

# THE SHRINE *of* WISDOM

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## THE LAWS OF MANU

WITH A COMMENTARY BY THE EDITORS OF THE  
SHRINE OF WISDOM

### I. (*Continued*)\*

117. "The threefold states of existence which arise from actions; the manner of attaining final bliss; and the examination of good and evil qualities of actions.

118. "The primal Laws of countries, of castes, of families; the rules concerning heretics and guilds, has Manu declared in these Institutes.

119. "As Manu, in reply to my questions, formerly promulgated these Institutes, even so learn ye also the whole from me."

These three verses conclude the first chapter of the *Laws of Manu*. Verses 118 and 119 refer, in a general way, to the succeeding chapters and to the work as a whole. The development of the subjects mentioned in verse 117 occupies almost the whole of the last chapter, which may be said to constitute an ideal synthesis of the Laws, since it represents the ultimate purpose for which they were formulated. The previous part of the work is concerned with the Origin and Creation of Man and the Cosmos; the generation of existences, and the principles underlying their preservation and perfection; the laws governing their operations, as well as the higher laws which govern the material activities of man. The concluding chapter deals chiefly with the results of actions and man's attainment of final bliss in Divine union.

\* For previous Sections see *Shrine of Wisdom*, Nos. 64 to 74.

The next section consists of selected verses from Chapter XII with the addition of a few comments.

The threefold conditions resulting from actions.

1. "The whole sacred Law applicable to the four castes has been declared by Thee, O Sinless One; communicate now to us the due retribution for their deeds, according to the truth.
2. "To the great sages who thus addressed him, righteous Bhrigu, sprung from Manu, answered: 'Hear the infallible laws concerning the connection with actions.'
3. "Action which springs from the mind, from speech, and from the body produces either good or evil results; thus by action are caused the various conditions of men—the highest, the middle, and the lowest.
4. "Know that the mind is the instigator here below of that action connected with the external nature, which is of three kinds, has three locations, and falls under ten heads.
5. "Coveting the property of others, thinking of what is forbidden, and adhering to false doctrines, are the three kinds of wrong mental action.
6. "Abusing others, speaking untruth, detracting from the merits of others, and talking about what does not concern one, are the four kinds of evil verbal action.
7. "Taking what has not been given, injuring without the sanction of the law, and adultery, are declared to be the three kinds of wicked bodily action."

These ten heads of wrong actions correspond with the ten evils which should be avoided, as taught in the Buddhist Scriptures. "Injuring without the sanction of the law" implies the recognition of legitimate punishment by the execution of legal penalties.

8. "A man obtains the result of a good or evil mental action in his mind, that of a verbal action in his speech, and that of a bodily action in his body.
9. "A man reaches the condition of sluggish existence through evil bodily acts, the condition like the winged creatures or wild animals through the faulty acts of the voice, and the condition of low birth through the wrong actions of the mind."

It is unreasonable to conclude that the human soul could ever actually become the soul of an irrational animal and still less of a lower existence; but it is evident that as a result of his evil actions man can assume corresponding animal and vegetative characteristics. "The condition of sluggish existence" would therefore represent a predominating inert or vegetative bodily condition; "the condition like the winged creatures or wild animals", that of the irrational desire nature characteristic of such creatures; while the "condition of low birth" would signify a life given to merely material and personal affairs, the product of the activities of the lower aspect of mind.

10. "That man is called a true tridandin who through his mind possesses control over his speech, control over his thoughts, and control over his body."

"Tridandin" means "he of the three rods." The rod is a symbol of control.

11. "He who keeps this threefold control over himself in respect to all creatures and wholly subdues desire and hate assuredly obtains thereby a firm hold on happiness.

23. "Let man, having recognized by means of his mind the transitions of the soul which depend upon virtue and vice, ever fix his heart on the acquisition of virtue.

24. "Know that goodness, activity, and darkness are the three qualities of the self with which the Great One eternally pervades all existences."

Goodness, activity, and darkness are the qualities of the three gunas, which have a general correspondence to the principles of intellect, nature, and matter.

25. "When any one of these qualities predominates in any manifested nature, so accordingly is the embodied soul eminently distinguished.

26. "Goodness is declared to have the form of knowledge; darkness, of ignorance; activity, of love or hate: such is the nature of these three which pervade and underlie all created things.

27. "When one experiences in his soul an inner feeling of

bliss, a deep calm, as it were, and a clear light, then let him know that as the quality of goodness.

28. "Whatever is mixed with pain and gives no satisfaction to the soul, one may know that to be the quality of action which is difficult to conquer and which draws the soul towards sensual objects.

29. "Whatever is coupled with delusion, whatever is confused and disordered, whatever cannot be made intelligible by reasoning, one must consider as the quality of darkness."

The association of delusion, confusion, disorder, and unintelligibility with darkness is significant. Darkness implies the absence of light: light makes things intelligible: intelligibility is never found where order is lacking. Therefore whatever lacks light and intelligibility must necessarily be confused, disordered, and delusive.

No gnostic power lower than reason enables man to arrive at an apperception of the intelligibility of anything, for although the lower faculties can have an awareness of existing things, they are incapable of knowing what and why they are. They are good and necessary for their normal purposes as instruments of the higher faculties for contacting external natures, but if used independently they merely relate to particularity, to changing conditions, and to phenomenal effects of minor and proximate causes. Hence they lead to confused and delusive notions and often to phantastic imaginations which are far removed from intelligible light.

30. "I will now describe the various results which arise from the three qualities, those that are excellent, those that have a middle nature, and those lowest of all.

31. "The study of the Vedas, austerity, the pursuit of real knowledge, purity, control over the sense organs, the performance of virtuous acts, and meditation on the soul, are marks of the quality of goodness.

32. "Delight in selfish undertakings, lack of firmness, inordinate action, continual indulgence in sensual pleasures, are the marks of the quality of activity.

