

THE SHRINE OF WISDOM

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A SYNTHESIS OF THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

I.—SRI KRISHNA, THE UNIVERSAL LORD

SRI KRISHNA, the Blessed One, is the central figure of the Gîtâ, which is the Song of the Universal Lord who is God made manifest.

The following passage affords a valuable key to the understanding of the significance of the entire work, because it indicates the relationship between Krishna and the Divine Principles according to which He manifests Himself.

Arjuna said:

VIII.—“ Who is that Brahmâ?

Who is Adhyâtmâ?

What is Karma, O Purushottama?

What is that thou callest Adhibhûta, and what that called Adhidaiva?

How is Adhiyajna here in this thy body, O Slayer of the Serpent?

And how do self-controlled men know Thee at the time of their going forth?

Sri Krishna said:

Brahmâ is the Indestructible Eternal One; His essential nature is called Adhyâtmâ.

That which causes the birth of all beings is called Karma.

Adhibhûta is His manifested divisible nature, and Adhidaiva is the Purusha.

I Myself, here present in the body, am Adhiyajna, O best of men!

And he who goes forth, thinking on Me alone, enters, after quitting the body, into My Being: of that verily, there is no doubt.”—4.

BRAHMA is the Great Creator Lord, the Eternal Fabricator of the manifested universe. He is not the Absolute Supreme God, but rather He is the All-creative Logos who eternally proceeds from the Indivisible and Unmanifested ONE.

III.—“ Know that Action (Karma) springs from Brahmâ, and that Brahmâ proceeds from the Indivisible One; therefore, Brahmâ, the All-pervading, is ever present in worship.”—15.

XIV.—“ The mighty Brahmâ is My womb; therein I place the potent germ, whence is the birth of all beings.—3.

In whatsoever womb forms are born, Brahmâ is their mighty womb, and I, the seed-giver and quickener.”—4.

ADHYATMA, as the essential nature of Brahmâ, is the Lord of Souls. He is the Over-Soul or Over-Self, and is thus that aspect of the Creator Lord which gives to every being in manifestation its distinctive individuality and enables it to have a separate existence in the great cosmos.

Atmâ is the Soul in its highest aspect, and thus it is sometimes called “ Spirit.” Perhaps it is best defined as the Spiritual-Soul, or the Self exalted to its highest plane by Divine Contact.

Every individual Atmâ is rooted in Deity, and Brahmâ as Adhyâtma is the Highest or Universal Soul from whom all souls proceed.

ADHIBHUTA is Brahmâ as the Lord of Beings.

Atmâ or Soul, as such, is indivisible, and yet there is an unending procession of individual Souls from the Over-Soul or Adhyâtma.

The principle through which these differentiations emanate is called Adhibhûta, which signifies the divisible aspect of Brahmâ's essential nature; who, paradoxically, remains indivisible even when divided, just as the Soul remains a single unity in itself although manifesting under manifold aspects.

Brahmâ is a Supernal Monad. He is One in essence, but plural in activity, and as a result of His Divine Action (Karma) all manifested beings come into existence.

Adhibhûta may be regarded as the principle of that which becomes; it is the being or be-ness of all things in manifestation.

ADHIDAIVA is Brahmâ as the Lord of Gods.

Every aspect of GOD is a Divine Idea, or Type, or Pattern, or Form. Hence, All the Gods are Divine Ideas.

Purusha is Positive Form. Thus, Adhidaiva, as the Lord of Divine Ideas, is the Purusha or Formative Principle which ensouls all things.

Therefore, Brahmâ is not only the monad whence all manifested beings emerge, but He is also the principle which causes them to receive their distinctive Form or Purusha.

Nothing can exist without some kind of Form. The Act of Creation is simply the union of subjective Form (Purusha) with objective matter (Prakriti).

Krishna, as Purushottâma, is the fullest possible expression, in One Self or Soul, of the Divine Types or Forms.

ADHIYAJNA is the Lord of Sacrifice, or the Sacrifice from Above.

Krishna is the Expression of all Divine Ideas and Perfections. But when these supernal principles are expressed in the realms of limitation it is as though they were sacrificed because they are necessarily conditioned by the finality of the world of manifestation.

Thus, Krishna as Adhiyajna, is the Sublime Incarnation or Sacrifice of the Most High which enters into the being of even the very last of things.

It is because Krishna is the Great Sacrifice that He identifies Himself with all that the universe contains or ever can contain.

And since He is the Means whereby each thing comes forth, so likewise is He the Means according to which each thing proceeds to its ultimate consummation.

Thus everything in its highest state is identified with Krishna, the Universal Lord, and He, in turn, identifies Himself with each thing.

And, inasmuch as Krishna is the Supreme Archetype, He analogically possesses all the attributes of the Infinite.

He is Unmanifest as well as Manifest; Above as well as Below; Divine as well as Human; above Nature as well as in Nature.

He is the Personification of every Excellence, and the whole of creation cannot exhaust That Fathomless Mystery of which He is the Ineffable SYMBOL.

VII.—“The foolish regard Me, the Unmanifest, as subject to manifestation, not knowing My higher nature, which is fathomless and supreme—24.

Veiled by My mystic illusion (*māya*) I am not manifest to all. This deluded world knows not Me, the Unborn and Eternal.—25.

I know all beings, past and present, Arjuna, and all that shall be hereafter, but not one of them knows Me.”—26.

XV.—“Since I surpass the Perishable and transcend even the Imperishable, I am celebrated among men in the world and in the Sacred Scriptures as the Supreme Archetype (*Purushottama*).—18.

He who is not deluded and knows Me as this Archetypal Fullness, he, knowing all, worships Me with his whole nature.—19.

Thus, this most mysterious doctrine has been declared by Me, O sinless one! By knowing this a man becomes wise and all his works are accomplished.”—20.

IV.—“ Though I am unborn and My nature is eternal; though I am Lord of all creatures, yet, having sway over My own Matter (*Prakriti*), I am born by My illusive power (*Māya*).”—6.

MAYA is the Apparent and Phenomenon, as distinct from the Real and the Noumenon. That which is Real and Immutable cannot be fully expressed by that which is impermanent; but by means of *Māya*, the Unmanifested Reality becomes reflected analogically in the realm of manifested phenomena. But, nevertheless, that which is seen is only a symbol of that which is Unseen.

II.—“ Thou grieveest for those who need no grief. The wise grieve neither for the living nor the dead.

Verily, never was I not, nor thou, nor all of these, nor ever shall we cease to be.”—12.

IX.—“ The unwise, ignorant of My highest nature as Universal Lord, recognize Me not when I appear in human form.”—11.

IX.—“ I am alike to all beings: I know no hate: I know no favour; but they who come to Me in devout worship, are in Me and I also am in them.”—29.

IX.—“ I am the oblation; I am the sacrifice; I am the offering to the Fathers (*Pitris*).

I am the sacred food; I am the holy hymn.

I am the fire; I, the burnt-offering.—16.

IX.—I am the father, the mother, the sustainer and grandsire of this universe.

I am the object of knowledge, the lustration, and the word of Power—OM.—17.

