—*Shinran Shônin.*

MAHAYANA MYSTIC VERSE*

"Eternal Life, Eternal Light!
Hail to Thee, Wisdom Infinite,
Hail to Thee, Mercy shining clear,
And limitless as is the air.
Thou givest sight unto the blind,
Thou sheddest mercy on mankind.
Hail, gladdening Light,
Hail, generous Might,
Whose Peace is round us like the sea,
And bathes us in Infinity."

—*Shinran Shônin.*

* * *

"The haze of morning veils the light of day
Or grudging filters some faint golden ray:
But lo! behind the shrouding veil of mist
The whole world by the Sun himself is kissed.
On every side His beams the world pervade:
His Grace forsakes not one who calls for aid.
In all this world no tiniest hamlet lies
On which the moon casts not her witcheries:
But when the peasant flings his casement wide
The Light of Heaven comes and dwells inside."

—*Hônen Shônin.*

* * *

"Exalted One, to Thee I pray
Whose beams the regions ten illume.
In Thee, Tathâgata, I trust,
Grant me Thine ever-ready aid.
O give me birth in Thy Pure Land,
Which now in vision I behold:
Free as the air embracing all,
Its confines are beyond our ken.
From Thine own merit grows the store
Of charity incomparable,
And like the radiance of the moon
Thy Light encompasses us all.
O may we all be born again
With thee; like Thee, the Truth proclaim!
I pray that I may see Thee, Lord,
That I and all men by Thy Grace
May to Thy Land of Bliss attain."

—*Vasubandhu.*

*From "The Wisdom of the East Series"—John Murray.

JEWELS FROM EMERSON

Knowledge is the antidote to fear.

* * *

The good mind chooses what is positive, what is advancing —embraces the affirmative.

* * *

Omit the negative propositions. Nerve us with incessant affirmatives. Don't waste yourself in rejection nor bark against the bad, but chant the beauty of the good.

* * *

The affirmative of affirmatives is love.

As much love, so much perception.

As caloric to matter so is love to mind; so it enlarges, and so it empowers it.

* * *

I know against all appearances that the universe can receive no detriment; that there is a remedy for every wrong and a satisfaction for every soul.

* * *

Whatever it be which the great Providence prepares for us, it must be something large and generous and in the great style of his works. The future must be up to the style of our faculties —of memory, of hope, of imagination, of reason.

* * *

The divine gift is ever the instant life, which receives and uses and creates, and can well bury the old in the omnipotency with which Nature decomposes all her harvest for recomposition.

* * *

All great natures are lovers of stability and permanence as types of the Eternal.

* * *

It is not easy to deal with Nature . . . . if we measure our individual forces against hers, we may easily feel as if we were the sport of an overwhelming destiny. But if instead of identifying ourselves with the work, we feel that the soul of the workman streams through us, that a paradise of love and power lies close beside us, where the Eternal Architect broods on his thought, and projects the world from his bosom, we may find the peace of the morning dwelling first in our hearts, and the fathomless powers of gravity and chemistry, and over them of life pre-existing within us in their highest form.

* * *

Wondrous state of man! never so happy as when he has lost all private interests and regards, and exists only in obedience and love of the Author.

* * *

The excellence of men consists in the completeness with which the lower system is taken up into the higher—a process of much time and delicacy but in which no point of the lower should be left untranslated.

THE MENO OF PLATO

Translated by the Editors of The Shrine of Wisdom

The "Meno" is one of the most important of the Platonic dialogues, for in it is contained a proof of the "innate ideas," which are latent in the human soul until aroused into activity and educed by philosophy. Although in its language and primary significance it is one of the simplest and most easy to follow, the ideas which it contains, or which follow from its principles, are most profound. Once the fact that the soul possesses these innate ideas of truth is fully established there can be deduced from this principle conclusions which supply the answers to many of the most vital questions which have perplexed mankind.

In the first place, the theory, sometimes put forward by sceptics, that all knowledge is derived from the senses and from contact with the external world, is completely exploded, for, were there not this latent knowledge or these ideas already in the soul, the sensible world would be meaningless, since it is only by relating the phenomena, which the soul observes in the external world, with the ideas which are latent in itself that it can derive knowledge from externalities; and, of the two factors which enable the soul thus to acquire knowledge, the latent ideas, since they are the criterion and the norm to which all external objects must in some degree be related before they can be intelligible, are prior to, and more important than, the sensible contact. Moreover, if the soul possessed these ideas before it came into its physical body, it must have existed or subsisted previously, and if it had an existence previous to that which we now know, it is reasonable to suppose that it continues to exist after the physical body has disintegrated. Hence the Meno contains a philosophical proof of the immortality of the human soul.

Other truths equally important may be deduced from it. It answers the theory, very prevalent at the present day, that mind is "evolved" from lower faculties; for it is clear that if the soul has these ideas from the very beginning, mind must be prior to body. To bring the principle of the innate ideas to bear upon the theory of evolution as sometimes propounded by modern schools, is to demonstrate its partitiveness, and to vindicate that true dignity of man with which all theories which postulate that man is "evolved" from the animals are incompatible.

