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THE LAWS OF MANU

WITH A COMMENTARY BY THE EDITORS OF THE
SHRINE OF WISDOM

Introduction

The Laws of Manu, or the Manava Dharma Shastra, is one of the most venerated of the scriptures of India, and to the devout Hindu it is a holy book. Any work which has held so high a place in the esteem of a great race possesses a value to the whole of humanity if studied with an unbiassed mind and in that appreciative spirit which should characterize all such study.

These Laws, which have been called "Medicine for the Soul," have had a profound influence upon the people of India; they relate to almost every aspect of life, and constitute one of the basic sources of their ethical, civil, and religious codes.

Manu is said to have been the first man, the progenitor of the human race, the first of mankind, the formulator of sacred rites, and the founder of social order. Tradition teaches of a succession of fourteen Manus, each of whom is said to rule for a definite world-period.

The word Manu is associated with the derivative roots of man and mind, meaning "to know" and "to think." It is a generic name eponymous of the human race, or its founders, and has a similar meaning to the Egyptian Menes and the Cretan Minos.

Every great civilization possesses the tradition of some original formulator of Laws for the guidance of human activities and the definition of man's right relationships to his Divine Source, to

the Cosmos which is the field of his activities, and to his fellow-men.

It is significant that invariably these Laws are said to have been taught to man by the Creator Himself, through the mediation of some Great One who has been regarded either as the progenitor of the race or the founder of civilization.

The Laws of Manu represents such a divine revelation to the Hindus. They have their correspondences in the Babylonian Laws of Khammurabi, the Hebrew Laws of Moses, the Greek Laws of Solon, the Roman legislation of Numa, and in those of other great civilizations when traced back to their earliest recorded traditions.

Attempts to fix definite dates to such traditional codes, or to assign their origin to a particular personality, necessarily lead to inconclusive results; for around the formulator there usually gathers a wealth of myth and legend which when regarded as historical is misleading.

Codes of laws which have crystallized into a detailed form are generally extensions and applications of more basic laws derived from earlier sources. It is reasonable to conclude that the primal revelation of Laws from Deity to man would be in the form of essential principles: and that the fundamental mode of application of these principles would be formulated by inspired lawgivers. As the Laws thus instituted were adapted by less enlightened men to the varying particular needs of different times and conditions, they would be expressed more and more in detail, deletions and interpolations would be made, and thus the knowledge of their source and original significance would gradually become obscured.

Many legendary elements are connected with *The Laws of Manu*. Tradition attributes their formulation to Brahma, Who, it was said, revealed them to Manu. Manu, in turn, transmitted them to ten sages, one of whom, Bhrigu, was appointed to be their promulgator; and his son, Sumati, gave them their present form.

Although legend and myth, when superficially considered, may appear to be lacking in truth, the deepest and most mystical truths have invariably been handed down in this way, veiled in symbolic form, but revealed to all who are able to penetrate to their inner meaning.

The universality of this mode of transmission and the corre-

spondences found between the myths of different races are strong evidence of their common origin and their inherent truth.

Whatever the facts may be regarding the origin of *The Laws* and the stages through which it has passed before receiving its present form, it is quite clear that it contains many profoundly mystical truths, and that its cardinal precepts are wisely instituted and also are of practical value.

A noteworthy feature of the book is the sequential order which is expressed in the development of its contents. Essentials are put in the primary place, and their definite relationships made clear, while secondary matters and those of a more particular nature are assigned their proper subservient positions in the general scheme.

Moreover, the work covers the complete field of law, for it includes within its range teachings concerning the essential relationships of mankind to the three all-inclusive Heads: the Divine, the Cosmic, and Human Principles.

It is of the utmost importance that each of these three Principles should be represented in every system of thought, religion, and code of ethics, whether of a personal, racial, or international character. The exclusion of any one of them inevitably narrows the field of consciousness and thus leads to one-sided and short-sighted aims, policies, and activities, which consequently fail to produce the highest, most extensive, and most permanent results.

These three Principles are represented in *The Laws of Manu*.

Divine Laws are the eternal Causes through which the Cosmos and Man are brought into existence or subsistence in perfect order; whereby they are essentially related to the spiritual world, and by conformity with which man enters into his Divine Heritage.

Since the Laws of Creation are primary, eternal, and inevitable, it is evident that, in order to realize the purpose for which he came into manifestation, man must have definite knowledge of those underlying laws which control and perfect all things: hence in this book of Laws there is an account of creation—which at first sight might appear to be irrelevant to the subject.

Cosmic or Natural Laws govern the generation, growth, and corruption of all objective existences; they also control all natural activities, including those of man.

In *The Laws of Manu* the cosmic aspect is only dealt with

incidentally, as subservient to the human aspect, with which it is primarily concerned. The universe, by its very nature, operates invariably according to Cosmic Laws and consequently is itself a continuous manifestation of the perfect work of the Perfect Creator.

Man's purpose, however, is higher than that of the Cosmos, for he has been endowed with the precious gift of freewill whereby he may voluntarily conform to the Divine and Cosmic Laws and thus realize his ideal destiny.

Human laws are of two kinds—ideal, which govern man's higher nature and his perfective union with his Divine Source; and sociological, which determine right human relationships and activities, individual and collective. The latter must be formulated by man himself; but he has for his guidance the teachings of the divinely inspired sages who have always proclaimed the essential and changeless principles which must be applied if these laws are to be just and ideal. All wise and just human laws, as well as all natural laws, have their ultimate source in Divine Law. Every law, as Demosthenes said, is "a gift of God."