I am the Way, the Supporter, the Master, the Witness, the Home, the Refuge, and the Friend; the Source and the Dissolution; the Foundation, the Treasure-house, and the Eternal Seed.—18.

I am immortality and also death.

Being and Non-being, am I.”—19.

X.—“Neither the vast company of Shining Ones, nor the Kingly Saints (*Rishis*), know My origin, for I am the primal source of all the Shining Ones and the Holy Sages.—2.

He who knows Me, as unborn and without beginning, the Mighty Lord of worlds, he, of mortals, is undeluded: he is liberated from all sin.—3.

I am the origin of all: the whole universe proceeds from Me; thus contemplating, the wise men who share My nature, worship Me.”—8.

IX.—“By Me is all this vast universe pervaded, in My unmanifested Form. All beings are contained in Me: I am not contained in them.”—4.

And yet these beings dwell not in Me.

Behold My royal Mystery!

My Being, which is the Source of All, supports all things, but is not contained in them.—5.

Even as the mighty wind moves everywhere, but is ever contained within the ether; know that thus also all beings are contained in Me.”—6.

X.—“I will unfold to thee, O Prince, My divine perfections, according to their highest characteristics, for there is no bound to My Fullness.

I am the SELF, seated deep in the heart of every creature.

From Me they come, by Me they exist, and to Me they return.—20.

Among the Lords of Light, I am the First-born Light (*Vishnu*).

Among luminous orbs, I am the Golden Sun.

I am Lord of the Tempests, and the Moon among nocturnal luminaries am I.—21.

I am the essence of the Sacred Scriptures.

Among the Shining Celestials, I am the Seeing One (*Indra*).

Of the faculties of sentient beings, I am the Mind (*Manas*) which apprehends and thinks.—22.

Of Creative Fires, I am the Summit. (*Shiva*).

I am chief of the Interplanetary Deities and Lord of the Lesser Powers.

Of Mountain-peaks I am Meru, the Mount of the Shining Ones.—23.

Know thou, that I am the Priest Hierophant among priests;

Of leaders of hosts, I am the Lord;
Of the waters, I am the all-receiving Ocean.—24.

Of the Great Sages, I am the Master, and of words, the syllable OM.

Of prayers, I am the Silent Utterance; and of stable things, the Himâlaya.—25.

Of all the trees that grow, I am the Mystic Tree (*Asvattha*).
Of Demigods, I am the Chief.

Of the celestial muses, I am Choregus and of the perfected ones I am the Model.—26.

Know thou that I am the horse of the Sun, born of the nectar of immortality.

I am the mount that bears great Indra, and the monarch of men.—27.

Of weapons, I am heaven's thunderbolt.

Of milk, I am the white cow of plenty.

Of progenitors, the first and best; of wise serpents, I am the King;—28.

The thousand-tongued, encircling the Supernal Sun.

I am the ruling-deity of the dwellers in the waters.

Of the ancient fathers (*Pitris*), I am Head; and of those who minister justice, I am the Judge.—29.

Of supernatural beings, I am over-ruler.

Of those who measure duration, I am Time.

Of wild beasts, I am the King, and of birds the most sacred am I.—30.

Of purifiers, I am the wind.

Of warriors, the hero.

Of fishes, I am the greatest; and of streams, the mightiest am I.—31.

Of emanations, I am First and Last—the inner centre of all that is or seems.

I am Knower of all the knowledge of the over-ruling Self.

The words of those who speak, am I—32; the beginning of all letters and their combinations.

I am endless Time; the all-perceiving Dispenser.—33.

I am the death that comes to all and the birth of all that is to be.

Of the viewless virtues, Fame, Fortune, Song, am I, and Memory, Understanding, Constancy and Patience.—34.

I am the most sacrosanct of hymns and the contemplation of the Highest.

I am the fruit-time of the year and the season of flowering spring.—35.

I am the skill of the skilful; the glory of the glorious; the victory of the victorious; and the goodness of the excellent;—36.

Of ancestral chains, I am the founder.

Of stewardship, I am the wealth.

Of poets, I am the laureate.—37.

And of sages, the most saintly.

Of rulers, I am the sceptre; of conquerors, the policy; of secret things, I am the Silence; and of the learned, I am the Lore.—38.

And whatsoever is the seed of all beings, that am I, O Arjuna; nor is there aught living or lifeless, moving or stilled, that exists, save by Me.—39.

There is no end to the unfolding of My divine perfections; of these, My boundless Glory, O Conquering One, I can reveal only in part.—40.

For wheresoever there is wondrous beauty, goodness, or power, it springeth from My Fullness.—41.

But what availeth this great panorama of knowledge, O Prince, for, having pervaded the vast cosmos with an aspect of Myself, yet I remain.”—42.

KRISHNA, as God made manifest, necessarily interpenetrates every conceivable order of existence; yet, inasmuch as He is the Ineffable SYMBOL of the Divine Nature, He retains an exempt transcendency according to which He is independent of all that He pervades and produces, and is the Ineffable Object of aspiration of all beings.

Thus, having pervaded the whole universe, *He yet remains!*

Krishna saith:

VII.—“ Learn now, O Prince, how if thy mind be fixed wholly on Me, if thou persist in devotion and in Me find thy refuge, thou shalt surely know Me in My plenitude.—1.

I will declare unto thee that utmost knowledge—divine and human—which being known, leaveth no more to know here in this world.—2.

Among the multitudes of mortals, perchance only one striveth for perfection, and of those few that strive, and even rise, only one knoweth Me as I am, in very Truth.—3.

My eightfold manifested Nature (*Aparā-Prakṛiti*) is composed of earth, water; fire, air, ether, intelligence (*Manas*), ideation (*Buddhi*), and individuality (*Ahamkāra*).”—4.

Krishna, as the Expression of all Divine Perfections, may be contemplated either according to His subjective or His objective aspects, His higher or His lower natures, His unmanifested or manifested principles.

His objective, lower and manifested nature is called Aparâ-Prakriti, as contrasted with Para-Prakriti which is His subjective, higher, and unmanifested nature.

The eight principles which embrace His Lower Nature are :

- (1) *Prithivî*, or Earth, in all its manifold aspects, the basic element of the universe.
- (2) *Apas*, or Water, which moistens and moves the earth.
- (3) *Taijas*, or Fire, which blends water and earth.
- (4) *Vâyu*, or Air which feeds the fire.
- (5) *Akâsha*, or Ether and Space which pervades and connects all the Five Great Elements or Mahâbhûtas.

These are the primary differentiations of Prakriti or Matter—the homogeneous formless material out of which all things are made. Behind them are three other principles:—

- (1) *Manas*, cosmic intelligence which guides all things.
- (2) *Buddhi*, cosmic ideation which gives each thing its inherent idea or type.
- (3) *Ahamkâra*, cosmic impulse, which gives each thing its separate and distinctive identity.

These Eight Principles each have a microcosmic aspect in Man and he possesses five primary sense-organs with their outer and inner capacities which correspond to the five cosmic elements of the Body of the Universal Lord.

By his tangiferous organs man is able not only to contact objects in all realms and manipulate them according to his needs, but also to touch and be touched by the Mystical Body of Krishna.

By his gustiferous organs man is able not only to taste the essences of all things and appreciate what is pleasing and what is not, but also to taste the Body of the Lord.

