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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE METAMORPHOSIS OF APULEIUS: AND THE AMOUR OF CUPID AND PSYCHE.

Thus far concerning the use of the mysteries to society. How essential they were esteemed to religion, we may understand by the *Metamorphosis of Apuleius*; a book, indeed, which from its very first appearance hath passed for a trivial fable. Capitolinus, in the life of Clodius Albinus, where he speaks of that kind of tales which disconcert the gravity of philosophers, tells us that Severus could not bear with patience the honors the Senate had conferred on Albinus; especially their distinguishing him with the title of *learned*, who was grown old in the study of old-wives-fables, such as the Milesian-Punic tales of his countryman and favorite, Apuleius.

The writer of the *Metamorphosis*, however, was one of the gravest and most virtuous, as well as most learned philosophers of his age. Albinus appears to have gone further into the true character of this work, than his rival Severus. And if we may believe Marcus Aurelius, who calls Albinus, "A man of experience, of demure life, and grave morals," he was not a man to be taken with such trifling amusements as Milesian fables. His fondness therefore for the *Metamorphosis of Apuleius* shows that he considered it in another light. And who so likely to be let into the author's true design, as Albinus, who lived very near his time, and was of Adrumetum in the neighborhood of Carthage, where Apuleius sojourned and studied, and was distinguished with public honors? The work is indeed of a different character from what some ancients have represented it; and even from what modern critics have pretended to discover of it. Those ancients, who stuck in the outside, considered it, without refinement, as an idle fable; the moderns, who could not reconcile a work of that nature to the gravity of the author's character, have supposed it a thing of more importance, and no less than a general satire on the vices of those times.

But this is far short of the matter. The author's main purpose was not to satirize the specific vices of his age, though to enliven his fable, and for the better carrying on his story, he hath employed many circumstances of this kind, but to recommend *Pagan religion*, as the only cure for *all vices whatsoever*.

To give what we have to say its proper force, we must consider

the real character of the writer. Apuleius, of Madaura in Africa, was a devoted Platonist; and, like the Platonists of that age, an inveterate enemy to Christianity. His zeal for the honor of *philosophy* is seen in that solemn affirmation, when convened before a court of justice, "I have never derogated ought from the honor of philosophy, which is more precious to me than life." His superstitious attachment to the religion of his country is seen in his immoderate fondness for the mysteries. He was initiated, as he tells us, into almost all of them; and in some, bore the most distinguished offices. In his Apology before the proconsul of Africa, he says, "Will you have me relate what kind of things those were, which wrapped up in a napkin, I confided to the house of Pontianus? You shall be allowed. I have been initiated in Greece into many mysteries. I carefully guard certain of their signs and tokens which have been committed to me by the priests. I say nothing unusual, nothing unknown. Ye who are present know what thing it is of father Bacchus Symmistæ which you keep concealed at home, and silently venerate apart from the profane. But I, as I have said, through love of truth, and duty to the gods, have learnt numerous mysteries, and very many rites, and various ceremonies. Nor do I make up this for the occasion: but it is about three years ago that shortly after my arrival at Oea, in a public discourse on the majesty of Æsculapius I made some declaration, and enumerated whatever mysteries I knew. That discourse is very celebrated; is generally read; is in the hands of every body,—commended to the pious people of Oea, not so much by my eloquence, as by the mention of Æsculapius. Can it then appear strange to any body who has any knowledge of religion, that a man versed in so many mysteries of the gods should keep certain holy trifles in his house? I am accustomed wherever I go to take with me the image of some god packed up among my books, and on festivals to worship it with incense and wine, and sometimes with sacrifices."

His great devotion to Paganism, therefore, must needs have been attended with an equal aversion to Christianity; and it is more than probable, that the oration he speaks of as made in honor of Æsculapius, was in the number of those invectives, at that time so well received by the enemies of our holy faith. For, not to insist on the success of his oration, which, he tells us, was in every body's hands, a thing common to discourses on subjects that engage the public attention, but rarely the fortune of such stale ware as panegyrics on a God long worn into an establishment; not, I say, to insist upon this, we may observe that

Æsculapius was one of those ancient heroes, who were employed, by the defenders of Paganism, to oppose to Jesus ; and the circumstances of Æsculapius's story made him the fittest of any in fabulous antiquity, for that purpose.

Having seen what there was in the common passion of his sect, and in his own fond mode of superstition, to indispose Apuleius to Christianity, let us inquire what private provocation he might have to prejudice him against it: for, a private provocation, I am persuaded, he had; occasioned by a personal injury done him by one of this profession; which, I suppose, did not a little contribute to exasperate his bigotry. He had married a rich widow, against the will of her first husband's relations; who endeavored to set aside the marriage on pretence of his employing sorcery and enchantments to engage her affections. Of this, he was judicially accused by his wife's brother-in-law, Licinius Æmilianus, before the Proconsul of Africa. Now his accuser, if I am not much mistaken, was a Christian, though this interesting circumstance hath escaped his commentators.

Now irreligion and atheism, we know, was the name Christianity at that time went by, for having dared to renounce the whole family of the gentile gods in a lump. Æmilianus had made such clear work, that there was not so much as an anointed stone, or a tree adorned with consecrated garlands, to be found throughout his whole Farm. That the Atheism of Æmilianus was of this sort, and no *courtley or philosophic* impiety, appears from his character and station. He was neither a fine gentleman or a profound inquirer into nature; characters indeed which are sometimes found to be above religion; but a mere rustic in his life and manners. Now plain unpolished men in such a station are never without some religion or other; when we find Æmilianus, therefore, not of the *established*, we must needs conclude him to be a *sectary* and a *Christian*. His neglect of his country gods was not a mere negative affront; of forgetfulness. He gloried in being their despiser; and took kindly to the name of Mezentius, as a title of honor,—(alterum, quod libentius audit, ob deorum contemptum, Mezentius,) which I would consider as a further mark of a Christian convict. He even held it an abomination so much as to put his hand to his lips, (according to the mode of adoration in those times,) when he passed by a heathen temple; (nefas habet adorandi gratia manum labris admoveere,) the most characteristic mark of a *primitive confessor*, by which he could never be mistaken; nor, one would think, so long overlooked.

The aversion therefore, which Apuleius had contracted to his Christian accuser, and we see, by his apology, it was in no ordinary degree, would without doubt increase his prejudice to that religion. I am persuaded he gave the character of the Baker's wife, in his golden ass for no other reason than to outrage our holy faith. He draws her stained with all the vices that could fall to the share of a woman; and then, to finish all, he makes her a Christian.

Let us see now how this would influence his writings. There was nothing the Philosophers of that time had more at heart, especially the Platonists and Pythagoreans, than the support of sinking Paganism. This service, as hath been occasionally remarked they performed in various ways and manners: some by allegorizing their theology; some by spiritualizing their philosophy; and some as Jamblicus and Philostratus, by writing the lives of their Heroes, to oppose to that of Christ; others again, as Porphyry, with this view, collected their oracles; or as Melanthius, Menander, Hicesius, and Sotades wrote descriptive encomiums on their Mysteries. Which last, as we shall now show, was the province undertaken by Apuleius; his Metamorphosis being nothing else but one continued recommendation of them.

But let us enquire into the motives our author might have for entering at all into the defence of Paganism: His reasons for choosing this topic of defence, the recommendation of the mysteries.

As to his defence of paganism in general, we may observe, that works of this kind were very much in fashion, especially amongst the philosophers of our author's sect. He was, as we have seen, most superstitiously devoted to pagan worship: and, he bore a personal spite and prejudice to the Christian profession.

As to his making the defence of the mysteries his choice, still stronger reasons may be assigned. These were the rites to which he was so peculiarly devoted, that he had contrived to be initiated into all the mysteries of note, in the Roman world; and in several of them had borne the most distinguished offices. The mysteries being at this time become extremely corrupt, and consequently, in discredit, needed an able and zealous apologist: both of which qualities met eminently in Apuleius. The corruptions were of two kinds, debaucheries and magic. Their debaucheries we have taken notice of, above: their magic will be considered hereafter. But, our author's close attachment to mysterious rites was, without question, the very thing that occasioned all those suspicions and reports, which ended in an accusa-

tion of magic: and considering what hath been said of the corrupt state of the mysteries, the reader will not wonder at it.

Such then being the general character of the mysteries, and of this their great devotee, nothing was more natural than his projecting their defence; which at the same time, that it concurred to the support of paganism in general, would vindicate his own credit, together with an institution of which he was so immoderately fond. And the following considerations are sufficient to show, that the *Metamorphosis* was written after his *Apology*: for, his accusers never once mention the fable of the *golden ass* to support their charge of magic, though they were in great want of proofs, and this lay so ready for their purpose. He positively asserts before the tribunal of Maximus Claudius that he had never given the least occasion to suspect him of magic: "*Nusquam passus sum vel exiguam suspicionem magicæ consistere.*"

Now antiquity considered initiation into the *mysteries as a delivery from a living death of vice, brutality, and misery, and the beginning of a new life of virtue, reason, and happiness.* This therefore, was the very circumstance which our author chose for the subject of his recommendation.