33. "Greed, indolence, pusillanimity, cruelty, atheism, an evil life, a habit of soliciting favours, and inattentiveness, are marks of the quality of darkness.

34. "Know, moreover, the following to be a brief description to the three qualities, each in its order, as they appear in the three times—the past, the present, and the future.

35. "When a man, having done, doing, or about to do any act, feels ashamed, the wise may know that all such acts bear the quality of darkness.

36. "When a man desires to gain by an act much fame in the world, although he may feel no sorrow if he fails, know this bears the mark of the quality of activity.

37. "That bears the mark of the quality of goodness, which with his whole heart he desires to know, which he is not ashamed to perform, and at which his soul rejoices.

38. "The craving after the pleasures of sense is declared to be the sign of darkness; the pursuit of worldly prosperity, the sign of passion or activity; the aspiration for spiritual virtue, the sign of goodness: each quality named following in order of excellence."

Although the qualities of activity and darkness are here regarded as harmful, yet the dynamic and static cosmic principles which underlie them are necessary to physical existence. The two qualities are only injurious to man when he possesses them in an excessive degree and thus identifies himself with his lower nature.

The quality of goodness, however, is ideal and belongs to man's essential nature, through which he may consciously participate in Divine light and love and bliss.

*(To be continued)*

Devotion is really neither more nor less than a general inclination and readiness to do that which we know to be acceptable to God. It is that "free Spirit" of which David spoke when he said, "I will run the way of Thy commandments when Thou hast set my heart at liberty". People of ordinary goodness walk in God's way, but the devout run in it, and at length they almost fly therein . . . to be truly devoted we must not only do God's will, but we must do it cheerfully.

—*Francis de Sales.*

## TRIADS OF WISDOM

Translated from the Welsh for *The Shrine of Wisdom* from the Myvyrian Archaiology

Prefacing these triads is a note to say that they were collected by Thomas ab Ivan of Dre Bryn, in the year 1679, from the various books of Rhisiart Iorwerth, Davydd Benwyn, Watkin Powell, Sir Sion Gruffydd of Langrallo, and Morys Davydd of Penybont ar Ogwr.

1. Three kinds of wisdom which every man ought to consider, know, and pursue: towards God, towards his fellow men, and towards himself.

2. The three excellences of wisdom: peace-lovingness, justice, and exalted learning.

3. Three expressions of wisdom: inspiration, understanding, and conscience.

4. Three forerunners of wisdom: inspired meditation, proof of the diligence of the attempt, love of worthy knowledge.

5. Three substantialities of wisdom: meditation, knowledge, and earnest mental qualities.

6. Three essentials of wisdom: devotion, effort, and action.

7. Three things which together possessed lead to wisdom: meditative understanding, diligent effort, and peace-loving gentleness.

8. Three essentials of meditation: apprehension of the subject of meditation, love of the subject of meditation, and necessity for the benefit of what is meditated.

9. Three essentials of diligent effort: bodily strength, sufficient understanding, and inspired devotion.

10. Three essential qualities of gentleness: peace-lovingness, affectionate joy, and humble obedience.

11. Three things in a man which the wise should deeply consider: the intensity of his sight, the expression of his voice, and the symbol of his action.

12. Three things without which true wisdom cannot be obtained: enlightened inspiration, strenuous effort, and ceremonial instruction.

13. Three things which render the paths of wisdom free from obstacles: moral upbringing from parents, instruction in upright conduct from teachers, and association only with wise learned men.

14. Three chief teachers of wisdom: intelligent understanding, instruction in laudable sciences, and a guarded conscience.

15. Three stabilities of wisdom: a retentive memory, love-inspired meditation, and the exercise of the mental faculties.

16. Three things that endow a wise man with knowledge and science: discretion, forceful inspired meditation, and the vigour of conscience.

17. The three teachers of an unwise man: the misfortunes of bad conduct, the laws of a country, and the retribution of God.

18. Three marks of wisdom: respect from men, joy of the mind, and the pleasure of God.

19. Three marks of unwisdom: disrespectful persecution of men, shameful sadness of the mind, and the displeasure of God.

20. Three rewards of wisdom: worldly profit, a peaceful mind, and fathomless joy.

21. Three rewards of unwisdom: worldly loss, an afflicted mind, and to perceive every right when it is too late in fathomless loss.

## JEWELS

Love fits the soul with wings, and bids her win  
Her flight aloft, nor e'er to earth decline;  
'Tis the first step that leads her to the shrine  
Of Him who slakes the thirst that burns within.

—*Michael Angelo*

To God again the enfranchised Soul must tend,  
He is her home, her Author is her End,  
No death is hers; when earthly eyes grow dim,  
Star-like she soars, and Godlike rests in Him.

—*Virgil*

## THE HISTORY OF GREAT LIGHT

## BOOK I. ORIGINAL INSTRUCTIONS IN TAO

BY HUAI-NAN-TSZE\*

## 15. THE PARADOX OF WATER

There is nothing in the world so weak as water, yet its greatness cannot be measured, its depths are unfathomable; its length is limitless, its horizon has no shores; in its ebbs and flows, its increase and decrease, it is boundless. When it rises to Heaven, it produces rain and dew; when it falls upon the earth, it gives richness and moisture; to all the creatures of the world, it imparts life; it brings all things to completion. It holds all things in its wide embrace with perfect impartiality; its graciousness extends to all things living, without expectation of reward.