By his luminiferous organs man is able not only to perceive the forms of all things and recognize beauty in all its phases, but also to see God in all things and all things in God.

By his odoriferous organs man is able not only to sense the significance of the subtle and inherent nature of things, but also to breathe the fragrant atmosphere which surrounds the Holy One.

By his sonoriferous organs man is able not only to hear and produce vibrations of Sound, but also to listen to the great word—OM or AUM—which is ceaselessly expressed by all creation.

By his Manas or mind, man is able to reason and introduce intelligence into all his actions.

By his Buddhi, or Intuition, man is able to cognize inherent ideas and arrive at the inner and ideal significance of all that is outward and actual.

By his Ahankâra, or Individuality, man is a distinct Ego and is able to manifest his self-hood.

VII.—“ This is My lower (objective) Nature, but know that My higher (subjective) Nature is the very Life principle whereby this universe is upheld.—5.

Know that all beings have their birth in these (i.e., eightfold principles); thus I am the source of the whole universe and the power also of its dissolution.—6.

There is nought higher than I, O Subduer of Wealth, all this universe is strung together in Me as a row of pearls upon its string.—7.

I am the taste in the waters; I am the light of the sun and the moon; the word of praise (*OM*) in the sacred scriptures; the sound in the ether; the manhood in men.—8.

I am the pure odour of the moistened earth, and the fire's red heat; the vital air in all beings am I, and the austerity (*tapas*) of the hallowed.—9.

Know, O Son, that I am the eternal seed of all beings; the inherent idea of all that can be conceived. I am the radiance of the radiant.—10.

I am the might of the mighty; free from passion and desire, yet, of all who yearn, I am the holy desire not contrary to the law (*dharma*), O Friend of Heroes.”—11.

(*To be continued.*)

THE SACRED ART OF PRAYER

ART is acquired skill in the exercise of the faculties of the human Soul.

Sacred Art is skill which is directed to hieratic purposes, such as all works that tend to elevate the human consciousness and direct man's faculties to holy ends.

Since the human Soul only truly knows itself when it is elevated to natures superior to itself, it follows that for the perfection of its Art, the Soul depends upon the inspiration which it receives from Above.

Therefore, Art is perfect in proportion as it is truly inspired.

But in order to be inspired, the Soul must assume a receptive attitude such as will facilitate the influx of supernal energies.

Prayer is a means for establishing this receptive relation between the Soul and the Natures which are above it.

Therefore, Prayer is an indispensable element in all Sacred Art, and is itself the most important as well as the most sacred of all the Arts of the human Soul.

I.—“Prayer is a certain force supernally imparted to the Soul, elevating and conjoining her to Divinity, and which always unites in a becoming manner secondary with primary natures.”
—(Thomas Taylor.)

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II.—“To a perfect and true prayer there is required, first, a knowledge of all divine orders to which he who prays approaches; for neither will any one succeed in a proper manner, unless he intimately beholds their distinguishing properties: and hence it is that the Oracle admonished, ‘*that a fiery intellection obtains the first order in sacred veneration.*’

“But afterwards there is required a conformation of our life with that which is divine; and this accompanied with all *purity, chastity, discipline and order*. For thus, while we present ourselves to the Gods, they will be provoked to beneficence; and our souls will be subjected to theirs, and will participate in the excellences of a divine nature.

In the third place, a certain contact is necessary, whence, with the more exalted part of the Soul we touch the divine essence, and verge to a union with its ineffable nature.

But there is yet further required an accession and inhesion (for thus the Oracle call it, while it says, ‘the mortal adhering to the fire will possess a divine light,’) whence we receive a greater and more illustrious part of the light proceeding from Deity.

In the last place, a union succeeds with the Divine Unity, restoring and establishing unity to the Soul, and causing our energy to become one with divine energy: so that in this case, we are no longer ourselves, but are absorbed, as it were, in the nature of Deity; and residing in divine light, are entirely surrounded with its splendour. And this is, indeed, the best end of prayer, the conjunction of the Soul’s conversion with its permanency; establishing in unity whatever proceeds from the divine unities; and surrounding our light with the light of God.”
—(Iamblichus.)

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III.—“Prayer is the application of the heart to God, and the interior exercise of love.”—(Madame Guyon.)

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IV.—“Divinity is present to all things, but all things are not present to Him; but when we invoke Him with all-sacred prayers, an unclouded intellect, and an aptitude to divine union, then we also are present to Him. For He is neither in place, that He may be absent from anything, nor does He pass from one thing to another. But, indeed, to assert He is in all things, falls far short of that infinity which is above, and which comprehends,

all things. Let us therefore extend ourselves by prayer to the most sublime intuition of his divine beneficent rays. Just as if a chain, consisting of numerous lamps, were suspended from the summit of heaven, and extended to earth. For if we ascended this chain, by always stretching forth our hands, we should appear, indeed, to ourselves to draw down the chain, though we should not in reality, it being present upwards and downwards, but we should elevate ourselves to the more sublime splendours of the abundantly luminous rays. Hence, prior to every undertaking, and especially that which is theological, it is necessary to begin from prayer, not as if drawing down that power which is everywhere present, and is at the same time nowhere, but as committing and uniting ourselves to it by divine recollections and invocations.”
—(*Dionysius the Areopagite.*)

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V.—“Prayer is the contemplation of the facts of life from the highest point of view. It is the soliloquy of the jubilant Soul. It is the spirit of God pronouncing his works good. But prayer as a means to effect a private end is theft and meanness. It supposes dualism and not unity in nature and consciousness. As soon as the man is at one with God, he will not beg. He will then see prayer in all his actions.”—(*Emerson.*)

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VI.—“Let thy thoughts of God be the noblest and most honourable. Thou oughtest to believe much more greatly in God, than it is in the power of any finite mind to conceive: and all those intervals of time which the thoughts of Him do not employ, should be looked upon as so many empty and insignificant spaces of thy life. Some part indeed of your time, the affairs of this life, and necessary recreation will of necessity devour; but be not too profuse upon these. Remember that there ought to be a difference between lending yourself to them for a little while, and wholly laying yourself out upon them. Nor even are these necessary avocations so importunate, but with good management the matter may be so ordered, as to leave room for pious thoughts to come in betwixt, and for keeping such reflections as tend to the everlasting good of the Soul, always uppermost there. And therefore be sure to preserve such a mastery over yourself, that you may retire into your own breast at any time, and find great satisfaction in so doing.”—(*St. Bernard.*)

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VII.—“We pray well when we have all our thoughts turned to Heaven. In this way a wonderful fullness of God’s goodness will be found in us; for from the innermost depths of our heart the love of God shall rise, and all our prayer will be fervent and effectual; so that we shall not hurry over the words but with great urgency offer every syllable to the Lord. Our heart being thus kindled with the fire of love, our prayer will also be kindled and offered by our lips with great sweetness in the sight of God, so that it becomes a great joy to pray.”—(*Richard Rolle.*)

VIII.—(A) *PREPARATION*. “Let us renounce self-love and self-will, care for nothing earthly, do penance, pray, mortify ourselves, be obedient, and perform all the other good works of which you know. Act up to your light; you have been taught your duties. Die! die as the silkworm does when it has fulfilled the office of its creation, and you will see God and be immersed in His greatness.”