The *Laws of Manu* deals not only with man's mundane life, but also with the Source whence he came, with the life after the death of his physical body, and with the means for the attainment of supreme bliss.

It may be divided into three parts corresponding severally to the chief subjects with which it deals. The first part is concerned with Creation, or the beginning of manifestation. Here are given teachings regarding the Divine origin of all things and the sequential order of creation. There is a close correspondence in many of its terms and descriptions with the accounts of creation recorded in other ancient scriptures.

Since the mode of expression employed in this part is mystical in character, the account should be given a mystical interpretation: the philosophical and scientific methods, if employed alone, are inadequate to unfold the inner meaning. The mystical mode, however, when adequately applied, makes use of both the philosophical and scientific modes and thus appeals to the three human rational faculties, the intuition, reason, and power of estimation.

The opening verses of the first chapter emphasize the inability of the mind to comprehend, by any discursive process, the real meaning to be communicated.

The second part contains instructions for the guidance of the four primary castes in the fulfilment of their dharma.*

These caste laws pertain to all the main aspects of life—personal, family, social, and religious: they deal with penalties to be administered by those in authority for the violation of certain laws, with other penances for self-administration, with sacrifices, with punishments to be experienced in the future life as a result of the neglect or violation of the laws, and with the rewards to be gained by their observance.

This section occupies the greater part of the book, but a considerable portion of it is unsuitable for application in the present time. It is probable that many corruptions of the text have occurred during transmission, through loss of direct contact with those who really understood its underlying principles.

About a quarter only of the book is concerned with civil laws: which fact evinces that, when there is conformity with the ideal laws, externally imposed laws take a minor place. "The rule of conduct is transcendent law whether it be taught in revealed texts or in the sacred tradition" (Chap. I, Verse 108).

The third part pertains to the realization of the ideal state. Although this subject is mainly dealt with in the last chapter, there are various references to it in other sections, particularly in the one relating to the Brahman caste. It follows the other parts in natural sequence, since it applies only to those who have conformed to the laws previously stated.

Thus the work appropriately concludes with instructions whereby man through union with his Divine Source may attain supreme bliss. "He who recognizes the Self through the self of all created beings, becomes equal-minded towards all, and enters the highest state" (Chap. 12, Verse 125).

The importance of *The Laws of Manu* has led to considerable research into its origin and relationship with other codes; several recensions of it and numerous commentaries and glosses have been made, thus enabling the student of history and ancient law to reach many conclusions of interest and value.

The Laws of Manu consists of twelve chapters which contain

* Dharma is a word having several different meanings, the chief of which, especially in the present consideration, is the fundamental law, or norm, or duty; but it also has a more specific aspect as that which is ideal for an individual or caste in particular instances.

2,685 verses. The first chapter, consisting of 119 verses, is the most important and valuable part of the work, for in it are laid the foundations of the subsequent parts. The last nine verses summarize in a very epitomized form the contents of the other eleven chapters.

It is proposed to print the whole of the first chapter and part of the last, commenting upon passages which seem to require special elucidation, and introducing relevant verses from other parts of the work to illustrate the closing verses of the first chapter.

This version, while retaining as far as possible the form given in the various other translations, will not necessarily follow any of them exactly, since the primary endeavour is to express the essential meaning which underlies the book as a whole.

1. *The Creation*

1. "Manu sat contemplating the Supreme One. The great sages approached him, and having reverently saluted, addressed him thus:

2. 'Deign, Sovereign Ruler, to declare unto us the sacred laws in their order, as they must be followed by all the four chief castes, in their several degrees, together with the duties of the intermediate castes.

3. 'For thou, Lord, and thou only among mankind, knowest the true meaning, the prescribed ceremonies, and the knowledge of the soul taught in the universal Veda, which is unequalled in authority.' "

These opening verses are very significant, for they indicate the basic and comprehensive nature of the Laws.

Manu's contemplation of the Supreme points to the one Source of all laws.

The title "Sovereign Ruler" is given to Manu as Law-giver.

The great sages are sons of Manu and rulers of mankind. Their request denotes that for wise rulership and the right ordering of life a knowledge of the sacred Laws and of the soul is essential.

The four castes are the four main types into which mankind is naturally divided, called by the Hindus Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Sudras, each of which has its own distinctive character and appropriate duty in national life. They corre-

spond to the four classes of citizens mentioned by Plato in his *Republic*. Further details regarding them will be given later.

Veda means "to know," or "divine knowledge." The Vedas are said to have been revealed by Brahma, and the universal Veda may be regarded as the original revelation. They are also regarded as laws, which being declared by Brahma are hence unequalled in authority.

4. "He whose power is measureless, being thus requested by the great sages, whose thoughts were profound, saluted them and answered saying: 'Be it heard!'"

"Be it heard" is a phrase often used in the declaration of *Sruti*, or revealed truth. Before such truths can be personally proved it is necessary to accept them on the testimony of their transmitters. This, however, does not call for blind acceptance, but for rational faith: those receiving instruction were great sages—eminently wise.

5. "This universe subsisted only in the first Divine Idea, as yet unexpanded, as if involved in darkness, unperceived, indefinable, unknowable by reasoning, and undiscovered by revelation, as though it were wholly immersed in sleep."

The objective universe is the manifestation of the subjective universe which subsists eternally as one Divine Idea. It is "as if involved in darkness" and "immersed in sleep" to all below it, and therefore unknowable to the finite intelligence.

6. "Then the Divine Self-subsistent, Himself undiscerned, though making discernible this world, with the great elements and other principles of nature, appeared with supernal power, dispelling the darkness.