Apart from its profundity the Meno is remarkable for the delicacy of its humour and the subtlety of its irony. Indeed, so subtle are some of its thrusts that some students of Plato have taken parts of it quite seriously and have thus been led to suppose that Plato contradicts himself.

It is, in essence, a demonstration of the need for clear and orderly reasoning, for definitions which are universally applicable and not mere parrot-like repetitions of the words of others. In the course of his conversation with Meno Socrates time after time

tears to pieces the shallow ready-made " wisdom " which Meno has learnt from the sophists, and although at the end of the dialogue the main question still remains unanswered, enough has been said to make it quite clear that the average instruction, for which the sophists received high fees from their pupils, was quite incapable of standing up against the Socratic dialectic.

The principal character whom Socrates interrogates, is Meno, "a Thessalian Alcibiades," rich, young, good-looking and somewhat supercilious until reduced by Socrates to a more humble frame of mind. He continually quotes his master Gorgias, a sophist, at whom Socrates aims many a sly thrust. He is typical of the aristocratic young men of the time, enthusiastic alike for politics and philosophy, but content as a rule to accept for truth ready-made opinions and high-sounding phrases. His slave, a boy who has had no education whatever, is used by Socrates to demonstrate the truth of the " true opinions " within the soul. Last comes Anytus, an Athenian of the old school, very conservative, hating both the sophists on the one hand and the philosophic method of Socrates on the other. Socrates offends him greatly by demonstrating that the idols of the state whom Anytus worships—Themistocles, Pericles, and the rest—were at any rate incapable of making their sons into men like themselves. Anytus was Socrates' accuser at his trial, and it is probably to this that Socrates refers when he tells Meno that " with him we shall converse again."

The dialogue opens rather abruptly with Meno's question to Socrates. "Is virtue to be taught?" Socrates, after some complimentary remarks upon Gorgias and Meno's countrymen, replies that he does not even know what virtue is and has never met anyone who did. What, replies Meno, you never met Gorgias? Socrates has met him. Did you think he did not know? pursues Meno. Socrates skilfully evades this question and entices Meno into telling him what he himself thinks virtue is. He begins by retailing the different virtues of a man, a woman, a child and so on. I am lucky, remarks Socrates. In looking for one virtue I have found a whole hive. What is the thing common to all these? Meno tries again and says, Virtue is to be capable of ruling men. But how about the virtue of a slave? objects Socrates; and further should we not qualify ' ruling ' by ' justly.' Meno, clutching at a clue, agrees: Yes. Justice is virtue. Virtue or a virtue? inquires Socrates. Are there no others? Meno, somewhat bewildered, complains that he cannot follow Socrates' method of investigation, and Socrates gives him as a guide universal definitions of form and colour on the understanding that Meno in turn shall define virtue. After some lively discussion, in which the difference between a philosophical definition of colour and the shallower, more concrete definition of Empedocles is brought out, Meno is compelled once more to try to define virtue He defines it " as the poet says, ' to rejoice in what is beautiful and have power over it,' and I say that virtue is this—to desire that which is beautiful and to be able to obtain it." Socrates

deals with this by showing that that which is beautiful is good, and since all men desire the good in some form or other—this Meno questions at first, but is bound to admit in the end—as far as virtue goes the only difference between men is in their power of obtaining the good. Meno, now rather flustered, states that he means by the good such things as wealth. But, objects Socrates, this obtaining must be just if it is to be virtue. Of course, assents Meno. Then virtue is the obtaining of such good things with justice and temperance and the like. Meno, you are playing with me. I have asked you particularly not to cut virtue up into small pieces and here you are defining virtue in terms of things which you have just said are themselves parts of virtue. How can we know what a part of virtue is when we do not know what virtue is itself? We must begin again from the beginning. What do you and your friend say that virtue is?

THE DIALOGUE

Meno. Socrates, I heard before I met you that you do nothing but go about in a helpless state yourself and reduce others to helplessness. And now, it seems to me, you are bewitching and drugging me, and completely subduing me by your spells, so that I have become filled to the brim with helplessness. And, if I may make a small joke, you seem to me, both in your appearance and in other respects, to be exactly like the flat torpedo-fish of the sea. For it, too, torpifies all who approach and touch it, and I think you have done something like that to me now. For, candidly, both my soul and my mouth are torpified, and I have nothing to reply to you. Although I have given voluminous discourses about virtue on a thousand occasions and to large audiences, and very good ones too, as I thought myself, yet now I am utterly unable to say even what it is. And I think you are very wise in not making voyages or going abroad. For if you did this sort of thing as a stranger in some foreign city you would probably be banished as a magician.

Socrates. You are a rogue, Meno, and you very nearly caught me.

Men. How especially, Socrates?

Soc. I know why you said I was like a torpedo.

Men. Why, do you think?

