



THE SECRET
TEACHINGS
OF ALL AGES

UNABRIDGED 1928 ILLUSTRATED EDITION

The Secret Teachings
Of All Ages

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The Secret Teachings Of All Ages

Preface

NUMEROUS volumes have been written as commentaries upon the secret systems of philosophy existing in the ancient world, but the ageless truths of life, like many of the earth's greatest thinkers, have usually been clothed in shabby garments. The present work is an attempt to supply a tome worthy of those seers and sages whose thoughts are the substance of its pages. To bring about this coalescence of Beauty and Truth has proved most costly, but I believe that the result will produce an effect upon the mind of the reader which will more than justify the expenditure.

Work upon the text of this volume was begun the first day of January, 1926, and has continued almost uninterruptedly for over two years. The greater part of the research work, however, was carried on prior to the writing of the manuscript. The collection of reference material was begun in 1921, and three years later the plans for the book took definite form. For the sake of clarity, all footnotes were eliminated, the various quotations and references to other authors being embodied in the text in their logical order. The bibliography is appended primarily to assist those interested in selecting for future study the most authoritative and important items dealing with philosophy and symbolism. To make readily accessible the abstruse information contained in the book, an elaborate topical cross index is included.

I make no claim for either the infallibility or the originality of any statement herein contained. I have studied the fragmentary writings of the ancients sufficiently to realize that dogmatic utterances concerning their tenets are worse than foolhardy. Traditionalism is the curse of modern philosophy, particularly that of the European schools. While many of the statements contained in this treatise may appear at first wildly fantastic, I have sincerely endeavored to refrain from haphazard metaphysical speculation, presenting the material as far as possible in the spirit rather than the

letter of the original authors. By assuming responsibility only for the mistakes which may appear herein, I hope to escape the accusation of plagiarism which has been directed against nearly every writer on the subject of mystical philosophy.

Having no particularism of my own to promulgate, I have not attempted to twist the original writings to substantiate preconceived notions, nor have I distorted doctrines in any effort to reconcile the irreconcilable differences present in the various systems of religious philosophic thought.

The entire theory of the book is diametrically opposed to the modern method of thinking, for it is concerned with subjects openly ridiculed by the sophists of the twentieth century. Its true purpose is to introduce the mind of the reader to a hypothesis of living wholly beyond the pale of materialistic theology, philosophy, or science. The mass of abstruse material between its covers is not susceptible to perfect organization, but so far as possible related topics have been grouped together.

Rich as the English language is in media of expression, it is curiously lacking in terms suitable to the conveyance of abstract philosophical premises. A certain intuitive grasp of the subtler meanings concealed within groups of inadequate words is necessary therefore to an understanding of the ancient Mystery Teachings.

Although the majority of the items in the bibliography are in my own library, I wish to acknowledge gratefully the assistance rendered by the Public Libraries of San Francisco and Los Angeles, the libraries of the Scottish Rite in San Francisco and Los Angeles, the libraries of the University of California in Berkeley and Los Angeles, the Mechanics' Library in San Francisco, and the Krotona Theosophical Library at Ojai, California. Special recognition for their help is also due to the following persons: Mrs. Max Heindel, Mrs. Alice Palmer Henderson, Mr. Ernest Dawson and staff, Mr. John Howell, Mr. Paul Elder, Mr. Phillip Watson Hackett, and Mr. John R. Ruckstell. Single books were lent by other persons and organizations, to whom thanks are also given.

The matter of translation was the greatest single task in the research work incident to the preparation

of this volume. The necessary German translations, which required nearly three years, were generously undertaken by Mr. Alfred Beri, who declined all remuneration for his labor. The Latin, Italian, French, and Spanish translations were made by Prof. Homer P. Earle. The Hebrew text was edited by Rabbi Jacob M. Alkow. Miscellaneous short translations and checking also were done by various individuals.

The editorial work was under the supervision of Dr. C. B. Rowlingson, through whose able efforts literary order was often brought out of literary chaos. Special recognition is also due the services rendered by Mr. Robert B. Tummonds, of the staff of H. S. Crocker Company, Inc., to whom were assigned the technical difficulties of fitting the text matter into its allotted space. For much of the literary charm of the work I am also indebted to Mr. M. M. Saxton, to whom the entire manuscript was first dictated and to whom was also entrusted the preparation of the index. The splendid efforts of Mr. J. Augustus Knapp, the illustrator, have resulted in a series of color plates which add materially to the beauty and completeness of the work. Q The printing of the book was in the hands of Mr. Frederick E. Keast, of H. S. Crocker Company, Inc., whose great personal interest in the volume has been manifested by an untiring effort to improve the quality thereof Through the gracious cooperation of Dr. John Henry Nash, the foremost designer of printing on the American Continent, the book appears in a unique and appropriate form, embodying the finest elements of the printer's craft. An increase in the number of plates and also a finer quality of workmanship than was first contemplated have been made possible by Mr. C. E. Benson, of the Los Angeles Engraving Company, who entered heart and soul into the production of this volume.

The pre-publication sale of this book has been without known precedent in book history. The subscription list for the first edition of 550 copies was entirely closed a year before the manuscript was placed in the printer's hands. The second, or King Solomon, edition, consisting of 550 copies, and the third, or Theosophical, edition, consisting of 200 copies, were sold before the finished volume was received from the printer. For so ambitious a production, this constitutes

a unique achievement. The credit for this extraordinary sales program belongs to Mrs. Maud F. Galigher, who had as her ideal not to sell the book in the commercial sense of the word but to place it in the hands of those particularly interested in the subject matter it contains. Valuable assistance in this respect was also rendered by numerous friends who had attended my lectures and who without compensation undertook and successfully accomplished the distribution of the book.

In conclusion, the author wishes to acknowledge gratefully his indebtedness to each one of the hundreds of subscribers through whose advance payments the publication of this folio was made possible. To undertake the enormous expense involved was entirely beyond his individual means and those who invested in the volume had no assurance of its production and no security other than their faith in the integrity of the writer.

I sincerely hope that each reader will profit from the perusal of this book, even as I have profited from the writing of it. The years of labor and thought expended upon it have meant much to me. The research work discovered to me many great truths; the writing of it discovered to me the laws of order and patience; the printing of it discovered to me new wonders of the arts and crafts; and the whole enterprise has discovered to me a multitude of friends whom otherwise I might never have known. And so, in the words of John Bunyan:

*I penned
It down, until at last it came to be,
For length and breadth, the bigness which you see.*

—Manly Palmer Hall
Los Angeles, California
May 28, 1928

Introduction

PHILOSOPHY IS THE SCIENCE of estimating values. The superiority of any state or substance over another is determined by philosophy. By assigning a position of primary importance to what remains when all that is secondary has been removed, philosophy thus becomes the true index of priority or emphasis in the realm of speculative thought. The mission of philosophy a priori is to establish the relation of manifested things to their invisible ultimate cause or nature.

“Philosophy,” writes Sir William Hamilton, “has been defined [as]: The science of things divine and human, and of the causes in which they are contained [Cicero]; The science of effects by their causes [Hobbes]; The science of sufficient reasons [Leibnitz]; The science of things possible, inasmuch as they are possible [Wolf]; The science of things evidently deduced from first principles [Descartes]; The science of truths, sensible and abstract [de Condillac]; The application of reason to its legitimate objects [Tennemann]; The science of the relations of all knowledge to the necessary ends of human reason [Kant]; The science of the original form of the ego or mental self [Krug]; The science of sciences [Fichte]; The science of the absolute [von Schelling]; The science of the absolute indifference of the ideal and real [von Schelling]—or, The identity of identity and non-identity [Hegel].” (See *Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic*.)

The six headings under which the disciplines of philosophy are commonly classified are: *metaphysics*, which deals with such abstract subjects as cosmology, theology, and the nature of being; *logic*, which deals with the laws governing rational thinking, or, as it has been called, “the doctrine of fallacies”; *ethics*, which is the science of morality, individual responsibility, and character—concerned chiefly with an effort to determine the nature of good; *psychology*,

which is devoted to investigation and classification of those forms of phenomena referable to a mental origin; *epistemology*, which is the science concerned primarily with the nature of knowledge itself and the question of whether it may exist in an absolute form; and *aesthetics*, which is the science of the nature of and the reactions awakened by the beautiful, the harmonious, the elegant, and the noble.

Plato regarded philosophy as the greatest good ever imparted by Divinity to man. In the twentieth century, however, it has become a ponderous and complicated structure of arbitrary and irreconcilable notions—yet each substantiated by almost incontestible logic. The lofty theorems of the old Academy which Iamblichus likened to the nectar and ambrosia of the gods have been so adulterated by opinion—which Heraclitus declared to be a falling sickness of the mind—that the heavenly mead would now be quite unrecognizable to this great Neo-Platonist. Convincing evidence of the increasing superficiality of modern scientific and philosophic thought is its persistent drift towards materialism. When the great astronomer Laplace was asked by Napoleon why he had not mentioned God in his *Traité de la Mécanique Céleste*, the mathematician naively replied: “Sire, I had no need for that hypothesis!”

In his treatise on Atheism, Sir Francis Bacon tersely summarizes the situation thus: “A little philosophy inclineth man’s mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men’s minds about to religion.” The *Metaphysics* of Aristotle opens with these words: “All men naturally desire to know.” To satisfy this common urge the unfolding human intellect has explored the extremities of imaginable space without and the extremities of imaginable self within, seeking to estimate the relationship between the one and the all; the effect and the cause; Nature and the groundwork of Nature; the mind and the source of the mind; the spirit and the substance of the spirit; the illusion and the reality.

An ancient philosopher once said: “He who has not even a knowledge of common things is a brute among men. He who has an accurate knowledge of human concerns alone is a man among brutes. But he who knows all that can be known by intellec-

tual energy, is a God among men.” Man’s status in the natural world is determined, therefore, by the quality of his thinking. He whose mind is enslaved to his bestial instincts is philosophically not superior to the brute-, he whose rational faculties ponder human affairs is a man; and he whose intellect is elevated to the consideration of divine realities is already a demigod, for his being partakes of the luminosity with which his reason has brought him into proximity. In his encomium of “the science of sciences” Cicero is led to exclaim: “O philosophy, life’s guide! O searcher—out of virtue and expeller of vices! What could we and every age of men have been without thee? Thou hast produced cities; thou hast called men scattered about into the social enjoyment of life.”

In this age the word *philosophy* has little meaning unless accompanied by some other qualifying term. The body of philosophy has been broken up into numerous *isms* more or less antagonistic, which have become so concerned with the effort to disprove each other’s fallacies that the sublimer issues of divine order and human destiny have suffered deplorable neglect. The ideal function of philosophy is to serve as the stabilizing influence in human thought. By virtue of its intrinsic nature it should prevent man from ever establishing unreasonable codes of life. Philosophers themselves, however, have frustrated the ends of philosophy by exceeding in their wool-gathering those untrained minds whom they are supposed to lead in the straight and narrow path of rational thinking. To list and classify any but the more important of the now recognized schools of philosophy is beyond the space limitations of this volume. The vast area of speculation covered by philosophy will be appreciated best after a brief consideration of a few of the outstanding systems of philosophic discipline which have swayed the world of thought during the last twenty-six centuries. The Greek school of philosophy had its inception with the seven immortalized thinkers upon whom was first conferred the appellation of *Sophos*, “the wise.” According to Diogenes Laertius, these were Thales, Solon, Chilon, Pittacus, Bias, Cleobulus, and Periander. Water was conceived by Thales to be the

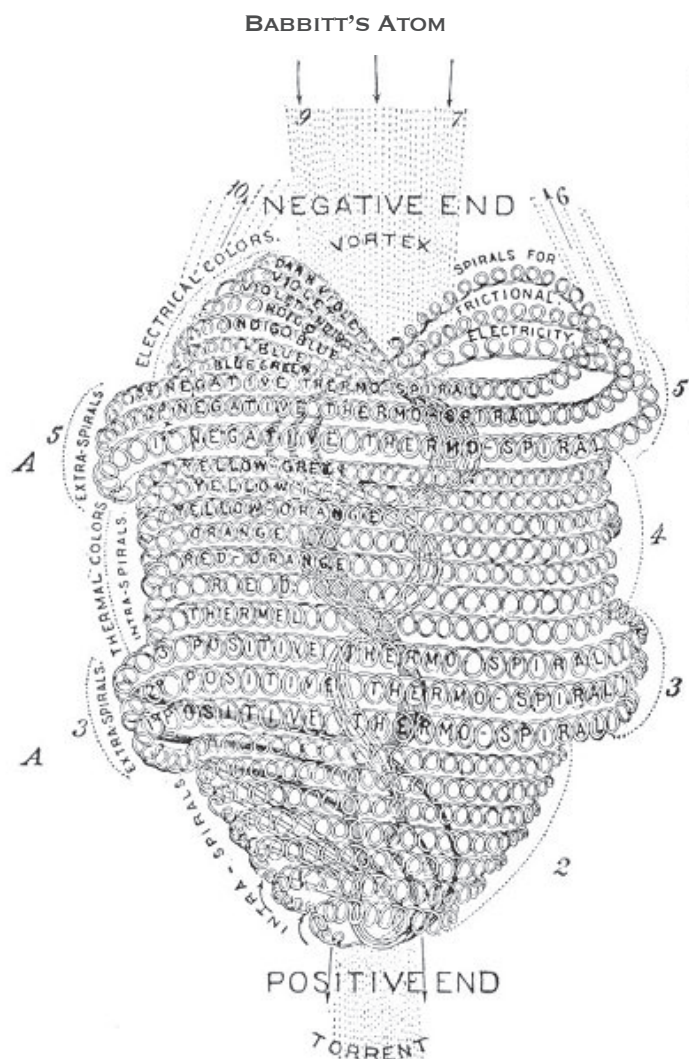
primal principle or element, upon which the earth floated like a ship, and earthquakes were the result of disturbances in this universal sea. Since Thales was an Ionian, the school perpetuating his tenets became known as the Ionic. He died in 546 B.C., and was succeeded by Anaximander, who in turn was followed by Anaximenes, Anaxagoras, and Archelaus, with whom the Ionic school ended. Anaximander, differing from his master Thales, declared measureless and indefinable infinity to be the principle from which all things were generated. Anaximenes asserted air to be the first element of the universe; that souls and even the Deity itself were composed of it.

Anaxagoras (whose doctrine savors of atomism) held God to be an infinite self-moving mind; that this divine infinite Mind, not inclosed in any body, is the efficient cause of all things; out of the infinite matter consisting of similar parts, everything being made according to its species by the divine mind, who when all things were at first confusedly mingled together, came and reduced them to order.” Archelaus declared the principle of all things to be twofold: mind (which was incorporeal) and air (which was corporeal), the rarefaction and condensation of the latter resulting in fire and water respectively. The stars were conceived by Archelaus to be burning iron plates. Heraclitus (who lived 536-470 B.C. and is sometimes included in the Ionic school) in his doctrine of change and eternal flux asserted fire to be the first element and also the state into which the world would ultimately be reabsorbed. The soul of the world he regarded as an exhalation from its humid parts, and he declared the ebb and flow of the sea to be caused by the sun.

After Pythagoras of Samos, its founder, the *Italic* or *Pythagorean* school numbers among its most distinguished representatives Empedocles, Epicharmus, Archytas, Alcmaeon, Hippasus, Philolaus, and Eudoxus. Pythagoras (580-500? B.C.) conceived mathematics to be the most sacred and exact of all the sciences, and demanded of all who came to him for study a familiarity with arithmetic, music, astronomy, and geometry. He laid special emphasis upon the *philosophic life* as a prerequisite to wisdom. Pythagoras was one of the first teachers to establish

a community wherein all the members were of mutual assistance to one another in the common attainment of the higher sciences. He also introduced the discipline of retrospection as essential to the development of the spiritual mind. Pythagoreanism may be summarized as a system of metaphysical speculation concerning the relationships between numbers and the causal agencies of existence. This school also first expounded the theory of celestial harmonics or “the music of the spheres.” John Reuchlin said of Pythagoras that he taught nothing to his disciples before the discipline of silence, silence being the first rudiment of contemplation. In his *Sophist*, Aristotle credits Empedocles with the discovery of rhetoric. Both Pythagoras and Empedocles accepted the theory of transmigration, the latter saying: “A boy I was, then did a maid become; a plant, bird, fish, and in the vast sea swum.” Archytas is credited with invention of the screw and the crane. Pleasure he declared to be a pestilence because it was opposed to the temperance of the mind; he considered a man without deceit to be as rare as a fish without bones.