Its wealth is sufficient to supply the wants of the whole world, without fear of exhaustion; its virtue is bestowed upon the people at large, and yet there is no waste. It is ever-flowing, ceaseless and unlimited; its subtlety is such that it cannot be grasped in the hand. Strike it, you hurt it not; stab it, you cause no wound; cut it, you cannot sever it in twain; apply fire to it, it will not burn. Whether it runs deep or shallow, seen or unseen, taking different directions, flowing this way or that, without order or design, it can never be utterly dispersed. Its cutting power is such that it will work its way through stone or metal; its strength is so great that the whole world is succoured by it. It flows peacefully through the regions of formlessness, soaring above the realms of obscurity;† it works its way backwards and forwards among valleys and watercourses; it seethes and overflows its banks in vast and desert wilds. Whether there be a superfluity of it, or a scarcity, the world is supplied according to natural law without respect to precedence in time. Wherefore there is nothing either generous or mean about it; for it flows

\* For previous Sections see *Shrine of Wisdom* Nos. 71 to 74.

† That is, in the form of clouds.

and rushes with echoing reverberations throughout the vast expanse of Earth and Heaven. Thus it cannot be said to have a left side or a right; it winds and meanders backwards and forwards, this way and that, being coexistent in point of time with the entire Universe, for which cause its virtue may be called perfect.

And how comes it that water is able thus to be perfect in the world? It is because of its gentleness, weakness, fertilizing properties and lubricity. Thus Lao-Tsze said: "That which is the weakest thing in all the world is able to overcome the strongest. Issuing from nothingness it returns to nowhere; and from this I know that there is advantage in *Wu-Wei*."\*

#### 16. THE NOBLE ANCESTRY OF WATER

Formlessness is the first progenitor of Form.

Silence is the first ancestor of Sound.

The son of Formlessness is Light; its grandson is Water.

Everything that lives was thus produced from Formlessness.

Light can be seen but not grasped.

Water can be handled but not violently compelled.

Wherefore, among all things which are endowed with form, there is none so noble as Water.

#### 17. THE UNITY OF TAO

To leave the road of life and enter upon that of death; to revert to non-existence from a state of being, after having arrived at a state of being from one of non-existence, cannot be done, and any attempt to do so will result in ruin.† Therefore hidden purity and repose are the quintessence of virtue; and softness and tenderness are essentials of Tao. The immaterial in happy repose provided all things for the use of man. When a man is able, calmly and impassively, to await whatever may befall him, and patiently and resolutely to cause his heart to

\* This quotation does not appear, as it stands, in any edition of the *Tao Teb King*.

† That which has real being subsists eternally. It is only the material which is subject to change and death.

revert to that from which he sprang, he will be enfolded in a state of Formlessness. And what is this Formlessness of which I speak? It is the Unity which is the foundation of Tao. And what is this Unity? It is that which has no equal under Heaven; which although it stands unsupported and alone, permeates the Nine Heavens\* above and the Nine Fields† below; round, but with a roundness that no compass could describe; square, but with a squareness that no carpenter's square could make; one with the vast expanse; exuberant in leaves, but having no discoverable roots; embracing and enveloping both Heaven and Earth. It opens the portals of Tao. Majestic in its breadth and depth, invisible and without form, it alone preserves its virtue absolutely pure, spreading and diffusing it without exhaustion, exercising it without fatigue. Wherefore it is invisible, though looked for; inaudible, though listened for; intangible, though followed after; formless, yet giving birth to forms; without sound, yet causing the five notes of harmony;‡ tasteless, yet producing the five flavours;§ colourless, yet perfecting the five colours.||

Thus existence is produced from non-existence, and the material from the immaterial. The world being its only enclosure, the potential and the actual exist together. There are only five notes in music; but the variations of these are more numerous than the ear can hear. There are only five flavours; but the modifications of these are more numerous than can be tasted. There are only five colours; but the diversifications of these are more numerous than can be observed. Wherefore, given the note *Kung*, the five notes may be formulated correctly; given the quality of sweetness, the five flavours may be decided; given whiteness, the five colours may be perfected; given Tao, the Creation will come into being.

\* According to the Taoists there are Nine Heavens conceived as successive gradations of sphere above sphere.

† The Nine Fields below correspond with the Nine Heavens; they are the centre and the eight points of the compass.

‡ See article on "Ancient Chinese Music," *Shrine of Wisdom*, Vol. XVI, No. 61, p. 11.

§ The five flavours are: Salt, Bitter, Sour, Pungent, and Sweet.

|| The five colours are: Black, Red, Blue, White, and Yellow.

Thus the Principle of Unity pervades the Four Seas;\* the permeation of it fills up all Heaven and Earth. In compactness it is as pure as unpolished jade; in a state of diffusion it is as turbid as muddy water. Yet, turbid as it is, it becomes gradually clear; from emptiness it becomes full; it ripples placidly like a deep abyss; it drifts along like floating clouds; to all appearance non-existing, it yet exists; to all appearance lost, it is still preserved. Multifarious as are created things, they all pass through its portal, the origin of all emerges from its gate. Its movements are invisible, its transformations like those of Spirit; its actions leave no vestiges; ever behind, and yet before all.

Therefore, in governing, the Servant of Tao hides his intelligence, and casts away written laws; he depends upon the principle of spontaneity and discards shrewdness, and includes both himself and his people in a policy of liberality and justice. The restraints he does keep in force are few; the objects for which he strives are also few. He renounces allurements on the one hand and longings on the other; discarding his lustful appetites and throwing off anxiety and care. The restrictive ordinances which he retains, being few, can be easily observed; the objects for which he strives, being few, can be easily attained. Those who depend upon their ears for hearing and their eyes for seeing put their bodies to great weariness, and do not succeed in perceiving clearly even then. Those who use knowledge and anxious thoughts in the work of government put their minds to great trouble, and yet fail to accomplish their object. Wherefore the Sage uses spontaneous methods, never swerving from the occasions' demands. He follows the square; he is guided by the plumb-line; he conforms to the universal order.

Now joy and anger are deflections of the true Doctrine, conformity with Tao; sorrow and melancholy are lapses from virtue; passionate love and hate are aberrations of the heart; depraved appetites are impediments to the original temperament. Great anger in a man tends to disperse the Yin principle in his nature; great joy, to repress the Yang.† Conflicting passions produce dumbness; intense terror produces madness. When

\* In ancient Chinese Cosmology the four seas bounded the habitable earth.