Soc. So that I in turn might liken you to something. For I know that all good-looking people delight in similes—it is to their advantage; for the similes of handsome people are handsome too—but I am not going to liken you to any-

thing. And if this torpedo of yours is torpid itself when it makes others torpid then I am like it, but if it is not, then I am not. For it is not that I make others helpless when I myself can find the way, but rather because I am completely at a loss myself that I reduce others too to helplessness. And now as to what virtue is, personally I do not know; you however possibly did know before you touched me, yet now you look like one who does not know. But still I would like to go into the matter with you and inquire with your assistance what it can be.

Men. And in what manner will you inquire, Socrates, about this, when you have not the slightest idea of its nature? Which of the things which you do not know will you put forward as the subject of the inquiry? And even if you chance upon it, how will you know that this is it since you do not know what it is?

Soc. I understand, Meno, what you want to say. Do you see what a quibbling method of argument you are introducing, to wit that a man cannot inquire either about that which he knows or that which he does not know? For he never would inquire about that which he knew—since, knowing it, he would have no need of such an inquiry—nor could he inquire about that which he does not know, for he does not even know what he is inquiring about.

Men. Then do you not think that this argument is fair?

Soc. I do not.

Men. Can you tell me in what way?

Soc. I can; for I have heard men and women wise in divine matters—

Men. What argument did they use?

Soc. A true one, it seems to me, and a fair one.

Men. What is it, and who are those who use it?

Soc. Those who used it were those of the priests and priestesses whose business it was to be able to give a reason for that to which they put their hands. And Pindar and many other divine poets say it, too. And what they say is this: do you consider whether you think they speak the truth. For they say that the soul of man is immortal, and at one time completes its course—which they call dying—and at another is born again, but is never destroyed; and that for

this reason we ought to go through our lives in as sinless a manner as possible. For those from whom

"....... Persephone
Receives the payment of some ancient grief,
She to the upper sunlight gives again
Their souls in the ninth year. From these are born
High, noble kings and mighty men of strength
And sages wise, who in the after time
Heroes and holy saints by men are called."

The soul, then, being immortal and having been born time after time, and having beheld that which is here and that which is in Hades and all things, it is impossible that she should not have learnt; so that there is nothing wonderful in her being able to remember, with regard to virtue and other things, that which she formerly knew. For since the whole of Nature is akin, and the soul has learnt all things, there is nothing to prevent a man who has remembered one thing only—which is what mankind call learning—from discovering all the rest, if he be courageous and does not shrink from the labour of the search. For discovering and learning is all recollection. So that we must put no trust in this quibbling argument; for it would make us lazy and is pleasant for those of a soft nature to hear; but this other makes men energetic and inquiring. And I, believing it to be true, wish to inquire with you what virtue is.

Men. Yes, Socrates; but what do you mean by saying that we do not learn, but that what we call learning is recollection or reminiscence. Can you teach me how this is so?

Soc. I said just now, Meno, that you are a rogue, and now you ask me if I can teach you, when I assert that it is not teaching but recollection; so that I may immediately appear to be contradicting myself.

Men. No, Socrates, I protest before Zeus, that I had not that in view when I spoke, but it was force of habit. But if you can demonstrate to me in any way that it is as you say, please do so.

Soc. It is not easy, yet for your sake I will make an effort. Call up one of your numerous attendants here, whichever you please, so that I may demonstrate this to you.

Men. Certainly. (*To a slave*) Come here.

Soc. He is a Greek and speaks Greek?

Men. Oh yes. He was born in the house.

Soc. Apply your mind to deciding whether he appears to you to be recollecting or learning from me.

Men. I will do so.

Soc. Tell me, boy, do you know that a four-angled space is like this? *Boy.* I do.

Soc. It is then a four-angled space having all these, its four lines, equal? *Boy.* Certainly.

Soc. And does it not also have these lines through the middle equal? *Boy.* Yes.

Soc. And could not such a space as this be greater or less? *Boy.* Certainly.

Soc. If then this side were two feet and this two feet, how many feet would there be in the whole? Look at it like this: if this side had two feet, and this only one foot, the whole space would be two feet once over? *Boy.* Yes.

Soc. But if this side has two feet also, the whole space becomes twice two feet? *Boy.* It does.

Soc. Then it becomes a space of twice two feet?

Boy. Yes.

Soc. How many, then, are twice two feet? Reckon up and tell me. *Boy.* Four, Socrates.

Soc. Could there not be, then, another space double this one but of the same kind, having all its lines equal like this? *Boy.* Yes.

Soc. Then how many feet will it have? *Boy.* Eight.

Soc. Come then, try to tell me how long each line of this space will be. For the line of this one is two feet long. What about that of the space which is double the size?

Boy. It is clear, Socrates, that it will be double.

Soc. You see, Meno, that I am teaching him nothing, but asking him everything. And now he thinks he knows what is the line which will produce a space of eight square feet. Do you not think so? *Men.* I do.

Soc. And does he know? *Men.* Certainly not.

Soc. He thinks it will be produced from a line double the length? *Men.* Yes.

Soc. Now behold him recollecting in an orderly manner, as he should recollect.