The *Eleatic* sect was founded by Xenophanes (570-480 B.C.), who was conspicuous for his attacks upon the cosmologic and theogonic fables of Homer and Hesiod. Xenophanes declared that God was “one and incorporeal, in substance and figure round, in no way resembling man; that He is all sight and all hearing, but breathes not; that He is all things, the mind and wisdom, not generate but eternal, impassible, immutable, and rational.” Xenophanes believed that all existing things were eternal, that the world was without beginning or end, and that everything which was generated was subject to corruption. He lived to great age and is said to have buried his sons with his own hands. Parmenides studied under Xenophanes, but never entirely subscribed to his doctrines. Parmenides declared the senses to be uncertain and reason the only criterion of truth. He first asserted the earth to be round and also divided



FROM BABBITT'S *PRINCIPLES OF LIGHT AND COLOR*

Since the postulation of the atomic theory by Democritus, many efforts have been made to determine the structure of atoms and the method by which they unite to form various elements.

Even science has not refrained from entering this field of speculation and presents for consideration most detailed and elaborate representations of these minute bodies.

By far the most remarkable conception of the atom evolved during the last century is that produced by the genius of Dr. Edwin D. Babbitt and which is reproduced herewith. The diagram is self-explanatory.

It must be borne in mind that this apparently massive structure is actually so minute as to defy analysis. Not only did Dr. Babbitt create this form of the atom but he also contrived a method whereby these particles could be grouped together in an orderly manner and thus result in the formation of molecular bodies.

its surface into zones of heat and cold.

Melissus, who is included in the Eleatic school, held many opinions in common with Parmenides. He declared the universe to be immovable because, occupying all space, there was no place to which it could be moved. He further rejected the theory of a vacuum in space. Zeno of Elea also maintained that a vacuum could not exist. Rejecting the theory of motion, he asserted that there was but one God, who was an eternal, ungenerated Being. Like Xenophanes, he conceived Deity to be spherical in shape. Leucippus held the Universe to consist of two parts: one full and the other a vacuum. From the Infinite a host of minute fragmentary bodies descended into the vacuum, where, through continual agitation, they organized themselves into spheres of substance.

The great Democritus to a certain degree enlarged upon the atomic theory of Leucippus. Democritus declared the principles of all things to be twofold: atoms and vacuum. Both, he asserted, are infinite—atoms in number, vacuum in magnitude. Thus all bodies must be composed of atoms or vacuum. Atoms possessed two properties, form and size, both characterized by infinite variety. The soul Democritus also conceived to be atomic in structure and subject to dissolution with the body. The mind he believed to be composed of spiritual atoms. Aristotle intimates that Democritus obtained his atomic theory from the Pythagorean doctrine of the *Monad*. Among the Eleatics are also included Protagoras and Anaxarchus.

Socrates (469-399 B.C.), the founder of the *Socratic* sect, being fundamentally a Skeptic, did not force his opinions upon others, but through the medium of questionings caused each man to give expression to his own philosophy. According to Plutarch, Socrates conceived every place as appropriate for reaching in that the whole world was a school of virtue. He held that the soul existed before the body and, prior to immersion therein, was endowed with all knowledge; that when the soul entered into the material form it became stupefied, but that by discourses upon sensible objects it was caused to reawaken and to recover its original knowl-

edge. On these premises was based his attempt to stimulate the soul-power through irony and inductive reasoning. It has been said of Socrates that the sole subject of his philosophy was man. He himself declared philosophy to be the way of true happiness and its purpose twofold: (1) to contemplate God, and (2) to abstract the soul from corporeal sense.

The principles of all things he conceived to be three in number: *God*, *matter*, and *ideas*. Of God he said: "What He is I know not; what He is not I know." Matter he defined as the subject of generation and corruption; idea, as an incorruptible substance—the intellect of God. Wisdom he considered the sum of the virtues. Among the prominent members of the Socratic sect were Xenophon, Æschines, Crito, Simon, Glauco, Simmias, and Cebes. Professor Zeller, the great authority on ancient philosophies, has recently declared the writings of Xenophon relating to Socrates to be forgeries. When *The Clouds of Aristophanes*, a comedy written to ridicule the theories of Socrates, was first presented, the great Skeptic himself attended the play. During the performance, which caricatured him seated in a basket high in the air studying the sun, Socrates rose calmly in his seat, the better to enable the Athenian spectators to compare his own unprepossessing features with the grotesque mask worn by the actor impersonating him.

The *Elean* sect was founded by Phædo of Elis, a youth of noble family, who was bought from slavery at the instigation of Socrates and who became his devoted disciple. Plato so highly admired Phædo's mentality that he named one of the most famous of his discourses *The Phædo*. Phædo was succeeded in his school by Plisthenes, who in turn was followed by Menedemus. Of the doctrines of the Elean sect little is known. Menedemus is presumed to have been inclined toward the teachings of Stilpo and the Megarian sect. When Menedemus' opinions were demanded, he answered that he was free, thus intimating that most men were enslaved to their opinions. Menedemus was apparently of a somewhat belligerent temperament and often returned from his lectures in a badly bruised condition. The most famous of his propositions is stated thus: That

PLATO



FROM THOMASIN'S *RECUII DES FIGURES, GROUPEs, THERMES, FONTAINES, VASES ET AUTRES ORNEMENTS*

Plato's real name was Aristocles. When his father brought him to study with Socrates, the great Skeptic declared that on the previous night he had dreamed of a white swan, which was an omen that his new disciple was to become one of the world's illumined. There is a tradition that the immortal Plato was sold as a slave by the King of Sicily.

which is not the same is different from that with which it is not the same. This point being admitted, Menedemus continued: To benefit is not the same as good, therefore good does not benefit. After the time of Menedemus the Elean sect became known as the Eretrian. Its exponents denounced all negative propositions and all complex and abstruse theories,

declaring that only affirmative and simple doctrines could be true.

The *Megarian* sect was founded by Euclid of Megara (not the celebrated mathematician), a great admirer of Socrates. The Athenians passed a law decreeing death to any citizen of Megara found in the city of Athens. Nothing daunted, Euclid donned woman's clothing and went at night to study with Socrates. After the cruel death of their teacher, the disciples of Socrates, fearing a similar fate, fled to Megara, where they were entertained with great honor by Euclid. The Megarian school accepted the Socratic doctrine that virtue is wisdom, adding to it the Eleatic concept that goodness is absolute unity and all change an illusion of the senses. Euclid maintained that good has no opposite and therefore evil does not exist. Being asked about the nature of the gods, he declared himself ignorant of their disposition save that they hated curious persons.

The Megarians are occasionally included among the dialectic philosophers. Euclid (who died 374? B.C.) was succeeded in his school by Eubulides, among whose disciples were Alexinus and Apollonius Cronus. Euphantus, who lived to great age and wrote many tragedies, was among the foremost followers of Eubulides. Diodorus is usually included in the Megarian school, having heard Eubulides lecture. According to legend, Diodorus died of grief because he could not answer instantly certain questions asked him by Stilpo, at one time master of the Megarian school. Diodorus held that nothing can be moved, since to be moved it must be taken out of the place in which it is and put into the place where it is not, which is impossible because all things must always be in the places where they are.

The *Cynics* were a sect founded by Antisthenes of Athens (444-365? B.C.), a disciple of Socrates. Their doctrine may be described as an extreme individualism which considers man as existing for himself alone and advocates surrounding him by inharmony, suffering, and direst need that he may thereby be driven to retire more completely into his own nature. The Cynics renounced all worldly possessions, living in the rudest shelters and subsisting upon the coarsest and simplest food. On the assumption that the

gods wanted nothing, the Cynics affirmed that those whose needs were fewest consequently approached closest to the divinities. Being asked what he gained by a life of philosophy, Antisthenes replied that he had learned how to converse with himself.

Diogenes of Sinopis is remembered chiefly for the tub in the Metroum which for many years served him as a home. The people of Athens loved the beggar-philosopher, and when a youth in jest bored holes in the tub, the city presented Diogenes with a new one and punished the youth. Diogenes believed that nothing in life can be rightly accomplished without exertion. He maintained that everything in the world belongs to the wise, a declaration which he proved by the following logic: "All things belong to the gods; the gods are friends to wise persons; all things are common amongst friends; therefore all things belong to the wise." Among the Cynics are Monimus, Onesicritus, Crates, Metrocles, Hipparchia (who married Crates), Menippus, and Menedemus.

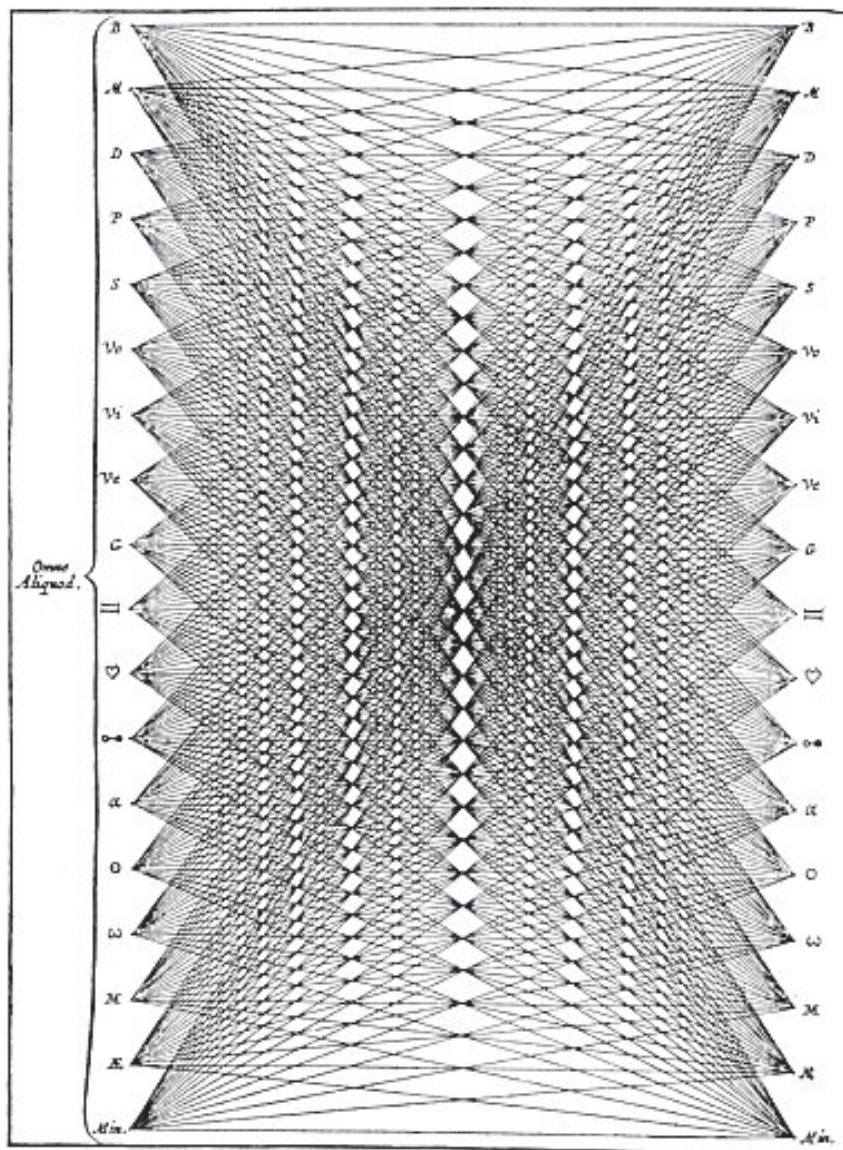
The *Cyrenaic* sect, founded by Aristippus of Cyrene (435-356? B.C.), promulgated the doctrine of hedonism. Learning of the fame of Socrates, Aristippus journeyed to Athens and applied himself to the teachings of the great Skeptic. Socrates, pained by the voluptuous and mercenary tendencies of Aristippus, vainly labored to reform the young man. Aristippus has the distinction of being consistent in principle and practice, for he lived in perfect harmony with his philosophy that the quest of pleasure was the chief purpose of life. The doctrines of the Cyrenaics may be summarized thus: All that is actually known concerning any object or condition is the feeling which it awakens in man's own nature. In the sphere of ethics that which awakens the most pleasant feeling is consequently to be esteemed as the greatest good. Emotional reactions are classified as pleasant or gentle, harsh, and mean. The end of pleasant emotion is pleasure; the end of harsh emotion, grief; the end of mean emotion, nothing.

Through mental perversity some men do not desire pleasure. In reality, however, pleasure (especially of a physical nature) is the true end of existence and exceeds in every way mental and spiritual enjoy-

ments. Pleasure, furthermore, is limited wholly to the moment; now is the only time. The past cannot be regarded without regret and the future cannot be faced without misgiving; therefore neither is conducive to pleasure. No man should grieve, for grief is the most serious of all diseases. Nature permits man to do anything he desires; he is limited only by his own laws and customs. A philosopher is one free from envy, love, and superstition, and whose days are one long round of pleasure. Indulgence was thus elevated by Aristippus to the chief position among the virtues. He further declared philosophers to differ markedly from other men in that they alone would not change the order of their lives if all the laws of men were abolished. Among prominent philosophers influenced by the Cyrenaic doctrines were Hegesias, Anniceris, Theodorus, and Bion.

The sect of the *Academic* philosophers instituted by Plato (427-347 B.C.) was divided into three major parts—the old, the middle, and the new Academy. Among the old Academics were Speusippus, Zenocrates, Polemon, Crates, and Crantor. Arcesilaus instituted the middle Academy and Carneades founded the new. Chief among the masters of Plato was Socrates. Plato traveled widely and was initiated by the Egyptians into the profundities of Hermetic philosophy. He also derived much from the doctrines of the Pythagoreans. Cicero describes the threefold constitution of Platonic philosophy as comprising ethics, physics, and dialectics. Plato defined good as threefold in character: good in the soul, expressed through the virtues; good in the body, expressed through the symmetry and endurance of the parts; and good in the external world, expressed through social position and companionship. In *The Book of Speusippus on Platonic Definitions*, that great Platonist thus defines God: "A being that lives immortally by means of Himself alone, sufficing for His own blessedness, the eternal Essence, cause of His own goodness. According to Plato, the *One* is the term most suitable for defining the Absolute, since the whole precedes the parts and diversity is dependent on unity, but unity not on diversity. The *One*, moreover, is before being, for *to be* is an attribute or condition of the *One*."

THE PROBLEM OF DIVERSITY

FROM KIRCHER'S *ARS MAGNA SCIENDI*

In the above diagram, Kircher arranges eighteen objects in two vertical columns and then determines the number of arrangements in which they can be combined.

By the same method Kircher further estimates that fifty objects may be arranged in 1,273,726,838,815,420,339,851,343,083,767,005,515,293,749,454,795,408,000,000,000,000 combinations.

From this it will be evident that infinite diversity is possible, for the countless parts of the universe may be related to each other in an incalculable number of ways; and through the various combinations of these limitless subdivisions of being, infinite individuality and infinite variety must inevitably result.

Thus it is further evident that life can never become monotonous or exhaust the possibilities of variety.

Platonic philosophy is based upon the postulation of three orders of being: that which moves unmoved, that which is self-moved, and that which is moved. That which is immovable but moves is anterior to that which is self-moved, which likewise is anterior to that which it moves. That in which motion is inherent cannot be separated from its motive power; it is therefore incapable of dissolution. Of such nature are the immortals. That which has motion imparted to it from another can be separated from the source of its animating principle; it is therefore subject to dissolution. Of such nature are mortal beings. Superior to both the mortals and the immortals is that condition which continually moves yet itself is unmoved. To this constitution the power of abidance is inherent; it is therefore the Divine Permanence upon which all things are established. Being nobler even than self-motion, the unmoved Mover is the first of all dignities. The Platonic discipline was founded upon the theory that learning is really reminiscence, or the bringing into objectivity of knowledge formerly acquired by the soul in a previous state of existence. At the entrance of the Platonic school in the Academy were written the words: "Let none ignorant of geometry enter here."