(B) *VOCAL AND MENTAL PRAYER*. “I do not allude more to mental than to vocal prayer, for if it is prayer at all, the mind must take part in it. If a person neither considers to whom he is addressing himself, what he asks, nor what he is who ventures to speak to God, although his lips may utter many words, I do not call it prayer. Sometimes, indeed, one may pray devoutly without making all these considerations through having practised them at other times. The custom of speaking to God Almighty as freely as with a slave—caring nothing whether the words are suitable or not, but simply saying the first thing that comes to mind from being learnt by rote by frequent repetition—cannot be called prayer.”

(E) *THE PRAYER OF QUIET*. “Recollection does not require us to give up meditation, nor to cease using our intellect. In the prayer of quiet, when the water flows from the spring itself, and not through conduits, the mind ceases to act; it is forced to do so, although it does not understand what is happening, and so wanders hither and thither in bewilderment, finding no place for rest. Meanwhile, the will, entirely united to God, is much disturbed by the tumult of the thoughts: no notice, however, should be taken of them, or they cause the loss of a great part of the favour the soul is enjoying. Let the spirit ignore these distractions and abandon itself in the arms of divine love: His Majesty will teach it how best to act, which chiefly consists in its recognizing its unworthiness of so great a good and occupying itself in thanking Him for it.”

(D) *THE PRAYER OF RECOLLECTION*. “There is a kind of recollection which, I believe, is supernatural. There is no occasion to retire nor to shut the eyes, nor does it depend on anything exterior; involuntarily the eyes close and solitude is found. Without any labour of one’s own, the temple is reared for the soul in which to pray: the senses and exterior surroundings appear to lose their hold, while the spirit gradually regains its lost sovereignty. Some say the soul enters into itself; others, that it rises above itself.

To see God within ourselves avails us far more than to look for Him amongst creatures; St. Augustine tells us how he found that Almighty within his own soul, after having sought for Him elsewhere. This recollection helps us greatly when God bestows

it upon us. But do not fancy you can gain it by thinking of God dwelling within you, or by imagining Him as present in your soul: this is a good practice and an excellent kind of meditation, for it is founded on the fact that God resides within us; it is not, however, the prayer of recollection, for by the divine assistance every one can practise it, but what I mean is quite a different thing. Sometimes, before they have begun to think of God, the powers of the soul find themselves within the castle. I know not by what means they entered, nor how they heard the Shepherd's pipe; the ears perceived no sound but the soul is keenly conscious of a delicious sense of recollection experienced by those who enjoy this favour, which I cannot describe more clearly."

(E) *THE PRAYER OF UNION*. "In the prayer of union the Soul is asleep, fast asleep, as regards the world and itself: in fact, during the short time this state lasts it is deprived of all feeling whatever, being unable to think on any subject, even if it wished. No effort is needed here to suspend the thoughts: if the Soul can love—it knows not how, nor whom it loves, nor what it desires. In fact, it has died entirely to this world, to live more truly than ever in God. This is a delicious death, for the Soul is deprived of the faculties it exercised while in the body; delicious because (although not really the case), it seems to have left its mortal covering to abide more entirely in God. So completely does this take place, that I know not whether the body retains sufficient life to continue breathing; on consideration, I believe it does not; at any rate, if it still breathes, it does so unconsciously.

The mind entirely concentrates itself on trying to understand what is happening, which is beyond its power; it is so astonished that, if consciousness is not completely lost, at least no movement is possible."

(F) *THE PRAYER OF RAPTURE*. "While the Soul is in ecstasy, our Lord does not appear to wish it to apprehend these mysteries, and its inebriation of joy in Him suffices it. But sometimes He is pleased to withdraw it from this rapture when it at once perceives what the mansion contains. On returning to itself, the mind can recall what has been seen but is unable to describe it, nor can it, by its natural abilities, attain to see more of the supernatural than God has chosen to show it.

The value of God's favours cannot be over-rated; for though the recipient is incapable of describing them, they are deeply imprinted in the centre of the Soul and are never forgotten. 'How can they be remembered if no image is seen and the powers of the Soul do not comprehend them?' I, too, do not understand this, but I know that certain truths of the greatness of God remain so impressed on the spirit by this favour that, did not faith teach

Who He is and that it is bound to believe He is God, the Soul would henceforth worship Him as such.

I think that if the Soul learns no mysteries at any time during raptures, they are no true raptures.

This supreme state of ecstasy never lasts long, but although it ceases, it leaves the will so inebriated, and the mind so transported out of itself that for a day, or sometimes for several days, such a person is incapable of attending to anything but what excites the will to the love of God; although wide awake enough to this, she seems asleep as regards all earthly matters."—
(*St. Teresa.*)

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IX.—“There are three signs of contemplation and interior recollection of the Soul: 1.—When the Soul takes no pleasure in transitory things. 2.—When it seeks solitude and silence, striving after that which is more perfect. 3.—When meditation, which was once a help, proves a hindrance. These three signs must be found together.”—(*St. John of the Cross.*)

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X.—“The Prayer of Quiet is a rest and internal sweetness, arising in the depths of the Soul, occasionally overflowing into the physical faculties and senses, and caused by the closeness of the Soul to God and the feeling of His Presence. It is distinguished from Spiritual Silence by the fact that that state is the result especially of an illumination of the intellect, while the Prayer of Quiet arises from an experimental love (of the will) which actually feels the Presence of God. This sensation of God present is the essence of the Prayer of Quiet, and its immediate effect is a very deep interior peace welling up from the depths of the Soul and spreading gradually throughout all the personality. The best simile is perhaps that suggested by *St. Teresa*, where she likens the spreading of this peace to the fumes of a censer penetrating from the centre to all parts and recesses of the Soul; and the intensity of the feeling is so great that it seems impossible to conceive a higher delight or a more profound peace. In some cases the sensation is confined to the faculties of the Soul, and in others it spreads to the physical faculties and senses, but the Prayer of Quiet may perfectly well be present without any physical sensation at all. Its essence is the feeling of the Presence of God.”—(*Scaramelli.*)

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XI.—“RIGHT PRAYER is not a mere custom according to which a man needs only to say the words of a set prayer; no, such speaking of words, without hearty consideration, attention or devotion, and divine desire, is but an outward thing, an outward forming or framing of words. The mouth contriveth its words of the prayer with an external power, and maketh only a form or figure of the willing wherein there is no active power. For nothing pleaseth God, unless He Himself worketh in that which works.

For God, in the prophet, complaineth of such outward lip-prayer without power, where He saith: "With their lips they draw near to Me, but their heart is far from Me."

Also saith Jesus: "Not all that say: Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but they that do the Will of My Father in Heaven." And saith further in another place: "Without Me ye can do nothing." He alone is the Living Fountain and the Throne of Grace, with and through which we, with Prayer, can enter and press before and into God.