Tell me, boy. Do you say that the double space will be produced from a line double the length? I mean a space of his kind, not with one side long and the other short, but let

it have all its sides equal like this one, but be double the size, that is eight feet. Now see if you still think that it will be produced by the line of double length. *Boy.* I do.

Soc. Does not this become double that, if we add a similar line from here? *Boy.* Certainly.

Soc. Then you say that it is from this line that the space of eight feet will be produced, if there are four such lines?

Boy. Yes.

Soc. Then let us draw from it four equal lines. This is what you would say was the space of eight feet, is it not?

Boy. Certainly.

Soc. And are there not in this space four spaces, each one of which is equal to this space of four feet? *Boy.* Yes.

Soc. Then how large does it become? Is it not four times as great? *Boy.* What else?

Soc. And is that double which is four times such a space?

Boy. No, by Zeus.

Soc. What then? *Boy.* Four times as much.

Soc. Then from the double line, my boy, there is produced a space not twice but four times as great.

Boy. True.

Soc. Four times four is sixteen. Is it not? *Boy.* Yes.

Soc. Then from what line is the space of eight feet produced. From this line comes the space four times as great, does it not? *Boy.* It does.

Soc. And this space of four feet from the line half the length of this? *Boy.* Yes.

Soc. Good. But the space of eight feet—is it not double this, but half this? *Boy.* Yes.

Soc. So will it not be made by a line greater than this one, but less than that? *Boy.* Yes, I think so.

Soc. Well done. Just say what you think. Now tell me; is not this line two feet long, and that four? *Boy.* Yes.

Soc. Then the line of the space of eight feet must be greater than this of two feet, but less than that of four?

Boy. It must.

Soc. Then try and tell me how long you think it ought to be. *Boy.* Three feet.

Soc. Then if it is three feet, we will add half of this line and it will be three feet, will it not? For that is two feet and this is one. And similarly from that point that is two

feet and that one; and that produces the space which you said. *Boy*. Yes.

Soc. Then if this side is three feet and this one three, the whole space will be one of three times three feet, will it not?

Boy. It seems so.

Soc. And how many are three times three feet?

Boy. Nine.

Soc. And how many feet was the double space to have?

Boy. Eight.

Soc. Then the space of eight feet is hardly produced by a line of three feet. *Boy*. It certainly is not.

Soc. But by what line? Try to tell me exactly; and if you do not want to do a sum, then show the line from which it comes. *Boy*. But, by Zeus, Socrates, I don't know.

Soc. Do you notice again, Meno, how far he has already advanced in the process of recollection? At first he did not know what is the line of the space of eight feet and indeed he does not know even now, but then he thought that he did know, and replied boldly as if he knew, and did not think there was any difficulty. But now he is aware of the difficulty, and, still not knowing, does not think that he knows.

Men. True.

Soc. And is he not now in a better condition with regard to the thing which he does not know? *Men*. Yes, I think he is.

Soc. Then in reducing him to helplessness and torpifying him like the torpedo, have we injured him at all?

Men. It does not seem so to me.

Soc. Then we have done something useful, it seems, in the direction of helping him to find out where he is. For now, not knowing, he would gladly search out the truth, but then he might easily have thought that he was making a fine speech when he told large audiences on many occasions respecting the double space that it required a line double the length to produce it. *Men*. Probably.

Soc. And do you think that in his former condition he would have tried to search out or learn that which he thought he knew, when he did not, before he plunged into a state of helplessness by becoming aware that he did not know, and desired to know? *Men*. No, I do not think so, Socrates.

Soc. Then he has been benefited by being torpified?

Men. It seems to me so.

Soc. Observe that he will emerge from this state of helplessness and discover the truth by inquiring with me, though I shall do nothing but question him and shall not teach him. Watch and see if you find me teaching or explaining anything to him and not merely asking him his opinions. (*To the boy*) Tell me, boy, is not this our space of four feet? Do you understand? *Boy*. I do.

Soc. And we might add to this another equal to it?

Boy. Yes.

Soc. And a third so, equal to each of these? *Boy*. Yes.

Soc. And we might then fill in the corner by one more thus? *Boy*. Certainly.

Soc. And so there would be produced these four equal spaces? *Boy*. Yes.

Soc. Well now. How many times that one is this whole space? *Boy*. Four times.

Soc. But we were to produce a space twice as large. Do you remember? *Boy*. Certainly.

Soc. And does not this line from corner to corner cut each of these spaces in half? *Boy*. Yes.

Soc. And are not these four equal lines produced enclosing this space? *Boy*. They are.

Soc. Now look. How large is this space?

Boy. I do not understand.

Soc. Does not each line within these four spaces cut off half of each one? Or not? *Boy*. Yes.

Soc. And how many such spaces are there in this figure?

Boy. Four.

Soc. But how many in this? *Boy*. Two.

Soc. And four is how many times two? *Boy*. Twice.

Soc. Then how many feet does this space become?

Boy. Eight.

Soc. And from what line is it produced?