After the death of Plato, his disciples separated into two groups. One, the *Academics*, continued to meet in the Academy where once he had presided; the other, the *Peripatetics*, removed to the Lyceum under the leadership of Aristotle (384-322 B.C.). Plato recognized Aristotle as his greatest disciple and, according to Philoponus, referred to him as "the mind of the

school." If Aristotle were absent from the lectures, Plato would say: "The intellect is not here." Of the prodigious genius of Aristotle, Thomas Taylor writes in his introduction to *The Metaphysics*:

"When we consider that he was not only well acquainted with every science, as his works abundantly evince, but that he wrote on almost every subject which is comprehended in the circle of human knowledge, and this with matchless accuracy and skill, we know not which to admire most, the penetration or extent of his mind." Of the philosophy of Aristotle, the same author says: "The end of Aristotle's moral philosophy is perfection through the virtues, and the end of his contemplative philosophy an union with the one principle of all things."

Aristotle conceived philosophy to be twofold: practical and theoretical. Practical philosophy embraced ethics and politics; theoretical philosophy, physics and logic. Metaphysics he considered to be the science concerning that substance which has the principle of motion and rest inherent to itself. To Aristotle the soul is that by which man first lives, feels, and understands. Hence to the soul he assigned three faculties: nutritive, sensitive, and intellective. He further considered the soul to be twofold—rational and irrational—and in some particulars elevated the sense perceptions above the mind. Aristotle defined wisdom as the science of first Causes. The four major divisions of his philosophy are dialectics, physics, ethics, and metaphysics. God is defined as the First Mover, the Best of beings, an immovable Substance, separate from sensible things, void of corporeal quantity, without parts and indivisible. Platonism is based upon *a priori* reasoning; Aristotelianism upon *a posteriori* reasoning. Aristotle taught his pupil, Alexander the Great, to feel that if he had not done a good deed he had not reigned that day. Among his followers were Theophrastus, Strato, Lyco, Aristo, Critolaus, and Diodorus.

Of *Skepticism* as propounded by Pyrrho of Elis (365-275 B.C.) and by Timon, Sextus Empiricus said that those who seek must find or deny they have found or can find, or persevere in the inquiry. Those who suppose they have found truth are called

Dogmatists; those who think it incomprehensible are the *Academics*; those who still seek are the *Skeptics*. The attitude of Skepticism towards the knowable is summed up by Sextus Empiricus in the following words: "But the chief ground of Skepticism is that to every reason there is an opposite reason equivalent, which makes us forbear to dogmatize." The Skeptics were strongly opposed to the Dogmatists and were agnostic in that they held the accepted theories regarding Deity to be self-contradictory and undemonstrable. "How," asked the Skeptic, "can we have indubitate knowledge of God, knowing not His substance, form or place; for, while philosophers disagree irreconcilably on these points, their conclusions cannot be considered as undoubtedly true?" Since absolute knowledge was considered unattainable, the Skeptics declared the end of their discipline to be: "In opinionatives, indisturbance; in impulsives, moderation; and in disquietives, suspension."

The sect of the *Stoics* was founded by Zeno (340-265 B.C.), the Cittiean, who studied under Crates the Cynic, from which sect the Stoics had their origin. Zeno was succeeded by Cleanthes, Chrysippus, Zeno of Tarsis, Diogenes, Antipater, Panætius, and Posidonius. Most famous of the Roman Stoics are Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. The Stoics were essentially pantheists, since they maintained that as there is nothing better than the world, the world is God. Zeno declared that the reason of the world is diffused throughout it as seed. Stoicism is a materialistic philosophy, enjoining voluntary resignation to natural law. Chrysippus maintained that good and evil being contrary, both are necessary since each sustains the other. The soul was regarded as a body distributed throughout the physical form and subject to dissolution with it. Though some of the Stoics held that wisdom prolonged the existence of the soul, actual immortality is not included in their tenets. The soul was said to be composed of eight parts: the five senses, the generative power, the vocal power, and an eighth, or hegemonic, part. Nature was defined as God mixed throughout the substance of the world. All things were looked upon as bodies either corporeal or incorporeal.

Meekness marked the attitude of the Stoic philoso-

ÆNEAS AT THE GATE OF HELL

FROM VIRGIL'S *ÆNEID*. (DRYDEN'S TRANSLATION)

Virgil describes part of the ritual of a Greek Mystery—possibly the Eleusinian—in his account of the descent of Æneas, to the gate of hell under the guidance of the Sibyl. Of that part of the ritual portrayed above the immortal poet writes:

“Full in the midst of this infernal Road,
An Elm displays her dusky Arms abroad;
The God of Sleep there hides his heavy Head
And empty Dreams on ev’ry Leaf are spread.
Of various Forms, unnumber’d Specters more;
Centaur, and double Shapes, besiege the Door:
Before the Passage horrid Hydra stands,
And Briareus with all his hundred Hands:
Gorgons, Geryon with his triple Frame;
And vain Chimæra vomits empty Flame.
The Chief unsheath’d his shining Steel, prepar’d,
Tho seiz’d with sudden Fear, to force the Guard.
Off’ring his brandish’d Weapon at their Face,
Had not the Sibyl stop’d his eager Pace,
And told him what those empty Phantoms were;
Forms without Bodies, and impassive Air.”

pher. While Diogenes was delivering a discourse against anger, one of his listeners spat contemptuously in his face. Receiving the insult with humility, the great Stoic was moved to retort: “I am not angry, but am in doubt whether I ought to be so or not!”

Epicurus of Samos (341-270 B.C.) was the founder of the *Epicurean* sect, which in many respects resembles the Cyrenaic but is higher in its ethical standards. The Epicureans also posited pleasure as the most desirable state, but conceived it to be a grave and dignified state achieved through renunciation of those mental and emotional inconstancies which are productive of pain and sorrow. Epicurus held that as the pains of the mind and soul are more grievous than those of the body, so the joys of the mind and soul exceed those of the body. The Cyrenaics asserted pleasure to be dependent upon action or motion; the Epicureans claimed rest or lack of action to be equally productive of pleasure. Epicurus accepted the philosophy of Democritus concerning the nature of atoms and based his physics upon this theory. The Epicurean philosophy may be summed up in four canons:

“(1) Sense is never deceived; and therefore every sensation and every perception of an appearance is true. (2) Opinion follows upon sense and is superadded to sensation, and capable of truth or falsehood, (3) All opinion attested, or not contradicted by the evidence of sense, is true. (4) An opinion contradicted, or not attested by the evidence of sense, is false.” Among the Epicureans of note were Metrodorus of Lampsacus, Zeno of Sidon, and Phædrus.

Eclecticism may be defined as the practice of choosing apparently irreconcilable doctrines from antagonistic schools and constructing therefrom a composite philosophic system in harmony with the convictions of the eclectic himself. Eclecticism can scarcely be considered philosophically or logically sound, for as individual schools arrive at their conclusions by different methods of reasoning, so the phil-

osophic product of fragments from these schools must necessarily be built upon the foundation of conflicting premises. Eclecticism, accordingly, has been designated the layman's cult. In the Roman Empire little thought was devoted to philosophic theory; consequently most of its thinkers were of the eclectic type. Cicero is the outstanding example of early Eclecticism, for his writings are a veritable pot-pourri of invaluable fragments from earlier schools of thought. Eclecticism appears to have had its inception at the moment when men first doubted the possibility of discovering ultimate truth. Observing all so-called knowledge to be mere opinion at best, the less studious furthermore concluded that the wiser course to pursue was to accept that which appeared to be the most reasonable of the teachings of any school or individual. From this practice, however, arose a pseudo-broadmindedness devoid of the element of preciseness found in true logic and philosophy.

The *Neo-Pythagorean* school flourished in Alexandria during the first century of the Christian Era. Only two names stand out in connection with it—Apollonius of Tyana and Moderatus of Gades. Neo-Pythagoreanism is a link between the older pagan philosophies and Neo-Platonism. Like the former, it contained many exact elements of thought derived from Pythagoras and Plato; like the latter, it emphasized metaphysical speculation and ascetic habits. A striking similarity has been observed by several authors between Neo-Pythagoreanism and the doctrines of the Essenes. Special emphasis was laid upon the mystery of numbers, and it is possible that the Neo-Pythagoreans had a far wider knowledge of the true teachings of Pythagoras than is available today. Even in the first century Pythagoras was regarded more as a god than a man, and the revival of his philosophy was resorted to apparently in the hope that his name would stimulate interest in the deeper systems of learning. But Greek philosophy had passed the zenith of its splendor; the mass of humanity was awakening to the importance of physical life and physical phenomena. The emphasis upon earthly affairs which began to assert itself later reached maturity of expression in twentieth century

materialism and commercialism, even though Neo-Platonism was to intervene and many centuries pass before this emphasis took definite form.

Although Ammonius Saccus was long believed to be the founder of *Neo-Platonism*, the school had its true beginning in Plotinus (A.D. 204-269?). Prominent among the Neo-Platonists of Alexandria, Syria, Rome, and Athens were Porphyry, Iamblichus, Sallustius, the Emperor Julian, Plutarch, and Proclus. Neo-Platonism was the supreme effort of decadent pagandom to publish and thus preserve for posterity its secret (or unwritten) doctrine. In its teachings ancient idealism found its most perfect expression. Neo-Platonism was concerned almost exclusively with the problems of higher metaphysics. It recognized the existence of a secret and all-important doctrine which from the time of the earliest civilizations had been concealed within the rituals, symbols, and allegories of religions and philosophies. To the mind unacquainted with its fundamental tenets, Neo-Platonism may appear to be a mass of speculations interspersed with extravagant flights of fancy. Such a viewpoint, however, ignores the institutions of the Mysteries—those secret schools into whose profundities of idealism nearly all of the first philosophers of antiquity were initiated.

When the physical body of pagan thought collapsed, an attempt was made to resurrect the form by instilling new life into it by the unveiling of its mystical truths. This effort apparently was barren of results. Despite the antagonism, however, between pristine Christianity and Neo-Platonism many basic tenets of the latter were accepted by the former and woven into the fabric of Patristic philosophy. Briefly described, Neo-Platonism is a philosophic code which conceives every physical or concrete body of doctrine to be merely the shell of a spiritual verity which may be discovered through meditation and certain exercises of a mystic nature. In comparison to the esoteric spiritual truths which they contain, the corporeal bodies of religion and philosophy were considered relatively of little value. Likewise, no emphasis was placed upon the material sciences.

The term *Patristic* is employed to designate the philosophy of the Fathers of the early Christian

Church. Patristic philosophy is divided into two general epochs: ante-Nicene and post-Nicene. The ante-Nicene period in the main was devoted to attacks upon paganism and to apologies and defenses of Christianity. The entire structure of pagan philosophy was assailed and the dictates of faith elevated above those of reason. In some instances efforts were made to reconcile the evident truths of paganism with Christian revelation. Eminent among the ante-Nicene Fathers were St. Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Justin Martyr. In the post-Nicene period more emphasis was placed upon the unfolding of Christian philosophy along Platonic and Neo-Platonic lines, resulting in the appearance of many strange documents of a lengthy, rambling, and ambiguous nature, nearly all of which were philosophically unsound. The post-Nicene philosophers included Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, and Cyril of Alexandria. The Patristic school is notable for its emphasis upon the supremacy of man throughout the universe. Man was conceived to be a separate and divine creation—the crowning achievement of Deity and an exception to the suzerainty of natural law. To the Patristics it was inconceivable that there should ever exist another creature so noble, so fortunate, or so able as man, for whose sole benefit and edification all the kingdoms of Nature were primarily created.

Patristic philosophy culminated in *Augustinianism*, which may best be defined as Christian Platonism. Opposing the *Pelagian* doctrine that man is the author of his own salvation, Augustinianism elevated the church and its dogmas to a position of absolute infallibility—a position which it successfully maintained until the Reformation. *Gnosticism*, a system of emanationism, interpreting Christianity in terms of Greek, Egyptian, and Persian metaphysics, appeared in the latter part of the first century of the Christian Era. Practically all the information extant regarding the Gnostics and their doctrines, stigmatized as heresy by the ante-Nicene Church Fathers, is derived from the accusations made against them, particularly from the writings of St. Irenæus. In the third century appeared *Manichæism*, a dualistic system of Persian origin, which taught that Good and Evil

were forever contending for universal supremacy. In Manichæism, Christ is conceived to be the Principle of redeeming Good in contradistinction to the man Jesus, who was viewed as an evil personality.

The death of Boethius in the sixth century marked the close of the ancient Greek school of philosophy. The ninth century saw the rise of the new school of *Scholasticism*, which sought to reconcile philosophy with theology. Representative of the main divisions of the Scholastic school were the *Eclecticism* of John of Salisbury, the *Mysticism* of Bernard of Clairvaux and St. Bonaventura, the *Rationalism* of Peter Abelard, and the pantheistic *Mysticism* of *Meister Eckhart*. Among the Arabian Aristotelians were Avicenna and Averroes. The zenith of Scholasticism was reached with the advent of Albertus Magnus and his illustrious disciple, St. Thomas Aquinas. *Thomism* (the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, sometimes referred to as the Christian Aristotle) sought to reconcile the various factions of the Scholastic school. Thomism was basically Aristotelian with the added concept that faith is a projection of reason.

Scotism, or the doctrine of *Voluntarism* promulgated by Joannes Duns Scotus, a Franciscan Scholastic, emphasized the power and efficacy of the individual will, as opposed to Thomism. The outstanding characteristic of Scholasticism was its frantic effort to cast all European thought in an Aristotelian mold. Eventually the Schoolmen descended to the level of mere wordmongers who picked the words of Aristotle so clean that nothing but the bones remained. It was this decadent school of meaningless verbiage against which Sir Francis Bacon directed his bitter shafts of irony and which he relegated to the potter's field of discarded notions.

The Baconian, or inductive, system of reasoning (whereby facts are arrived at by a process of observation and verified by experimentation) cleared the way for the schools of modern science. Bacon was followed by Thomas Hobbes (for some time his secretary), who held mathematics to be the only exact science and thought to be essentially a mathematical process. Hobbes declared matter to be the only reality, and scientific investigation to be limited to the study of bodies, the phenomena relative to their

probable causes, and the consequences which flow from them under every variety of circumstance. Hobbes laid special stress upon the significance of words, declaring understanding to be the faculty of perceiving the relationship between words and the objects for which they stand.

Having broken away from the scholastic and theological schools, *Post-Reformation*, or modern, philosophy experienced a most prolific growth along many diverse lines. According to Humanism, man is the measure of all things; *Rationalism* makes the reasoning faculties the basis of all knowledge; *Political Philosophy* holds that man must comprehend his natural, social, and national privileges; Empiricism declares that alone to be true which is demonstrable by experiment or experience; *Moralism* emphasizes the necessity of right conduct as a fundamental philosophic tenet; *Idealism* asserts the realities of the universe to be superphysical—either mental or psychical; *Realism*, the reverse; and *Phenomenalism* restricts knowledge to facts or events which can be scientifically described or explained. The most recent developments in the field of philosophic thought are *Behaviorism* and *Neo-Realism*. The former estimates the intrinsic characteristics through an analysis of behavior; the latter may be summed up as the total extinction of idealism.

Baruch de Spinoza, the eminent Dutch philosopher, conceived God to be a substance absolutely self-existent and needing no other conception besides itself to render it complete and intelligible. The nature of this Being was held by Spinoza to be comprehensible only through its attributes, which are extension and thought: these combine to form an endless variety of *aspects* or *modes*. The mind of man is one of the modes of infinite thought; the body of man one of the modes of infinite extension. Through reason man is enabled to elevate himself above the illusionary world of the senses and find eternal repose in perfect union with the Divine Essence. Spinoza, it has been said, deprived God of all personality, making Deity synonymous with the universe.