And as in the mysteries, their moral and divine truths were represented in *shows* and *allegories*, so in order to comply with this method of instruction, and in imitation of the ancient masters of wisdom, who borrowed their manner of teaching from thence, he hath artfully insinuated his doctrine in an agreeable fable; and the fittest one could conceive for his purpose, as will be seen when we come to examine it.

The foundation of this allegory was a Milesian fable, a species of polite trifling then much in vogue, and not very unlike the modern *Arabian tales*. To allure his readers, therefore, with the promise of a fashionable work, he introduces his *Metamorphosis* in this manner: "And I too will deliver to you various fables in this Milesian style, and delight your ears in a gentle whisper;" plainly intimating that there was something of more consequence at bottom. But they took him at his word: and, never troubled their heads about a further meaning. The outside engaged all their attention, and sufficiently delighted them; as we may gather from the early title it bore of *Asinus Aureus* :\*

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\* From the beginning of one of Pliny's epistles, I suspect that *Aurea* was the common title given to the *Milesian*, and such like tales as strollers used to tell for a piece of money to the rabble in a circle. Pliny's words are these—*assem para et accipe auream fabulam.* l. ii, Ep. 20.

unless we will rather suppose it to have been bestowed by the few intelligent readers in the secret; for, in spite of the author, a secret it was, and so all along continued.

Upon one of these popular fables, he chose to ingraft his instruction; taking a celebrated tale from the collections of one Lucius of Patræ; who relates his transformation into an Ass, and his adventures under that shape. Lucian has epitomised this story, as Apuleius seems to have paraphrased it: and the subject being a metamorphosis, it admirably fitted his purpose; as the metempsychosis to which that superstition belongs, was one of the fundamental doctrines of the mysteries.

The fable opens with the representation of a young man, personated by himself, sensible of the advantages of *virtue* and *piety*, but immoderately fond of *pleasure*, and as curious of *magic*. He gives a loose to his vicious appetite, and the crimes and follies into which they lead him soon ends in his transformation to a brute.

This contrivance of the introductory part is artful; and finely insinuates the great moral of the piece, that brutality attends vice as its punishment: and punishment by actual transformation was keeping up to the popular opinion.

St. Austin permitted himself to doubt whether Apuleius's account of his change into an ass was not a true relation. I shall say nothing to this extravagant doubt, but only observe, that it appears from hence, that St. Austin esteemed Apuleius a profligate in his manners, and addicted to the superstitions of magic.

But to proceed with his plan. Having now shown himself thoroughly brutalized by his crimes; he goes on to represent at large the miseries of that condition, in a long detail of his misadventures; in the course of which he fell, by turns, under the dominion of every vicious passion; though the incidents are chiefly confined to the mischiefs of unlawful love: and this, with much judgement, as one of the principal ends of the mysteries was to curb and subdue this inordinance, which brings more general and lasting misery upon mankind than all the other. And as it was the great moral of his piece to show that *pure religion*, such as a Platonic philosopher esteemed pure, was the only remedy for human corruption; so, to prevent the abuse or mistake of this capital principle, he takes care to inform us, that an attachment to superstitious and corrupt religion does but plunge the wretched victim into still greater miseries. This he finely illustrates, in the history of his adventures with the *begging priests of Cybele*; whose enormities are related in the eighth and ninth books; and whose corrupt myste-

zies are intended as a contrast to the pure rites of Isis ; with which in a very studied description and encomium he concludes the Fable.

In the mean time, matters growing from bad to worse, and Lucius plunged deeper and deeper in the sink of vice, his affairs come to a crisis. For this is one great beauty in the conduct of the fable, that every change of station, while he remains a brute, makes his condition still more wretched and deplorable. And being now about to perpetrate one of the most shocking enormities ; Nature, though so deeply brutalized, *revolts* ; he abhors the idea of his projected crime ; he evades his keepers ; he flies to the sea-shore ; and, in this solitude, begins to reflect more seriously on his lost condition. This is finely imagined, for we often see men, even after a whole life of horrors, come suddenly to themselves on the hideous aspect of some monster-vice too frightful even for an hardened conscience to endure. Nor is it with less judgment that the author makes these beginnings of reformation confirmed by solitude ; when the unhappy victim of pleasure hath broken loose from the companions and partakers of his follies.

And now, a more intimate acquaintance of his hopeless state obliges him to fly to heaven for relief. The moon is in full splendor, and the awful silence of the night inspires him with sentiments of religion.

He then purifies himself in the manner prescribed by Pythagoras, the philosopher most addicted to initiations of all the early sages ; as Apuleius, of all the later ; and so makes his prayer to the moon or *Isis*, invoking her by her several names of the *Eleusinian Ceres*, the *celestial Venus*, *Diana* and *Proserpine*, when betaking himself to repose, she appears to him in a dream, under that shining image so much spoken of by the *mystics*, as representing the divine nature in general.\*

These several symbolic attributes, [as described by Apuleius, but here omitted,] the *lucid round*, the *snakes*, the *ears of corn*, and the *sistrum*, represent the tutelar Deities of the Hecatæan, Bacchic, Eleusinian and Isiac mysteries. That is, the mystic rites in general : for whose sake the allegory was invented. As the black Palla in which she is wrapped, embroidered with a *silver moon*, and *stars*, denotes the *time*, in which the mysteries were celebrated, namely

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\* Artemidorus says, that for a man to dream that *Ceres Proserpine*, or *Bacchus* appears to him, betokens some extraordinary good fortune to happen to him. This popular divination by dreams was apparently founded on the common opinion of the advantages attending initiation into the mysteries. The ancient *Onirotics* were not founded on the arbitrary fancies of the impostors who professed that art, but on the customs and superstitions of the times, and with a principal reference to the *Egyptian Hieroglyphics* and *mysteries*.

in the dead of *night*; which was so constant and inseparable a circumstance, that the author calls initiation, *noctis societas*.\*

"Behold, Lucius, I, moved by thy prayers, am present with thee; I, who am Nature, the parent of things, the queen of all the elements, the primordial progeny of ages, the Supreme of Divinities, the sovereign of the spirits of the dead, the first of the celestials, and the uniform resemblance of gods and goddesses. I who rule by my nod the luminous summits of the heavens, the salubrious breezes of the sea, and the deplorable silences of the realms beneath: and whose one divinity the whole orb of the earth venerates under a manifold form, by different rites, and a variety of appalleations. Hence the primogenial Phrygians call me Pessinuntica, the mother of the gods; the Attic Aborigines, Cecropian Minerva; the floating Cyprians, Paphian Venus; the arrow-bearing Cretans, Diana Dictynna; the three tongued Sicilians, Stygian Proserpine; and the Eleusinians, the ancient goddess Ceres. Some also call me Juno, others Bellona, others Hecate, and others Rhamnusia. And those who are illuminated by the incipient rays of that divinity, the sun, when he rises, viz. the Ethiopians, the Aarii, and Egyptians skilled in ancient learning, worshipping me by ceremonies perfectly appropriate, call me by my true name *queen Isis*." This was exactly adapted to the *design* of the mysteries; and preparatory to the communication of the *aporreta*. It had likewise this further use, to patch up and recommend the pagan religions; by showing that their *Polytheism* consisted in nothing else than in giving the *Supreme God* various names, merely expressive of his various attributes. This was the fashionable coloring, which, after the appearance of Christianity, the advocates of paganism employed to blanch their Idolatry. I will only observe further that the words *the Egyptians worshipping me with ceremonies perfectly appropriate*, insinuate what was true, that all *mysterious* worship came *first* from *Egypt*: this people having penetrated furthest into the nature of the gods: as the calling *her* who represents the mysteries in general *rerum natura parens*, shows plainly what were the *aporreta* of them all.

Parent Nature then reveals to Lucius the means of his recovery. Her *festival* was on the following day; when there was to be a *pro-*

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\* Masonic meetings are nocturnal, and the aprons of the fraternity are generally ornamented with figures of the sun, moon, and seven stars, or planets; which shows that the principal design of the institution was something very different from the mechanical occupation of masonry. They show, indeed, that it was founded on *Sabism*, the worship of the stars.—Edit.

*cession* of her votaries. The priest who led it up, would have a chaplet of roses in his hand, which had the virtue to restore him to his former shape. But as breaking through a habit of vice is, of all things, the most difficult; she adds encouragements to her promises, "Nor should you fear any thing pertaining to my concerns as difficult. For in this very same moment of time in which I come to you, being there also present, I order my priest in a dream to do those things which are to be done hereafter." Alluding, to what was taught in the mysteries, that, the assistance of Heaven was always present to second the efforts of virtue. But in return for the favor of releasing him from his brutal shape, that is of reforming his manners by initiation, she tells him she expected the service of his whole life; and this, the mysteries required. Nor should his service go unrewarded, for he should have a place in *Elysium* hereafter; and this, too, the mysteries promised.

Lucius is at length confirmed in his resolution of aspiring to a life of virtue. And on this change of his dispositions, and entire conquest of his passions, the author finely represents all nature as putting on a new face of cheerfulness and gaiety. "All things likewise, independent of my peculiar joy, seemed to me to exult with such great hilarity that I might have thought that cattle of every kind, every house, and even the day itself, rejoiced with a serene countenance." And to enjoy Nature, in these her best conditions, was the boasted privilege of the *Initiated*, as we may see from a Chorus in the *Frogs* of Aristophanes.