Boy. From this.

Soc. From the line which cuts the space of four feet from corner to corner? *Boy*. Yes.

Soc. That is what the learned call the diagonal; so that, if that is its name, it is from the diagonal, as you, boy of Meno's household, assert, that the double space would be produced. *Boy*. Assuredly, Socrates.

Soc. What do you think, Meno? Has this boy given in his answers any opinion which is not his own?

Men. No, they were all his own.

Soc. And yet he did not know, as we said a little while ago. *Men.* True.

Soc. Then these opinions were within him; were they not? *Men.* Yes.

Soc. Then in one who does not know there are true opinions concerning that which he does not know?

Men. It appears so.

Soc. And now these opinions have lately been stirred up in him as if in a dream. But if someone will ask him questions on these matters repeatedly and in many different ways, be sure that in the end there will be nothing that he will not know as accurately as anyone regarding them.

Men. Very likely.

Soc. Then he will know with no one teaching him, but only asking him questions, himself recovering his knowledge from himself? *Men.* Yes.

Soc. But for him to recover, himself, the knowledge in himself is to recollect it? *Men.* Certainly.

Soc. Therefore this boy has either at some time acquired the knowledge which he now has, or has always had it?

Men. Yes.

Soc. But if he always had it, he would always have known; and if he at sometime acquired it, the acquisition could not have been in his present life. Or did someone teach him geometry? For he will do exactly the same with regard to the whole of geometry and all the other sciences. Is it then possible that anyone can have taught him everything? You, if anyone, are in a position to know, especially as he was born and bred in your house.

Men. But I am quite sure that no one ever taught him.

Soc. And has he these opinions, or not?

Men. It appears, Socrates, that he must have them.

Soc. But if he did not acquire them in his present life, is not this, at any rate, clear—that he had them and had learnt them at some other time? *Men.* It appears so.

Soc. Then this time was when he was not a man?

Men. Yes.

Soc. If then, during the time when he is and when he is not a man, there are in him true opinions which, when aroused by questioning, become knowledge, will not that which has learnt throughout all time be his soul? For it is clear that he always either was or was not a man. *Men.* It appears so.

Soc. If then the truth of things that are is always in our soul, the soul must be immortal, so that you should confidently attempt to search out and recollect that which you do not happen to know—that is to remember—now?

Men. You seem to me to be right, Socrates, though I do not know how.

Soc. I think I am right, too, Meno. There are some points in the argument on which I should not contend very strenuously; but that if we believe that a man should search out that which he does not know we shall be better and more manly and less lazy than if we think that we neither ought to investigate that which we do not know nor is it possible to find it out, about this I would fight to the last, if I could, both by word and deed.

Men. And in that, too, I think you are right, Socrates.

Soc. Then are you willing, since we agree that we ought to investigate that which we do not know, that we should together attempt to find out what virtue is?

Meno, however, prefers to investigate whether virtue can be taught, or not, before finding out what it is, and Socrates, humouring him, consents to do this "on hypothesis," the hypothesis being that if virtue is a kind of knowledge, it can be taught. The difficulty about admitting this is: Are there any teachers or disciples of it? Anytus is now invited to tell Meno to whom he should go to learn virtue. After indignantly rejecting Socrates' suggestion that the sophists may be able to teach virtue, he tells Meno to go to "any Athenian gentleman." But, says Socrates, have these Athenian gentlemen of yours been able to teach their own sons to be good men? Anytus is forced to admit that they have not, and retires in a rage. Well, Meno, continues Socrates, since there are no teachers of virtue, it probably cannot be taught. I am beginning to wonder, answers Meno, if there are any really good men. Meno, exclaims Socrates, we are poor creatures, and have made an absurd slip. Knowledge is not the only thing which guides things rightly: there is right opinion also. Why then, inquires Meno, is knowledge so much more highly esteemed than opinion? Because, Socrates answers, opinions which are not anchored by knowledge are apt, like the statues of Daedalus, to escape from the mind. But right opinion, as long as it is present, is just as good a guide as knowledge, and our statesmen, who, like soothsayers who utter profound truths without knowing what they are saying, direct states by inspiration without knowing what they are doing, may well be called "divine." Meno agrees. It would seem, therefore, Socrates concludes, that virtun does not come naturally, nor is it taught, but is given to certaie men by God. But we shall only know with certainty whether it can be taught or not when we have first investigated what it is.

DRUIDIC WISDOM

THE MODE OF TAKING FOOD AND DRINK

When thou takest thy food, think of Him Who gives it, namely, God, and whilst thinking of His Name, with the word put the first morsel in thy mouth, thank God for it, and entreat his blessing and grace upon it, that it may be for the health of thy body and mind; then thy drink in the same manner. And upon any other thing or quantity, which thou canst not take with the Name of God in thy mind, entreat His grace and blessing, lest it should prove an injury and a curse to thee. Whilst thou art masticating thy food in the name of God, chew it small and delicately, then swallow, drinking whilst thou swallowest. And whilst thou art drinking in slow and spare draughts, conduct thyself towards God as at thy food; and let the voice of heart and conscience be manifested in thee, and not heard by any other being than God.