German philosophy had its inception with Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibnitz, whose theories are permeated with the qualities of optimism and ide-

alism. Leibnitz's criteria of *sufficient reason* revealed to him the insufficiency of Descartes' theory of extension, and he therefore concluded that substance itself contained an inherent power in the form of an incalculable number of separate and all-sufficient units. Matter reduced to its ultimate particles ceases to exist as a substantial body, being resolved into a mass of immaterial ideas or metaphysical units of power, to which Leibnitz applied the term *monad*. Thus the universe is composed of an infinite number of separate monadic entities unfolding spontaneously through the objectification of innate active qualities. All things are conceived as consisting of single monads of varying magnitudes or of aggregations of these bodies, which may exist as physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual substances. God is the first and greatest Monad; the spirit of man is an awakened monad in contradistinction to the lower kingdoms whose governing monadic powers are in a semi-dormant state.

Though a product of the Leibnitzian-Wolfian school, Immanuel Kant, like Locke, dedicated himself to investigation of the powers and limits of human understanding. The result was his critical philosophy, embracing the critique of pure reason, the critique of practical reason, and the critique of judgment. Dr. W. J. Durant sums up Kant's philosophy in the concise statement that he rescued mind from matter. The mind Kant conceived to be the selector and coordinator of all perceptions, which in turn are the result of sensations grouping themselves about some external object. In the classification of sensations and ideas the mind employs certain categories: of sense, time and space; of understanding, quality, relation, modality, and causation; and the unity of apperception. Being subject to mathematical laws, time and space are considered absolute and sufficient bases for exact thinking. Kant's practical reason declared that while the nature of *noumenon* could never be comprehended by the reason, the fact of morality proves the existence of three necessary postulates: free will, immortality, and God. In the critique of judgment Kant demonstrates the union of the *noumenon* and the *phenomenon* in art and biological evolution. German *superintellectual-*

THE PTOLEMAIC SCHEME OF THE UNIVERSE



FROM AN OLD PRINT, COURTESY OF CARL OSCAR BORG

In ridiculing the geocentric system of astronomy expounded by Claudius Ptolemy, modern astronomers have overlooked the philosophic key to the Ptolemaic system. The universe of Ptolemy is a diagrammatic representation of the relationships existing between the various divine and elemental parts of every creature, and is not concerned with astronomy as that science is now comprehended. In the above figure, special attention is called to the three circles of zodiacs surrounding the orbits of the planets. These zodiacs represent the threefold spiritual constitution of the universe. The orbits of the planets are the Governors of the World and the four elemental spheres in the center represent the physical constitution of both man and the universe, Ptolemy's scheme of the universe is simply a cross section of the universal aura, the planets and elements to which he refers having no relation to those recognized by modern astronomers.

ism is the outgrowth of an overemphasis of Kant's theory of the autocratic supremacy of the mind over sensation and thought. The philosophy of Johann Gottlieb Fichte was a projection of Kant's philosophy, wherein he attempted to unite Kant's practical reason with his pure reason. Fichte held that the known is merely the contents of the consciousness of the knower, and that nothing can exist to the knower

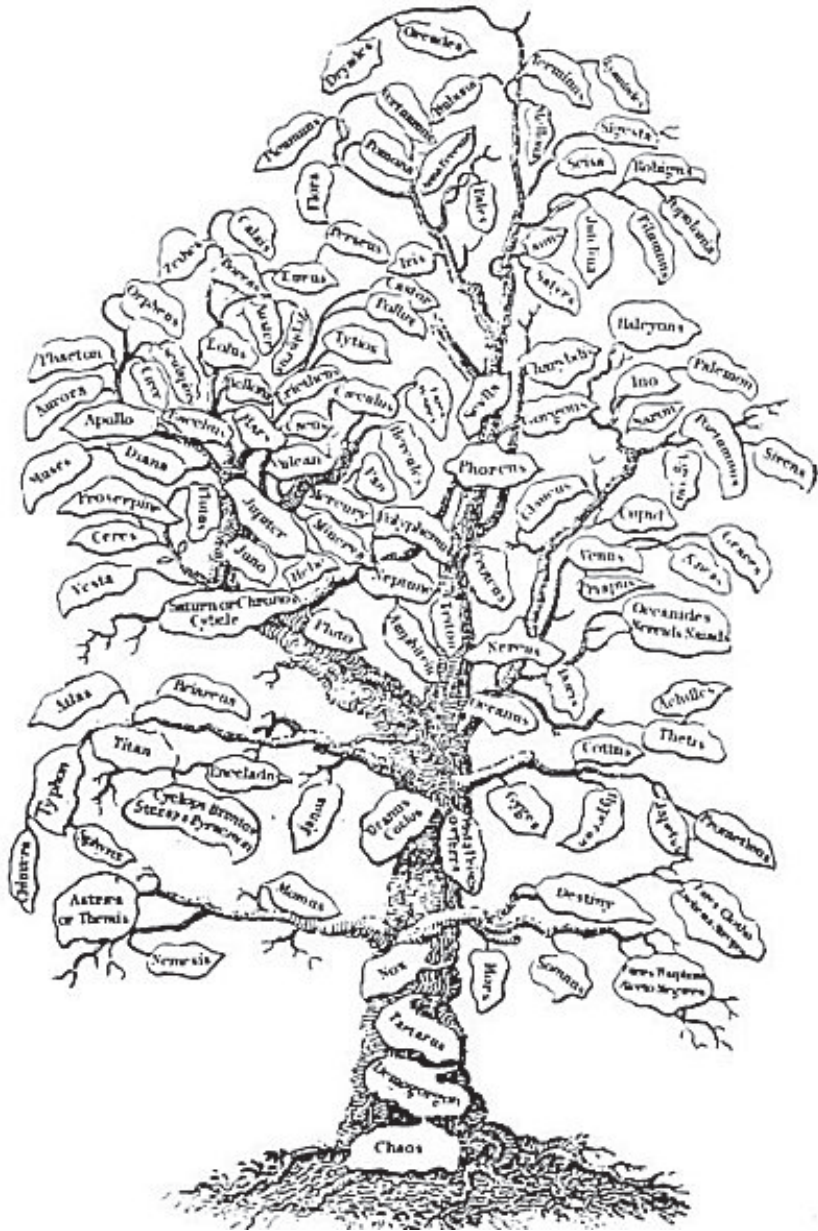
until it becomes part of those contents. Nothing is actually real, therefore, except the facts of one's own mental experience.

Recognizing the necessity of certain objective realities, Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, who succeeded Fichte in the chair of philosophy at Jena, first employed the doctrine of identity as the groundwork for a complete system of philosophy. Whereas

Fichte regarded self as the Absolute, von Schelling conceived infinite and eternal Mind to be the all-pervading Cause. Realization of the Absolute is made possible by intellectual intuition which, being a superior or spiritual sense, is able to dissociate itself from both subject and object. Kant's categories of space and time von Schelling conceived to be positive and negative respectively, and material existence the result of the reciprocal action of these two expressions. Von Schelling also held that the Absolute in its process of self-development proceeds according to a law or rhythm consisting of three movements. The first, a reflective movement, is the attempt of the Infinite to embody itself in the finite. The second, that of subsumption, is the attempt of the Absolute to return to the Infinite after involvement in the finite. The third, that of reason, is the neutral point wherein the two former movements are blended.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel considered the intellectual intuition of von Schelling to be philosophically unsound and hence turned his attention to the establishment of a system of philosophy based upon pure logic. Of Hegel it has been said that he began with nothing and showed with logical precision how everything had proceeded from it in logical order. Hegel elevated logic to a position of supreme importance, in fact as a quality of the Absolute itself. God he conceived to be a process of unfolding which never attains to the condition of unfoldment. In like manner, thought is without either beginning or end. Hegel further believed that all things owe their existence to their opposites and that all opposites are actually identical. Thus the only existence is the relationship of opposites to each other, through whose combinations new elements are produced. As the Divine

THE TREE OF CLASSICAL MYTHOLOGY

FROM HORT'S *THE NEW PANTHEON*

Before a proper appreciation of the deeper scientific aspects of Greek mythology is possible, it is necessary to organize the Greek pantheon and arrange its gods, goddesses, and various superhuman hierarchies in concatenated order. Proclus, the great Neo-Platonist, in his commentaries on the theology of Plato, gives an invaluable key to the sequence of the various deities in relation to the First Cause and the inferior powers emanating from themselves.

When thus arranged, the divine hierarchies may be likened to the branches of a great tree. The roots of this tree are firmly imbedded in Unknowable Being. The trunk and larger branches of the tree symbolize the superior gods; the twigs and leaves, the innumerable existences dependent upon the first and unchanging Power.

Mind is an eternal process of thought never accomplished, Hegel assails the very foundation of theism and his philosophy limits immortality to the ever-flowing Deity alone. Evolution is consequently the never-ending flow of Divine Consciousness out of itself; all creation, though continually moving, never arrives at any state other than that of ceaseless flow.

Johann Friedrich Herbart's philosophy was a realistic reaction from the idealism of Fichte and von Schelling. To Herbart the true basis of philosophy was the great mass of phenomena continually moving through the human mind. Examination of phenomena, however, demonstrates that a great part of it is unreal, at least incapable of supplying the mind with actual truth. To correct the false impressions caused by phenomena and discover reality, Herbart believed it necessary to resolve phenomena into separate elements, for reality exists in the elements and not in the whole. He stated that objects can be classified by three general terms: thing, matter, and mind; the first a unit of several properties, the second an existing object, the third a self-conscious being. All three notions give rise, however, to certain contradictions, with whose solution Herbart is primarily concerned. For example, consider matter. Though capable of filling space, if reduced to its ultimate state it consists of incomprehensibly minute units of divine energy occupying no physical space whatsoever.

The true subject of Arthur Schopenhauer's philosophy is the will; the object of his philosophy is the elevation of the mind to the point where it is capable of controlling the will. Schopenhauer likens the will to a strong blind man who carries on his shoulders the intellect, which is a weak lame man possessing the power of sight. The will is the tireless cause of manifestation and every part of Nature the product of will. The brain is the product of the will to know; the hand the product of the will to grasp. The entire intellectual and emotional constitutions of man are subservient to the will and are largely concerned with the effort to justify the dictates of the will. Thus the mind creates elaborate systems of thought simply to prove the necessity of the thing willed. Genius, however, represents the state where-

in the intellect has gained supremacy over the will and the life is ruled by reason and not by impulse. The strength of Christianity, said Schopenhauer, lay in its pessimism and conquest of individual will. His own religious viewpoints resembled closely the Buddhistic. To him Nirvana represented the subjugation of will. Life—the manifestation of the blind will to live—he viewed as a misfortune, claiming that the true philosopher was one who, recognizing the wisdom of death, resisted the inherent urge to reproduce his kind.

Of Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche it has been said that his peculiar contribution to the cause of human hope was the glad tidings that God had died of pity! The outstanding features of Nietzsche's philosophy are his doctrine of eternal recurrence and the extreme emphasis placed by him upon the *will to power*—a projection of Schopenhauer's will to live. Nietzsche believed the purpose of existence to be the production of a type of all-powerful individual, designated by him the superman. This superman was the product of careful culturing, for if not separated forcibly from the mass and consecrated to the production of power, the individual would sink back to the level of the deadly mediocre. Love, Nietzsche said, should be sacrificed to the production of the superman and those only should marry who are best fitted to produce this outstanding type. Nietzsche also believed in the rule of the aristocracy, both blood and breeding being essential to the establishment of this superior type. Nietzsche's doctrine did not liberate the masses; it rather placed over them supermen for whom their inferior brothers and sisters should be perfectly reconciled to die. Ethically and politically, the superman was a law unto himself. To those who understand the true meaning of power to be virtue, self-control, and truth, the ideality behind Nietzsche's theory is apparent. To the superficial, however, it is a philosophy heartless and calculating, concerned solely with the survival of the fittest.

Of the other German schools of philosophic thought, limitations of space preclude detailed mention. The more recent developments of the German school are *Freudianism* and *Relativism* (often called the Einstein theory). The former is a system of psy-

choanalysis through psychopathic and neurological phenomena; the latter attacks the accuracy of mechanical principles dependent upon the present theory of velocity.

René Descartes stands at the head of the French school of philosophy and shares with Sir Francis Bacon the honor of founding the systems of modern science and philosophy. As Bacon based his conclusions upon observation of external things, so Descartes founded his metaphysical philosophy upon observation of internal things. *Cartesianism* (the philosophy of Descartes) first eliminates all things and then replaces as fundamental those premises without which existence is impossible. Descartes defined an idea as that which fills the mind when we conceive a thing. The truth of an idea must be determined by the criteria of clarity and distinctness. Hence Descartes, held that a clear and distinct idea must be true. Descartes has the distinction also of evolving his own philosophy without recourse to authority. Consequently his conclusions are built up from the simplest of premises and grow in complexity as the structure of his philosophy takes form.

The *Positive* philosophy of Auguste Comte is based upon the theory that the human intellect develops through three stages of thought. The first and lowest stage is theological; the second, metaphysical; and the third and highest, positive. Thus theology and metaphysics are the feeble intellectual efforts of humanity's child-mind and positivism is the mental expression of the adult intellect. In his *Cours de Philosophie positive*, Comte writes:

"In the final, the positive state, the mind has given over the vain search after Absolute notions, the origin and destination of the universe, and the causes of phenomena, and applies itself to the study of their laws,—that is, their invariable relations of succession and resemblance. Reasoning and observation, duly combined, are the means of this knowledge."

Comte's theory is described as an "enormous system of materialism." According to Comte, it was formerly said that the heavens declare the glory of God, but now they only recount the glory of Newton

and Laplace.

Among the French schools of philosophy are *Traditionalism* (often applied to Christianity), which esteems tradition as the proper foundation for philosophy; the *Sociological* school, which regards humanity as one vast social organism; the *Encyclopedists*, whose efforts to classify knowledge according to the Baconian system revolutionized European thought; *Voltaireism*, which assailed the divine origin of the Christian faith and adopted an attitude of extreme skepticism toward all matters pertaining to theology; and *Neo-Criticism*, a French revision of the doctrines of Immanuel Kant.

Henri Bergson, the intuitionist, undoubtedly the greatest living French philosopher, presents a theory of mystic anti-intellectualism founded upon the premise of creative evolution. His rapid rise to popularity is due to his appeal to the finer sentiments in human nature, which rebel against the hopelessness and helplessness of materialistic science and realistic philosophy. Bergson sees God as life continually struggling against the limitations of matter. He even conceives the possible victory of life over matter, and in time the annihilation of death.

Applying the Baconian method to the mind, John Locke, the great English philosopher, declared that everything which passes through the mind is a legitimate object of mental philosophy, and that these mental phenomena are as real and valid as the objects of any other science. In his investigations of the origin of phenomena Locke departed from the Baconian requirement that it was first necessary to make a natural history of facts. The mind was regarded by Locke to be blank until experience is inscribed upon it. Thus the mind is built up of received impressions plus reflection. The soul Locke believed to be incapable of apprehension of Deity, and man's realization or cognition of God to be merely an inference of the reasoning faculty. David Hume was the most enthusiastic and also the most powerful of the disciples of Locke.

Attacking Locke's sensationalism, Bishop George Berkeley substituted for it a philosophy founded on Locke's fundamental premises but which he de-

A CHRISTIAN TRINITY



FROM HONE'S ANCIENT MYSTERIES DESCRIBED

In an effort to set forth in an appropriate figure the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, it was necessary to devise an image in which the three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—were separate and yet one. In different parts of Europe may be seen figures similar to the above, wherein three faces are united in one head. This is a legitimate method of for to those able to realize the sacred significance of the threefold head a great mystery is revealed. However, in the presence of such applications of symbology in Christian art, it is scarcely proper to consider the philosophers of other faiths as benighted if, like the Hindus, they have a three-faced Brahma, or, like the Romans, a two-faced Janus.

veloped as a system of idealism. Berkeley held that ideas are the real objects of knowledge. He declared it impossible to adduce proof that sensations are occasioned by material objects; he also attempted to

prove that matter has no existence. Berkeleianism holds that the universe is permeated and governed by mind. Thus the belief in the existence of material objects is merely a mental condition, and the objects themselves may well be fabrications of the mind. At the same time Berkeley considered it worse than insanity to question the accuracy of the perceptions; for if the power of the perceptive faculties be questioned man is reduced to a creature incapable of knowing, estimating, or realizing anything whatsoever.