7. "He Whom the enlightened mind alone can perceive, Who is indivisible and eternal, even He, the Source of all beings, Whom no being can comprehend, shone forth of His own will."

The Self-subsistent is perhaps best regarded as primal Being, Who is incomprehensible in His fullness to any being, but mystically discernible to the enlightened.

The "great elements" are the Mahabhutas which enter into all natural existences.

8. "He, having willed to produce manifold beings from His own divine substance, first with a thought created the waters and placed therein a productive seed.

9. "That seed became a golden egg, more brilliant than the luminary, with a thousand beams, and in that egg He Himself was born in the form of Brahma, the Progenitor of the whole world."

"Divine substance" is the ground or basis of all that is. The "seed" and "golden egg" represent the primal creation prior to all differentiation.

"He Himself was born in the form of Brahma"—manifested Himself in His creative aspect. This does not mean that He literally became Brahma, for subjective Principles in manifesting do not become divided in essence, nor diminished in power in any respect whatever.

10. "The waters are called *Nara*, and since they were His first ayana, or place of motion, He is called *Narayana*, or *Moving on the Waters*."

"The waters" symbolize life and infinite potentiality. They correspond to the "Chaos" of many mythologies, and are referred to in the Egyptian and Babylonian systems, and in the Book of Genesis.

11. "From the First Cause (That which Is), Which is indiscernible, eternal, Which is and is not, was produced that Divine Male (Purusha) famed in all worlds as Brahma."

Since it is self-subsistent and the cause of all subsisting and existing things it is "real"; but since to all finite beings it is indiscernible it appears to them to be "unreal."

Purusha is the creative formative principle which ensouls all things, giving to each its distinctive nature.

(To be continued)

JEWEL

One may conquer a thousand men in a battle,
But he who conquers himself alone is the greatest victor.

Dhamma-pada

GERAINT THE BLUE BARD

(GERAINT VARDD GLAS)

The investigation of the beginning of Bardism in Wales is attended, as might be expected, with certain difficulties: facts of origin and documentary evidence are rarely to be found, since the very essence of the Bardic System is vested in an oral tradition passed on from master to pupil, and it is only in comparatively recent times that written records have been made.

For much valuable information concerning "The Bards of the Island of Britain," students are indebted to that extraordinary character, "Iolo Morganwg" (Edward Williams), who was born March 10, 1746, and died December 18, 1826. He was one of the editors of that monumental storehouse of Bardic Lore, *The Myvyrian Archaiology of Wales*, which was published in 1801.

Iolo Morganwg was the son of a stonemason, and he learned his alphabet by seeing his father carve letters on tombstones. In 1794 he published two volumes of poems, in English, which contain, at the end of the second volume, *An Account of and Extracts from the Welsh-Bardic Triads*.

Iolo followed his father's trade as a stonemason, and worked on the structure of Blackfriars Bridge in London. He was a contemporary of Dr. Johnson, and once met that eminent gentleman in a bookshop.

It is largely on the authority of Iolo Morganwg, and the manuscripts collected by him, that modern knowledge of Geraint the Blue Bard is based. It has even been suggested that Geraint is a figment of the fertile brain of Iolo, but if this were so, the aged stonemason-poet was an even greater genius than his own works would suggest. There is certainly not to be found in any of his own writings the depth and profundity of the traditional teachings which he collected and preserved from the past: the Ancient Triads, and the Wisdom of Catwg and Geraint. He seems to have lacked the scholarship necessary for the conception of such wisdom as that enshrined in the manuscripts which he brought together in the *Myvyrian Archaiology*. He spent many years of his life travelling about the country discovering and copying all that

then remained of the Bardic Lore of the past, and but for his tireless researches much knowledge would have been lost concerning the doctrines of "The Bards of the Island of Britain," which are a true heritage of the race.

It is regrettable that Iolo was not always careful to record the sources of his manuscripts and general information. His chief concern appears to have been with the material itself, rather than with its source or its authenticity. What, however, is known of the personal identity of the writers of many of the greatest Sacred Scriptures of the past? Are they any the less good, true, and valuable because we lack authentic records regarding them? The sanction of authority is perhaps too binding to admit of unbiassed judgment of presentations of truth; thus, profound works are often consigned to oblivion through lack of discrimination and insight.

The following quotation from the *Iolo MSS.* (p. 632), published by the Welsh MSS. Society in 1848, will serve as an introduction to the consideration of Geraint.

"The oldest system on record of memorials and recollections is that of Geraint Vardd Glas, upon the poetic metres; and of all that is extant from before his time, there is nothing remaining excepting what may be discovered by the learned by means of books. This Geraint was brother to Morgan Hen (the Aged), King of Glamorgan, and he collected ancient records of poetry and bardism, and arranged them in a book of his own composition, and established them by the laws of the Chair of the Gorsedd, in every country and dominion in Wales; and Geraint excelled in knowledge and judgment, and every chair in Wales and England was given him; from which he was called the Bardd Glas of the Chair. After this he became domestic Bard to Alfred King of England, and remained with him, giving instructions to the Cymry in England, and to the Saxons; and in Winchester he lies buried. And on the system of Geraint all the Bards and Poets proceeded."

A footnote adds: "Geraint Vardd Glas, or the Azure Bard, is supposed to have been the same person as Asser Menevensis, a monk of St. David's, who at the request of King Alfred went to reside with him as his preceptor, and was made Bishop of Shirburne. He wrote a Life of Alfred, which is still extant."