If we would pray aright, then, we should:—

Firstly, view and well consider ourselves, whether our hearts have framed into another creature, and whether, also, such desire, which we desire to obtain of God, be right;

Or, also, whether such desire, which we would bring to God in our prayer, be against the profit or benefit and love of our neighbour;

Or whether, we therein seek temporal matters to abridge our neighbour therein and to draw that which is his, to ourselves;

Or whether, we thereby desire a general common love and unity of concord;

Or whether, with such praying, we seek only our own profit and gain to ourselves.

Secondly, we should well consider also, whether, in our Prayer, we desire and love anything more or above the Grace of God;

Or whether, whatsoever we desire of temporal things, we desire them alone from the divine hand and co-working;

Or whether we would, through our artificial skill, subtle cunning and wit, draw it to ourselves and so only pray to God for his permission to have it;

Or whether we rely upon ourselves;

Or whether we would obtain it through the divine co-working, that we may afterward say with a cheerful heart: "This, God hath bestowed or vouchsafed me through His fatherly care and providence. I have only been the hand and the instrument";

Or whether we will say: "I have brought this to pass through my own skill and understanding."

Thirdly, we should consider, what we would do with that for which we pray and desire from God. Whether we thereby only desire to have the honour and highness of the world for temporal pleasure and gratification;

Or whether, we would lay out that which God bestoweth upon us with his blessing through our prayer, to his honour and to the love of our neighbour and thus give it to Him again;

And whether, we would also account ourselves therein only to be labourers and servants or ministers in His vineyard, as from whom God will require an account of his gifts, how faithful we have been therein.

Fourthly, we should consider, that in this world we have nothing of our own and that we ourselves are not our own, but only, for a little while, are labourers; and moreover, that we are guests or pilgrims, only officers of our God, over his creation, workmanship, and creatures; and that whatsoever we work in and do, we do it not for ourselves only, but for God and our neighbour; and that we will heartily and readily impart the gifts which God hath given us through our prayer, whether they be earthly or heavenly, to our fellow-members; and hold together as the tree in its branches, or, as the earth with its fruit and produce doth; which willingly and readily giveth up itself unto all its fruits and loveth and beareth them all.

Fifthly, we must consider that we, of and from our own power, cannot rightly pray before God, as Christ saith: "Without Me, ye can do nothing." Also St. Paul saith: "We know not what we should pray as we ought before God; but the Holy Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered."

Therefore, when we pray to God our Heavenly Father, then we must call upon Him for the illumination of His Holy Spirit, to give us that which is good and blissful for us, and we should commit all whatsoever is earthly to his will and not only with empty breath and words enter before God when we would pray aright and be heard; but with true earnest sincere penitence and conversion, we must go forth from all falsehood, pride, covetousness, envy, anger, and contrariety, and totally give up our heart and soul to God, the Holy Spirit, that He may be our working of repentance, and power of prayer: that He may include and comprehend our willing and desiring in Himself, and bring it into God, that we may die away from our false vanity and desire, and rise again and be born with a new will, mind, and obedience towards God;

And thenceforth walk in such power, in righteousness and purity, with our will and new birth before God as children, regenerated in His Spirit.

Finally thou oughtest well to consider, *What Prayer is*, and *Why* Gods bids us to pray. It is not such a thing as when a man cometh before a worldly king or lord, when he hath misdemeaned himself towards him, and beggeth grace and pardon from him and oftentimes in his heart thinketh much otherwise; no, but it is a going forth out of ourselves, that a man, out of all his powers with all whatsoever he is and whatsoever he possesseth, give himself up to God.

Yea, with right true Prayer, he giveth himself up to God."
—(Jacob Boehme.)

* * *

XII.—"He who is engaged in prayer ought to have his attention so completely occupied with God that he ought even to forget he is praying."—(St. Anthony the Hermit.)

THE GOLDEN VERSES OF THE PYTHAGOREANS*

Pay honour first to the Immortal Gods,
As Order hath establishèd Their Choirs:
Reverence the Oath. The Heroes great and good
Revere thou next, and earth's good geniuses,
Paying to them such honours as are due.
Honour thy parents and thy nearest kin;
Of others make the virtuous thy friend:
Yield to his gentle words, his timely acts;
Nor for a petty fault take back thy love.
Bear what thou canst: pow'r cometh at man's need.
Know this for truth, and learn to conquer these:
Thy belly first; sloth, luxury, and rage.
Do nothing base with others or alone,
And, above all things, thine own self respect.
Next practise justice in thy word and deed
And learn to act unreasonably in naught;
But know that all must die. Wealth comes and goes.
Of ills the Goddess Fortune gives to man
Bear meekly thou thy lot, nor grieve at it;
But cure it as thou canst. Remember this:
Fate gives the least of evil to the good.

*The Venerable Master Pythagoras has justly been celebrated as a Trainer of Souls.

The Great Brotherhood of which he was the founder has perhaps never been equalled as a System, containing the quintessence of all the elements necessary for living the truly religious, philosophical, and mystical life, which leads straight to the Divine.

The Golden Verses give all the essential principles required for the right ordering of physical, affectional, intellectual, and devotional life. By putting them into regular practice all the real and lasting virtues of the Soul follow spontaneously as ineffable fruits of a well-ordered life.

Most of the Verses are of an exhortative character. Their periodical repetition will be found to act as a most valuable aid to the treading of the Mystic Path, because their outward expression reacts inwardly upon the Soul, arousing and quickening that interior urge towards the Ideal, which the cares and difficulties of mundane existence tend to quench.

The more the Verses are reflected upon the more they grow in significance and power.

A commentary on the Verses will be published later.

Many the reasonings that on men's ears
Fall; good and bad. Admire not all of such
Nor shun them neither. If one speaketh false,
Be calm. And practise ever this that now
I say. Let no man's word or deed seduce thee
To do or say aught not to thy best good.
First think, then act; lest foolish be thy deed.
Unhappy he who thoughtless acts and speaks:
But that which after vexes not do thou.
Do naught thou dost not understand; but learn
That which is right, and sweet will be thy life.
Nor shouldest thou thy body's health neglect,
But give it food and drink and exercise
In measure; that is, to cause it no distress.
Decent, without vain show, thy way of life:
Look well to this, that none thou envious make
By unmeet expense, like one who lacks good taste.
Nor niggard be: in all the mean is best.
Do that which cannot harm thee. Think, then act.
When first thou dost from soothing sleep arise,
Hasten about thy day's intended work;
Nor suffer sleep to fall on thy soft lids
Till thrice thou hast each act of the day recalled:
How have I sinned? What done? What duty missed?
Go through them first to last; and, if they seem
Evil, reproach thyself; if good, rejoice.
Toil at and practise this; this must thou love;
This to the Path of Heavenly Virtue leads.
By Him Who gave the Tetractys to our soul,
Fount of Eternal Nature, this I swear.
Begin thy work, first having prayed the Gods
To accomplish it. Thou, having mastered this,
That essence of Gods and mortal men shalt know,
Which all things permeates and all obeys.
And thou shalt know that Law hath stablishéd
The inner nature of all things alike;
So shalt thou hope not for what may not be,
Nor aught that may escape thee. Thou shalt know
Self-chosen are the woes that fall on men—
How wretched, for they see not good so near,

Nor hearken to its voice—few only know
 The Pathway of Deliverance from ill.
 Such fate doth blind mankind, who, up and down,
 With countless woes are carried by its wheel.
 For bitter inborn strife companions them
 And does them secret harm. Provoke it not,
 O men, but yield, and yielding, find escape.
 O Father Zeus, release us all from ill;
 Or show to each what genius works in him!
 But courage! Men are children of the Gods,
 And Sacred Nature all things hid reveals.
 And if the mysteries have part in thee,
 Thou shalt prevail in all I bade thee do,
 And, thoroughly cured, shalt save thy soul from toil.
 Eat not the foods proscribed, but use discretion
 In lustral rites and the freeing of thy soul:
 Ponder all things, and stablish high thy mind.
 That best of charioteers. And if at length,
 Leaving behind thy body, thou dost come
 To the free Upper Air, then shalt thou be
 Deathless, divine, a mortal man no more.