In the *Associationalism* of Hartley and Hume was advanced the theory that the association of ideas is the fundamental principle of psychology and the explanation for all mental phenomena. Hartley held that if a sensation be repeated several times there is a tendency towards its spontaneous repetition, which may be awakened by association with some other idea even though the object causing the original reaction be absent. The *Utilitarianism* of Jeremy Bentham, Archdeacon Paley, and James and John Stuart Mill declares that to be the greatest good which is the most useful to the greatest number. John Stuart Mill believed that if it is possible through sensation to secure knowledge of the *properties* of things, it is also possible through a higher state of the mind—that is, intuition or reason—to gain a knowledge of the true substance of things.

Darwinism is the doctrine of natural selection and physical evolution. It has been said of Charles Robert Darwin that he determined to banish spirit altogether from the universe and make the infinite and omnipresent Mind itself synonymous with the all-pervading powers of an impersonal Nature. *Agnosticism* and *Neo-Hegelianism* are also noteworthy products of this period of philosophic thought. The former is the belief that the nature of ultimates is unknowable; the latter an English and American revival of Hegel's idealism.

Dr. W. J. Durant declares that Herbert Spencer's Great Work, *First Principles*, made him almost at once the most famous philosopher of his time. *Spencerianism* is a philosophic positivism which describes evolution as an ever-increasing complexity with equilibrium as its highest possible state.

According to Spencer, life is a continuous process from homogeneity to heterogeneity and back from heterogeneity to homogeneity. Life also involves the continual adjustment of internal relations to external relations. Most famous of all Spencer's aphorisms is his definition of Deity: "God is infinite intelligence, infinitely diversified through infinite time and infinite space, manifesting through an infinitude of ever-evolving individualities." The universality of the law of evolution was emphasized by Spencer, who applied it not only to the form but also to the intelligence behind the form. In every manifestation of being he recognized the fundamental tendency of unfoldment from simplicity to complexity, observing that when the point of equilibrium is reached it is always followed by the process of dissolution. According to Spencer, however, disintegration took place only that reintegration might follow upon a higher level of being.

The chief position in the Italian school of philosophy should be awarded to Giordano Bruno, who, after enthusiastically accepting Copernicus' theory that the sun is the center of the solar system, declared the sun to be a star and all the stars to be suns. In Bruno's time the earth was regarded as the center of all creation. Consequently when he thus relegated the world and man to an obscure corner in space the effect was cataclysmic. For the heresy of affirming a multiplicity of universes and conceiving Cosmos to be so vast that no single creed could fill it, Bruno paid the forfeit of his life.

Vicoism is a philosophy based upon the conclusions of Giovanni Battista Vico, who held that God controls His world not miraculously but through natural law. The laws by which men rule themselves, Vico declared, issue from a spiritual source within mankind which is *en rapport* with the law of the Deity. Hence material law is of divine origin and reflects the dictates of the Spiritual Father. The philosophy of *Ontologism* developed by Vincenzo Gioberti (generally considered more as a theologian than a philosopher) posits God as the only being and the origin of all knowledge, knowledge being identical with Deity itself. God is consequently called Being; all other manifestations are existences. Truth is to

be discovered through reflection upon this mystery.

The most important of modern Italian philosophers is Benedetto Croce, a Hegelian idealist. Croce conceives ideas to be the only reality. He is anti-theological in his viewpoints, does not believe in the immortality of the soul, and seeks to substitute ethics and aesthetics for religion. Among other branches of Italian philosophy should be mentioned *Sensism* (Sensationalism), which posits the sense perceptions as the sole channels for the reception of knowledge; *Criticism*, or the philosophy of accurate judgment; and *Neo-Scholasticism*, which is a revival of Thomism encouraged by the Roman Catholic Church.

The two outstanding schools of American philosophy are *Transcendentalism* and *Pragmatism*. Transcendentalism, exemplified in the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson, emphasizes the power of the transcendental over the physical. Many of Emerson's writings show pronounced Oriental influence, particularly his essays on the Oversoul and the Law of Compensation. The theory of Pragmatism, while not original with Professor William James, owes its widespread popularity as a philosophic tenet to his efforts. Pragmatism may be defined as the doctrine that the meaning and nature of things are to be discovered from consideration of their consequences. The true, according to James, "is only an expedient in the way of our thinking, just as 'the right' is only an expedient in the way of our behaving." (See his *Pragmatism*.) John Dewey, the *Instrumentalist*, who applies the experimental attitude to all the aims of life, should be considered a commentator of James. To Dewey, growth and change are limitless and no ultimates are postulated. The long residence in America of George Santayana warrants the listing of this great Spaniard among the ranks of American philosophers. Defending himself with the shield of skepticism alike from the illusions of the senses and the cumulative errors of the ages, Santayana seeks to lead mankind into a more apprehending state denominated by him *the life of reason*.

(In addition to the authorities already quoted, in the preparation of the foregoing abstract of the main branches of philosophic thought the present writer has had recourse to Stanley's *History of*

Philosophy; Morell's *An Historical and Critical View of the Speculative Philosophy of Europe in the Nineteenth Century*; Singer's *Modern Thinkers and Present Problems*; Rand's *Modern Classical Philosophers*; Windelband's *History of Philosophy*; Perry's *Present Philosophical Tendencies*; Hamilton's *Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic*; and Durant's *The Story of Philosophy*.)

Having thus traced the more or less sequential development of philosophic speculation from Thales to James and Bergson, it is now in order to direct the reader's attention to the elements leading to and the circumstances attendant upon the genesis of philosophic thinking. Although the Hellenes proved themselves peculiarly responsive to the disciplines of philosophy, this science of sciences should not be considered indigenous to them. "Although some of the Grecians," writes Thomas Stanley, "have challenged to their nation the original of philosophy, yet the more learned of them have acknowledged it [to be] derived from the East." The magnificent institutions of Hindu, Chaldean, and Egyptian learning must be recognized as the actual source of Greek wisdom. The last was patterned after the shadow cast by the sanctuaries of Ellora, Ur, and Memphis upon the thought substance of a primitive people. Thales, Pythagoras, and Plato in their philosophic wanderings contacted many distant cults and brought back the lore of Egypt and the inscrutable Orient.

From indisputable facts such as these it is evident that philosophy emerged from the religious Mysteries of antiquity, not being separated from religion until after the decay of the Mysteries. Hence he who would fathom the depths of philosophic thought must familiarize himself with the teachings of those initiated priests designated as the first custodians of divine revelation. The Mysteries claimed to be the guardians of a transcendental knowledge so profound as to be incomprehensible save to the most exalted intellect and so potent as to be revealed with safety only to those in whom personal ambition was dead and who had consecrated their lives to the unselfish service of humanity. Both the dignity of these sacred institutions and the validity of their claim to possession of Universal Wisdom

are attested by the most illustrious philosophers of antiquity, who were themselves initiated into the profundities of the secret doctrine and who bore witness to its efficacy.

The question may legitimately be propounded: If these ancient mystical institutions were of such "great pith and moment," why is so little information now available concerning them and the arcana they claimed to possess? The answer is simple enough: The Mysteries were secret societies, binding their initiates to inviolable secrecy, and avenging with death the betrayal of their sacred trusts. Although these schools were the true inspiration of the various doctrines promulgated by the ancient philosophers, the fountainhead of those doctrines was never revealed to the profane. Furthermore, in the lapse of time the teachings became so inextricably linked with the names of their disseminators that the actual but recondite source—the Mysteries—came to be wholly ignored.

Symbolism is the language of the Mysteries; in fact it is the language not only of mysticism and philosophy but of all Nature, for every law and power active in universal procedure is manifested to the limited sense perceptions of man through the medium of symbol. Every form existing in the diversified sphere of being is symbolic of the divine activity by which it is produced. By symbols men have ever sought to communicate to each other those thoughts which transcend the limitations of language. Rejecting man-conceived dialects as inadequate and unworthy to perpetuate divine ideas, the Mysteries thus chose symbolism as a far more ingenious and ideal method of preserving their transcendental knowledge. In a single figure a symbol may both reveal and conceal, for to the wise the subject of the symbol is obvious, while to the ignorant the figure remains inscrutable. Hence, he who seeks to unveil the secret doctrine of antiquity must search for that doctrine not upon the open pages of books which might fall into the hands of the unworthy but in the place where it was originally concealed.

Far-sighted were the initiates of antiquity. They realized that nations come and go, that empires rise and fall, and that the golden ages of art, science, and

THE ORPHIC EGG



FROM BRYANT'S *AN ANALYSIS OF ANCIENT MYTHOLOGY*

The ancient symbol of the Orphic Mysteries was the serpent-entwined egg, which signified Cosmos as encircled by the fiery Creative Spirit. The egg also represents the soul of the philosopher; the serpent, the Mysteries. At the time of initiation the shell is broke, and man emerges from the embryonic state of physical existence wherein he had remained through the fetal period of philosophic regeneration.

idealism are succeeded by the dark ages of superstition. With the needs of posterity foremost in mind, the sages of old went to inconceivable extremes to make certain that their knowledge should be preserved. They engraved it upon the face of mountains and concealed it within the measurements of colossal images, each of which was a geometric marvel. Their knowledge of chemistry and mathematics they hid within mythologies which the ignorant would perpetuate, or in the spans and arches of their temples which time has not entirely obliterated. They wrote in characters that neither the vandalism of men nor the ruthlessness of the elements could completely efface. Today men gaze with awe and reverence upon the mighty Memnons standing alone on the sands of Egypt, or upon the strange terraced pyramids of Palanque. Mute testimonies these are of the lost arts and sciences of antiquity; and concealed this wisdom

must remain until this race has learned to read the universal language—SYMBOLISM.

The book to which this is the introduction is dedicated to the proposition that concealed within the emblematic figures, allegories, and rituals of the ancients is a secret doctrine concerning the inner mysteries of life, which doctrine has been preserved *in toto* among a small band of initiated minds since the beginning of the world. Departing, these illumined philosophers left their formulæ that others, too, might attain to understanding. But, lest these secret processes fall into uncultured hands and be perverted, the Great Arcanum was always concealed in symbol or allegory; and those who can today discover its lost keys may open with them a treasure house of philosophic, scientific, and religious truths.

The Ancient Mysteries And Secret Societies

Which Have Influenced Modern Masonic Symbolism

WHEN CONFRONTED WITH A problem involving the use of the reasoning faculties, individuals of strong intellect keep their poise, and seek to reach a solution by obtaining facts bearing upon the question. Those of immature mentality, on the other hand, when similarly confronted, are overwhelmed. While the former may be qualified to solve the riddle of their own destiny, the latter must be led like a flock of sheep and taught in simple language. They depend almost entirely upon the ministrations of the shepherd. The Apostle Paul said that these little ones must be fed with milk, but that meat is the food of strong men. Thoughtlessness is almost synonymous with childishness, while thoughtfulness is symbolic of maturity.

There are, however, but few mature minds in the world; and thus it was that the philosophic-religious doctrines of the pagans were divided to meet the needs of these two fundamental groups of human intellect—one philosophic, the other incapable of appreciating the deeper mysteries of life. To the discerning few were revealed the *esoteric*, or spiritual, teachings, while the unqualified many received only the literal, or *exoteric*, interpretations. In order to make simple the great truths of Nature and the abstract principles of natural law, the vital forces of the universe were personified, becoming the gods and goddesses of the ancient mythologies. While the ignorant multitudes brought their offerings to the altars of Priapus and Pan (deities representing the procreative energies), the wise recognized in these marble statues only symbolic concretions of great abstract truths.

In all cities of the ancient world were temples for public worship and offering. In every community also were philosophers and mystics, deeply versed in Nature's lore. These individuals were usually banded together, forming seclusive philosophic and religious schools. The more important of these groups were known as the *Mysteries*. Many of the great minds of antiquity were initiated into these secret fraternities by strange and mysterious rites, some of which were extremely cruel. Alexander Wilder defines the Mysteries as "Sacred dramas performed at stated periods. The most celebrated were those of Isis, Sabazius, Cybele, and Eleusis." After being admitted, the initiates were instructed in the secret wisdom which had been preserved for ages. Plato, an initiate of one of these sacred orders, was severely criticized because in his writings he revealed to the public many of the secret philosophic principles of the Mysteries.

Every pagan nation had (and has) not only its state religion, but another into which the philosophic elect alone have gained entrance. Many of these ancient cults vanished from the earth without revealing their secrets, but a few have survived the test of ages and their mysterious symbols are still preserved. Much of the ritualism of Freemasonry is based on the trials to which candidates were subjected by the ancient hierophants before the keys of wisdom were entrusted to them.

Few realize the extent to which the ancient secret schools influenced contemporary intellects and, through those minds, posterity. Robert Macoy, 33°, in his *General History of Freemasonry*, pays a magnificent tribute to the part played by the ancient Mysteries in the rearing of the edifice of human culture. He says, in part: "It appears that all the perfection of civilization, and all the advancement made in philosophy, science, and art among the ancients are due to those institutions which, under the veil of mystery, sought to illustrate the sublimest truths of religion, morality, and virtue, and impress them on the hearts of their disciples. (...) Their chief object was to teach the doctrine of one God, the resurrection of man to eternal life, the dignity of the human soul, and to lead the people to see the shadow of the

deity, in the beauty, magnificence, and splendor of the universe.”

With the decline of virtue, which has preceded the destruction of every nation of history, the Mysteries became perverted. Sorcery took the place of the divine magic. Indescribable practices (such as the Bacchanalia) were introduced, and perversion ruled supreme; for no institution can be any better than the members of which it is composed. In despair, the few who were true sought to preserve the secret doctrines from oblivion. In some cases they succeeded, but more often the arcanum was lost and only the empty shell of the Mysteries remained.

Thomas Taylor has written, “Man is naturally a religious animal.” From the earliest dawning of his consciousness, man has worshiped and revered *things* as symbolic of the invisible, omnipresent, indescribable *Thing*, concerning which he could discover practically nothing. The pagan Mysteries opposed the Christians during the early centuries of their church, declaring that the new faith (Christianity) did not demand virtue and integrity as requisites for salvation. Celsus expressed himself on the subject in the following caustic terms:

“That I do not, however, accuse the Christians more bitterly than truth compels, may be conjectured from hence, that the cryers who call men to other mysteries proclaim as follows: ‘Let him approach whose hands are pure, and whose words are wise.’ And again, others proclaim: ‘Let him approach who is pure from all wickedness, whose soul is not conscious of any evil, and who leads a just and upright life.’ And these things are proclaimed by those who promise a purification from error. Let us now hear who those are that are called to the Christian mysteries: Whoever is a sinner, whoever is unwise, whoever is a fool, and whoever, in short, is miserable, him the kingdom of God will receive. Do you not, therefore, call a sinner, an unjust man, a thief, a housebreaker, a wizard, one who is sacrilegious, and a robber of sepulchres? What other persons would the cryer nominate, who should call robbers together?”

It was not the true faith of the early Christian

mystics that Celsus attacked, but the false forms that were creeping in even during his day. The ideals of early Christianity were based upon the high moral standards of the pagan Mysteries, and the first Christians who met under the city of Rome used as their places of worship the subterranean temples of Mithras, from whose cult has been borrowed much of the sacerdotalism of the modern church.

The ancient philosophers believed that no man could live intelligently who did not have a fundamental knowledge of Nature and her laws. Before man can obey, he must understand, and the Mysteries were devoted to instructing man concerning the operation of divine law in the terrestrial sphere. Few of the early cults actually worshiped anthropomorphic deities, although their symbolism might lead one to believe they did. They were moralistic rather than religionistic; philosophic rather than theologic. They taught man to use his faculties more intelligently, to be patient in the face of adversity, to be courageous when confronted by danger, to be true in the midst of temptation, and, most of all, to view a worthy life as the most acceptable sacrifice to God, and his body as an altar sacred to the Deity.