Asser, Bishop of Shirburne (or Sherborne) was beyond doubt

a historical personage. He is mentioned by Fisher in his *Lives of the British Saints* as being summoned to the courts of Alfred "out of the furthest coasts of Western Britain," in A.D. 884. Alfred styled him affectionately, "Asser, my Bishop," and there seems to have been a great and warm friendship between them.

Geraint, as the Blue Bard, may be more legendary in character, but the *Dosparth Edeyrn Dafod Aur*, or Ancient Welsh Grammar, printed in Welsh and English, and edited by Rev. John Williams Ab Ithel, the editor of *Barddas*, is said to have been based on an earlier work by Geraint, which was preserved among the MSS. in Raglan Castle, but destroyed in the wars of the Commonwealth. No copy of this earlier work is known to be extant.

The appellation Bardd Glas, or Blue Bard, by which he became known, was due to the colour of his dress. As a "bard proper, according to the right privilege and custom of the bards of the Isle of Britain," his official dress was sky blue, even as that of the druid was white, and that of the ovate, green: a custom which obtains in the Gorsedd even to this day.

Williams, in his *Eminent Welshman*, gives an interesting account of Asser, whom he calls a learned monk of St. David's or Menevia. He informs us that his instructor was the philosopher John Scotus Erigena, whose writings had a profound influence upon mediæval thought, and who was the translator of the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite.

He proceeds to tell of the monk's friendship with King Alfred, and how it was the desire of the monarch to have him near his person. Asser, however, being loyal to his duty to his monastery, agreed to divide his time between his religious brethren and the king. Upon his learned and pious friend, the king bestowed many gifts, among which were "the monasteries of Amgresbyri (supposed to be Amesbury in Wiltshire) and Bannville or Banwell in Somersetshire, together with a silk pall of great value and as much incense as a strong man was able to carry."

It is said that it was through the influence of Asser with the king that the University of Oxford was founded: a truly noble monument to his memory. "Three halls were established according to the religious impressions of the age, in the name of the Holy Trinity." The sciences were distributed into three divisions: grammar and rhetoric, astronomy and geometry, and divinity.

There is a theory, which seems to have some justification, that *Bardd Glas Geraint* (sometimes spelt *Keraint*) is the same as the *Glaskerion* of Chaucer who in his *Third Boke of Fame* wrote :

... Stoden . . . the castell all aboutin
 Of all maner of Mynstrales
 And Jestours that tellen tales
 Both of wepyng and of game
 And of all that longeth unto fame,
 There herde I play on a harpe
 That sowned both well and sharpe
 Hym Orpheus full craftily
 And on his side fast by
 Sat the Harper Orion;
 And Eacides Chirion,
 And other Harpers many one,
 And the Briton Glaskerion.

The English name *Glaskerion* differs less from *Glas Keraint*, it has been said, than do many Welsh names of persons and places from their true orthography, when written and pronounced by Englishmen!

Edward Davies of Margam who collected and arranged Bardic material in the year 1620, writes that *Geraint* went to Alfred King of England in the capacity of *Bardd Teliaw*.

The Welsh word *teliaw* means : "to make accordant" or "to put compactly together" or "to practise any ingenious art"; it will therefore be seen that the work of the *Bardd Teliaw* was perfecting, harmonizing, and beautifying in its character, and, as such, made a strong appeal to the noble-minded king.

Caradog, the historian, writes in his *Chronicle* : "Asser the Wise, Archbishop of the Britons, died A.D. 906."

Besides writing the life of his patron, King Alfred, Asser is said to have produced the following works, all of which are lost.

1. A Commentary on Boethius.*
2. *Annales Britanniae*.
3. *Aurearum Sententiarum Enchridion*.
4. A Book of Homilies.
5. A Volume of Letters.

* King Alfred, as is well known, translated Boethius into the vulgar tongue.

He is also said to have made numerous translations from the Latin into Welsh.

Of works attributed to Geraint, only a few of his "moral pieces" have been preserved. A selection from them follows.

DIDACTICS OF GERAINT

The Song of the Blue Bard of the Chair

Copied from the Book of Joseph Jones of Caer Dyv (or Cardiff),
written about the year 1590

There are ten oppressions of benevolent beings,
That destroy the world to the end:
Woe to men where they are!

The violence of the mighty ones and their domination
Over the laborious commonality:
Woe to such as feel them! direful woe!

The inattention of bishops
In chastising evil men:
Woe to them in the day of doom in the presence of HUON!*

Greediness, from avarice and sheer usury,
For obtaining goods and wealth:
Woe to them in doom, unwise men!

Perjury without shame
Amongst a generation insincere:
Woe to them in doom before DOVYDD †

* The name of HUON, or the Pervader, applied to Deity, appears to have been originally used for the sun, when it was an object of worship among most nations. Its correlative term, HUAN, the pervading essence, was anciently, and still continues, a poetical epithet for the same luminary, as in the following lines of Gwalchmai:

"Mochddwyreag *huan* hav dyfestin,
Maws llavar adar, mygr hiar hin."

The early rising *sun* of summer is hastening,
Melodious is the voice of birds, splendid the sound-diffusing
weather.

† The appellation of DOVYDD is often used for the Lord, and is expressive of his controlling power: it means literally the Tamer.

Flaunting vanity in dress,
 In contrast to the wise ones of former ages :
 Woe to such as cherish it before the NER* of the heavens !

The timidity of a people cultivated,
 Fearing to open the mouth :
 Woe will be to them in the day of wary scrutiny !

Coldness amongst kindred
 Extinguishing love in countries :
 Woe to those from the sway of the tyrant !

Drunkenness and every indulgence,
 So far that no one loses his countenance :
 Woe to them because of their folly !