And now the *procession*, in honor of Isis, begins. Where by the way, we must observe, that the two first days of the celebration of the Eleusinian mysteries are plainly described: the one called *agyrmos*, from the multitude assembled; the other *alase mystai*, from the procession made to the sea-shore. "Then there was an influx of a crowd of those who had been initiated in the *sacred rites* of the goddess, resplendent with the *pure whiteness of linen garments*. In the next place, the images of the gods, carried by the priests of Isis, proceeded, not disdaining to walk with the feet of men; *this* terrifically raising a *canine* head; but *that* being the messenger of the infernal gods, and of those in the realms beneath, with an erect face, partly black, and partly of a golden color, bearing in his left hand a *caduceus*, and shaking in his right hand branches of the flourishing palm tree; whose footsteps, a *crow*, in an erect position, immediately followed. This crow was the prolific resemblance of the all-parent goddess, and was carried on the shoulders of one of the *blessed* servants of this divinity

and who acted the part of a mimic as he walked; another carried a *cista* or *chest*, containing *arcana*, and perfectly concealing the *mystic symbols* of a magnificent religion. And another bore in his *happy bosom* the venerable effigies of the *Supreme Divinity*, which was not similar to any cattle, bird or wild beast, nor even to man; but being venerable for the subtilty by which it was invented, and also for its novelty, was an ineffable indication of a more *sublime religion*, and which was to be *concealed* with the *greatest silence*."\* The priest or hierophant of the rites leads up the train of the initiated with a garland of roses in his hand. Lucius approaches, devours the roses, and is according to the promise of the goddess, restored to his natural form, by which, as we have said, no more was meant than a change of manners from vice to virtue. And this the author plainly intimates by making the goddess thus address him under his brutal form, "Immediately divest yourself of the hide of that worst of beasts, and which for *some time since* has been to me detestable." For an Ass was so far from being detestable, that it was employed in the celebration of her rites; and was ever found in the retinue of Osiris or Bacchus. The garland plainly represents that which the aspirants were *crowned* with at their initiation; just as the *virtue* of the *roses* designs the mysteries. At his transformation he had been told, that *roses* were to restore him to humanity † so that amidst all his adventures, he had still this remedy in view.

Our author proceeds to tell us, that the people wondered at this instantaneous metamorphosis. "The people admire, and the religious venerate so evident an indication of the power of the Supreme Divinity, and the magnificence and facility of my restoration." For

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\* I have given a more full account of this procession, from the work of Apuleius, than is copied by Warburton. In the processions of the London masons, before noticed, at laying the foundation stone, and the dedication, of freemasons' hall, in 1775, and 1776, among other things, were carried, three pitchers, containing corn, wine, and oil; the bible; wand or caduceus; a *cista* or *chest*, here called the *lodge* &c. After the ceremony of laying the foundation stone, "the brethren proceeded through the city in procession, without *exposing* any of the *ensignia* of the order." Smith.—Edit.

† The modern masomic degree of Rose-Cross seems to allude to this ridiculous conceit regarding the virtue of roses. The following dialogue takes place between the master and senior warden:—"Do you know the *Pelican*?—I do.—What does it signify?—*Among us* it is a symbol of the *Saviour* of the world, and of his *perfect humanity*. What is the object of the degree of Knights of the Rose-Cross?—To lead us to respect the decrees of the Most High, who is able to *reinstamp* his image on us." To reinstamp is here intended to signify the restoration to a former state; which is exactly what occurred to Lucius, when in his *assine* condition, by the *eating of roses*. The Pelican is a Roman Catholic symbol of the Saviour, arising from the fable that this bird perforates its breast, and suffers its young to feed upon the blood issuing therefrom.

The Saviour, in the ritual of the Catholic Church, is thus addressed: "*O Pelican Jesus! cleanse us with thy blood, one drop of which is sufficient to purify a world.*"

The degree of Rose-Cross was invented in France, a Roman Catholic country.—Edit.

the mysteries boasted the power of giving a sudden and entire change to the mind and affections. And the advocates of paganism against Christianity used to oppose this boast to the real and miraculous efficacy of grace.

As soon as Lucius had recovered the integrity of his nature by initiation, the priest covers him, naked as he was, with a *linen* garment. A habit always bestowed upon the aspirant, on his admission to the mysteries; the *rationale* of which, Apuleius himself gives us in his apology.\* When all was over, the priest accosts his penitent in the following manner. "O Lucius! you have at length arrived at the port of quiet, and the altar of pity, having endured many and various labors, and great tempests of fortune, and been tossed about by mighty waves of calamity. Assume now a more joyful countenance, and more adapted to that *white garment* which you wear. Attend the pomp of your *saviour goddess* with triumphant steps. *Let the irreligious see, let them see and acknowledge their error.* Behold Lucius, rejoicing in the providence of the great Isis, and freed from his pristine miseries, triumphs in his own fortune,"†

Here the moral of the fable is delivered in plain terms; and, in this moral, all we have advanced, concerning the purpose of the work, fully confirmed. It is expressly declared, that vice and inordinate curiosity were the causes of Lucius's disasters; from which the only relief was *initiation* into the *mysteries*. Whereby the author would insinuate that nothing was more abhorrent from those holy rites than *debauchery* and *magic*; the two enormities they were then commonly suspected to encourage.

It hath been observed above, that, by Lucius's return to his proper form, was meant his initiation; and accordingly, that return is called, as initiation was, *the being born again,—ut renatus quodammodo,*

\* "Wool, the excretion of the most sluggish body belonging to the herd, was for that reason, pronounced by Orpheus and Pythagoras, to be a *profane* raiment. But flax, truly the most cleanly of the best production of the earth, not only clothed and veiled the most holy priests of Egypt, but was used also to cover the sacred utensils." Apul. p. 64.

† "Whilst the *apron* with which we [masons] are *cloathed* indicates a disposition of *innocence*, and belies not the wearer's heart, let the ignorant deride and scoff on: superior to the ridicule and malice of the *wicked*, we will enfold ourselves in the garb of our own virtue; and safe in our self-approving conscience, stand unmoved against the persecutions of adversity.

"The raiment which *truly implies* the innocence of the heart, is a badge more honorable than ever was devised by kings; the Roman eagle, with all the orders of knighthood, are thereunto inferior." Smith.

"Formerly masons used to be clothed in *white* during Lodge hours, which practice is still followed in many lodges in Germany, France, and Holland; but in England, the *white apron* is only remaining." Ibid.—Edit.

and—*sua providentia quodammodo renatos*; but this was only to the lesser, not the greater mysteries. The first was to purify the mind: hence it was called by the ancients, *kakias aphairesin*, a separation from evil: the second was to enlighten it, when purified, and to bring it to the knowledge of *divine secrets*. Hence they named the one *Katharsin*, and the other *Teleiothta*, purification and perfection.\* The first is here represented in the incident of Lucius's being restored to humanity by the use of roses: The second, as the matter of chief importance, the author treats more circumstantially.

He begins with making the priest take occasion, from the benefit already received, to press Lucius to enter into the greater mysteries of Isis.

But at the same time makes him inform the candidate, that nothing was to be precipitated: for that not only many previous rites and ceremonies, concerning religious diet, and abstinence from profane food, were to be observed; but that the aspirants to these higher mysteries were to wait for a call.

The author, by the doubts and apprehensions which retarded his initiation, first gives us to understand, that the highest degree of sanctity was required of those who entered into the mysteries.

These difficulties being surmounted, he is initiated with the accustomed ceremonies. He then makes his prayer, in which the grand *aporrta* of the mysteries is still more plainly referred to.

"Thou, O holy and perpetual saviour of the human race, being always munificent in cherishing mortals, dost employ the sweet affection of a mother in the misfortunes of the miserable. Nor is there any day or night, or even a slender moment of time, which passes unattended by thy benevolent interpositions. Thou protectest men both by sea and land, and dispersing the storms of life, dost extend thy salutary right hand, by which thou drawest back the enextricably twisted thread of the Fates, and dost mitigate the tempests of inclement fortune, and restrain the noxious courses of the stars. The supernal gods reverence thee, and those in the realms beneath attentively observe thy nod. Thou rollest the sphere of the universe round the steady poles, dost illuminate the sun, govern the world, and tread on the dark realms of Tartarus. The stars move responsive to thy command,† the gods rejoice in thy

\* The masonic "Degree of Perfection, or the grand elect, perfect, and sublime mason," it may be presumed, is entitled to the appellation of *Teleiothta*.—Edit.

† *Respondent sidera*. This, I suppose, relates to the music of the spheres. The image is noble and sublime. It is taken from the consent in the lyre, to answer to, and obey the hand of the master who had put them into tune.

divinity, the hours and seasons return by thy appointment, and the elements reverence thy decree. By thy nod blasts of wind blow, the clouds are nourished, seeds germinate, and blossoms increase. Birds swiftly pass through the tracks of the air, wild beasts wandering on the mountains, serpents concealed in the ground, and the enormous monsters that swim in the sea, are terrified at the majesty which invests thy divinity, etc."