—(*Translated from the Greek by the Editors of "The Shrine of Wisdom."*)

SEED THOUGHTS

“ Let us give way to love, and love will constrain us to pray. We are glad to be alone a little with true friends; and if we love God, and love Him cordially, we shall be willingly alone with Him, nor will the time spent in His society easily appear long to us. If we love God we shall always have something to say to Him; and if we have nothing to say to Him, yet still we have something to love, and that is praying. O, it is an excellent prayer to love, and to be silent in the presence of God.”—*Gerhard Tersteegen.*

* * *

“ My God, Thou art exceeding silent unto me,
 Thou hast set Thy glory in silence.
 Blessed art Thou, O Lord,
 Because I have called and Thou answerest not,
 I have cried, and Thou sayest not ‘ I am here ’;
 But Thou grantest me to trust in Thee,
 To perceive in the darkness Thy presence.”

—*N. Salaman.*

MYSTIC ADORATION

I adore
 Being, Intelligence, Bliss,
 The highest goal,
 Despised by the worldly, desired by the holy saints.

* * *

I adore
 The Supreme Primeval, Highest,
 Full, indivisible,
 Transcendent, yet immanent.

* * *

I adore
 The One with inner relations,
 Holy, self-contained,
 Self-conscious, incomprehensible.

* * *

I adore
 The Father, Highest Lord, Unbegotten,
 The Rootless Principle of the Tree of Existence,
 Who creates through Intelligence.

* * *

I adore
 The Son, uncreate, Eternal Word, Supreme,
 The Image of the Father, whose Form is Intelligence,
 Giver of highest Release.

* * *

I adore
 The Spirit proceeding from Being and Intelligence,
 The Blessed Breath, intense Bliss, the Sanctifier,
 Swift in movement, speaking through the Word,
 The Giver of Life.

—*Brahma Bandas Upadhya.*

“ Fall in love with Love. Forget your wishes. Treat your longings lightly and cavalierly. Get on with to-day’s work with as gay a sense of adventure as the heart can manage. Joyous detachment is better than ambition. God gives us the things which we have proved ourselves able to do without. Somewhere, somewhen, we shall come to fruition.”—*Anon.*

AWEN OR INSPIRATIONAL GENIUS

INHERENT in every Soul there is an original Genius, an idea of individuality, a mysterious principle of unity, which makes each Soul what it is, gives to it its definite identity, its distinctive potentialities, its special capacities.

The wise old Druids called this principle "Awen," which has no exact equivalent in our language.

Awen, as the Idea of Unity within the Soul, is the primary principle through which man may become identified with the Supreme ONE, through the conscious union of his own particular oneness or unity with the Universal and Absolute One.

Awen, as the Idea of Individuality within the Soul, is the primary principle which distinguishes each human soul from all others and thus gives to each its own special relationship with the Infinite.

Awen, as the Original Genius, or Source of Inspiration, is the primary principle through which God reveals Himself in a special manner to each one of His children.

The Awen from God, therefore, is the Divine Revelation, the Inspired Word, the Uttered Name of God, the Beginning and End of all Mysteries.

Those who know this Mysterious Awen of their Soul are divinely-inspired, supernally-illuminated, and God-taught.

According to the Ancient Bards, the presence of Awen is to be realized "by habituating one's self to the holy life, with all love towards God and man, all justice and mercy, all generosity, all endurance, and all peace, by practising the good disciplinary arts and sciences, by avoiding pride, cruelty, uncleanness, killing, stealing, covetousness, and all injustice; by avoiding all things that corrupt and quench the light of Awen where it exists and which prevent its participation where it is present."

1. There are three witnesses of Awen from God: the love of Truth, the understanding of Truth, and the maintenance of Truth, so that nothing may prevail against it.

2. There are three foundations of Awen: the Gift of God, the exertion of Man, and the events of Life.

3. There are three primary requisites of Awen: the vision to see its nature, the heart to feel its nature, and the faith to dare to follow its nature.

4. There are three indispensables for manifesting Awen: intelligence, feeling, and perseverance.

5. There are three properties of Awen: elevative thought, appropriate thought, and unlimited diversified thought.

6. There are three things that exalt Awen: understanding, intuitive-imagination, and holy zeal.

7. There are three ministers of Awen: strong mental endowments, awakened memory, and vigour of right earnestness.

8. There are three marks of Awen: the understanding of Genius, the conduct of Genius, and the exertion of Genius.

9. There are three friends of Awen: discretion, optimism, and vigour.

10. There are three things that perpetuate Awen: right exertion, abundance of exertion, and repeated exertion.

11. There are three effects of Awen: Gentleness, Generosity, and Serenity.

12. There are three things that enrich Awen: the cherishing of good thoughts, the exercising of memory, and contentment of mind.

Elevative Art.

Awen is the Source of supernal Inspiration upon which all real art depends. It is the origin of the mystical or elevative arts, the interpretative or prophetic arts, the ordinative or telestic arts, the musical, poetic or expressive arts, as well as the useful or pragmatic arts.

In so far as Awen is present in any aspect of Art, so that Art tends to become real, true, useful, and perfective.

13. There are three radical elements of Art: its nature, its utility, and its originality.

14. The three primary features of its nature are: where it cannot be better, where it cannot be otherwise, and where there is no necessity for it to be otherwise.

15. The three primary features of its Utility are: that it is universally exercised, that its virtue universally benefits, and that it is capable of perfecting itself.

16. The three primary features of its Originality are: where it has not been excelled, where it could not be otherwise, and where there is no need for it to be otherwise.

17. There are three marks of the propriety of an Art: just cause, just organization, and just conformity.

18. There are three occasions of an Art: when it is just, when it is opportune, and when it is necessary.

19. There are three beings to whom Art is suitable: he who delights in it, he who understands it, and he who merits it.

Interpretative Art.

20. There are three fountains of the Art of Learning: invention, study, and experience.

21. There are three foundations of Thought: perspicacity, sequence and accuracy.

22. There are three ornaments of Thought: luminosity, harmony, and completeness.

23. There are three canons of Thought: right expression, right relationship, and right emphasis.

24. There are three essentials of Thought: unity, variety, and similitude.

Ordinative Art.

25. There are three foundations of Experience: seeing much, suffering much, and learning much.

26. There are three foundations of Prudence: courage in judgment, constant experiment, and profit from mistakes.

27. There are three essentials for the attainment of Felicity: suffering with resignation, hope that it may come, and faith that it will.