Notorious adulteries,
 Without any one judging them criminal :
 Woe to those beings without control !

Dealing with the law unjustly,
 Without caring for what is right :
 Woe to those who do it because of their full requital !

Woe to them ! saith the Blue Bard,
 Who have hoarded their property :
 Woe to those who shall be thus through disgrace !

Woe to them ! those of the demoniac tribe,
 Who inhabit the cold sloughy quagmire :
 Woe to them on account of their punishment in hell !

Be mine a life devoid of self-perdition ;
 Be there not to men secret communion with vice ;
 And with this my endowment God will deliver me.

* The term NER is also appropriated to the Supreme Being. It is the root of *nerth*, the common word for strength, and means one that has self-energy.

Be mine a life without corrupt tendency,
 Considering of my end;
 Thus mine will be the protection of the NER of peace.

May aptly reasoning meditation be mine,
 Separating myself from sin;
 So God will protect me in the day of doom.

Thus sang the Blue Bard of the Chair.

THE COUNSELS OF THE WREN'S* ATTENDANT

1. Seek instruction and advice, and act according to reason.
2. Trust to no one but to God, and to the strength that He has given thee.
3. The best power is the power derived from reason; the power from reason is a power from God.
4. The best instruction is instruction derived from genius (Awen).
5. The best companion is a pure conscience.
6. The most courageous of all actions is to amend.
7. Be every thing from thyself under the protection and power of God, and not from man, nor from wealth, nor from law, nor from suffering, other than a pure conscience, and what God may will.

THE NINE BEATITUDES OF HEAVEN

1. Day without night, or light without darkness:
2. Peace without war, or love without hate:
3. Health without ailment, or enjoyment without weariness:
4. Joy without sadness, or pleasure without displeasure:
5. Wealth without luxury, or possession without sin:
6. Understanding without lack of understanding, or knowledge without ignorance:
7. Honour without disgrace, or respect without disrespect:
8. Liberty without restraint, or free will without error:
9. Life without death, or God and enough.

* The word translated Wren is *Dryw*, which has sometimes been rendered Druid.

THE SEVEN GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. The understanding, in the soul, to comprehend:
2. Reason, to methodize:
3. The senses, to operate:
4. Bodily powers, to accomplish:
5. Affection, to love good and to hate evil:
6. Genius (Awen), to invent and to study that which may be known.
7. Conscience, to judge of all goodness and wickedness.

From these are derived all knowledge and art, and every joy, comfort, and happiness.

Thus said the Blue Bard of the Chair.

THE SEVEN SUBSTANCES OF MAN

1. Earth, from which is the body;
2. Water, from which are the blood and humor;
3. Sun, from which are the heat and light;
4. Air, from which are breath and motion;
5. Nwyvre (Ether), from which are the feelings and affections;
6. Pure Spirit, from which are reason and intellect;
7. God, from Whom is eternal life.

The Blue Bard of the Chair has said it.

ZEN JEWELS

As clouds dimming the moon,
So matter veils the face of Thought.

From Hokazō.

What a man gains in contemplation
He must return in work.

Watchword of Zen Buddhists.

THE ELEMENTS OF THEOLOGY

PROCLUS*

PROPOSITION XXXIII

Every thing which proceeds from a certain thing and is converted to it, has a circular energy†

For if it reverts to that from which it proceeds, it conjoins the end to the beginning, and the motion is one and continuous; one motion being from that which abides, but the other being directed to the abiding cause. Hence, all things proceed in a circle from causes to causes; greater and less circles being continually formed of conversions, some of which are to the natures immediately above the things that are converted, but others to still higher natures, and so on as far as to the Principle of all things. For all things proceed from this Principle, and are converted to It.

PROPOSITION XXXIV

Every thing which is converted according to nature, makes its conversion to that from which also it had the progression of its proper hypostasis

For if it is converted according to nature, it will have an essential desire of that to which it is converted. But if this be the case, the whole being of it is suspended from that to which it makes an essential conversion, and it is essentially similar to it. Hence, it also has a natural sympathy with it, as being allied to its essence. If this, however, be the case, either the being of both is the same or the one is derived from the other, or both are allotted similitude from a certain other one. But if the being of both is the same, how

* For previous sections see *Shrine of Wisdom*, Vol. XVII, No. 65, p. 130, No. 66, p. 141, No. 67, p. 169, and No. 68, p. 197.

† In order to understand this proposition the reader must observe that the hypothesis requires that both the progression and regression subsist together. And this hypothesis is no less proper than true; for unless effects are continually converted to their causes they could not exist; since they depend on these for their subsistence, and this can only be effected by conversion.

is the one naturally converted to the other? And if both are from a certain one, it will be according to nature for both to be converted to that one. It remains, therefore, that the one must derive its being from the other. But if this be the case, the progression will be from that to which the conversion is according to nature.

COROLLARY

From these things, therefore, it is evident that Intellect is the object of desire to all things, that all things proceed from Intellect, and that the whole world, though it is perpetual, possesses its essence from Intellect. For it is not prevented from proceeding from Intellect because it is perpetual; neither because it is always arranged is it not unconverted to Intellect. But it always proceeds, is essentially perpetual, and is always converted, and indissoluble according to its own order.