The affair thus over, the author, in the next place, takes occasion, agreeably to his real practice and opinions, to recommend a *multiplicity of initiations*. He tells us how Isis counseled him to enter into the mysteries of Osiris: how, after that she invited him to a *third* initiation: and then rewarded him for his *accumulated piety* with an abundance of temporal blessings.

All this considered, we can no longer doubt but that the true design of his work was to recommend initiation into the mysteries, in opposition to the new religion. We see the catastrophe of the piece, the whole Eleventh Book, entirely taken up with it; and composed with the greatest seriousness and superstition.

And, surely, nothing could be better conceived, to recommend the mysteries, than the idea of such a plan; or better contrived than his execution of it. In which, he omits no circumstance that might be plausibly opposed to Christianity; or that might be recommended, with advantage, to the magistrate's favor: as where he tells us, that in these rites, they prayed for the prosperity of all orders in the State,—“For the great Emperor, the senate, the equestrian order, and for all the Roman people.”

This interpretation will throw new light on every part of the *golden ass*. But I have been so long upon the subject, that I have only time to give one instance; and this, chiefly because it reflects it back again on the general interpretation of the fable.

### *The Amour of Cupid and Psyche.*

In the fifth and sixth books is the long episode of *Cupid and Psyche*,\* visibly allegorical throughout; and entirely foreign to all the rest of the

\* In order to a due understanding of the Fable, it is necessary to know the nature of the characters upon which it is founded.

“Psyche, (Greek, the soul or life) a goddess by which the ancients seem to mean the human soul. She was represented with the wings of a butterfly on her shoulders, to intimate by the nimbleness of that creature, the activity, nature and properties of the soul.”—(Bailey.)

According to ancient mythology, there were two cupids, one, born of Venus, and begotten by Jupiter, the inciter of celestial love; the other, the son of Erebus and Nox, the author of *terrestrial amours*.—(Edit.)

work, considered as a mere Milesian fable; but very applicable to the writer's purpose, if he had that moral to inculcate which we have here assigned him.

There was no man, though he regarded the golden ass as a thing of mere amusement, but saw that the story of Cupid and Psyche was a philosophic allegory of the progress of the soul to perfection, in the possession of divine love and the reward of immortality.\* Now we have shown at large, that the professed end of the mysteries was to restore the soul to its *original rectitude*, and to encourage good men with the promises of happiness in another life. The fable, therefore, of Cupid and Psyche, in the fifth and sixth books, was the finest and most artful preparative for the subject of the eleventh, which treats of the mysteries.

But if we look more nearly into this beautiful fable, we shall find that, besides its general purpose, it has one more particular. We have observed that the corrupt state of the mysteries, in the time of Apuleius, was one principal reason of his undertaking their apology. These corruptions were of two kinds, *debaucheries* and *magic*. Their debaucheries have been taken notice of above. Their *magic* was of three sorts: The magic of invocation or *necromancy*; the magic of transformation or *metamorphosis*; and the magic of divine communication under a visible appearance or *theurgy*. The shows of the mysteries seem to have given birth to the first, the doctrine of the metempsychosis taught therein to the second, and the *Aporreta* concerning the divine nature, to the third. The abomination of the two first sorts was seen, by all, and frankly given up as criminal: but the fanatic *Platonists* and *Pythagoreans* of the latter ages, espousing the third, occasioned it to be held in credit and reverence. So that, as Heliodorus tells us, the Egyptian priests, (between whose Philosophy and fanatic Platonism, there was at this time a kind of coalition,) affected to distinguish between the magic of *necromancy* and the magic of *theurgy*, accounting the first infamous and wicked; but the last very fair, and even commendable. For now both those fanatics had their *philosophic mysteries*: the rites of which consisted in the practice of this *theurgic magic*. These were the mysteries, to observe it by the way, of which the emperor Julian was so fond, that he placed his principal felicity, as the Christians did his principal

\* The Amour of Cupid and Psyche was a subject which lay in common amongst the Platonic writers. And every one fashioned this agreeable fiction according to the doctrines he had to convey under it. By this means it could not but become famous. The remaining monuments of ancient sculpture convince us that it was very famous; in which, nothing is so common as the figures of Cupid and Psyche in the various circumstances of their adventures.

crime, in their celebration. But our author who had imbibed his Platonism, not at the muddy streams of those late enthusiasts, but at the pure fountain-head of the Academy itself, well understood how much this superstition, with all its plausible pretences, had polluted the mysteries ; and, therefore, as in the course of the adventures of his *golden ass*, he had stigmatized the two other kinds of *magic*, he composed this celebrated tale, hitherto so little understood, to expose the magic of *theurgy*. It is, as we said, a philosophic allegory, delivered in the adventures of Psyche, or the soul : whose various labours and traverses in this progress, are all represented as the affects of her indiscreet passion for that species of magic called Theurgy.

To understand this, we must observe, that the enthusiastic Platonists, in their pursuit of the Supreme Good, the *union with the Deity*, made the completion and perfection of it to consist in the theurgic vision of the Autopton Agalma or the self seen image, that is, seen by the splendor of its own light. Now the story tells us, there were three sisters, the youngest of whom was called Psyche ; by which we are to understand, the *three peripatetic souls*, the *sensitive*, the *animal*, and the *rational* ; or, in other words, *sense*, *appetite*, and *reason* : that the beauty of Psyche was so divine, that men forsook the altars of the gods to follow and worship her, according to the ancient aphorism :

Nullum Numen abest, si sit Prudentia.

*No Deity is wanting, if Prudence is consulted.*

She is contracted to, and possesses the celestial Cupid or *divine love*, invisibly. In the mean time her sisters, envious of her superior enjoyments, take advantage of the god's *invisibility* to perplex her with a thousand doubts and scruples, which end in exciting her *curiosity* to get a *sight* of her lover. By which the author seems to insinuate that they are the irregular passions and appetites which stir up men's curiosity to this species of magic, the *theurgic vision*. Psyche is deluded by them, and against the express injunction of the god, who calls it *sacrilega curiositas*, attempts this *forbidden sight*. She succeeds, and is undone. Divine love forsakes her : the scenes of pleasure vanish : and she finds herself forlorn and abandoned ; surrounded by miseries, and pursued with the vengeance of Heaven. In this distress she comes to the temples of Ceres and Juno, and seeks protection of those deities ; by which is meant, the having recourse to their mysteries, against the evils and disasters of life ; as is plainly marked by the reason given for her application :—" Not willing to omit any even doubtful means of bettering my

condition." They both deny admittance to her; intimating that the *puræ mysteriæ* discouraged all kind of *magic*, even the most specious. In a word, after a long and severe repentance and penance, in which the author seems to have shadowed the trials and labors undergone by the aspirants to the mysteries, she is pardoned and restored to the favor of Heaven. She is put again into possession of Divine Love, and rewarded with the prerogative of immortality.

There are many other circumstances in this fine allegory equally serving to the end here explained: as there are others which allude to divers beautiful platonic notions, foreign to the present discourse. It is enough that we have pointed to its chief and peculiar purpose; which it was impossible to see while the nature and design of the whole fable lay undiscovered.

Before I totally dismiss this matter it may not be improper to observe, that both Virgil and Apuleius have represented the genuine mysteries, as Rites of perfect sanctity and purity; and recommended only such to their countrymen; while they expose impure and impious rites to the public aversion; for it was their purpose to stigmatize the reigning corruptions and to recommend the ancient sanctity. On the contrary, a man attached by his office to the recommendation of the mysteries, as then practised, was to do the best he could, when deprived of the benefit of this distinction; and was to endeavor to give fair colors to the foulest things. This was the case of Jamblichus. His friend Porphyry had some scruples on this head. He doubts whether those rites could come from the gods, which admitted such a mixture of lewdness and impurity. Such a mixture Jamblichus confesses; but at the same time, endeavors to account for their divine original, by showing, that they are only the emblems of natural truths; or a kind of moral purgation of the inordinate passions.

Hitherto we have considered the legislator's care in perpetuating the doctrine of a future state. And if I have been longer than ordinary on this head, my excuse is, that the topic was new, and the doctrine itself, which is the main subject of the present inquiry, much interested in it.

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#### *Theurgy.*

Theurgy is compounded of Theos, God, and ergon, work, and signifies *magic* operating by divine or celestial means, or the power of doing extraordinary and supernatural things by lawful means, as prayer, invocation of God, etc., called by some *white magic*.—Bailey.

'The wisest of the pagan world, and their greatest philosophers held Theurgic magic

in the highest esteem. Theurgy was, according to them, a divine art, which served only to advance the mind of man to the highest perfection, and render the soul more pure; and they, who by means of this magic had the happiness to arrive at what they called *Aulopsia*, or *Intuition*, a state wherein they enjoyed intimate intercourse with the gods, believed themselves invested with all their power, and were persuaded that nothing to them was impossible. Towards this state of perfection all those aspired, who made profession of that sort of magic; but then it laid them under severe regulations. None could be priest of this order but a man of unblemished morals, and all who joined with him in his operations, were bound to strict purity; they were not allowed to have any commerce with women; to eat any kind of animal food, nor to defile themselves by the touch of a dead body. The philosophers, and persons of the greatest virtue, thought it their honor to be initiated into the mysteries of this sort of magic."—Mayo's Myth. v. 1. p 277.