Expressive Art.

28. There are three ideals of inspired Poetry: increase of virtue, increase of knowledge, and increase of happiness.

29. There are three essentials of a Poet: Awen, Knowledge, and Impulse.

30. There are three qualifications for inspired Poetry: intuition of Awen, prudence from experience, and serenity of mind.

31. There are three requisites for inspired Song: thought that expresses Awen, imagination guided by Art, and veracity of expression.

32. There are three excellences of inspired Song: simplicity of language, simplicity of subject, and simplicity of object.

33. There are three necessities of inspired Song: dignity of intention, propriety of idea, and suitability of matter.

34. There are three elegancies of inspired Song: noble language, luminous thoughts, and ingenuity of composition.

35. There are three ideal intentions of inspired Song: to improve the understanding, to elevate the heart, and to soothe the mind.

36. There are three perfections of inspired Song: perfect language, perfect composition, and perfect Art.

Pragmatic Art.

37. There are three indispensables of Language: purity, copiousness, and aptness.

38. The three constituents of the purity of Language are: order, strength, and beauty.

39. The three means for the copiousness of Language are: the diversifying of synonymous words, the variety of compound epithets, and the multiformity of expression.

40. The three degrees of aptitude of Language are: that which is understood, that which affords pleasure, and that which is self-evident.—(*Compiled from Bardic Sources.*)

JEWELS

“Persevere in light-heartedness, for it is the true way to make progress in the practice of virtue. Be merry, but do not sin.”—St. Philip Neri.

* * *

“Banish from your mouth imprecations against your neighbour and accustom yourself to say: ‘God make you a saint. God bless you.’”—St. Alphonsus Liguori.

* * *

“We should have the hearts of children for God, of mothers for our neighbours, and of judges for ourselves.”—Sœur Rosalie.

SACRED MYTHOI OF HEROES

THE LABOURS OF HERCULES (*continued*)

THE AUTUMN LABOURS

THE AUGEAN STABLES

The Mythos

Eurystheus bids Hercules to cleanse in one day the stalls of 3,000 oxen belonging to Augeas, King of Elis, which had not been cleansed for 30 years.

Hercules accomplished this task by diverting the courses of the Rivers Alpheus and Peneus so that they flowed through the stalls. Augeas refused to give Hercules the reward promised for the accomplishment of this labour, and was subsequently killed by him.

The Clavis

Augeas means a being of streaming radiant light. He was a son of Helios, the Sun.

Elis was situated on the eastern borders of Arcadia. Among its herds of cattle were 12 white bulls sacred to Helios.

The Oxen are symbolical of natural cosmic co-ordinated energies. The number Three, and all its multiples (30, 300, 3,000), denotes activity: therefore, the cattle with their stalls or stables, are like the various modes of activity according to which the Sun manifests in the 12 "Houses" and triplicities through which it passes in its cyclic journeyings.

Alpheus and Peneus are sons of the God Oceanus; they may be regarded as dual aspects of divine life—involving and evolving.

Libra, the "Balance," is the Zodiacal Sign associated with this task.

The influences of *Libra* are perverted when they appear as unbalance, injustice, aloofness, fastidiousness, oversensitiveness, procrastination, and all that pertains to the superficial and to the dislike for duties of a menial but cleansing character.

The pure aspects of *Libra* appear as the love of order, beauty, justice, and symmetry; and as all that pertains to equilibrium, tact, honour, adaptability, timeliness, and impartiality.

The Exegesis.

The task of Hercules in this labour may be regarded as that of re-adjusting and re-establishing the balance which has been disturbed by the cumulative action of the Law of Cause and Effect resulting from the exercise of lordship of the independent mind or self-hood, over the forces at its disposal. Augeas is like the light of reason, or consciousness, and the sentient nature of man as a whole, which makes him a being endowed with light. This gives to him his sense of self-hood, of independence of nature, as well as his potential lordship over nature. But when he exercises this without wisdom he becomes more and more immersed in the multiplication of causes and effects which he sets into operation.

Thus the sphere of his life, his consciousness, his existence, like the fields, or stalls or stables of the cattle, become more and more congested and in need of purification and re-adjustment. The unbalanced condition produced prevents him from seeing things as they really are, he becomes unjust, hypersensitive, and less and less inclined to undertake the unpleasant task of removing the accretions that have grown around his entire transient nature. Instead of sitting on the throne of balance he becomes chained to the wheel of causation or Karma and is unable to escape its cumulative influence. Only the power of the hero-Soul, with the aid of divine life, can undertake this task.

It marks the turning-point, as it were, in the soul's peregrinations in the transient realms, for if the balance is restored it means that the Soul's real ascent may be commenced, but if this labour is not performed, then the Soul must continue to revolve with the wheel of birth and death.

The task must be accomplished in a single day, that is to say, it must be performed in such a manner that the influence of Time is transcended. Time, as Plato affirmed, is a flowing image of Eternity, hence when Eternal Life manifests in the realms of Time it assumes the flowing appearance of streams of water (Rivers Alpheus and Peneus). But the hero-Soul has the power to change the natural and temporal progress of this life so that it not only transcends

the limitations of Time but also washes away all the effects that have accumulated during the transient activities of the independent Self in the realms of duality. Thus, the twin streams, with their actions and re-actions, their in-flowing and out-flowing, are equilibrated and thus speedily bring about a re-adjustment, a harmony, and justice of life.

THE STYMPHALIAN BIRDS

The Mythos.

Eurystheus bids Hercules to expel the man-eating birds who infested the Lake of Stymphalus in the mountains of Arcadia; they had wings, talons, and beaks of iron, and their feathers shot out like arrows.

Hercules destroyed some of them with his arrows and scared the others away with the sound of a brazen cymbal made by Hephaistos and given to him by Pallas Athene.

They flew away to an island sacred to Ares in the Black Sea.

The Clavis.

The Lake Stymphalus is symbolical of creative and generative force in its static unprecipitated condition as suggested by its position in the mountains of pure Arcadia.

The Birds, or Stymphalides as they were called, symbolize the inordinate tendencies which utilize this creative energy for unnatural and abnormal purposes, with all their attendant destructive consequences to the human organism.

Scorpio is the Zodiacal Sign connected with this labour. Some perverted Scorpio aspects are such as pertain to uncontrolled impulses, unbridled passions, destructiveness, callousness, tyranny, vindictiveness, intolerance, secretiveness, and pessimism.

But the pure influences of Scorpio are controlled forcefulness, energy, penetration, skill, resourcefulness, thoroughness, determination, devotion to the ideal, strength, courage, and potent regenerative capacity.

The Exegesis.

This task may be defined as that of controlling the desires, impulses, and passions. These are all good in their highest phases, and are not necessarily to be destroyed even when perverted, but rather they require to be ordained and their abnormal aspects expelled. They are essential to the process of human regeneration, even as they are to the processes whereby the human race is generated and perpetuated. In their original condition these forces are pure and holy, but because of their remarkable potency they may easily and quickly be converted into deadly powers, consuming the human flesh, even as did the Stympthalides.