PROPOSITION XXXV

Every thing caused, abides in, proceeds from, and returns, or is converted to, its cause

For if it alone abided, it would in no respect differ from its cause, being without separation and distinction from it: for progression is accompanied with separation. But if it alone proceeded, it would be unconjoined and deprived of sympathy with its cause, having no communication with it whatever. And if it were alone converted, how could that which had not its essence from the cause be essentially converted to that which was foreign to its nature? But if it should abide and proceed, but should not be converted, how would there be a natural desire of well-being in everything, and of good, and an excitation to its generating cause? And if it should proceed and be converted, but should not abide, how, being separated from its cause, would it hasten to be conjoined with it? For it was unconjoined prior to its departure; since, if it had been conjoined, it would entirely have abided in it. But if it should abide and be converted, but should not proceed, how could that which is not separated be able to revert to its cause? For everything which is converted resembles that which is resolved into the nature from which it is

essentially divided. It is necessary, however, either that it should abide alone, or be converted alone, or alone proceed, or that the extremes should be bound to each other, or that the medium should be conjoined with each of the extremes, or that all should be conjoined. Hence, it remains that every thing must abide in its cause, proceed from, and be converted to it.

PROPOSITION XXXVI

Of all things which are multiplied according to progression, the first are more perfect than the second, the second than those posterior to them, and after the same manner successively

For if progressions separate productions from their causes, and there are diminutions of things secondary with respect to such as are first, it follows that first natures, in proceeding, are more conjoined with their causes, being as it were germinations from them. But secondary natures are more remote from their causes, and in a similar manner such as are successive. Things, however, which are nearer and more allied to their causes, are more perfect. For causes are more perfect than things caused; but things which are more remote are more imperfect, being dissimilar to their causes.

PROPOSITION XXXVII

Of all things which subsist according to conversion, the first are more imperfect than the second, and the second than those that follow: but the last are the most perfect

For if conversions are effected in a circle, and conversion is directed to that from which progression is derived, but progression is from that which is most perfect, then conversion is directed to the most perfect. And if conversion first begins from that in which progression terminates, but progression terminates in that which is most imperfect, conversion will begin from the most imperfect. Hence, in things which subsist according to conversion, such as are most imperfect are the first, but such as are most perfect, the last.

PROPOSITION XXXVIII

Every thing which proceeds from certain causes is converted through as many causes as those through which it proceeds, and all conversion is through the same things as those through which progression is effected

For since each of these takes place through similitude, that indeed which has a transition immediately from a certain thing is also immediately converted to it; for the similitude here is without a medium. But that which requires a medium in proceeding, requires also a medium according to conversion; for it is necessary that each should be effected with reference to the same thing. Hence, the conversion will be first to the medium, and afterwards to that which is better than the medium. Through such things, therefore, as being is derived to each thing, through as many well-being also is derived, and vice versa.

PROPOSITION XXXIX

Every being is either alone essentially converted, or vitally, or also gnostically

For either it alone possesses being from its cause, or life together with being, or it likewise receives from thence a gnostic power. So far, therefore, as it alone is, it makes an essential conversion, but so far as it lives, a vital, and so far as it likewise knows, a gnostic conversion. For in such a way as it proceeded from its cause, such also is the mode of its conversion to it, and the measures of its conversion are defined by the measures according to progression. Desire, therefore, is to some things according to being alone, this desire being an aptitude to the participation of causes; but to others it is according to life, being a motion to more excellent natures; and to others, it is according to knowledge, being a consciousness of the goodness of causes.

(To be continued)

EXTRACT FROM ONOMASTICON
THEOLOGICUM

BY FLOYER SYDENHAM*

Since all rational beings are, by our hypothesis, capable of looking into themselves, of reviewing their own past actions and of tracing effects up to their general causes—such of these beings as have for a long time been sensible of their own miserable state—if, amidst the heat and hurry of their passions, they can allow themselves leisure time for cool reflection, they will naturally every now and then recur to it, and will at length find their own desires and passions, and those of others such as themselves, to have been the causes of all the evils which they endure, and of all the dangers to which they are exposed: these reflections will of course oblige them to self-accusation and self-condemnation; for, though the appetites and desires never accuse themselves and the passions are always eager to justify their imaginary rights, yet the unhappy souls who have been governed by them, looking deeply into themselves, will discover a certain Being within them, unperceived till then—such a one as we perceive within our selves, and to whom we give the name of Conscience; and this Being, they will find, is their accuser. At the same time, a court of justice will open to them in the inmost part of their own beings; and sitting there on the seat of judgment, they will discover a High Being, the sight of Whom, though veiled, will strike them with profoundest awe, and make them tremble—a Judge, in Whose Presence they will not dare to vindicate the bad actions they are accused of by Conscience, perceiving that He knows, even better than themselves or their accuser, the hidden springs of their actions, and all their inward movements.

But whilst they are thus intuitively perceiving the pure and blameless Rectitude of His Judgment, and the Reasonableness and Equity of His Sentence, pronouncing them justly miserable, the Ideas of Moral Rectitude, Equity, and Justice will arise within

* See also *Shrine of Wisdom*, Vol. XV, No. 58, p. 287, No. 59, p. 316, and No. 68, p. 215.

their minds; and these Divine Things will appear to them (as they will always to every mental eye which is not hoodwinked by appetite or passion, and is able steadfastly to behold them) much fairer than the former objects of their desires. And the contrary things, injustice, iniquity, and moral pravity, will be the objects of their aversion, much more than any things they formerly most shunned and dreaded. In fine, they will perceive themselves to be rational beings, as well as sensitive; and consequently that reason and those Divine Ideas are congenial to the better part of their nature, no less than sensation and imagination are connatural to them, as animals.