† For information concerning the Yang and Yin, see *Shrine of Wisdom*, Manual No. 8, "The Simple Way of Lao-Tsze," p. 17.

sorrow, melancholy, and anger coexist, the disease is past cure; when loves and hatreds flourish greatly, tribulation will follow in their train. Wherefore the height of virtue is an absence of both joy and sorrow from the heart; the height of tranquillity is to reach this condition and abide in it without change; the height of emptiness is to be perfectly free of depraved appetites; the height of peace is the absence of loves and hates; the height of simplicity is to keep oneself free from the confusion which affects others. Those who are able to bring themselves into these five conditions acquire absolute perspicacity (clear-seeing), and the acquirement of absolute perspicacity leads to union of the mind with Tao.

If man's mind be one with Tao, it is impossible for passions to be fostered, so that the union of the mind with Tao results in the tranquillization of the interior life and the pacification of the passions of joy and anger; the nerves will become firm and strong, the ear quick, the eye clear. The mind, being free and open, is continually ordinate; the body, being healthy, never breaks down. Such a man will never err in his duty either by excess or defect. If his sphere of action is limited, he does not feel cramped; if it is large, he is able in like manner to accommodate himself to its extent. His soul is prone neither to anger nor vexation, but pure and tranquil, serene and reposeful, he is a model of the Universe.

*(To be continued)*

Thou Brightness of eternal glory,  
 Thou Comfort of the Pilgrim Soul,  
 with Thee is my tongue without voice, and  
 my very silence speaketh unto Thee.  
 Come, O come; for without Thee I shall have  
 no joyful day or hour; for Thou art my joy,  
 and without Thee my table is empty.  
 Praise and glory be unto Thee; let my mouth,  
 my soul, praise and bless Thee. Amen."

—*Thomas à Kempis*

## THE MYTH OF BRANWEN, THE DAUGHTER OF LLYR

### THE SECOND BRANCH OF THE MABINOZION

#### THE MYTHOS

One day Bendigaid Fran\* (Bran), son of Llyr, and King of all Britain, or the Island of the Mighty, was seated on the Rock of Harlech, accompanied by his brother Manawydan and his half-brothers, Nisseyen and Efnisseyen. The latter were sons of Euroswydd and Bran's mother, Penarddim, the daughter of Beli, son of Mynogan. Nisseyen was ever a peacemaker, but Efnisseyen was a stirrer of strife between the families of Llyr and Euroswydd.

As they gazed out to sea they saw thirteen beautifully equipped ships approaching from Southern Ireland, bearing Matholwch, King of Ireland, who came seeking the hand of Branwen, Bran's sister, in marriage. His suit was willingly granted, and it was arranged for the wedding to take place at Aberffraw, whither Matholwch and his hosts journeyed by sea, while the British proceeded overland. At the wedding feast, which was held in tents because Bran was so vast that no house could contain him, he and Manawydan sat on one side facing Matholwch and Branwen.

On the morrow, when all the horses and attendants were ranged in order as far as the sea, Efnisseyen chanced upon Matholwch's horses. Upon hearing the cause of the array, he was furious that his half-sister should have been betrothed without his consent, and, rushing under the horses, he cut off their lips at the teeth, their ears close to their heads, their tails, and, so far as he was able, their eyelids, thus rendering them useless.

\* The spelling of many of the names will be found to differ from that used by Lady Guest. In common with all ancient MSS., there is great variation in this respect, and the edition of T. P. Ellis and John Lloyd has been followed, as affording the more exact version.

When this news reached Matholwch, he departed with his followers to his ships in high dudgeon, but Bran, hearing of his departure, sent Iddic the son of Anarawc and Hefeydd Hir to inquire the cause and, upon learning it, despatched three ambassadors, Manawydan, Hefeydd Hir, and Unic Glew Ysgwydd, with an offer to replace the maimed steeds and in addition give to Matholwch a staff of silver as tall as himself and a plate of gold as broad as his face.

The offer was accepted and ratified at another feast, where Bran also bestowed upon Matholwch a magic cauldron which would restore to full life, except for the power of speech, any slain men who were cast therein.

Accordingly on the next day Matholwch was paid with as many trained horses as were available and the total completed with colts from a neighbouring district.

When questioned by Matholwch, Bran told him that the cauldron had been the gift of a giant named Llassar Llaesygyfnewid, who had come from Ireland with his wife, Kymidei Kymeinfoll, and whose previous history Matholwch himself was able to supply.

It appeared that when hunting Matholwch had met this couple coming from a lake, the man bearing the cauldron on his back. He was huge, yellow-haired, of horrid aspect, and his wife was twice his size. Craving hospitality because in six weeks the woman was to bear a son who would be born a warrior fully armed, they had remained in Ireland for a year, but had made themselves hated in the land because of their disorderly conduct. It was found impossible to expel them, and therefore an iron chamber was built, round which fuel was piled. Into this the couple and their children were enticed with meat and drink, and when they were drunk the fuel was lighted and the chamber made red hot. But Llassar waited until the metal was white hot, and then burst his way out with his shoulder, so that he and his wife escaped to Wales, their children having perished.

In Britain they had given the cauldron to Bran, and their progeny had become very numerous, prospering in all parts of Wales and fortifying themselves with the finest men and arms wherever they dwelt.

After the feasting, Matholwch and Branwen embarked at Aber Menai and returned to Ireland, where Branwen was

received with great honour, and eventually bore a son named Gwern.

But in the second year the Irish taunted their King with the insult he had sustained in Wales and the payment of the horses, with the result that Branwen was degraded to the position of cook, and the butcher was instructed to smite her on the ear every day after he had cut up the meat. At the same time, all communication with Wales was severed, so that for the space of three years no news of Branwen's misfortunes reached the ears of Bran.