My beloved teacher, prithee tell me the meaning of the small and delicate mastication of food, and the spare swallowing of drink?

TEACHER.—The small and delicate mastication involves a deep meaning, namely, that there should be no belief in, and reception of judgment, or chronicle, or report, or marvel, or opinion, or concern, or faith, or unbelief, without, as it were, chewing, turning, and agitating it small and delicately, scattered and scrutinized, before it be swallowed by the intelligence and reason; that inquiry as to what is necessary be made of him who knows about it, in respect of species and quality, and in respect of what is true or false in it; and whilst all this takes place, the unutterable Name of God, how it is to be spoken by the mind of man, should be brought to memory and mind. Then what thou hast taken into thy memory and mind, thy reason and understanding, will be to thee a grace and a blessing, good for thyself, and good for all men, and God's chief blessing will dwell upon thee.

—*From Barddas.*

THE CHALDEAN ORACLES

Translated and Systematized with Commentary

NATURE AND MATTER*

THE WORLD-VIEW afforded by the Chaldean Oracles is integral in the real sense, for it embraces the innermost and uppermost principles of the Empyrean and Subjective Cosmos, as well as the objective realm of Nature and precipitated Matter, which are the outermost and nethermost expressions of all the higher, spiritual, and noetic principles.

Viewed from below upwards and outwards, the manifested Cosmos consists of the Sublunary Sphere, the Seven Planetary Spheres, and the Inerratic Sphere or Sphere of Fixed Stars, while above and beyond and pervading all these is the Ethereal Realm with its sub-divisions.

Psellus, in his Exposition of the Oracles, says:

" There are seven worlds of form, one empyrean and the first, after this three ethereal, and then three material worlds, namely, the inerratic sphere, the seven planetary spheres, and the sublunary region. They also assert that there are two solar worlds, one which is subservient to the ethereal profundity, and the other, zonic, being one of the seven spheres."

All that exists is the result of the union of Form and Matter; the form is, as it were, reflected from the Archetypal World into the Azonic and Ethereal Realm of Nature as a whole, while the matter, which in its totality is called " Hyle," is composed of the various elements arising out of the chaos or void when impregnated by the higher principles which proceed into manifestation from the Creative Fire of the Demiurgus or Divine Creative Mind.

" That which comes into being must be in bodily form and seen and divided, and deprived of fire nothing would ever be seen."—*Proclus in Tim.*

LXVIII.—" It is indeed an imitation of Mind (Nous), but that which is brought forth has something of body."

" The Demiurgus Himself, by antecedently comprehending Nature, governs the universe."—*ibid.*

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*The previous articles of this series appeared in issues Nos. 23 to 26 and deal with (1) The Paternal Profundity, (2) Archetypal Ideas, (3) The Sevenfold Creative Fire, (4) The Ruling, Vivific, and Solar Principles.

In the Timaeus Plato unfolds in mystical and allegorical language the manner in which Jupiter, or the Demiurgus, directs the Mundane Gods to the work of generating mortal natures and animals, in completion of His own creations, which necessarily partake of His own immortal nature.

" Gods of Gods, of Whom I am the Demiurgus and Father, whatever is produced by Me is indissoluble, such being My Will in its fabrication.

Three genera of mortals yet remain to be produced: without the generation of these the universe would be imperfect, for it would not contain every kind of animated being in its spacious extent.

That mortal natures may exist, therefore, and that the Cosmos may be truly integral, convert yourselves according to your natures to the fabrication of animated creatures, and whatever among these is of such a nature as to deserve the title of immortal, which is called divine, obtains sovereignty in them and willingly pursues justice and reverences you—of this I myself will deliver the seed and beginning. It is your work to accomplish the rest, to weave together the mortal and immortal natures, by this means fabricating and generating animated beings, causing them to increase by supplying them with nutriment and receiving them back again when dissolved by corruption. . ."

" At the same time, He Who orderly disposed all these things, remained, as befitting Him, in His own nature, and His Children heard and were obedient to their Father's Word, and receiving from Him the immortal principle of mortal creatures, in imitation of their own creation, they borrowed portions of fire and earth and water from the world, which were thereafter to be returned, these they took and welded together."—*Plato in " Timaeus."*

" These fashion that which is indivisible and sensible, and things with bodily form, and those which are co-arranged with Matter."—*Damascius de Princ.*

" Since the Gods spake these things to Theurgists; for although They are without body, for your sakes They put on bodies in the autoptic visions, since you cannot participate in incorporeal natures incorporeally because of the corporeal nature in which you are centred."—*Proclus on " Republic."*

"For it says that this (the light) is that which first received the everlasting allotments of the Gods and makes manifest in itself the autoptic visions, for in this the Oracle says—

LXIX.—"That which is formless is given form."—*Simplicius in Phys.*

This refers to the manner in which the noetic and noumenal ideas of the Archetypal Realm are reflected and expressed by the Gods in the realms of form and matter. These reflected types, in their totality, are comprehended by Nature, who, according to the Oracles, is the Divine Ruling Principle of the sensible world.