Dwelling on these thoughts; and conversing with the rational part of themselves continually—but conversant, no more than is necessary, with the objects of their passions and desires, and driving out of their imaginations, as much as possible, all images of evil—they will find a very considerable change wrought within them: the growth of those desires and passions, which had before overspread their souls, they will now find to have been stopped, and their swell to have subsided; the natural and the social affections, which had before been stifled and suppressed by the rampancy of those passions and desires, they will now find to have shot up, and spread abroad, flourishing and towering. For, having now come to be contented with the products of Nature, cultivated and improved by their own labour, ingenuity, and industry, and feeling themselves happy in this contentment, they will, as rational beings, naturally be prompted to search out, by reasoning, the cause of so great a change within them, as from a sense of their own misery to a sense of their own happiness.

As to external things, the numberless and various vegetables, growing upon the earth, the multitude and variety of fossils, thrown up or dug out from under ground, and the many tame, and some wild animals around them, the Origin of all which beings they had never before thought of inquiring about, though their labour and ingenuity had daily been employed on them—on fossils, to harden or soften, and shape them, as they pleased; on vegetables, the larger trees to cleave for building, and the smaller to cut in pieces and frame into utensils; some plants to manufacture, and others to prepare for food; on brute animals, such as are tame, to render obedient and serviceable to them, and such as are wild, to hunt and kill, for luxurious food, or for apparel—

all these external things they will now consider as the boons of Nature, created and produced for their subsistence, comfort, and convenience. From this consideration, the Ideas of Goodness and Beneficence will open within their minds; and these Ideas will excite the affections of gratitude and piety.

In the next place they will survey their own bodies, the structure of their limbs, instrumental to motion, and the finer members of the body instrumental to sensation; and at the same time consider, that, if they wanted these organs of motion and sensation, they could not obtain, make use of, or enjoy those external boons of nature. When they consider also the powers which they find from experience to be in themselves and in brute animals likewise—the powers of sense, memory, and imagination, but especially when they reflect on such as are peculiarly their own—the powers of comparing, deliberating, and judging; the powers of art and infinite invention; those also, which they are exercising at that very time, namely the powers of reflecting and reasoning—they will rationally conclude that all these powers are given them by that Nature Which created all things; and therefore, that this Creative Nature possesseth all those powers, virtually, which It dispenses and distributes among Its creatures.

From these rational conclusions an idea will arise in their minds—how imperfect soever it may be—of a SOVEREIGN POWER in Nature, so truly kingly, as to be in continual exercise and exertion for the good of all beings, the subjects of that Power, by giving them to partake of it in a measure sufficient to make them happy. And this idea in their minds will be accompanied by a love, springing up spontaneously in their hearts—a love of that Nature, which so powerfully and efficaciously blesseth the whole creation; a love increasing in proportion to the advances they make in the knowledge of Nature from observations and reasonings.

For when they shall have observed that different kinds of animals are endued with different degrees of sense and other animal-powers; and that these different degrees are respectively proportioned to their different wants and occasions, and to the use which those powers will be toward their living happily; and when they shall have considered that the frame of every animal is the measure of its wants; and that the uses for which those powers are bestowed on it evidently appear, not only from the

structure of its organs, but also, and chiefly, from the instincts innate within it, to employ those organs on certain occasions, and to certain uses; when they shall have reasoned on the parsimony of Nature, in not bestowing on any animals more powers, nor higher degrees of any powers, than they have occasion for, and shall with certainty have concluded that if more powers had been given to any animals, or higher degrees of those which they actually possess, such powers would have proved destructive to whole tribes of other animals, or have made the possessors of them miserable themselves; that the chain of things also would thus have been broken, and wide chasms made in the gradation of beings—when our newly enlightened reasoners shall have made these observations and have come to these conclusions, they will readily conceive that, in this universally CREATIVE NATURE, Power and Goodness are essentially united with an all-comprehensive MIND and a consummate WISDOM. And hence their love of Nature will be attended with the affections of awful reverence and mental adoration in the highest degree.

When, after this, they return to self-introspection, and review their own reasonings, from which those Ideas of the Divine Perfections, newly sprung up in their minds, will seem to have arisen, they will naturally at first suppose that those great Ideas are the offspring of their own reason; and afterward perhaps they will suppose them to be impressed on their minds immediately by that UNIVERSAL MIND lately discovered by them to be in Nature—to which Divine Mind such Ideas must essentially belong. If they incline to this latter supposition, the ideas of their own minds will then appear to be the offspring, the likenesses, and the representatives of those in the MIND of NATURE.

If they adhere to their first hypothesis, then those Universal and Divine Ideas, newly started up in their minds, will appear to have been within them before, but latent, until stirred up as it were from the bottom, by the mind's internal motion, in the energies of reasoning: and in this case, they must presume that their rational part—mind—was at first as it were a seed, sown in their souls by the Great Mind Universal—a seed, teeming with Universal Ideas, like so many lobes, into which it afterwards divides; where each lobe is charged with the seeds of subordinate ideas, all, in time, through proper aliment and culture, to be developed, unfolded, and produced to light.

They will then perceive that all the ideas, which they had ever beheld in their minds before this new discovery, were of the subordinate sort; and represented nothing more than the species and the kinds of things in outward nature; that such ideas were nourished and supported daily by the external objects surrounding them; that many of these ideas they had entertained and dwelt on with pleasure, because flattering and pleasing to their passions.

They will perceive also that these very passions, pampered, and tyrannizing in their souls, had, till then, blinded their mental eye to the finer Ideas Universal; notwithstanding that every natural object around them shines (as they will then clearly see) with the reflection of those Divine Forms, Whose splendid Rays extend to all things; for Ideas, so elevated, and so elevating to the soul, will have then humbled and mortified the vain arrogance of their passions.