Meanwhile she secretly trained a starling to speak and, after instructing it how to recognize her brother, tied a letter to its wing and sent it across the sea.

Bran was at *Caer Seint* in *Arfon* when the bird found him, and he immediately summoned one hundred and forty-four districts to council. At this council it was decided to invade Ireland, leaving seven princes in *Edeyrnion* under the leadership of *Caradawg*, the son of Bran, to govern in their absence. The six in addition to *Caradawg* were *Hefeydd Hir*, *Unic Glew Ysgwydd*, *Iddic* the son of *Anarawc Gwalltgrwn*, *Fodor* the son of *Erfyll*, *Gwlch Minascwrn*, and *Llasnar* the son of *Llaesar Llaesgygydd*, with *Pendaran Dyfed* as a young page to them.

As they drew near to Ireland, close to the rivers *Lli* and *Archan*, Bran and his host came to shallow water, so he waded ashore with his provisions on his back, to the consternation of some Irish swineherds, who reported to *Matholwch* that they had seen a moving wood on the sea by the side of a mountain surmounted by a lofty ridge with a lake on each side of the ridge. Branwen explained that these things were really the men of the Island of the Mighty come to her rescue; the forest being the masts of the ships, the mountain, *Bendigaid Fran* (for no ship could contain him), and the ridge and lakes, his nose and eyes.

In fear, the Irish retreated across the River *Llinon* and destroyed the bridge, deeming themselves safe; for in the bed of this river was a loadstone over which no ship could pass. But this was no barrier to Bran, who laid himself down across the river, and his army passed over him as a bridge.

*Matholwch* sent messengers to Bran offering to abdicate in favour of his son, *Gwern*. This offer Bran rejected, whereupon

Matholwch offered to build a house so vast that it would accommodate Bran, in which the Irish would do him homage and surrender the kingdom to his will. On the advice of Branwen, Bran accepted this offer.

But in building the house the Irish craftily put two brackets on each of the hundred pillars which supported the roof, and suspended from each a leathern bag containing an armed man.

Efnissyen entered the hall before any of the Welsh and inquired what the bags contained. "Meal," he was told, but, groping with his hand, he felt a man's head, which he squeezed until he felt his fingers meet together in the brain. In this way he destroyed the two hundred armed men.

The appointed meeting was held and Gwern was proclaimed King of Ireland, and was embraced by Bran, Manawydan, and Nissyen. But once more Efnissyen was the cause of strife: "Wherefore comes not my nephew, the son of my sister, to me?" he demanded. "Cheerfully let him go to thee," replied Bran; but Efnissyen in a rage seized the lad by the feet and thrust him headlong into the blazing fire.

Branwen strove to leap after him, but was held back by Bran, while tumult and battle raged around them.

To strengthen their forces the Irish kindled a fire beneath the magic cauldron and filled it with their dead comrades, who were restored the next day to full fighting powers, although dumb. At the sight of such overwhelming odds, remorse overcame Efnissyen, and he feigned death among the Irish dead, so that he also was thrown into the cauldron, whereupon he stretched himself, rent the cauldron into four pieces and burst his own heart.

This saved the British from utter destruction, but only seven beside Bran escaped with their lives, and he was wounded in the foot with a poisoned dart. The seven survivors were Pryderi, Manawydan, Glivieu Eil Taran, Taliesin, Ynawc, Grudieu the son of Muriel, and Heilyn the son of Gwynn Hên.

Then Bendigaid Fran issued his last command to his followers—to cut off his own head.

"And take you the head," he said, "and bear it to Gwynfryn in London, and bury it there with the face towards France. And a long time will you be upon the road. In Harlech you will be feasting seven years, the birds of Rhiannon singing to

you. And the head will be to you as good company as it ever was at its best to you when it was on me. And at Gwales in Penvro you will be fourscore years, and unless you open the door towards Aber Henfelen and towards Cornwall, you may remain there, and the head with you uncorrupted. And after you open that door, there you may no longer tarry. Set forth to London to bury the head, and go ye yonder straight through."

So they cut off his head and set out on their journey, accompanied by Branwen. They landed at Aber Alaw in Talebolion, where Branwen died of a broken heart and was buried in a four-sided grave on the banks of the Alaw.

As they journeyed on towards Harlech they learned that Caswallawn, son of Beli, had usurped the throne and slain six of the seven regent princes, having spared only his nephew Caradawg. Over him he had thrown the veil of illusion, so that although he saw the sword which slew his companions the wielder was invisible to him, and he broke his heart for grief. This is the third broken heart in the story. The young page, Pendaran Dyfed, had escaped to the woods.

As promised, at Harlech the three birds sang to them the most beautiful song they had ever heard, as distinctly as if close at hand, although apparently a great distance over the sea.

At Gwales in Penvro they sojourned in a spacious hall, with three doors overlooking the sea, the door towards Cornwall being closed. While there, the memory of all that had happened left them and they remained for the allotted period of eighty years in blissful happiness, entertained by the Noble Head.

But at the end of that time Heilyn, the son of Gwynn, opened the fateful door, and as they gazed through it memory returned. Thereafter they could not rest until they had buried the head in the White Mount in London, where, so long as it remained in concealment, it would guard the land from foreign invasion.

We are told elsewhere that King Arthur eventually disinterred it.

In Ireland, the only survivors were five pregnant women in a cave. To these were born on the same night five sons, who eventually wedded the mothers of their companions, and so populated the country once more. On the sites of the battles they discovered gold and silver, and thus acquired great wealth.

## CLAVIS

The title *Bendigaid*, applied to Bran, means "blessed", and Davies, in his *Mythology and Rites of the Druids*, states that Bran was one of the Ban-Cewyddion Teyrnedd, or consolidating sovereigns.

*Harlech* is derived from the two words *Hardd* and *Llech*, meaning "beautiful (or high) rock". The Rock of Harlech has always had a mysterious significance, being considered as a large slab covering the entrance to a subterranean passage leading to the Other World.