Thomas Taylor, in a note to his translation of Jamblichus, observes:—"This art of divine works is called *theurgy*, in which Pythagoras was initiated among the Syrians as we are informed by Jamblichus in his life of that philosopher. Proclus was also skilled in this art, as may be seen in his life by Marinus. Psellus, in his MS. treatise on Demons, says, 'that magic formed the last part of the sacerdotal science:' in which place by magic he doubtless means that kind of it which is denominated theurgy. And that theurgy was employed by the ancients in their mysteries, I have fully proved in my treatise on the Eleusinian and Bacchic mysteries. This theurgy, is doubtless the same as the magic of Zoroaster, which Plato in his first Alcibiades says, consisted in the worship of the gods."

"The emperor Julian alludes to this theurgical art, in the following extract from his Arguments against the Christians, preserved by Cyril:

'For the inspiration which arrives to men from the gods is rare, and exists but in a few. Nor is it easy for every man to partake of this, nor at every time. It has ceased among the Hebrews, nor is it preserved to the present time among the Egyptians. Spontaneous oracles, also, are seen to yield to temporal periods. This, however, our philanthropic lord and father Jupiter understanding, that we might not be entirely deprived of communion with the gods, has given us observation through *sacred arts*, by which we have at hand sufficient assistance.'"—(p. 343, 347

This art was professed by the early masons, as appears by an examination of one of the brotherhood by King Henry VI. It is, as before observed, a fundamental doctrine of the Roman Catholic church.

"The priests of Egypt, Persia, India, etc. pretended to bind the gods to their idols, and to make them descend from heaven at their pleasure; they threatened the sun and moon to reveal the secret mysteries, to shake the heavens, etc." (Eusebius Prep. Evang. p. 198, and Jamb. do Myst. Egypt.—See Ruins, p. 235.)

## CHAPTER IV.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND DOCTRINES OF PITHAGORAS, THE FOUNDER OF THE SECT OF ANCIENT PHILOSOPHERS THAT BORE HIS NAME. ALSO THE DOCTRINES AND CUSTOMS OF THE DRUIDS, THE PRIESTS OF THE ANCIENT BRITONS.

NOTWITHSTANDING Pythagoras died, at least fifteen hundred years before the institution of the Freemasons' society, he is hailed by the fraternity as a *brother mason*. Both Cross and Webb, in treating of masonic emblems, among which they include a diagram of the forty-seventh problem of Euclid, hold the following language:

"This was an invention of *our ancient friend and brother*, the great Pythagoras, who in his travels through Asia, Africa and Europe, was initiated into several orders of priesthood, and raised to the sublime degree of *master-mason*. This wise philosopher, enriched his mind abundantly in a general knowledge of things, and more especially in geometry or *masonry*; on this subject he drew out many problems and theorems." etc.

The appellation of grandfather of freemasons would perhaps apply much more appropriately to Pythagoras, than that of *brother*; for he probably was the father of Druidism, and this was the father of the masonic society; which it made use of as a mere cloak to cover its religious observances, with no special regard to the improvement of the craft. The idea however of a connection between Pythagoras and masonry, must have been handed down in tradition by the old Druidical masons; which is a strong evidence, that the secrets and ceremonies of masonry, are derived from the ancient Egyptian mysteries through the Pythagorean school.

Upon this supposition, of the truth of which I have no doubt, it becomes important to give some account of this celebrated philosopher, whose memory is so deservedly venerated by the masonic order.

The best arranged account of his life and doctrines, that I have met with, is contained in Rees's Cyclopaedia; I therefore make the following abstract from that work.

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Pythagoras was of Samos, the son of a lapidary, and the pupil of Pherecydes, and flourished, says Bayle, about five hundred years before Christ, in the time of Tarquin, the last king of Rome, and not in Numa's time, as many authors have supposed.—(See *Cicero Tus. Ques. lib. iv. cap. 1*.)

Posterity has been very liberal to this philosopher, in bestowing upon him all such inventions as others had neglected to claim, particularly in music; for there is scarcely any part of it, as a science, with which he has not been invested by his generous followers in biography.

Musical ratios have been assigned to him, with the method of determining the gravity or acuteness of sounds by the greater or less degree of velocity in the vibration of strings; the addition of an eighth to the

lyre, (Pliny, lib. ii. cap. 2.) the harmony of the spheres (Plato;) and the Greek musical notation (Boethius). His right, indeed, to some of these discoveries has been disputed by several authors, who have given them to others with as little reason, perhaps, as they have been before bestowed upon him.

After musical ratios were discovered and reduced to numbers, they were made by Pithagoras and his followers, the type of order and just proportion in all things; hence virtue, friendship, good government, celestial motion, the human soul, and God himself were harmony.

This discovery gave birth to various species of music, far more strange and inconceivable than chromatic and enharmonic; such as *divine* music, *mundane* music, *elementery* music, and many other divisions and subdivisions, upon which Zarlino, Kircher, and almost all the old writers, never fail to expatiate with wonderful complacence.\* It is perhaps, equally to the credit and advantage of music and philosophy, that they have long descended from these heights, and taken their proper and separate stations upon earth; that we no longer admit of music that cannot be heard, or of philosophy that cannot be understood.

Master Thomas Mace, author of a most delectable book, called "Music's Monument," would have been an excellent Pythagorean; for he maintains that the mystery of the Trinity is perspicuously made plain by the connection of the three harmonical concords, 1, 3, 5; that music and divinity are nearly allied; and that the contemplation of concord and discord, of the nature of the octave and unison, will so strengthen a man's faith, "that he shall never after degenerate into that gross sub-beastical sin of atheism."

Pythagoras is said by the writers of his life, to have regarded music as something celestial and divine, and to have had such an opinion of its power over the human affections, that according to the Egyptian system, he ordered his disciples to be waked every morning, and lulled to sleep every night, by sweet sounds. He likewise considered it as greatly conducive to health, and made use of it in disorders of the body, as well as in those of the mind. His biographers pretend to tell us what kind of music he applied upon these occasions.

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\* The terms *sacred* and *profane* music, are still retained, appropriating grave and plain ive tones to the former, and gay and lively to the latter. On this account, it is reported, that Wesley, the founder of the Methodist sect, declared that the Devil should not have all the best tunes, and accordingly, he introduced into his church service the most sprightly airs, which are still in use among his followers, having, it is said, the most happy effect.—*Edit.*

Grave and solemn, we may be certain; and vocal, say they, was preferred to instrumental, and the lyre to the flute, not only for its decency and gravity, but because instruction could be conveyed to the mind, by means of articulation in singing, at the same time as the ear was delighted by sweet sounds.

In perusing the list of illustrious men, who have sprung from the school of Pythagoras, it appears that the love and cultivation of music was so much a part of their discipline, that almost every one of them left a treatise behind him upon the subject.

The first journey of Pythagoras from the Grecian islands was probably into Egypt, which were celebrated in his time for that kind of wisdom which best suited his genius and temper. In his way thither, Jamblichus asserts that he visited Phœnecia, and conversed with the prophets and philosophers that were the successors of Mochus the Physiologist.

While he was in Egypt, he was introduced by the recommendation of Polycrates, tyrant\* of Samos, to Amasia, king of Egypt, a distinguished patron of literary men, and thus obtained access to the colleges of the priests. Having found it difficult to gain this privilege, he performed many severe and troublesome preliminary ceremonies, and even submitted to circumcision, a prescribed condition of his admission. He passed twenty-two years in Egypt, availing himself of all possible means of information with regard to the recondite doctrines of the Egyptian priests, as well as their astronomy and geometry, and Egyptian learning in its most unlimited extent.