LXX.—"For unwearied Nature ruleth over worlds and works, that the whirling heaven may run its everlasting course and the swift Sun may come about his centre in his accustomed way."

Proclus says: "From the Timaeus it appears that Plato does not consider either matter or material form or body or natural powers as worthy to be called Nature, though it has been thus denominated by others. Nor does he think proper to call Nature "Soul"; but, establishing its essence between Soul and corporeal powers, he considers it as inferior to the former through its being divided about bodies and its incapacity of conversion to itself, but as surpassing the latter through containing the productive principles, and by generating and vivifying every part of the visible world. For Nature verges towards bodies, and is inseparable from their fluctuating empire; but Soul is separate from body, is established in herself, and subsists both from herself and another; from another, that is Intellect (Nous) through participation, and from herself, on account of not verging to body, but abiding in her own essence and at the same time illuminating the obscure nature of matter with a secondary life."

"Nature, therefore, is the last of the causes which fabricate the corporeal and sensible world, bounds the progressions of incorporeal essences, and is full of reasons and powers through which she governs mundane affairs."

"Nature proceeds from the Vivific Goddess Rhea, for as the Oracle says: "And about the shoulders of the Goddess, vast Nature hangs" (LXIV) from Whom all life is derived,

both that which is intellectual and that which is inseparable from the objects of its government. But Nature, being thus suspended, She pervades and inspires all things without impediment. Hence, the most inanimate of things participate of a certain soul, and corruptible natures remain perpetually in the world, being connected and comprehended by the causes of forms which Nature contains."—*Proclus in Theol. of Plato*.

In the Oracles the Moon is identified with Nature as the ultimate expression of the Ruling Vivific Principles of the Hyperzonic Realm, just as the Sun is of the Ruling Solar Principles.

"The Divinity (the Moon) has the relation of Nature and of a Mother with respect to generation or the sublunary region; for all things are convolved and co-increased by her when she increases, but are diminished when she diminishes. This Goddess, too, benevolently leads into light the unapparent productive principles of Nature."—*Proclus on Timaeus*.

In passing from the unapparent or unmanifested to the apparent and hylic realm all things proceed out of the womb of the ethereal profundity, through the power of the Sun, and become precipitated in the Sublunary sphere through the influence of the Moon.

LXXI.—"The centres of the hylic world are fixed in the ether above it."

LXXII.—"It (the world) is a part of ether, of the Sun, of the rivers of the Moon, and of the air."

Proclus in Timaeus says that the Oracles "everywhere arrange the moon after the sun and the air after the moon, both when they deliver the order of them from above and when from below," as the following fragments evince.

LXXIII.—"O Ether, Sun, breath of the Moon, and Ye Rulers of the Air; of the solar circles, the ringing dances of the Moon, and the airy depths."

LXXIV.—"And the etherial course, the measureless rush of the Moon, and the aerial streams."

LXXV.—"The wide air, the lunar course, and the everlasting pole of the Sun."

LXXVI.—" And the lunar course and the procession of the stars."

" He (The Demiurgus) fixed also a great multitude of inerratic stars, not by laborious and painful effort, but with a stability that could admit of no wandering. He compelled the Fire to the Fire."—*Proclus in Timaeus.*

LXXVII.—The Demiurgus is said to make the whole world "from fire and water and earth and all-nourishing ether."

This fire of the Demiurgus is not the same as the terrestrial or sublunary fire, but is rather a celestial wholeness of fire from which the fire of the visible Sun itself springs.

" For the life-engendering channel proceeds as far as the centre, as the Oracles say, speaking of the midmost of the five centres extending from above right through the centre of the earth to the opposite extreme."—*Proclus in Tim.*

LXXVIII.—" And fifth, in the midst, another fiery way whence the life-bearing fire descends even to the hylic channels."

The "five centres" are, no doubt, the five planets, which, with the Sun and the Earth, make up the seven mystical planets of the Chaldean mysteries.

" The Demiurgus suspended six zones, and for the seventh hurled into the midst the fire of the Sun."—*Emp. Julian.*

LXXIX.—The Oracles define a centre as that

" From which all lines (or rays) to the periphery are equal."

LXXX.—" For the Father caused to swell forth seven firmaments of worlds, confining the heaven in a curved form."

These seven firmaments of worlds are also called "cosmocrators," each of which is said to have its appropriate archontic and angelic principles.

Thomas Taylor, in his " Theoretic Arithmetic," quoting an anonymous writer, says: The Ancients " very properly call the starry orbs ' herds '; either in so far as they alone among corporeal masses revolve perfectly about the centre, or because the Oracles in their discourses on Nature lay down that they hold the position of ' binders ' or ' uniters,' which

in the same manner they call 'herds' (ἀγέλας=*agelas*) and by the insertion of the gamma 'angels' (ἀγγέλους). Wherefore the stars which rule over each of these herds they call daemons like angels, and archangels—and these are seven in number."