The word *Hardd* also occurs in the name *Penarddim*, which may be translated "Beautiful head". *Llyr*, meaning "sea", has often been associated with Shakespeare's King Lear, and the full title, *Llyr Llediaith*, may be rendered "Sea of Mystery", for *Llediaith* means "half language".

*Aberffraw*, where in historical times was the residence of the princes of Gwynnedd, is the mouth of the river Ffraw in *Talebolion*, in Anglesey, which is derived from *Tal Ebolygon*—"End of deep cavities". The old name for Anglesey was *Mon* or *Mona*, meaning "a separate body or individual"; "a centre"; "furthest". It is sometimes associated with the Island of the Dead.

*Gwynnedd*, which was the district of North-West Wales nearest to Anglesey, means "the White or Blissful Place" (*Gwynn*=ecstasy or bliss).

It has been suggested that *Manawydan* is connected with *Manaw*, the Isle of Man. He was said to be grave in his counsel. *Euroswydd* is connected with the word *Eur*, gold, and by some is said to mean "the Golden One", but Davies translates it as "the Splendid Destroyer"; it might also be rendered "Golden Bough".

*Gwern* means "alder". The signification of *Iddic* is "Lord"; *Anarawc*, "honourable one"; *Hefeydd*, "Bold One"; *Hir*, "long"; *Unic Glew Ysgwydd*, "One bold or valiant Shield"; and *Fodor*, "Lucky One". The meaning of *Llassar Llaesgyfnewid* is obscure, but *Llaes* signifies "deep", and *gyfnewit*, "blow"; it has been translated "Flame with a terrible onset". *Kymeinvoll* means "corpulent one".

*Caer Seint* means "fort or castle of Seint", and is thought to correspond with Caernarvon (*Caer Seint* in Arvon), and *Edeyrnion* was in Merionethshire.

*Gwlch Minascwrn* means "Bonelipped", and *Pendaran Dyfed* has already appeared in the Myth of Pwyll as the foster-father of Pryderi. His name is derived from the two words *Pen*, "head", and *Daran*, "thunder".

The Irish river *Llinon* ("spear") is stated to be the Shannon; and *Glivieu Eil Taran* signified "Glivieu son of thunder". An article on *Taliesin* appeared in number 48 of the *Shrine of Wisdom*.

*Rhiannon* (Great Queen or Goddess), whose birds sang in Harlech, has already been mentioned in the first story as the heavenly bride of Pwyll. *Gwales* (meaning "shelter" or "refuge") in *Penvro* (Pembroke) has been identified with the island of Grassholm, far off the coast of Pembrokeshire.

*Gwynfryn*, the White Mount, is stated to be the hill upon which the Tower of London is situated.

#### EXEGESIS

It will be noticed that this second branch of the Mabinogion differs radically from the first, in that Pryderi, there considered as representing the soul which has achieved mastery over its natural instincts and powers, plays a very subsidiary rôle, being mentioned only once, as one of those who returned from Ireland. The whole myth is suggestive rather of the sphere of Divine operations in the objective realms, and is here dealt with from this standpoint. The interpretation which follows indicates certain principles which can give a basis for the understanding of the myth, and is not in any sense intended to be regarded as final or comprehensive.

Bran, who is King of all Britain (symbolical of the whole objective cosmos), but has his seat of government in the extreme north-west of Wales (suggestive of its more subjective aspect), may be considered as the Divine Creator in relation to the objective world. He is described as Boundless, for no house or ship could contain him. His sister Branwen may be considered as soul, and his brother Manawydan as the intellectual principle of objectivity.

His half-brothers, Efnissyen and Nissyen, symbolize the two-

fold aspect of the dynamic principle which impels activity both downward, or away from the Divine (appearing as a disruptive element) and upwards, as a harmonizing influence.

The southern Irish, who seek union with Bran by marriage with Branwen, are suggestive of cosmic principles which may be said to need the Divine operations for the actualization of their own potentialities, and it is significant that immediately the union was consummated Efnissyen stirred up strife or activity by maiming Matholwch's horses, which may be said to represent the dynamic, multiplex aspect of the cosmic principles.

This calls forth the gift of other horses in compensation, some of which, however, being only colts, and therefore requiring training and development, represent potentialities rather than actualized powers, which the horses symbolize.

The gold and silver which accompany this gift suggest the sun and moon, and the duality of the realm of manifestation.

In the process of manifestation soul may be said, analogically, to be "imprisoned" in the cosmos, as Branwen, after the birth of Gwern, was confined in Southern Ireland; but the link between soul and the Creator, symbolized by the starling, ensures the return through Divine aid, in the bringing of which it is noticeable that Bran himself acts as a bridge, spanning the River Llinon with his body.

The cauldron, which has the property of restoring men to life, without, however, their powers of speech, may here signify the process whereby principles are carried down to the mundane realm, "dying" to the higher planes and being born again into activity in the lower, but unable to "speak" or fully express their ideal nature in the limitations of the latter, for prior natures can only be truly understood in their own realms.

This "descent" of the cosmic principles is emphasized once more at the end of the myth by the statement that the only survivors of the Irish were five pregnant women whose children, by interbreeding, peopled the country afresh. This interbreeding illustrates the interaction of cosmic principles whereby the infinite variety of manifestation is accomplished; and the gold and silver discovered on the sites of the battles indicate the wealth and abundance of the material realm resulting from these Divine operations.

It is significant that Efnissyen was alive when cast into the cauldron, but after breaking it, burst his own heart. This may be said to indicate that his work was thus finished, for the purpose of the "divisive" aspect of Divine activity is completed with objective manifestation. His last act burst the cauldron into four pieces, which suggest the four elements of the material realm. Nissyen, the unifier and harmonizer, remained to complete the work.