After his return from Egypt to his native island, he wished to communicate the benefit of his researches and studies to his fellow-citizens, and with this view he attempted to institute a school for their instruction in the elements of science; proposing to adopt the Egyptian mode of teaching, and to communicate his doctrines under a symbolical form. But the Samians were either too stupid or too indolent to profit by his instructions. Although he was obliged to relinquish his design, he did not altogether abandon it. In order to engage the attention of his countrymen by some other means, he repaired to Delos; and after presenting an offering of cakes to Apollo, he there received, or pretended to receive, moral dogmas from the priestess, which he afterwards delivered to his disciples under the character of divine precepts. With

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\*The name tyrant, as at first used, merely designated the chief magistrate of a place: the Greeks in old time, called the supreme governor of every city a tyrant or king. Bailey.—*Edit.*

the same views he also visited the island of Crete, so celebrated in mythological history; where he was conducted by the Corybantes, or priests of Cybele, into the cave of mount Ida, in which Jupiter is said to have been buried. Here he conversed with Epimenides, an eminent pretender to prophetic powers, and was by him initiated into the most sacred mysteries of Greece. About the same time he visited Sparta and Elis, and was present during the celebration of the Olympic games, where he is said to have exhibited a golden thigh to Abaris, in order to convince him that he was Apollo. Besides other places which he visited during his stay in Greece, he repaired to Phlius, where he first assumed the appellation of philosopher. Having thus added to the stores of learning which he had previously accumulated, and acquired a kind of authority which was calculated to command respect, he returned to Samos, and made a second attempt, more successful than his first, to establish a school of philosophy. In a semicircular kind of building, which the Simians had used as a place of resort for public business, he delivered, with an assumed authority of a sacred nature, popular precepts of morality; and he also provided himself with a secret cave, into which he retired with his intimate friends and professed disciples, and here he gave his followers daily instructions, accompanied with a considerable parade of mystery, in the more abstruse parts of philosophy. His fame, and the multitude of his followers, increased. What he failed to accomplish by mere force of learning and ability, he effected by concealing his doctrines under the veil of mysterious symbols, and issuing forth his precepts as responses from a divine oracle. About the beginning of the fifty-ninth Olympiad, Pythagoras, desirous of escaping the tyranical government exercised in his native island, by Syllon, the brother of Polycrates, left Samos, and, as we have already hinted, passed over into Italy, and attempted to establish his school among the colonies of Magna Græcia. It is probable, that, in order to obtain credit with the populace, he about this time pretended to possess a power of performing miracles, and practised many arts of imposture. The first place at which he arrived in Italy was Crotona, a city in the bay of Tarentum, the inhabitants of which were very corrupt in their manners. But such were his reputation and influence, that he was treated with great respect, and people of all classes assembled to hear his discourses; insomuch that the manners of the citizens were soon totally changed from great luxury and licentiousness to strict sobriety and frugality. It is said that six hundred, (some say two thousand,) persons were prevailed upon to submit to the strict discipline which he

required and to throw their effects into a common stock for the benefit of the whole fraternity. The influence of his philosophy extended from Crotona to many other cities of Magna Græcia, and obtained for Pythagoras from his followers a degree of respect little short of adoration. If he had contented himself with delivering doctrines of philosophy and precepts of practical wisdom, he might probably have continued his labors, without molestation, to the end of his life. But he manifested a strong propensity towards political innovations; and he employed his influence in urging the people to the strenuous assertion of their rights, against the encroachment of their tyrannical governors. This course of conduct raised against him a very powerful opposition which he was unable to resist and contend against, and which obliged him to retire to Metapontum. Here he found himself still surrounded with enemies, and was under a necessity of seeking an assylum in the temple of the Muses, where not being supplied by his friends with sufficient food, he perished with hunger.\* The time of his death is uncertain; but according to the *Chronicon* of Eusebius, he died in the third year of the sixty-eighth Olympiad, B. C. 506, after having lived according to the most probable statement of his birth, to the age of eighty years. After his death his followers paid a superstitious respect to his memory. They erected statues in honor of him, converted his house at Crotona into a temple of Ceres, the street in which it stood was called the Museum, and appealed to him as a divinity, swearing by his name.

It appears, from the history of this philosopher, that with all his talents and learning, he owed much of his celebrity and authority to imposture. His whole manner of life confirms this opinion. Clothed in a long white robe with a flowing beard, and, as some say, with a golden crown on his head, he preserved among the people, and in the presence of his disciples, a commanding gravity, and majesty of aspect. He recurred to music for promoting the tranquility of his mind, frequently singing, for this purpose, hymns of Thales, Hesiod, and Homer. He had such an entire command over himself, that he was never seen to express, in his countenance, grief, joy, or anger. He refrained from animal food, and confined himself to a frugal vegetable diet, excluding from his simple bill of fare, for mystical reasons, pulse

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\* Anobius affirms that Pythagoras was buried alive in a temple; others state that he was slain in attempting to make his escape. It can hardly be doubted that his death was violent, and that, with all his caution to preserve himself, he fell a martyr to his generous efforts to undeceive mankind. An ill construction was put upon the union of the Pythagoreans, and it proved very fatal to them. That society of students being looked upon as a faction which conspired against the state, sixty of them were destroyed, and the rest went into banishment.—Diegesis, by the Rev. R. Taylor.—*Edit.*

or beans. By this artificial demeanor, Pythagoras appeared among the vulgar as a being of an order superior to the common condition of humanity, and persuaded them that he had received his doctrine from heaven. Pythagoras married Theano of Crotona, or, as some say, of Crete, by whom he had two sons, Telaugus and Mnesarchus, who, after his death took the charge of his school. Whether this philosopher left behind him any writings has been a subject of dispute. Many works have been enumerated under his name by Leartius, Jamblichus, and Pliny: but it is the declared opinion of Plutarch, Josephus, Lucian, and others, that there were no genuine works of Pythagoras extant; and it appears highly probable, from the pains which he took to confine his doctrine to his own school during his life, that he never committed his philosophical system to writing, and that the pieces to which his name was affixed at an early period, were written by some of his followers, upon the principles imbibed in his school. The famous golden verses attributed to Pythagoras, and illustrated with a commentary by Hierocles, were not written by our philosopher, but are to be ascribed to Epicharmus, or Empedocles. They may, however, be considered as a brief summary of his popular doctrines.

His method of instruction, formed upon the Egyptian model, was "exoteric," and "esoteric," that is, public and private. Those auditors, who attended his public lectures, did not properly belong to his school, but followed their usual mode of living. His select disciples called his *companions* and friends, were such as submitted to a peculiar plan of discipline, and were admitted by *a long course of instruction, into all the mysteries of his esoteric doctrine.\**

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\* Masons, who have taken only the three first degrees of the order, are taught only what may be called the exoteric doctrine of masonry, and this in an obscure symbolical manner, not intended to be fully understood. In this grade, they call each other *brother*. They were formerly, that is, in the time of the Druids, not permitted to advance further, until they had convinced their superiors that confidence might be placed in them, and that they were worthy of receiving the *esoteric* principles of the order. When raised to the sublime degree of royal arch, they address one another by the appellation of *companion*. And then, no doubt, in ancient times, the whole secret of masonry, that is, the doctrine of Druidism was clearly exposed.

Dermott, after making some remarks on the conduct of certain persons, who, it seems, were dissatisfied at not having been admitted to the royal arch degree, says, "To this I will add the opinion our *worshipful* brother, Dr. Fifield D'Assigney, printed in the year 1744. 'Some of the fraternity, says he, have expressed an uneasiness at this matter's being kept a secret from them, since they had already passed through the usual degrees of probation; but I cannot help being of opinion that they have no right to any such benefit until they make a proper application, and are received with due formality; and as it is an organized body of men, who have passed the chair, and given *undeniable proofs of their skill in architecture*, it cannot be treated with too much *reverence*.'"

Now, Dr. Fifield must have been sensible, that architecture was not taught in the lodge in his day. This ridiculous parade, therefore, about *skill* in this art, is a mere excuse for the observance of an ancient custom, the reason for which was unknown. *Edit.*

Previously to the admission of any person into this fraternity, Pythagoras examined his features and external appearance; inquired how he had been accustomed to behave towards his parents and friends; marked his manner of laughing, conversing, and keeping silence; and observed what passions he was most inclined to indulge; with what kind of company he chose to associate; how he passed his leisure moments; and what incidents appeared to excite in him the strongest emotions of joy or sorrow. Nor after this examination was any one admitted into his society, till he was fully persuaded of the docility of his disposition, the gentleness of his manners, his power of retaining in silence what he was taught, and, in fine, his capacity of becoming a true philosopher. After the first probationary admission, the fortitude and self-command of the candidate were put to the trial by a long course of severe abstinence and rigorous exercise. The course of abstinence and self-denial comprehended food and drink, and clothing, all which were of the most plain and simple kind, and the exercises prescribed were such as could not be performed without pain and fatigue. To teach them humility and industry, he exposed them, for three years, to a continued course of *contradiction, ridicule and contempt*, among their fellows.\* In order to restrain the powerful passion of avarice, he required his disciples to submit to voluntary poverty: he deprived them of all command over their own property, by casting the possessions of each individual into a common stock, to be distributed by proper officers as occasion required. After this sequestration of their goods, they lived together on a footing of perfect equality, and sat down together daily at a common table. If any one afterwards repented of the connection, he was at liberty to depart, and might reclaim, from the general fund, his whole contribution. That his disciples might acquire a habit of entire docility, Pythagoras enjoined upon them, from their first admission, a

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\* This is imitated in the *past master's* degree of masonry. The newly initiated member, perfectly ignorant of the mode of proceedings in a lodge, is, against his will, placed in the chair of the master as presiding officer; and "the installed worshipful is made the butt for every worthy brother to exercise his wit upon."