They will then perceive, further, what most of all things concerns them to know, as the knowledge of it is of the utmost consequence to the stability and permanence of their happiness, namely this: that, if those Universal and DIVINE IDEAS are con-natural to their minds, and as it were innate in them, this rational principle within their souls—namely mind—must have been derived immediately from that Universal and DIVINE MIND, in which those Ideas originally and essentially reside.

Thus become conscious of their Origin—the Origin of that only part of their souls, which by its nature is immortal; That, which alone constitutes the proper and true Self of every rational being; That, without which no being can be always one and the same—they will thenceforth contemplate the Divine Mind as their intentional and voluntary Father, the sole Parent of their most valuable and immortal Part, the Giver to them of Themselves.

In this delightful contemplation they will feel springing up in their hearts an affection to Him, truly filial and reverential; an attachment to Him, truly devotional; a devoting of themselves, their best hours, and their noblest faculties, to celebrate the Excellencies of His Nature, and the Glories of His works. In admiring His works, they will love them all, as His creation, but rational beings they will love in a more especial manner; for, looking on them as His children, they will feel a fraternal affection to them—a natural friendship for all of them, in proportion to their being what they are by nature, i.e., rational; and a kind,

social, and compassionate regard for their unhappy companions, in the present outward state of their being: namely those who continue in ignorance of themselves; in ignorance of what is their true Good, and what would, if they knew it, make them happy; in ignorance of the Author of All Good, their Divine Father. Filled with these sentiments and these affections, their souls will become qualified for the society of better Beings in better Worlds.

From the LAWA'IH JAMI

“The fleeting phantoms you admire to-day
Will soon at heaven’s behest be swept away.
O give your heart to Him who never fails,
Is, ever with you, and will ever stay.”

* * *

“Go, sweep out the chamber of your heart,
Make it ready to be the dwelling-place of the Beloved;
When you depart out He will enter in:
In you, void of yourself, will He display His beauty.”

* * *

“My lust for this world and the next efface,
Grant me the crown of poverty and grace
To be the partaker in Thy mysteries;
From paths that lead not towards Thee turn my face.”

* * *

“I am the tree; these flowers My offshoots are:
Let not the offshoots hide from thee the tree.”

* * *

“Thy face uncovered would be all too bright,
Without a veil none could endure the sight.
What eye is strong enough to gaze upon
The dazzling splendour of the fount of light?
When the sun’s banner blazes in the sky,
Its light gives pain by its intensity,
But when ’tis tempered by a veil of cloud
That light is soft and pleasant to the eye.”

THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE LIGHT WITHIN

BY WILLIAM PENN

That there is an universal Light, the universality of all ages hath plentifully testified. There is nothing more constant now that can plead either such antiquity, or general consent: not a nation in the world ever knew an age in which it was destitute of such a discovery of internal Light, as gave them to discern evil from good; that virtue was not ever most commendable, and vice above all things pernicious. I conclude therefore that since both wicked and good men, in all ages, have confessed to well and ill doing, and that this depends upon the discovery of the Divine Light of Christ, which makes manifest every reprobable action; that none of mankind are exempted from this illumination.

But again, it is highly consistent with the goodness of God, and the order of His creation; since it seems unreasonable that men should have the benefit of a natural sun, which shines on the just and unjust, by which to direct their steps and securely transact all temporal affairs, and yet that their souls should be left destitute of a Spiritual Luminary or Sun of Righteousness; when, in comparison of the salvation of a single soul, Christ counts the world of no value. The soul, then, hath eyes as well as the body; and, as men may see, if they please, when the sun is in the outward firmament, unless they wilfully close their eyes, so may all rational souls see, if they will, by their eye of Reason, that *Spiritual* Sun, which gives as true discerning and direction to the mind, how to think and desire, as the natural sun doth to the body, how to act and walk aright.

Were not this true, men would miserably charge God with neglect to His creatures; for since it is to be supposed that God made nothing but with a design it should acknowledge a Creator, after its respective nature; and that man's duty was peculiar, namely, divine homage and worship expressed generally by a life corresponding with that Being Which made him, it is just that we believe God hath endued mankind with something

that is Divine, in order to it; since otherwise man would be destitute of that which should enable him to perform that duty, without which he could not please or rightly acknowledge God. If then all mankind ought to worship, fear, and reverence God, certainly all mankind have an ability from God so to do, or else perfect impossibilities are expected, man of himself being a most impotent creature. But certainly it can never stand with the rectitude and justice of the Eternal God, to expect from man what He never gave him power to do, or the improvement of a talent he never had.

LOVE OF GOD

Says St. Gregory: "Wilt thou know whether thou lovest God? Take note when cares, troubles, or sorrows overtake thee (from within or from without—whencesoever they come) and weigh down thy spirit so that thou knowest not which way to turn, nor what is to become of thee, and canst find no counsel, and art outwardly in a storm of affliction, in unwonted perplexity and sore distress; if thou remainest inwardly at peace and unmoved in the bottom of thy heart, so that thou dost not in any wise falter, either by complaint, or in word, or work, or gesture, then there is no doubt that thou lovest God." For where there is true love a man is neither out of measure lifted up by prosperity, nor cast down by mishap; whether you give or take away from him, so long as he keeps his beloved, he has a spring of inward peace. Thus even though thine outward man grieve or weep downright, that may well be borne, if only thy inner man remain at peace, perfectly content with the Will of God. But if thou dost not find it thus with thee, then thou art in truth deaf, and hast not really heard the Voice of the Eternal Word within thee.

JOHN TAULER.