The giant and giantess, Llassar Llaesyfnewid and Kymeinvoll, the former of whom brings the cauldron on his back from the lake, symbolize the dual aspect of Divine Providence which provides the means for this precipitation into multiplicity, and which, although it is inherent in the cosmos, symbolized by Southern Ireland, necessitates a "War" with the cosmic principles which are, analogically, to be split up.

This cannot be accomplished without the agency of soul, and therefore it is with Branwen that the cauldron is returned to the Irish.

The statements that the child of Llassar and Kymeinvoll was born as a warrior fully armed and that their children fortified themselves in all parts of Bran's kingdom are symbolical of the immutable effects of Divine Providence, which are always guarded so that they are preserved from anything that would attempt to destroy them.

Gwern, the son of Matholwch and Branwen, may be considered as representing an intermediate principle between the material world and soul. Through the influence and power of Bran, Matholwch is ready to resign his rule to Gwern, who, as the son of Branwen (soul), is essentially superior to his father.

The casting of Gwern into the fire by Efnissyen is significant of the ultimate conversion of all activities to good, for fire converts essential natures to their proper principles; and as Gwern represents a higher principle than the material world, so the fire is the means whereby he ascends to his true place in the Order of the Cosmos.

In preventing Branwen from following Gwern into the fire, Bran shows his recognition that what has happened is in accord with the Divine purpose.

The seven Welsh who survived with Bran, and also the seven

regents left behind in Wales, symbolize the sevenfold aspect of the Creator; and the head which they are bidden to carry and bury in London represents the Divine Principle which is buried or hidden in the mundane realm. So long as it is hidden from man, while he is living in a state of innocence, it is a protective influence shielding him from harm, but when once man has delved into the secrets of the universe he becomes a self-responsible being, and in so far as he regards his own powers as adequate for his protection, he tends to alienate himself from certain aspects of Providential protection.

It will be noticed that there are three stages in this journey, characterized by increasing lack of direct contact with the Divine. The first sojourn was at Harlech, a period of seven years, which were enlivened not only by the conversation of the head, but also by the spiritual singing of Rhiannon's three birds. The second was a period of eighty years in South Wales, where the birds were no longer heard. On the last stage the head was silent also, and then had to be buried with all speed in London.

The usurpation of the crown of London by Caswallawn represents the reign of inordination in the mundane realm, due to the separation of man from the Divine, which analogically slays the sevenfold creative principle under the veil of illusion. Thus the myth traces out the process leading to the bewildering state of confusion which characterizes the environment in which the aspiring soul is placed, and leads on to the third branch of the Mabinogion, which deals with Pryderi's activities in this realm.

## SEED THOUGHTS

As we call that a Phidian statue which is formed according to the art of Phidias; so show me some one person formed according to the principles that he professes. Show me one who is sick, and happy; in danger, and happy; dying, and happy; exiled, and happy."

—*Epicetius*

## THE ELEMENTS OF THEOLOGY

PROCLUS\*

## PROPOSITION LXXX

*Every body is naturally adapted of itself to be passive, but every thing incorporeal to act. And the former indeed is essentially inefficacious, but the latter is impassive. That which is incorporeal, however, becomes passive through its association with body: just as bodies are able to act through the participation of incorporeals*

For body, so far as it is body, is alone divisible, and through this becomes passive, being entirely partible, and this to infinity. But that which is incorporeal, being simple, is impassive. For that which is impartible cannot be divided, nor can that be changed in quality which is not compounded. Either, therefore, nothing will be effective, or this must be affirmed of an incorporeal nature, since body, as body, does not act, because it is alone liable to be divided, and to be passive. For every thing which acts has an effective power; so that body, so far as it is body, will not act, except so far as it contains in itself a power of acting. Hence, when it acts, it does so through the participation of power. Moreover, incorporeal natures when they are inherent in bodies participate of passions, being divided together with bodies, and experiencing their partible nature, though according to their own essence they are impartible.

## PROPOSITION LXXXI

*Every thing which is participated in a separable manner, is present with its participant by a certain inseparable power which it inserts in it*

For if it is itself present with the participant in a separate manner and is not in it as if it possessed its subsistence in it, a certain medium between the two is necessary, connecting the one with the other, and which is more similar to that which is participated, and subsists in the participant. For if this medium

\* For previous Sections see *Shrine of Wisdom*, Nos. 65 to 74.

is separable, how can it be participated by the participant, since the participant neither contains the medium, nor any thing proceeding from it? A power, therefore, and illumination proceeding from that which is separable into the participant conjoins both. Hence, one of these will be that through which the participation is effected, another will be that which is participated, and another that which participates.

PROPOSITION LXXXII

*Every thing incorporeal, which is converted to itself, when it is participated by other things, is participated in a separable manner*

For if in an inseparable manner, the energy of it would not be separate from its participant, nor would its essence be separate. If, however, this were the case, it would not be converted to itself; for being converted, it will be separate from its participant, each being different from the other. If, therefore, it is able to be converted to itself, it will be participated in a separate manner, when it is participated by other things.

PROPOSITION LXXXIII

*Every thing which has a knowledge of itself, is entirely converted to itself*

For knowing itself, it is evident that it is converted to itself in energy. For that which knows and that which is known are one. And the knowledge of itself is directed to itself as to that which is known. This knowledge also, as pertaining to that which knows, is a certain energy; but it is the knowledge of itself directed to itself, because it is gnostic of itself. Moreover, that it is converted to itself essentially, if it is so in energy, has been demonstrated: for every thing which by energizing is converted to itself, has also an essence verging to and subsisting in itself.

PROPOSITION LXXXIV

*Every thing which always is, possesses an infinite power*

For if its hypostasis is never-failing, the power also according to which it is that which it is, and is able to exist, is infinite.

For if the power of existing were finite, it would some time or other fail. But if this were to fail, the existence also of that which possessed it would fail, and it would no longer be that which always is. It is necessary, therefore, that the power of that which always is, and which connects and contains it essentially, should be infinite.