This custom, it would appear, has descended from the Druids, the ancient school-masters of England, to the universities and colleges, even of America; where those of the freshmen, or newly entered class, are made the butt and ridicule of the higher classes for twelve months. The latter are empowered to direct the former to perform any errand they wish; can order them to repair to their rooms, and there lecture them for their awkwardness, ignorance, etc. This practice was doubtless introduced upon the principle of Pythagoras, to inculcate *humility*; but when exercised upon a raw, diffident, country boy, it must prove extremely discouraging and oppressive. The custom however, it is said has gone into disuse. Gen. Erastus Root of Delhi, in this State, by a resolute refusal to submit to this discipline, has the honor, as I am informed by a graduate of Dartmouth college, of putting an end to this vile practice in that institution.--  
*Edit.*

long term of silence, called *echemythia*. This initiatory silence, which probably consisted in refraining from speech, not only during the hours of instruction, but through the whole term of initiation, continued from two to five years, according to the propensity discovered by the pupil towards conceit and loquacity. With regard to himself, this was a judicious expedient, as it checked impertinent curiosity, and prevented every inconvenience of contradiction. Accordingly his disciples silenced all doubts and refuted all objections, by appealing to his authority *Autos epha, ipse dixit*, decided every dispute. Moreover, during the years of initiation, the disciples were prohibited from seeing their master, or hearing his lectures, except from behind a curtain,\* or receiving instructions from some inferior preceptor.

To the members of the esoteric school (who were called *gyesioi emiletai* genuine disciples) belonged the peculiar privilege of receiving a full explanation of the whole doctrine of Pythagoras, which was delivered to others in brief precepts and dogmas, under the concealment of symbols. Disciples of this class were permitted to take minutes of their master's lectures in writing, as well as to propose questions, and offer remarks, upon every subject of discourse. These were particularly distinguished by the appellation of the "Pythagoreans," they were also called "Mathematicians," from the studies upon which they entered immediately after their initiation. After having made a sufficient progress in geometrical science, they proceeded to the study of nature, the investigation of primary principles, and the knowledge of God. Those who pursued these sublime speculations were called "Theorists," and those who devoted themselves more particularly to Theology, were styled *sebastikoi*, religious. Others, according to their abilities and inclinations, were engaged in the study of morals, economics, and policy; and were afterwards employed in managing the affairs of the fraternity, or sent into the cities of Greece, to instruct them in the principles of government, or assist them in the institution of laws.

The brethren of the Pythagorean college at Crotona, called *coniobion*, coenobium, about six hundred in number, lived together as in one family, with their wives and children, and the whole business of the society was conducted with the most perfect regularity. Every day commenced with a deliberation upon the manner in which it should be spent, and concluded with a retrospect of the events which had occurred,

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\* There is an affectation of this sort, as before observed, in the masonic degrees of "Knight of the Eagle," and "Knight of Kadosh," in which the candidate is not permitted to see the person who initiates him.—*Edit.*

and of the business that had been transacted. They rose before the sun that they might do him homage; after which they repeated select verses from Homer and other poets, and made use of music, both vocal and instrumental, to enliven their spirits and fit them for the business of the day. They then employed several hours in the study of science. These were succeeded by an interval of leisure, which was commonly spent in a solitary walk for the purpose of contemplation. The next portion of the day was allotted to conversation. The hour immediately before dinner was filled up with various kinds of athletic exercises. Their dinner consisted chiefly of bread, honey, and water; for after they were perfectly initiated, they wholly denied themselves the use of wine. The remainder of the day was devoted to civil and domestic affairs, conversation, bathing and religious ceremonies.

The "exoteric" disciples of Pythagoras were taught after the Egyptian manner, by images and symbols, obscure and almost unintelligible to those who were not initiated into the mysteries of the school; and those who were admitted to this privilege were under the strictest obligation of silence with regard to the recondite doctrines of their master. The wisdom of Pythagoras, that it might not pass into the ears of the vulgar, was committed chiefly to memory; and when they found it necessary to make use of writing, they took care not to suffer their minutes to pass beyond the limits of the school.\*

Clemens observes, that the two orders above described corresponded very exactly to those among the Hebrews; for in the schools of the prophets there were two classes, viz: the sons of the prophets, who were the scholars; and the doctors or masters, who were also called perfecti; and among the Levites, the novices or tyros, who had their quinquennial exercises, by way of preparation. Lastly, even among the proselytes there were two orders: exoterici, or proselytes of the gate;

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\* The principal and most efficacious of their doctrines, the Pythagoreans committed to memory, and communicated them to their successors as *mysteries* from the gods; and if at any time there were any *extraneous*, or, as I may say, *profane* persons among them, they signified their meaning by symbols.

Hence Lysis reproving Hipparchus for communicating the *discourse* to uninitiated persons, void of *mathematics* and *theory*, saith, it is reported that you teach philosophy in public to all that come, which Pythagoras would not do. If you are changed, I shall rejoice; if not, you are dead to me: for we ought to remember that it is *pious*, according to the direction of *divine* and *human* exertations, that the *goods of wisdom* ought not to be communicated to those whose *soul is not purified* so much as in dream. It is not lawful to bestow on every one that which was acquired with so much labor, nor to reveal the mysteries of the Eleusinian goddess to profane persons. They who do both these, are alike unjust and irreligious. It is good to consider within ourselves how much time was employed in taking away the *spots* that were in our breasts, that after five years we might be made capable of his [Pythagoras's] discourses.—Jamblichus. Quoted in T. Stanley's History of Philosophy. London, 1666, p. 376.—*Edit.*

and intrinseci, or perfecti, proselytes of the covenant. He adds, it is highly probable, that Pythagoras himself had been a proselyte of the gate, if not of the covenant.

After the dissolution of the assembly of Pythagoras's disciples by the faction of Cylo, a man of wealth and distinction at Crotona, it was thought necessary by Lysis and Archippus, in order to preserve the Pythagorean doctrine from oblivion, to reduce it to a systematic summary; at the same time, however, strongly enjoining their children to preserve these memoirs secret, and to transmit them in confidence to their posterity. From this time books began to multiply among the followers of Pythagoras, till at length, in the time of Plato, Philolaus exposed the Pythagorean records to sale, and Archytas of Tarentum gave Plato a copy of his commentaries upon the aphorisms and precepts of his master. Of the imperfect records of the Pythagorean philosophy left by Lysis, Archytas, and others, nothing has escaped the wreck of time, except perhaps sundry fragments collected by the diligence of Stobæus, concerning the authenticity of which there are some grounds for suspicion; and which, if admitted as genuine, will only exhibit an imperfect view of the moral and political doctrine of Pythagoras under the disguise of symbolical and enigmatical language. The strict injunction of secrecy, which was given by oath to the initiated, Pythagoreans has effectually prevented any original records of their doctrine concerning Nature and God from passing down to posterity. On this head we are to rely entirely for information, and indeed concerning the whole doctrine of Pythagoras, upon Plato and his followers. Plato himself, while he enriched his system with stores from the magazine of Pythagoras, accommodated the Pythagorean doctrines, as he also did those of his master Socrates, to his own system, and thus gave an imperfect, and, we may suppose, in many particulars, a false representation of the doctrines of the Samian philosopher. It was farther corrupted by the followers of Plato, even in the old academy, and afterwards in the Alexandrian school. To which we may add, that the doctrine of Pythagoras itself, probably in its original state, and certainly in every form under which it has been transmitted to us, was observed, not only by symbolical, but by mathematical language, which is rather adapted to perplex than to illustrate metaphysical conceptions. In this fault Pythagoras was afterwards imitated by Plato, Aristotle, and others.\*

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\* Moderatus saith, that the Pythagoric philosophy came at last to be extinguished; first, because it was enigmatical; next, because the writings were in the Doric dialect, which is obscure, by which means the doctrines delivered in it were not understood;

We extract from Brucker the following faint delineation of the Pythagorean philosophy: The end of philosophy is to free the mind from those incumbrances, which hinder its progress towards perfection, and to raise it to the contemplation of immutable truth, and the knowledge of divine and spiritual objects. This effect must be produced by easy steps, lest the mind, hitherto conversant only with sensible things, should revolt at the change. The first step towards wisdom is the study of mathematics, a science which contemplates objects that lie in the middle way between corporeal and incorporeal beings, and as it were on the confines of both, and which most advantageously inures the mind to contemplation.

The monad, or unity, is that quantity, which, being deprived of all number, remains fixed; whence called monad from *to menein*. It is the fountain of all number. The duad is imperfect and passive, and the cause of increase and division. The triad, composed of the monad and duad, partakes of the nature of both. The tetrad, tetractys, or quaternion number, is the most perfect. The decad, which is the sum of the four former, comprehends all arithmetical and musical proportions.

According to some writers, the monad denotes the active principle in nature, or God; the duad, the passive principle, or matter; the triad, the word formed by the union of the two former; and the tetractys, the perfection of nature. Some have understood by this mysterious number the four elements; others, the four faculties of the human mind; others, the four cardinal virtues; and others have been so absurd as to suppose that Pythagoras made use of this number to express the name of God, in reference to the word — [Gehovah,] by which that name is expressed in the Hebrew language. But every attempt to unfold this mystery has hitherto been unsuccessful.

Next to numbers, music had the chief place in the preparatory exercises of the Pythagorean school, by means of which the mind was to be raised above the dominion of the passions, and inured to contemplation. Pythagoras considered music, not only as an art to be judged of by the ear, but as a science to be reduced to mathematical principles and proportions.