Sun worship played an important part in nearly all the early pagan Mysteries. This indicates the probability of their Atlantean origin, for the people of Atlantis were sun worshipers. The Solar Deity was usually personified as a beautiful youth, with long golden hair to symbolize the rays of the sun. This golden Sun God was slain by wicked ruffians, who personified the evil principle of the universe. By means of certain rituals and ceremonies, symbolic of purification and regeneration, this wonderful God of Good was brought back to life and became the Savior of His people. The secret processes whereby He was resurrected symbolized those cultures by means of which man is able to overcome his lower nature, master his appetites, and give expression to the higher side of himself. The Mysteries were organized for the purpose of assisting the struggling human creature to reawaken the spiritual powers which, surrounded by the flaming ring of lust and degeneracy, lay asleep within his soul. In other words, man was offered a way by which he could

A FEMALE HIEROPHANT OF THE MYSTERIES

FROM MONTFAUCON'S *ANTIQUITIES*

This illustration shows Cybele, here called the Syrian Goddess, in the robes of a hierophant. Montfaucon describes the figure as follows: "Upon her head is an episcopal mitre, adorned on the lower part with towers and pinnacles; over the gate of the city is a crescent, and beneath the circuit of the walls a crown of rays. The Goddess wears a sort of surplice, exactly like the surplice of a priest or bishop; and upon the surplice a tunic, which falls down to the legs; and over all an episcopal cope, with the twelve signs of the Zodiac wrought on the borders. The figure hath a lion on each side, and holds in its left hand a Tympanum, a Sistrum, a Distaff, a Caduceus, and another instrument. In her right hand she holds with her middle finger a thunderbolt, and upon the same animals, insects, and, as far as we may guess, flowers, fruit, a bow, a quiver, a torch, and a scythe." The whereabouts of the statue is unknown, the copy reproduced by Montfaucon being from drawings by Pirro Ligorio.

regain his lost estate. (See Wagner's *Siegfried*.)

In the ancient world, nearly all the secret societies were philosophic and religious. During the mediæval centuries, they were chiefly religious and political, although a few philosophic schools remained. In modern times, secret societies, in the Occidental countries, are largely political or fraternal, although in a few of them, as in Masonry, the ancient religious and philosophic principles still survive.

Space prohibits a detailed discussion of the secret schools. There were literally scores of these ancient cults, with branches in all parts of the Eastern and Western worlds. Some, such as those of Pythagoras and the Hermetists, show a decided Oriental influence, while the Rosicrucians, according to their own proclamations, gained much of their wisdom from Arabian mystics. Although the Mystery schools are usually associated with civilization, there is evidence that the most uncivilized peoples of prehistoric times had a knowledge of them. Natives of distant islands, many in the lowest forms of savagery, have mystic rituals and secret practices which, although primitive, are of a decided Masonic tinge.

The Druidic Mysteries of Britain and Gaul

"The original and primitive inhabitants of Britain, at some remote period, revived and reformed their national institutes. Their priest, or instructor, had hitherto been simply named Gwydd, but it was considered to have become necessary to divide this office between the national, or superior, priest and another whose influence [would] be more limited. From henceforth the former became Der-Wydd (Druid), or superior instructor, and [the latter] Go-Wydd, or O-Vydd (Ovate), subordinate instructor; and both went by the general name of Beirdd (Bards), or teachers of wisdom. As the system matured and augmented, the Bardic Order consisted of three classes, the Druids, Beirdd Braint, or privileged Bards, and Ovates." (See Samuel Meyrick and Charles Smith, *The Costume of The Original Inhabitants of The British Islands*.)

The origin of the word *Druid* is under dispute. Max Müller believes that, like the Irish word *Druí*, it means “the men of the oak trees.” He further draws attention to the fact that the forest gods and tree deities of the Greeks were called *dryades*. Some believe the word to be of Teutonic origin; others ascribe it to the Welsh. A few trace it to the Gaelic *druiddh*, which means “a wise man” or “a sorcerer.” In Sanskrit the word *dru* means “timber.”

At the time of the Roman conquest, the Druids were thoroughly ensconced in Britain and Gaul. Their power over the people was unquestioned, and there were instances in which armies, about to attack each other, sheathed their swords when ordered to do so by the white-robed Druids. No undertaking of great importance was scatted without the assistance of these patriarchs, who stood as mediators between the gods and men. The Druidic Order is deservedly credited with having had a deep understanding of Nature and her laws. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* states that geography, physical science, natural theology, and astrology were their favorite studies. The Druids had a fundamental knowledge of medicine, especially the use of herbs and *simples*. Crude surgical instruments also have been found in England and Ireland. An odd treatise on early British medicine states that every practitioner was expected to have a garden or back yard for the growing of certain herbs necessary to his profession. Eliphas Levi, the celebrated transcendentalist, makes the following significant statement:

“The Druids were priests and physicians, curing by magnetism and charging amulets with their fluidic influence. Their universal remedies were mistletoe and serpents’ eggs, because these substances attract the astral light in a special manner. The solemnity with which mistletoe was cut down drew upon this plant the popular confidence and rendered it powerfully magnetic. (...) The progress of magnetism will some day reveal to us the absorbing properties of mistletoe. We shall then understand the secret of those spongy growths which drew the unused virtues of plants and become surcharged with tinctures and savors. Mushrooms, truffles, gall on trees, and the dif-

ferent kinds of mistletoe will be employed with understanding by a medical science, which will be new because it is old (...) but one must not move quicker than science, which recedes that it may advance the further. (See *The History of Magic*.)

Not only was the mistletoe sacred as symbolic of the universal medicine, or panacea, but also because of the fact that it grew upon the oak tree. Through the symbol of the oak, the Druids worshiped the Supreme Deity; therefore, anything growing upon that tree was sacred to Him. At certain seasons, according to the positions of the sun, moon, and stars, the Arch-Druid climbed the oak tree and cut the mistletoe with a golden sickle consecrated for that service. The parasitic growth was caught in white cloths provided for the purpose, lest it touch the earth and be polluted by terrestrial vibrations. Usually a sacrifice of a white bull was made under the tree.

The Druids were initiates of a secret school that existed in their midst. This school, which closely resembled the Bacchic and Eleusinian Mysteries of Greece or the Egyptian rites of Isis and Osiris, is justly designated the *Druidic Mysteries*. There has been much speculation concerning the secret wisdom that the Druids claimed to possess. Their secret teachings were never written, but were communicated orally to specially prepared candidates. Robert Brown, 32°, is of the opinion that the British priests secured their information from Tyrian and Phoenician navigators who, thousands of years before the Christian Era, established colonies in Britain and Gaul while searching for tin. Thomas Maurice, in his *Indian Antiquities*, discourses at length on Phoenician, Carthaginian, and Greek expeditions to the British Isles for the purpose of procuring tin. Others are of the opinion that the Mysteries as celebrated by the Druids were of Oriental origin, possibly Buddhistic.

The proximity of the British Isles to the lost Atlantis may account for the sun worship which plays an important part in the rituals of Druidism. According to Artemidorus, Ceres and Persephone were worshiped on an island close to Britain with rites and ceremonies similar to those of Samothrace. There is

THE ARCH-DRUID IN HIS CEREMONIAL ROBES

FROM WELLCOME'S *ANCIENT CYMRIC MEDICINE*

The most striking adornment of the Arch-Druid was the *iodhan moran*, or breastplate of judgment, which possessed the mysterious Power of strangling any who made an untrue statement while wearing it. Godfrey Higgins states that this breastplate was put on the necks of witnesses to test the veracity of their evidence. The Druidic *tiara*, or *anguinum*, its front embossed with a number of points to represent the sun's rays, indicated that the priest was a personification of the rising sun. On the front of his belt the Arch-Druid wore the *liath meisicith*—a magic brooch, or buckle in the center of which was a large white stone. To this was attributed the power of drawing the fire of the gods down from heaven at the priest's command. This specially cut stone was a burning glass, by which the sun's rays were concentrated to light the altar fires. The Druids also had other symbolic implements, such as the peculiarly shaped golden sickle with which they cut the mistletoe from the oak, and the *cornan*, or scepter, in the form of a crescent, symbolic of the sixth day of the increasing moon and also of the Ark of Noah. An early initiate of the Druidic Mysteries related that admission to their midnight ceremony was gained by means of a glass boat, called *Cwrwg Gwydrin*. This boat symbolized the moon, which, floating upon the waters of eternity, preserved the seeds of living creatures within its boatlike crescent.

no doubt that the Druidic Pantheon includes a large number of Greek and Roman deities. This greatly amazed Cæsar during his conquest of Britain and Gaul, and caused him to affirm that these tribes adored Mercury, Apollo, Mars, and Jupiter, in a manner similar to that of the Latin countries. It is almost certain that the Druidic Mysteries were not indigenous to Britain or Gaul, but migrated from one of the more ancient civilizations.

The school of the Druids was divided into three distinct parts, and the secret teachings embodied therein are practically the same as the mysteries concealed under the allegories of Blue Lodge Masonry. The lowest of the three divisions was that of Ovate (Ovydd). This was an honorary degree, requiring no special purification or preparation. The Ovates dressed in green, the Druidic color of learning, and were expected to know something about medicine, astronomy, poetry if possible, and sometimes music. An Ovate was an individual admitted to the Druidic Order because of his general excellence and superior knowledge concerning the problems of life.

The second division was that of Bard (Beirdd). Its members were robed in sky-blue, to represent harmony and truth, and to them was assigned the labor of memorizing, at least in part, the twenty thousand verses of Druidic sacred poetry. They were often pictured with the primitive British or Irish harp—an instrument strung with human hair, and having as many strings as there were ribs on one side of the human body. These Bards were often chosen as teachers of candidates seeking entrance into the Druidic Mysteries. Neophytes wore striped robes of blue, green, and white, these being the three sacred colors of the Druidic Order.

The third division was that of Druid (Derwyddon). Its particular labor was to minister to the religious needs of the people. To reach this dignity, the candidate must first

become a Bard Braint. The Druids always dressed in white—symbolic of their purity, and the color used by them to symbolize the sun.

In order to reach the exalted position of *Arch-Druid*, or spiritual head of the organization, it was necessary for a priest to pass through the six successive degrees of the Druidic Order. (The members of the different degrees were differentiated by the colors of their sashes, for all of them wore robes of white.) Some writers are of the opinion that the title of *Arch-Druid* was hereditary, descending from father to son, but it is more probable that the honor was conferred by ballot election. Its recipient was chosen for his virtues and integrity from the most learned members of the higher Druidic degrees.

According to James Gardner, there were usually two *Arch-Druids* in Britain, one residing on the Isle of Anglesea and the other on the Isle of Man. Presumably there were others in Gaul. These dignitaries generally carried golden scepters and were crowned with wreaths of oak leaves, symbolic of their authority. The younger members of the Druidic Order were clean-shaven and modestly dressed, but the more aged had long gray beards and wore magnificent golden ornaments. The educational system of the Druids in Britain was superior to that of their colleagues on the Continent, and consequently many of the Gallic youths were sent to the Druidic colleges in Britain for their philosophical instruction and training.

Eliphas Levi states that the Druids lived in strict abstinence, studied the natural sciences, preserved the deepest secrecy, and admitted new members only after long probationary periods. Many of the priests of the order lived in buildings not unlike the monasteries of the modern world. They were associated in groups like ascetics of the Far East. Although celibacy was not demanded of them, few married. Many of the Druids retired from the world and lived as recluses in caves, in rough-stone houses, or in little shacks built in the depths of a forest. Here they prayed and medicated, emerging only to perform their religious duties.

James Freeman Clarke, in his *Ten Great Religions*,

describes the beliefs of the Druids as follows: “The Druids believed in three worlds and in transmigration from one to the other: In a world above this, in which happiness predominated; a world below, of misery; and this present state. This transmigration was to punish and reward and also to purify the soul. In the present world, said they, Good and Evil are so exactly balanced that man has the utmost freedom and is able to choose or reject either. The Welsh Triads tell us there are three objects of metempsychosis: to collect into the soul the properties of all being, to acquire a knowledge of all things, and to get power to conquer evil. There are also, they say, three kinds of knowledge: knowledge of the nature of each thing, of its cause, and its influence. There are three things which continually grow less: darkness, falsehood, and death. There are three which constantly increase: light, life, and truth.”

Like nearly all schools of the Mysteries, the teachings of the Druids were divided into two distinct sections. The simpler, a moral code, was taught to all the people, while the deeper, esoteric doctrine was given only to initiated priests. To be admitted to the order, a candidate was required to be of good family and of high moral character. No important secrets were intrusted to him until he had been tempted in many ways and his strength of character severely tried. The Druids taught the people of Britain and Gaul concerning the immortality of the soul. They believed in transmigration and apparently in reincarnation. They borrowed in one life, promising to pay back in the next. They believed in a purgatorial type of hell where they would be purged of their sins, afterward passing on to the happiness of unity with the gods. The Druids taught that all men would be saved, but that some must return to earth many times to learn the lessons of human life and to overcome the inherent evil of their own natures.

Before a candidate was intrusted with the secret doctrines of the Druids, he was bound with a vow of secrecy. These doctrines were imparted only in the depths of forests and in the darkness of caves. In these places, far from the haunts of men, the neophyte was instructed concerning the creation of the universe, the personalities of the gods, the laws

of Nature, the secrets of occult medicine, the mysteries of the celestial bodies, and the rudiments of magic and sorcery. The Druids had a great number of feast days. The new and full moon and the sixth day of the moon were sacred periods. It is believed that initiations took place only at the two solstices and the two equinoxes. At dawn of the 25th day of December, the birth of the Sun God was celebrated.

The secret teachings of the Druids are said by some to be tinctured with Pythagorean philosophy. The Druids had a Madonna, or Virgin Mother, with a Child in her arms, who was sacred to their Mysteries; and their Sun God was resurrected at the time of the year corresponding to that at which modern Christians celebrate Easter.

Both the cross and the serpent were sacred to the Druids, who made the former by cutting off all the branches of an oak tree and fastening one of them to the main trunk in the form of the letter T. This oaken cross became symbolic of their superior Deity. They also worshiped the sun, moon, and stars. The moon received their special veneration. Caesar stated that Mercury was one of the chief deities of the Gauls. The Druids are believed to have worshiped Mercury under the similitude of a stone cube. They also had great veneration for the Nature spirits (fairies, gnomes, and undines), little creatures of the forests and rivers to whom many offerings were made. Describing the temples of the Druids, Charles Heckethorn, in *The Secret Societies of All Ages & Countries*, says:

“Their temples wherein the sacred fire was preserved were generally situate on eminences and in dense groves of oak, and assumed various forms—circular, because a circle was the emblem of the universe; oval, in allusion to the mundane egg, from which issued, according to the traditions of many nations, the universe, or, according to others, our first parents; serpentine, because a serpent was the symbol of Hu, the Druidic Osiris; cruciform, because a cross is an emblem of regeneration; or winged, to represent the motion of the Divine Spirit. (...) Their chief deities were reducible to two—a male and a female, the great father and mother—Hu and Ceridwen, distin-

guished by the same characteristics as belong to Osiris and Isis, Bacchus and Ceres, or any other supreme god and goddess representing the two principles of all Being.”

Godfrey Higgins states that *Hu*, the Mighty, regarded as the first settler of Britain, came from a place which the Welsh *Triads* call the Summer Country, the present site of Constantinople. Albert Pike says that the Lost Word of Masonry is concealed in the name of the Druid god *Hu*. The meager information extant concerning the secret initiations of the Druids indicates a decided similarity between their Mystery school and the schools of Greece and Egypt. *Hu*, the Sun God, was murdered and, after a number of strange ordeals and mystic rituals, was restored to life.

There were three degrees of the Druidic Mysteries, but few successfully passed them all. The candidate was buried in a coffin, as symbolic of the death of the Sun God. The supreme test, however, was being sent out to sea in an open boat. While undergoing this ordeal, many lost their lives. Taliesin, an ancient scholar, who passed through the Mysteries, describes the initiation of the open boat in Faber's *Pagan Idolatry*. The few who passed this third degree were said to have been “born again,” and were instructed in the secret and hidden truths which the Druid priests had preserved from antiquity. From these initiates were chosen many of the dignitaries of the British religious and political world. (For further details, see Faber's *Pagan Idolatry*, Albert Pike's *Morals and Dogma*, and Godfrey Higgins' *Celtic Druids*.)