Nature, as well as the Divine and Celestial Principles, operates through the media of angels and daemons. There are innumerable hosts of these Lesser Powers, which govern all the operations of the various Kingdoms of Nature. In the Oracles, the Daemons are symbolically called "Dogs," because of their watchful and guardian characteristics.

LXXXI.—"She (Nature) is the Charioteer of the airy, terrestrial, and watery dogs."

LXXXII.—"Nature persuades us that the Daemons are pure and that even the growths of evil matter are useful and good."

That is to say, the beneficent operations of the angelic hosts turn all things to good and useful ends.

LXXXIII.—"Out of the womb of earth leap Dogs terrestrial that unto mortal never show true sign."

There are watery powers as well as powers of earth and fire.

The watery, in reference to divine concerns, signifies the providential characteristic of water which is analogous to the undivided sovereignty of the Gods, "wherefore the Oracles call these Gods Water-walkers."—*Proclus in Tim.*

LXXXIV.—"The nymphs of the fountains and all the water spirits and the depths of the earth and the air and the gleaming hollows are the lunar riders and the rulers of matter, celestial, starry, and that which is of the abysses."

Thus is the great Chaldean world-view completed, beginning from the Ineffable Paternal Profundity of the Most High, and passing through a sublime and wondrous Hierarchy of Divine, Celestial, and Angelic principles, ruling over all the realms and planes of existence in the macrocosm, from the first to the very last of things, even to the darkest and most gross aspect of Matter, in which, as the Oracles say, is the "light-hating place."

LXXXV.—"All Nature in generation, in which are the 'turbid bulk of Matter,' and the 'Light-hating World,'

as the Gods say, and the 'winding streams by which many are drawn under.'"

"There are three hylic worlds of which the last is called terrestrial and light-hating, which is the place below the Moon, having Matter in itself also, which they call the Abyss."—*Psellus*.

LXXXVI.—"Alas, alas, for these (those in the "light-hating world") the Earth maketh lamentation even unto their children."

For the Soul, merged in Matter, is indeed in a hylic prison house, seeking ever the Realms of Light of its True Home. The Way of Return is the Great Ascent, which the Oracles unfold in a most luminous and inspiring manner.

(*To be continued*)

THE BARDS' ENIGMA

There is nothing truly hidden but what is not conceivable;
There is nothing not conceivable but what is immeasurable;
There is nothing immeasurable but God;
There is no God but that which is not conceivable;
There is nothing not conceivable but that which is truly hidden.
There is nothing truly hidden but God.

THE TWELVE PRIMARY NEGATIVES

There is nothing sought after but what is precious;
There is nothing precious but what is beneficial;
There is nothing beneficial but possession;
There is no possession but Gwynvyd;*
There is no Gwynvyd but knowledge;
There is no knowledge but what is new;
There is nothing new but what changes;
There is no change but what is advantageous;
There is no advantage but what is beautiful;
There is nothing beautiful but what is just;
There is nothing just but love;
There is no love but God.
And thus it ends. —*From Barddas*.

*Gwynvyd, The Circle of Felicity which man is destined to traverse when freed from all bondage.

JEWELS

"Learn to make the best of all things and to endure, kindly and meekly, the behaviour of all kinds of men."—*Tauler.*

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"The desire for temporal things causes a real alienation from eternal things."—*ibid.*

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O admirable but sweet unrest of the human heart! Be ever without any rest or tranquillity on this earth, my Soul, till you have met with the fresh waters of the immortal life and the Most Holy Divinity, Who alone can satisfy your thirst and quiet your desire."—*St. Francis of Sales.*

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"Disinterested love doth ever include the will to love God without measure, either of degree or of time. It doth ever include conformity to the good pleasure of God, Who willeth our salvation, and Who willeth us to will it with Him, for His Glory."—*Fénelon.*

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"The greater the detachment and self-effacement of a Soul which casts itself upon God and allows itself to be borne by Him, the more deeply rooted in God does that Soul become and the more receptive of all God's precious gifts."—*Eckhart.*

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"He that is selfless lays no sort of claim to himself or to anything about him—not even to God."—*ibid.*

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"Seek not too eagerly after the grace of devotion, sensible sweetness and tears, but let thy chief care be to remain inwardly united to God by good will in the intellectual part of the Soul."—*Albertus Magnus.*

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"Love is the life of the Soul, its nuptial garment, its perfection."—*ibid.*

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"Seek and love only that Perfect Good which includes in itself all good, and it will suffice thee."—*ibid.*

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"He who rises from his knees a better man, his prayer has been granted."—*George Meredith.*

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"O highest and changeless God, I see that Thou lovest me exceedingly, and that if I abide in Thee it will be as impossible for Thee not to take care of me at all times, in all places and circumstances, as it is impossible for Thee not to care for Thyself. And Thou offerest to me Thy whole self, to be mine whole and undivided, if at least I remain Thine whole and undivided."—*Gerlac Petersen.*