All human art is an expression of man's inherent creative force, but when this is directed towards the gratification of inordinate desires and selfish propensities, then, in addition to the other evils, there is the prostitution of the sacred office of Art in the development of all manner of unnatural and non-ideal implements—as when Science and Art are devoted to the manufacture of instruments of destruction and war. These are suggested by the metallic wings, talons, beaks, and feathers of the birds.

But Creative Art is characterized by divine inspiration and is ordinative and elevative in its influence.

Pallas Athene—Divine Wisdom—is the inspiration of the true Artist-Soul.

Hephaistos—the Divine Smith—is the skill of the true Artist.

Thus, the Sound which Hercules produces by means of the brazen cymbal, made by Hephaistos, and given to him by Pallas Athene, is symbolical of pure creative and expressive Art which dispels all that is inordinate, degrading, and destructive.

THE ARCADIAN STAG

The Mythos

Eurystheus bids Hercules to bring to him alive the Stag which frequented Mount Maenalus, and was famous for its extraordinary fleetness.

It had golden antlers and brazen hoofs and was sacred to Artemis.

Hercules pursued it for a year over hills and plains and valleys into the Hyperboreans and thence back to the Arcadian Hills whence it started.

At length he wounded it with an arrow as it was endeavouring to gain the shelter of the recesses of a mountain sacred to Artemis, caught it and would have slain it had not Apollo and Artemis appeared. He then carried it away on his shoulders to Eurystheus.

The Clavis.

Mount Maenalus was said to be a haunt of Pan in his aspect as God of Nature.

The Stag was sacred to Artemis, or Diana, as Goddess of Nature, but with its golden antlers and brazen hoofs, it is, among other things, symbolical of the manner in which the forms of Nature may be exalted by works and processes which are superimposed upon those of Nature; gold denoting exaltation, and brass, as an alloy, signifying the power to combine and develop the simple elements or products of Nature. The Stag may also be regarded as denoting the object which is pursued by aspirational nature, and which is so swift and difficult to capture.

The Hyperboreans, or northern regions, signify the measurable extremity to which objects of aspiration can be pursued by merely human means.

Sagittarius, the "Archer," is the Zodiacal Sign of this labour. Some of its perverted influences are aimless roving, restlessness, hastiness, carelessness, fretfulness, rebellion, narrowness, and over-confidence; but its pure aspects are resoluteness, agility, quick discernment, idealism, love of liberty, honesty, naive frankness, and optimism.

The Exegesis.

This task of Hercules may be interpreted as that of learning to direct Aspirations into right channels so that they may lead the Soul to the realization of right Ideals.

It is easy and natural for the Soul to aspire, but purely natural aspirations do not necessarily lead the Soul to a realization of those Ideals which are above and beyond Nature.

To allow the aspirations merely to follow the ways of Nature is equivalent to the worship of Nature. But Nature, although comparable to the Book of God, is not itself God. Therefore, natural aspirations must be turned, ultimately, to that which is supra-natural and divine for their ideal realization. Then the processes of purification and regeneration symbolized by the two previous labours may be carried a stage further towards their full accomplishment.

When aspirations follow Nature they return, as it were, to their starting points after traversing the sphere which Nature comprehends, because Nature cannot, alone, raise herself above her own level. Thus, Hercules pursues the Stag through the realms of Nature for a whole year—that is, he completes a natural cycle and returns to his starting point without catching the Stag, or the object of his aspirations. The Soul in its highest aspect (Hercules) aspires to something above Nature, because it is prompted by the Inner Monitor (Eurystheus).

Thus, when he pursues the Stag to the mountain sacred to Artemis, it is as though his aspirations are turned to the Divine Source of Nature which Artemis or Diana signifies.

And the arrow whereby he wounds it is like a swift shaft of aspiration from the very deeps of the Soul, which is more rapid and potent than any of the merely natural aspirations. But these latter are not to be slain, they are useful and even indispensable for leading the Soul a stage further towards the attainment of its ideals, as Hercules—or the Soul—realizes when the Divine Light of Apollo and the Divine Principle of Nature (Diana) appear before him. Therefore, he lifts the Stag (aspirations) on to his shoulders and bears it away, thus completing the task of directing aspirations into right channels.

JEWELS

“Saints never complain.”—Curé d’Ars.

* * *

“One act of thanksgiving when things go wrong with us is worth a thousand thanks when things are agreeable to us.”—Blessed John of Avila.

MYSTIC PRAYERS FROM THE LITURGIES

“ O God, Who art the unsearchable abyss of peace, the ineffable sea of love, the fountain of blessings, and the bestower of affection, Who sendest peace to those that receive it; Open to us the sea of Thy love, and water us with the plenteous streams from the riches of Thy grace. Make us children of quietness and heirs of peace. Enkindle in us the fire of Thy love; sow in us Thy fear; strengthen our weakness by Thy power; and bind us closely to Thee and to each other in one firm bond of unity.”—Syrian Clementine Liturgy (1st cent.).

* * *

“ We give Thee thanks—yea, more than thanks—O Lord our God, for all Thy goodness at all times and in all places.”—Liturgy of St. Mark (2nd cent.).

* * *

“ That which we know not, do Thou reveal; that which is wanting in us, do Thou fill up; in that which we know, do Thou strengthen us.”—Liturgy of the Greek Church (3rd cent.).

* * *

“ Almighty God, we invoke Thee, the fountain of everlasting Light, and entreat Thee to send forth Thy truth into our hearts, and to pour upon us the glory of Thy Brightness.”—Sarum Breviary (4th cent.).

* * *

“ Grant us, O Lord, not to mind earthly things but to love things heavenly; and even now while we are placed among things that are passing away, to cleave to those that shall abide.”—Leonine Sacramentary (5th cent.).

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“ O God of unchangeable power, let the whole world feel and see that things which were cast down are being raised up, that those which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are returning to perfection.”—Gelasian Sacramentary (5th cent.).

“ O God who hast folded back the mantle of the night to clothe us in the golden glory of the day, chase from our hearts all gloomy thoughts, and make us glad with the brightness of hope that we may effectively aspire to unknown virtues.”
—6th century Collect.

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“ Do Thou meet us while we walk in the way and long to reach the Country; so that following Thy light we may keep the way of righteousness and never wander away into the darkness of this world’s night.”—Mozarabic Liturgy (6th cent.)

* * *

“ O God the Father, Origin of Divinity, Good beyond all that is good, Fair beyond all that is fair, in Whom is calmness, peace, and concord; Bring us all back into an unity of love, which may bear some likeness to Thy sublime nature.”
—Jacobite Liturgy of St. Dionysius.

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“ O Light which does lighten every man that cometh into the world, without Whom all is most dark darkness, by Whom all things are most splendent; Lighten our minds, that we may only see those things that please Thee and may be blinded to all other things.”—Book of Christian Prayers, A.D. 1566.

EDITORIAL

THE SIMPLE WAY.

A fourth article on “ Wu Wei ” has been added to the series which appeared recently in the Shrine; this completes our translation and analysis of the “ Tao Têh Canon ” of Lao Tsze. They have now been bound in blue cloth, uniform with our other manuals, together with a special Frontispiece, produced from an old Chinese painting in the British Museum, of Lao Tsze, and also a Symbolical Chart of the Taoist System.

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