The Rites of Mithras

When the Persian Mysteries immigrated into Southern Europe, they were quickly assimilated by the Latin mind. The cult grew rapidly, especially among the Roman soldiery, and during the Roman wars of conquest the teachings were carried by the legionaries to nearly all parts of Europe. So powerful did the cult of Mithras become that at least one Roman Emperor was initiated into the order, which met in caverns under the city of Rome. Concerning the spread of this Mystery school through different

parts of Europe, C. W. King, in his *Gnostics and Their Remains*, says:

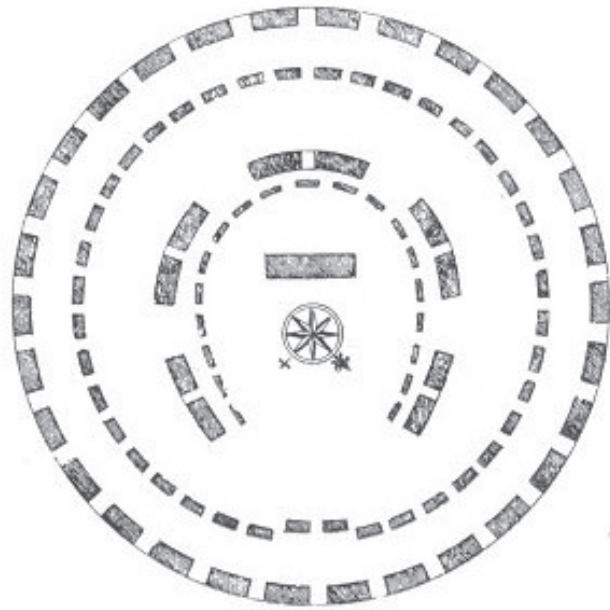
“Mithraic bas-reliefs cut on the faces of rocks or on stone tablets still abound in the countries formerly the western provinces of the Roman Empire; many exist in Germany, still more in France, and in this island (Britain) they have often been discovered on the line of the Picts’ Wall and the noted one at Bath.”

Alexander Wilder, in his *Philosophy and Ethics of the Zoroasters*, states that *Mithras* is the Zend title for the sun, and he is supposed to dwell within that shining orb. Mithras has a male and a female aspect, though not himself androgynous. As Mithras, he is the ford of the sun, powerful and radiant, and most magnificent of the *Yazatas* (Izads, or Genii, of the sun). As *Mithra*, this deity represents the feminine principle; the mundane universe is recognized as her symbol. She represents Nature as receptive and terrestrial, and as fruitful only when bathed in the glory of the solar orb. The Mithraic cult is a simplification of the more elaborate teachings of Zarathustra (Zoroaster), the Persian fire magician.

According to the Persians, there coexisted in eternity two principles. The first of these, *Ahura-Mazda*, or *Ormuzd*, was the Spirit of Good. From Ormuzd came forth a number of hierarchies of good and beautiful spirits (angels and archangels). The second of these eternally existing principles was called *Ahriman*. He was also a pure and beautiful spirit, but he later rebelled against Ormuzd, being jealous of his power. This did not occur, however, until after Ormuzd had created light, for previously Ahriman had not been conscious of the existence of Ormuzd. Because of his jealousy and rebellion, Ahriman became the Spirit of Evil. From himself he individualized a host of destructive creatures to injure Ormuzd.

When Ormuzd created the earth, Ahriman entered into its grosser elements. Whenever Ormuzd did a good deed, Ahriman placed the principle of evil within it. At last when Ormuzd created the human race, Ahriman became incarnate in the lower nature of man so that in each personality the Spirit of Good and the Spirit of Evil struggle for control.

THE GROUND PLAN OF STONEHENGE

FROM MAURICE'S *INDIAN ANTIQUITIES*

The Druid temples of places of religious worship were not patterned after those of other nations. Most of their ceremonies were performed at night, either in thick groves of oak trees or around open-air altars built of great uncut stones. How these masses of rock were moved has not been satisfactorily explained. The most famous of their altars, a great stone ring of rocks, is Stonehenge, in Southwestern England. This structure, laid out on an astronomical basis, still stands, a wonder of antiquity.

For 3,000 years Ormuzd ruled the celestial worlds with light and goodness. Then he created man. For another 3,000 years he ruled man with wisdom, and integrity. Then the power of Ahriman began, and the struggle for the soul of man continues through the next period of 3,000 years. During the fourth period of 3,000 years, the power of Ahriman will be destroyed. Good will return to the world again, evil and death will be vanquished, and at last the Spirit of Evil will bow humbly before the throne of Ormuzd. While Ormuzd and Ahriman are struggling for control of the human soul and for supremacy in Nature, Mithras, God of Intelligence, stands as mediator between the two. Many authors have noted the similarity between mercury and Mithras. As the chemical mercury acts as a solvent (according to alchemists), so Mithras seeks to harmonize the two celestial opposites.

There are many points of resemblance between Christianity and the cult of Mithras. One of the reasons for this probably is that the Persian mystics invaded Italy during the first century after Christ and the early history of both cults was closely interwoven. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* makes the following statement concerning the Mithraic and Christian Mysteries:

“The fraternal and democratic spirit of the first communities, and their humble origin; the identification of the object of adoration with light and the sun; the legends of the shepherds with their gifts and adoration, the flood, and the ark; the representation in art of the fiery chariot, the drawing of water from the rock; the use of bell and candle, holy water and the communion; the sanctification of Sunday and of the 25th of December; the insistence on moral conduct, the emphasis placed on abstinence and self-control; the doctrine of heaven and hell, of primitive revelation, of the mediation of the Logos emanating from the divine, the atoning sacrifice, the constant warfare between good and evil and the final triumph of the former, the immortality of the soul, the last judgment, the resurrection of the flesh and the fiery destruction of the universe—[these] are some of the resemblances which, whether real or only apparent, enabled Mithraism to prolong its resistance to Christianity.”

The rites of Mithras were performed in caves. Porphyry, in his *Cave of the Nymphs*, states that Zarathustra (Zoroaster) was the first to consecrate a cave to the worship of God, because a cavern was symbolic of the earth, or the lower world of darkness. John P. Lundy, in his *Monumental Christianity*, describes the cave of Mithras as follows:

“But this cave was adorned with the signs of the zodiac, Cancer and Capricorn. The summer and winter solstices were chiefly conspicuous, as the gates of souls descending into this life, or passing out of it in their ascent to the Gods; Cancer being the gate of descent, and Capricorn of ascent. These are the two avenues of the immortals passing up and down from earth to heaven, and from heaven to earth.”

The so-called chair of St. Peter, in Rome, was believed to have been used in one of the pagan Mysteries, possibly that of Mithras, in whose subterranean grottoes the votaries of the Christian Mysteries met in the early days of their faith. In *Anacalypsis*, Godfrey Higgins writes that in 1662, while cleaning this sacred chair of Bar-Jonas, the Twelve Labors of Hercules were discovered upon it, and that later the French discovered upon the same chair the Mohammedan confession of faith, written in Arabic.

Initiation into the rites of Mithras, like initiation into many other ancient schools of philosophy, apparently consisted of three important degrees. Preparation for these degrees consisted of self-purification, the building up of the intellectual powers, and the control of the animal nature. In the first degree the candidate was given a crown upon the point of a sword and instructed in the mysteries of Mithras' hidden power. Probably he was taught that the golden crown represented his own spiritual nature, which must be objectified and unfolded before he could truly glorify Mithras; for Mithras was his own soul, standing as mediator between Ormuzd, his spirit, and Ahriman, his animal nature. In the second degree he was given the armor of intelligence and purity and sent into the darkness of subterranean pits to fight the beasts of lust, passion, and degeneracy. In the third degree he was given a cape, upon which were drawn or woven the signs of the zodiac and other astronomical symbols. After his initiations were over, he was hailed as one who had risen from the dead, was instructed in the secret teachings of the Persian mystics, and became a full-fledged member of the order. Candidates who successfully passed the Mithraic initiations were called *Lions* and were marked upon their foreheads with the Egyptian cross. Mithras himself is often pictured with the head of a lion and two pairs of wings. Throughout the entire ritual were repeated references to the birth of Mithras as the Sun God, his sacrifice for man, his death that men might have eternal life, and lastly, his resurrection and the saving of all humanity by his intercession before the throne of Ormuzd. (See Heckethorn.)

While the cult of Mithras did not reach the philosophic heights attained by Zarathustra, its effect upon the civilization of the Western world was far-reaching, for at one time nearly all Europe was converted to its doctrines. Rome, in her intercourse with other nations, inoculated them with her religious principles; and many later institutions have exhibited Mithraic culture. The reference to the "Lion" and the "Grip of the Lion's Paw" in the Master Mason's degree have a strong Mithraic tinge and may easily have originated from this cult. A ladder of seven rungs appears in the Mithraic initiation. Faber is of the opinion that this ladder was originally a pyramid of seven steps. It is possible that the Masonic ladder with seven rungs had its origin in this Mithraic symbol. Women were never permitted to enter the Mithraic Order, but children of the male sex were initiates long before they reached maturity. The refusal to permit women to join the Masonic Order may be based on the esoteric reason given in the secret instructions of the Mithraics. This cult is another excellent example of those secret societies whose legends are largely symbolic representations of the sun and his journey through the houses of the heavens. Mithras, rising from a stone, is merely the sun rising over the horizon, or, as the ancients supposed, out of the horizon, at the vernal equinox.

John O'Neill disputes the theory that Mithras was intended as a solar deity. In *The Night of the Gods* he writes:

"The Avestan Mithra, the yazata of light, has '10,000 eyes, high, with full knowledge (perethuvaedayana), strong, sleepless and ever awake (jaghaurvaunghem).' The supreme god Ahura Mazda also has one Eye, or else it is said that 'with his eyes, the sun, moon and stars, he sees everything.' The theory that Mithra was originally

MITHRAS SLAYING THE BULL



FROM LUNDY'S MONUMENTAL CHRISTIANITY

The most famous sculpturings and reliefs of this prototokos show Mithras kneeling upon the recumbent form of a great bull, into whose throat he is driving a sword. The slaying of the bull signifies that the rays of the sun, symbolized by the sword, release at the vernal equinox the vital essences of the earth—the blood of the bull—which, pouring from the wound made by the Sun God, fertilize the seeds of living things. Dogs were held sacred to the cult of Mithras, being symbolic of sincerity and trustworthiness. The Mithraics used the serpent as an emblem of Ahriman, the Spirit of Evil, and water rats were held sacred to him. The bull is esoterically the Constellation of Taurus; the serpent, its opposite in the zodiac, Scorpio; the sun, Mithras, entering into the side of the bull, slays the celestial creature and nourishes the universe with its blood.

a title of the supreme heavens-god—putting the sun out of court—is the only one that answers all requirements. It will be evident that here we have origins in abundance for the Freemason's Eye and 'its nunquam dormio.'"

The reader must not confuse the Persian Mithra with the Vedic Mitra. According to Alexander Wilder, "The Mithraic rites superseded the Mysteries of Bacchus, and became the foundation of the Gnostic system, which for many centuries prevailed in Asia, Egypt, and even the remote West."

THE BIRTH OF MITHRAS



FROM MONTFAUCON'S *ANTIQUITIES*

Mithras was born out of a rock, which, breaking open, permitted him to emerge. This occurred in the darkness of a subterranean chamber. The Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem confirms the theory that Jesus was born in a grotto, or cave. According to Dupuis, Mithras was put to death by crucifixion and rose again on the third day.

The Ancient Mysteries And Secret Societies

Part Two

THE ENTIRE HISTORY OF Christian and pagan Gnosticism is shrouded in the deepest mystery and obscurity; for, while the Gnostics were undoubtedly prolific writers, little of their literature has survived. They brought down upon themselves the animosity of the early Christian Church, and when this institution reached its position of world power it destroyed all available records of the Gnostic *cultus*. The name *Gnostic* means *wisdom*, or *knowledge*, and is derived from the Greek *Gnosis*. The members of the order claimed to be familiar with the secret doctrines of early Christianity. They interpreted the Christian Mysteries according to pagan symbolism. Their secret information and philosophic tenets they concealed from the profane and taught to a small group only of especially initiated persons.

Simon Magus, the magician of New Testament fame, is often supposed to have been the founder of Gnosticism. If this be true, the sect was formed during the century after Christ and is probably the first of the many branches which have sprung from the main trunk of Christianity. Everything with which the enthusiasts of the early Christian Church might not agree they declared to be inspired by the Devil. That Simon Magus had mysterious and supernatural powers is conceded even by his enemies, but they maintained that these powers were lent to him by the infernal spirits and furies which they asserted were his ever present companions. Undoubtedly the most interesting legend concerning Simon is that which tells of his theosophic contests with the Apostle Peter while the two were promulgating their differing doctrines in Rome. According to the story

that the Church Fathers have preserved, Simon was to prove his spiritual superiority by ascending to heaven in a chariot of fire. He was actually picked up and carried many feet into the air by invisible powers. When St. Peter saw this, he cried out in a loud voice, ordering the demons (spirits of the air) to release their hold upon the magician. The evil spirits, when so ordered by the great saint, were forced to obey. Simon fell a great distance and was killed, which decisively proved the superiority of the Christian powers. This story is undoubtedly manufactured out of whole cloth, as it is only one out of many accounts concerning his death, few of which agree. As more and more evidence is being amassed to the effect that St. Peter was never in Rome, its last possible vestige of authenticity is rapidly being dissipated.

That Simon was a philosopher there is no doubt, for wherever his exact words are preserved his synthetic and transcending thoughts are beautifully expressed. The principles of Gnosticism are well described in the following verbatim statement by him, supposed to have been preserved by Hippolytus:

"To you, therefore, I say what I say, and write what I write. And the writing is this. Of the universal *Æons* [periods, planes, or cycles of creative and created life in substance and space, celestial creatures] there are two shoots, without beginning or end, springing from one Root, which is the power invisible, inapprehensible silence [Bythos]. Of these shoots one is manifested from above, which is the Great Power, the Universal Mind ordering all things, male, and the other, [is manifested] from below, the Great Thought, female, producing all things. Hence pairing with each other, they unite and manifest the Middle Distance, incomprehensible Air, without beginning or end. In this is the Father Who sustains all things, and nourishes those things which have a beginning and end." (See *Simon Magus*, by G. R. S. Mead.)

By this we are to understand that manifestation is the result of a positive and a negative principle, one acting upon the other, and it takes place in the middle plane, or point of equilibrium, called the

THE DEATH OF SIMON THE MAGICIAN



FROM THE NUREMBERG CHRONICLE

Simon Magus, having called upon the Spirits of the Air, is here shown being picked up by the demons. St. Peter demands that the evil genii release their hold upon the magician. The demons are forced to comply and Simon Magus is killed by the fall.

pleroma. This *pleroma* is a peculiar substance produced out of the blending of the spiritual and material *æons*. Out of the *pleroma* was individualized the *Demiurgus*, the immortal mortal, to whom we are responsible for our physical existence and the suffering we must go through in connection with it. In the Gnostic system, three pairs of opposites, called *Syzygies*, emanated from the Eternal One. These, with Himself, make the total of seven. The six (three pairs) *Æons* (living, divine principles) were described by Simon in the *Philosophumena* in the following man-

ner: The first two were *Mind* (Nous) and *Thought* (Epinoia). Then came *Voice* (Phone) and its opposite, *Name* (Onoma), and lastly, *Reason* (Logismos) and *Reflection* (Enthumesis). From these primordial six, united with the *Eternal Flame*, came forth the Æons (Angels) who formed the lower worlds through the direction of the Demiurgus. (See the works of H. P. Blavatsky.) How this first Gnosticism of Simon Magus and Menander, his disciple, was amplified, and frequently distorted, by later adherents to the cult must now be considered.

The School of Gnosticism was divided into two major parts, commonly called the Syrian Cult and the Alexandrian Cult. These schools agreed in essentials, but the latter division was more inclined to be pantheistic, while the former was dualistic. While the Syrian cult was largely Simonian, the Alexandrian School was the outgrowth of the philosophical deductions of a clever Egyptian Christian, Basilides by name, who claimed to have received his instructions from the Apostle Matthew. Like Simon Magus, he was an emanationist, with Neo-Platonic inclinations. In fact, the entire Gnostic Mystery is based upon the hypothesis of emanations as being the logical connection between the irreconcilable opposites Absolute Spirit and Absolute Substance, which the Gnostics believed to have been coexistent in Eternity. Some assert that Basilides was the true founder of Gnosticism, but there is much evidence to the effect that Simon Magus laid down its fundamental principles in the preceding century.