## PROPOSITION LXXXV

*Every thing which is always becoming to be, or rising into existence, possesses an infinite power of becoming to be*

For if it is always rising into existence, the power of generation in it is never-failing. For if this power were finite, it would cease in an infinite time. But the power of becoming to be ceasing, that which is rising into being according to this power would cease, and thus it would no longer be always becoming to be. It is, however, supposed to be always becoming to be. Hence, it possesses an infinite power of rising into existence.

## PROPOSITION LXXXVI

*Every thing which is truly being is infinite, neither according to multitude, nor according to magnitude, but according to power alone*

For every infinite is either in discrete, or in continued quantity, or in power. But that which always is, is infinite, as having an inextinguishable life, a never-failing hyparxis, and an undiminished energy. That which is eternally being, however, is neither infinite on account of magnitude—for that which is truly being is without magnitude, being self-subsistent, since every thing self-subsistent is impartible and simple—nor is it infinite on account of multitude; for it has in the most eminent degree the form of *The One*, as being arranged most near, and being most allied to it. But it is infinite according to power. Hence, it is also impartible and infinite. And by how much the more it is one and impartible, by so much the more is it infinite. For the power which is divided becomes debile and finite, and powers which are entirely divided are in every respect finite. For ultimate powers, which are most remote from *The One*, are in a certain respect finite, on account of their dis-

tribution into parts. But first powers, on account of their impartibility, are infinite; for a separation into parts divulges and dissolves the power of every thing. But impartibility compressing and contracting that which it contains, renders it never-failing, and undiminished in itself.

Moreover, infinity, according to magnitude, and also according to multitude, is entirely a privation and falling off from impartibility. For that which is finite is most near to the impartible, but the infinite is most remote from it, entirely departing from *The One*. Hence, that which is infinite according to power, is not infinite either according to multitude or magnitude, since infinite power subsists in conjunction with impartibility. But the infinite either in multitude or magnitude, is most remote from the impartible. If, therefore, that which is truly being were infinite either in magnitude or multitude, it would not possess infinite power. It does, however, possess infinite power; and therefore is not infinite either according to multitude, or according to magnitude.

## PROPOSITION LXXXVII

*Every thing eternal indeed is being, but not every being is eternal*

For the participation of being is present in a certain respect with generated natures,\* so far as each of these is not that which in no respect is. But if that which is generated is not entirely deprived of being, it is in a certain respect being. The eternal, however, is in no respect whatever present with generated natures, and especially not with such of these as do not even participate of the perpetuity which subsists according to the whole of time. Moreover, every thing eternal always is; for it participates of eternity, which imparts to the natures by which it is participated to be always that which they are. Being, therefore, is participated by a greater number of things than eternity. And hence being is beyond eternity. For by those natures by whom eternity is participated, being is also participated. But not every thing which participates of being participates also of eternity.

\* That is with natures rising into existence, or becoming to be, as opposed to the things which are, or to beings *truly* so called.

## PROPOSITION LXXXVIII

*Every thing which is truly being, is either prior to eternity, or in eternity, or participates of eternity*

For that there is true being prior to eternity has been demonstrated. But true being is also in eternity; for eternity possesses the *always* in conjunction with *being*. And that which participates of eternity, has both the *always* and *being*, according to participation. Eternity, however, possesses the *always* primarily, but *being* according to participation. But being itself is primarily being.

(*To be continued*)

## SEED THOUGHTS FROM NIZAMI

I am glad that in the narrow mansion of the world joy and sorrow have neither of them duration.

This is all dominion and vassalage, there is not in this world any felicity.

The stars and the spheres are in motion, pleasure and pain are in their passage.

I am glad that my heart is sorrowful, because the coming of sorrow is the occasion of cheerfulness.

I inflicted shame; should I not sit ashamed? I am stone-hearted; how should my heart not be contracted?

Come to the gate of asking pardon, and thou wilt wash away thy sin.

Seek the mark (the service) of the "exalted", O intelligent man, that thou mayst be exalted above the mark of the lofty.

In the writing of every noble-minded man is found the coin of his name, the title of the just.

When he had received sight by the light of confidence in heaven, he became acquainted with himself, and found God.

Whoever places his confidence in the *Supreme Will*, brings the conclusion of his work to happiness.

## MYSTIC VERSE

I have drunk of the Cup of the Ineffable.  
 I have found the Key of the Mystery—  
 Travelling by no mean track, I have come to the Sorrowless  
 Land—  
 Wonderful is that land of rest—  
 It is the wise who has seen it, it is the wise who has sung of it.  
 This is the Ultimate Word: but can any express its marvellous  
 savour?

—*Karib*

O my soul, gentle creature, do not abase thyself,  
 Nor let thy courage fail,  
 For thou art nobly born to high estate.  
 The great Lord comes to thee in pilgrim guise,  
 And the path He trod for thee was most bitter.  
 O miserly heart, canst thou stand obdurate?  
 This world cannot suffice the seeing eye,  
 For never can it fill that which has no bounds;  
 The sight of a thousand worlds would leave thee famished,  
 So great are the hunger and thirst of thy desire.  
 If in a mirror thou desirest to behold thyself,  
 Then shalt thou perceive thy own rare loveliness,  
 For thou bearest the likeness of our great Lord God.  
 Well mayest thou rejoice to be stamped thus with His image!  
 O Infinity! Thou art held thus in this narrow bond:  
 Heaven, Earth, all are contained in this one small vessel.  
 O Vase, most beautiful, how sorely art thou treated!  
 Never canst thou find life in created things,  
 For thou art bound to the shores of another sphere,  
 To ascend to God, of Whom thou art the heir,  
 And Who alone can fill thy poverty.  
 So tarry not: The Way is that of Love.

—*Fra Jacopone da Todi*