The Alexandrian Basilides inculcated Egyptian Hermeticism, Oriental occultism, Chaldean astrology, and Persian philosophy in his followers, and in his doctrines sought to unite the schools of early Christianity with the ancient pagan Mysteries. To him is attributed the formulation of that peculiar concept of the Deity which carries the name of Abraxas. In discussing the original meaning of this word, Godfrey Higgins, in his *Celtic Druids*, has demonstrated that the numerological powers of the letters forming the word Abraxas when added together result in the sum of 365. The same author also notes that the name Mithras when treated in a similar manner has the same numerical value. Basilides

caught that the powers of the universe were divided into 365 Æons, or spiritual cycles, and that the sum of all these together was the Supreme Father, and to Him he gave the Qabbalistical appellation *Abraxas*, as being symbolical, numerologically, of His divine powers, attributes, and emanations. *Abraxas* is usually symbolized as a composite creature, with the body of a human being and the head of a rooster, and with each of his legs ending in a serpent. C. W. King, in his *Gnostics and Their Remains*, gives the following concise description of the Gnostic philosophy of Basilides, quoting from the writings of the early Christian bishop and martyr, St. Irenæus:

“He asserted that God, the uncreated, eternal Father, had first brought forth Nous, or Mind; this the Logos, Word; this again Phronesis, Intelligence; from Phronesis sprung Sophia, Wisdom, and Dynamis, Strength.” In describing Abraxas, C. W. King says: “Bellermand considers the composite image, inscribed with the actual name Abraxas, to be a Gnostic Pantheos, representing the Supreme Being, with the Five Emanations marked out by appropriate symbols. From the human body, the usual form assigned to the Deity, spring the two supporters, Nous and Logos, expressed in the serpents, symbols of the inner senses, and the quickening understanding; on which account the Greeks had made the serpent the attribute of Pallas. His head—that of a cock—represents Phronesis, that bird being the emblem of foresight and of vigilance. His two arms hold the symbols of Sophia and Dynamis: the shield of Wisdom and the whip of Power.”

The Gnostics were divided in their opinions concerning the Demiurgus, or creator of the lower worlds. He established the terrestrial universe with the aid of six sons, or emanations (possibly the planetary Angels) which He formed out of, and yet within, Himself. As stated before, the Demiurgus was individualized as the lowest creation out of the substance called *pleroma*. One group of the Gnostics was of the opinion that the Demiurgus was the cause of all misery and was an evil creature, who by building this lower world had separated the souls of men from truth by encasing them in mortal vehicles. The

other sect viewed the Demiurgus as being divinely inspired and merely fulfilling the dictates of the invisible Lord. Some Gnostics were of the opinion that the Jewish God, *Jehovah*, was the Demiurgus. This concept, under a slightly different name, apparently influenced mediæval Rosicrucianism, which viewed Jehovah as the Lord of the material universe rather than as the Supreme Deity. Mythology abounds with the stories of gods who partook of both celestial and terrestrial natures. Odin, of Scandinavia, is a good example of a deity subject to mortality, bowing before the laws of Nature and yet being, in certain senses at least, a Supreme Deity.

The Gnostic viewpoint concerning the Christ is well worthy of consideration. This order claimed to be the only sect to have actual pictures of the Divine Syrian. While these were, in all probability, idealistic conceptions of the Savior based upon existing sculpturings and paintings of the pagan sun gods, they were all Christianity had. To the Gnostics, the Christ was the personification of *Nous*, the Divine Mind, and emanated from the higher spiritual Æons. He descended into the body of Jesus at the baptism and left it again before the crucifixion. The Gnostics declared that the Christ was not crucified, as this Divine *Nous* could not suffer death, but that Simon, the Cyrenian, offered his life instead and that the *Nous*, by means of its power, caused Simon to resemble Jesus. Irenæus makes the following statement concerning the cosmic sacrifice of the Christ:

"When the uncreated, unnamed Father saw the corruption of mankind, He sent His firstborn, Nous, into the world, in the form of Christ, for the redemption of all who believe in Him, out of the power of those that have fabricated the world (the Demiurgus, and his six sons, the planetary genii). He appeared amongst men as the Man Jesus, and wrought miracles." (See King's Gnostics and Their Remains.)

The Gnostics divided humanity into three parts: those who, as savages, worshiped only the visible Nature; those who, like the Jews, worshiped the Demiurgus; and lastly, themselves, or others of a similar cult, including certain sects of Christians, who worshiped *Nous* (Christ) and the true spiritual

light of the higher Æons.

After the death of Basilides, Valentinus became the leading inspiration of the Gnostic movement. He still further complicated the system of Gnostic philosophy by adding infinitely to the details. He increased the number of emanations from the Great One (the Abyss) to fifteen pairs and also laid much emphasis on the *Virgin Sophia*, or Wisdom. In the *Books of the Savior*, parts of which are commonly known as the *Pistis Sophia*, may be found much material concerning this strange doctrine of Æons and their strange inhabitants. James Freeman Clarke, in speaking of the doctrines of the Gnostics, says:

"These doctrines, strange as they seem to us, had a wide influence in the Christian Church."

Many of the theories of the ancient Gnostics, especially those concerning scientific subjects, have been substantiated by modern research. Several sects branched off from the main stem of Gnosticism, such as the Valentinians, the Ophites (serpent worshipers), and the Adamites. After the third century their power waned, and the Gnostics practically vanished from the philosophic world. An effort was made during the Middle Ages to resurrect the principles of Gnosticism, but owing to the destruction of their records the material necessary was not available. Even today there are evidences of Gnostic philosophy in the modern world, but they bear other names and their true origin is not suspected. Many of the Gnostic concepts have actually been incorporated into the dogmas of the Christian Church, and our newer interpretations of Christianity are often along the lines of Gnostic emanationism.

The Mysteries of Asar-Hapi



The identity of the Greco-Egyptian Serapis (known to the Greeks as *Serapis* and the Egyptians as *Asar-Hapi*) is shrouded by an impenetrable veil of mystery. While this deity was a familiar figure among the symbols of the secret Egyptian initiatory rites, his arcane nature was revealed only to those who

had fulfilled the requirements of the Serapic cultus. Therefore, in all probability, excepting the initiated priests, the Egyptians themselves were ignorant of his true character. So far as known, there exists no authentic account of the rites of Serapis, but an analysis of the deity and his accompanying symbols reveals their salient points. In an oracle delivered to the King of Cyprus, Serapis described himself thus:

“A god I am such as I show to thee,
The Starry Heavens are my head, my trunk the sea,
Earth forms my feet, mine ears the air supplies,
The Sun’s far-darting, brilliant rays, mine eyes.”

Several unsatisfactory attempts have been made to etymologize the word *Serapis*. Godfrey Higgins notes that *Soros* was the name given by the Egyptians to a stone coffin, and *Apis* was Osiris incarnate in the sacred bull. These two words combined result in *Soros-Apis* or *Sor-Apis*, “the tomb of the bull.” But it is improbable that the Egyptians would worship a coffin in the form of a man.

Several ancient authors, including Macrobius, have affirmed that Serapis was a name for the Sun, because his image so often had a halo of light about its head. In his *Oration Upon the Sovereign Sun*, Julian speaks of the deity in these words: “One Jove, one Pluto, one Sun is Serapis.” In Hebrew, Serapis is *Saraph*, meaning “to blaze out” or “to blaze up.” For this reason the Jews designated one of their hierarchies of spiritual beings, *Seraphim*.

The most common theory, however, regarding the origin of the name *Serapis* is that which traces its derivation from the compound *Osiris-Apis*. At one time the Egyptians believed that the dead were absorbed into the nature of Osiris, the god of the dead. While marked similarity exists between Osiris-Apis and Serapis, the theory advanced by Egyptologists that Serapis is merely a name given to the dead Apis, or sacred bull of Egypt, is untenable in view of the transcendent wisdom possessed by the Egyptian priestcraft, who, in all probability, used the god to symbolize the soul of the world (*anima mundi*). The material body of Nature was called *Apis*; the soul which escaped from the body at death but was enmeshed with the form during physical life was

THE LION-FACED LIGHT-POWER



FROM MONTFAUCON'S *ANTIQUITIES*

This Gnostic gem represents by its serpentine body the pathway of the Sun and by its lion head the exaltation of the solar in the constellation of Leo.

designated *Serapis*.

C. W. King believes Serapis to be a deity of Brahmanic extraction, his name being the Grecianized form of *Ser-adah* or *Sri-pa*, two titles ascribed to *Yama*, the Hindu god of death. This appears reasonable, especially since there is a legend to the effect that Serapis, in the form of a bull, was driven by Bacchus from India to Egypt. The priority of the Hindu Mysteries would further substantiate such a theory.

Among other meanings suggested for the word *Serapis* are: “The Sacred Bull,” “The Sun in Taurus,” “The Soul of Osiris,” “The Sacred Serpent,” and “The Retiring of the Bull.” The last appellation has reference to the ceremony of drowning the sacred Apis in the waters of the Nile every twenty-five years.

There is considerable evidence that the famous statue of Serapis in the Serapeum at Alexandria was originally worshiped under another name at Sinope, from which it was brought to Alexandria. There is also a legend which tells that Serapis was a very early king of the Egyptians, to whom they owed the foundation of their philosophical and scientific power. After his death this king was elevated to the estate

of a god. Phylarchus declared that the word *Serapis* means “the power that disposed the universe into its present beautiful order.”

In his *Isis and Osiris*, Plutarch gives the following account of the origin of the magnificent statue of Serapis which stood in the Serapeum at Alexandria:

A SYMBOLIC LABYRINTH



FROM MONTFAUCON'S *ANTIQUITIES*

Labyrinths and mazes were favored places of initiation among many ancient cults. Remains of these mystic mazes have been found among the American Indians, Hindus, Persians, Egyptians, and Greeks. Some of these mazes are merely involved pathways lined with stones; others are literally miles of gloomy caverns under temples or hollowed from the sides of mountains. The famous labyrinth of Crete, in which roamed the bull-headed Minotaur, was unquestionably a place of initiation into the Cretan Mysteries.

While he was Pharaoh of Egypt, Ptolemy Soter had a strange dream in which he beheld a tremendous statue, which came to life and ordered the Pharaoh to bring it to Alexandria with all possible speed. Ptolemy Soter, not knowing the whereabouts of the statue, was sorely perplexed as to how he could discover it. While the Pharaoh was relating his dream, a great traveler by the name of Sosibius, coming forward, declared that he had seen such an image at Sinope. The Pharaoh immediately dispatched Soteles and Dionysius to negotiate for the removal of the figure to Alexandria. Three years elapsed before the image was finally obtained, the representatives of the

Pharaoh finally stealing it and concealing the theft by spreading a story that the statue had come to life and, walking down the street leading from its temple, had boarded the ship prepared for its transportation to Alexandria. Upon its arrival in Egypt, the figure was brought into the presence of two Egyptian Initiates—the Eumolpid Timotheus and Manetho the Sebennite—who, immediately pronounced it to be Serapis. The priests then declared that it was equipollent to Pluto. This was a masterly stroke, for in Serapis the Greeks and Egyptians found a deity in common and thus religious unity was consummated between the two nations.

Several figures of Serapis that stood in his various temples in Egypt and Rome have been described by early authors. Nearly all these showed Grecian rather than Egyptian influence. In some the body of the god was encircled by the coils of a great serpent. Others showed him as a composite of Osiris and Apis.

A description of the god that in all probability is reasonably accurate is that which represents him as a tall, powerful figure, conveying the twofold impression of manly strength and womanly grace. His face portrayed a deeply pensive mood, the expression inclining toward sadness. His hair was long and arranged in a somewhat feminine manner, resting in curls upon his breast and shoulders. The face, save for its heavy beard, was also decidedly feminine. The figure of Serapis was usually robed from head to foot in heavy draperies, believed by initiates to conceal the fact that his body was androgynous.

Various substances were used in making the statues of Serapis. Some undoubtedly were carved from stone or marble by skilled craftsmen; others may have been cast from base or precious metals. One colossus of Serapis was composed of plates of various metals fitted together. In a labyrinth sacred to Serapis stood a thirteen-foot statue of him reputed to have been made from a single emerald. Modern writers, discussing this image, state that it was made of green glass poured into a mold. According to the Egyptians, however, it withstood all the tests of an actual emerald.

Clement of Alexandria describes a figure of Serapis compounded from the following elements: First, filings of gold, silver, lead, and tin; second, all manner of Egyptian stones, including sapphires, hematites, emeralds, and topazes; all these being ground down and mixed together with the coloring matter left over from the funeral of Osiris and Apis. The result was a rare and curious figure, indigo in color. Some of the statues of Serapis must have been formed of extremely hard substances, for when a Christian soldier, carrying out the edict of Theodosius, struck the Alexandrian Serapis with his ax, that instrument was shattered into fragments and sparks flew from it. It is also quite probable that Serapis was worshiped in the form of a serpent, in common with many of the higher deities of the Egyptian and Greek pantheons.

Serapis was called *Theon Heptagrammaton*, or the god with the name of seven letters. The name *Serapis* (like Abraxas and Mithras) contains seven letters. In their hymns to Serapis the priests chanted the seven vowels. Occasionally Serapis is depicted with horns or a coronet of seven rays. These evidently represented the seven divine intelligences manifesting through the solar light. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* notes that the earliest authentic mention of Serapis is in connection with the death of Alexander. Such was the prestige of Serapis that he alone of the gods was consulted in behalf of the dying king.

The Egyptian secret school of philosophy was divided into the Lesser and the Greater Mysteries, the former being sacred to Isis and the latter to Serapis and Osiris. Wilkinson is of the opinion that only the priests were permitted to enter the Greater Mysteries. Even the heir to the throne was not eligible until he had been crowned Pharaoh, when, by virtue of his kingly office, he automatically became a priest and the temporal head of the state religion. (See Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the Egyptians*.) A limited number were admitted into the Greater Mysteries: these preserved their secrets inviolate.

Much of the information concerning the rituals of the higher degrees of the Egyptian Mysteries has been gleaned from an examination of the chambers and passageways in which the initiations were given. Under the temple of Serapis destroyed by

Theodosius were found strange mechanical contrivances constructed by the priests in the subterranean crypts and caverns where the nocturnal initiatory rites were celebrated. These machines indicate the severe tests of moral and physical courage undergone by the candidates. After passing through these tortuous ways, the neophytes who survived the ordeals were ushered into the presence of Serapis, a noble and awe-inspiring figure illumined by unseen lights.

Labyrinths were also a striking feature in connection with the Rice of Serapis, and E. A. Wallis Budge, in his *Gods of the Egyptians*, depicts Serapis (Minotaur-like) with the body of a man and the head of a bull. Labyrinths were symbolic of the involvements and illusions of the lower world through which wanders the soul of man in its search for truth. In the labyrinth dwells the lower animal man with the head of the bull, who seeks to destroy the soul entangled in the maze of worldly ignorance. In this relation Serapis becomes the Tryer or Adversary who tests the souls of those seeking union with the Immortals. The maze was also doubtless used to represent the solar system, the Bull-Man representing the sun dwelling in the mystic maze of its planets, moons, and asteroids.

The Gnostic Mysteries were acquainted with the arcane meaning of Serapis, and through the medium of Gnosticism this god became inextricably associated with early Christianity. In fact, the Emperor Hadrian, while traveling in Egypt in A.D. 24, declared in a letter to Servianus that the worshipers of Serapis were Christians and that the Bishops of the church also worshiped at his shrine. He even declared that the Patriarch himself, when in Egypt, was forced to adore Serapis as well as Christ. (See Parsons' *New Light on the Great Pyramid*.)

The little-suspected importance of Serapis as a prototype of Christ can be best appreciated after a consideration of the following extract from C. W. King's *Gnostics and Their Remains*: "There can be no doubt that the head of Serapis, marked as the face is by a grave and pensive majesty, supplied the first idea for the conventional portraits of the Saviour. The Jewish prejudices of the first converts were so powerful that we may be sure no attempt was made



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