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and, moreover, because they who published them were not Pythagoreans. Besides, Plato, Aristotle, and others, as the Pythagoreans affirm, vended the best of them as their own, changing only some few things in them, but the more vulgar and trivial, and whatsoever was afterwards *invented by envious and calumnious persons*, to cast a contempt upon the Pythagorean school, they collected and delivered as proper to that sect.—(Porphyry, p. 36; Stanley, p. 363.)—*Edit.*

It was said of Pythagoras by his followers, who hesitated at no assertion, however improbable, which might seem to exalt their master's fame, that he was the only mortal so far favored by the gods as to be permitted to hear the celestial music of the spheres. Pythagoras applied music to the cure of diseases both bodily and mental. It was, as we have seen, the custom of his school, to compose their minds for rest in the evening, and to prepare themselves for action in the morning, by suitable airs, which they performed upon the lute, or other stringed instruments. The music was, however, always accompanied with verse, so that it may be doubted, whether the effect was to be ascribed more to the musician or to the poet. It is said of Clinius, a Pythagorean, that whenever he perceived himself inclined to anger, spleen, or other restless passions, he took up his lute, and that it never failed to restore the tranquility of his mind. Of Pythagoras himself, it is related, that he checked a young man, who, in the midst of his revels, was meditating some act of Bacchanalian madness, by ordering the musician, who had inflamed his passions by Phrygian airs, to change the music on a sudden into the slow and solemn Doric mood. If the stories which are related by the ancients concerning the wonderful effects of their music are to be credited, we must acknowledge we are strangers to the method by which these effects were produced.

Besides arithmetic and music, Pythagoras cultivated geometry, which he had learned in Egypt; but he greatly improved it, by investigating many new theorems, and by digesting its principles, in an order more perfectly systematical than had before been done. Several Grecians, about the time of Pythagoras, applied themselves to mathematical learning, particularly Thales in Ionia. But Pythagoras seems to have done more than any other philosopher of this period towards reducing geometry to a regular science. His definition of a point is a monad or unity with position. He taught that a geometrical point corresponds to unity in arithmetic, a line to two, a superficies to three, a solid to four. Of the geometrical theorems ascribed to Pythagoras, the following are the principal: that the interior angles of every triangle are together equal to two right angles; that the only polygons which fill up the whole space about a given point, are the equilateral triangle, the square, and the hexagon; the first to be taken six times, the second four times, and the third three times; and that, in rectangular triangles, the square of the side which subtends the right angle is equal to the two squares of the sides which contain the right angle. Upon the invention of this later proposition (Euclid, I. i. prop. 47.,) Plutarch says,

that Pythagoras offered an ox, others, an hecatomb, to the gods. But this story is thought by Cicero inconsistent with the institutions of Pythagoras, which, as he supposes, did not admit of animal sacrifices.

Theoretical philosophy, which treats of nature and its origin, was the highest object of study of the Pythagorean school, and included all those profound mysteries, which those, who have been ambitious to report what Pythagoras said behind the curtain, have endeavored to unfold. Upon this subject, nothing can be advanced with certainty, especially respecting theology, the doctrine of which, Pythagoras, after the manner of the Egyptian priests, was peculiarly careful to hide under the vail of symbols, probably through fear of disturbing the popular superstitions. The ancients have not, however, left us without some grounds of conjecture.

With respect to God, Pythagoras appears to have taught, that he is the Universal Mind, diffused through all things, the source of all animal life, the proper and intrinsic cause of all motion, in substance similar to light, in nature like truth, the first principle of the universe, incapable of pain, invisible, incorruptible, and only to be comprehended by the mind.

The region of the air was supposed by the Pythagoreans to be full of spirits, demons, or heroes, who cause sickness or health to man or beast, and communicate, at their pleasure, by means of dreams, and other instruments of divination, the knowledge of future events. That Pythagoras himself held this opinion cannot be doubted, if it be true, as his biographers relate, that he professed to cure diseases by incantations. It is probable that he derived it from the Egyptians, among whom it was believed that many diseases were caused by *demoniacal possessions*.

The doctrine of the Pythagoreans, respecting the nature of brute animals, and *metempsychosis*, the transmigration of souls, were the foundation of their abstinence from animal food, and of the exclusion of animal sacrifices from their religious ceremonies.

This doctrine Pythagoras probably learned in Egypt, where it was commonly taught. Nor is there any sufficient reason for understanding it, as some have done, symbolically.

The precept prohibiting the use of beans, is one of the mysteries which the ancient Pythagoreans never disclosed, and which modern ingenuity has in vain attempted to discover. Pythagorean precepts of more value are such as these: Discourse not of Pythagorean doctrines without light. Above all things govern your tongue. Quit not your

station without the command of your general. Remember that the paths of virtue and of vice resemble the letter Y. To this symbol Persius refers, when he says,

"There has the Samain Y's instructive make  
Pointed the road thy doubtful foot should take;  
There warn'd thy raw and yet unpractis'd youth,  
To tread the rising right-hand path of truth."

(*Brucker's Hist. Philos. by Enfield, vol. i. b. c. 12.*)

After the death of Pythagoras, the care and education of his children, and the charge of his school, devolved upon Aristæus of Crotona, who, having taught the doctrine of Pythagoras thirty-nine years, was succeeded by Mnesarchus, the son of Pythagoras. Pythagorean schools were afterwards conducted in Heraclia by Clinias and Philolaus; at Metapontum by Theorides and Eurytus; and at Tarentum by Archytas, who is said to have been the eighth in succession from Pythagoras. The first person who divulged the Pythagorean doctrine was Philolaus.

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The symbolical use of the letter Y has reference to the old fable, before noticed, of the *trivia* or triple path, that is, where the road to the infernal regions divides into two, the one leading to Elysium, and the other to Tartarus. This letter was a very appropriate symbol to mark out these roads; the disproportion of the two strokes which form it, being indicative of the comparative numbers to be accommodated in the two courses; that is, of the righteous and the wicked. St. Matthew, no doubt, makes allusion to the common idea entertained upon this subject, when he says,

"Enter ye in at the straight gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it." (vii. 13.)

"It is surprising, says Bayle, that a philosopher so skillful as Pythagoras in astronomy, in geometry, and in other parts of the mathematics, should be pleased to deliver his most beautiful precepts under the vail of enigmas. This vail was so thick, that the interpreters have found in it ample matter for conjecture. This symbolic method was very much used in the East, and in Egypt. It is from thence without doubt Pythagoras has derived it. He returned from his travels laden with the spoils of the erudition of all the countries he had visited. It is pretended that his *tetractys* is the same thing as the name *tetragrammaton*, a name ineffable and full of mystery, according to the Rabbins. Others will have it, that this *tetractys*, this grand object of *veneration* and of *oaths*, is nothing more than a mysterious manner of dogmatising by numbers. But let us not forget, that Pythagoras and his successors had two ways of teaching, one for the initiated, and the other for strangers and the profane. The first was clear and unveiled, the second was symbolic and enigmatical."—(Dict.)

It is somewhat remarkable, that a difference of opinion should exist among the learned in regard to the meaning which Pythagoras intended to convey to his pupils of the *esoteric* class, by the word *Tetractys*: for it appears pretty evident, that he used it

enigmatically as synonymous with geometry. And so Bailey, who seems to have known more of antiquity than any other of his day, defines it. He says, "Tetractys, in ancient geometry, signified a point, a line, a surface, and a solid." Hutchinson, in his 'Spirits of Masonry,' gives the same definition. He says, "The Pythagoric tetractis [tetractys] were a point," etc. as above.

The ancient Druidical Freemasons were taught, as reported by Prichard, that there are four principles in masonry, which are specified agreeably to the above definition of tetractys.

These four principles contained in the tetractys or geometry, comprehend the entire of physical nature, and on this account the enigma of the perfection of the number four has been erected.

A writer on masonry (see Carlile. p. 99) observes, "That the Pythagoreans affirmed the tetractys, or number four to be the sum and completion of all things, as comprising the four, great principles both of arithmetic and geometry. In the center of a masonic lodge, within an irradiation or blazing star, is inscribed the letter G, denoting the *great and glorious* science of geometry, as cultivated by our ancient and *venerable masters*." And adds, "Whilst each of those our symbols recipocally serves to illustrate the rest, there is one sense, in which they yield to the decided præminence of the great central emblem, whose *sacred initial character*, surrounded by a blaze of glory, recalls our minds from the work to the *architect*, from the science to its mystery."

The Egyptians invented geometry, and they found it of such infinite importance, that they in a manner deified the science. Hence the great respect paid to its initial in masonry. It is, in fact, made to indicate the Supreme Being, who, according to the Pythagorean doctrine, was mysteriously involved in the physical principles of nature. Geometry is painted as a lady, with a sallow face, clad in a green mantle, fringed with silver, and holding a silver *wand* [the Nilometer] in her right hand.—*Bailey*.

The Eleusinian mysteries were regularly celebrated every fifth year, that is, after a revolution of four years. The Olympic games took place at the same time, the name of which originated from their being first celebrated near the city of Olympia. Hence the olympiad, an epoch of four years; all arising, evidently, from the perfection attributed to the number four.

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*The Customs and Religious Dogmas, of the Druids of England,  
extracted from the History of Great Britain, by Robert  
Henry, D. D.*

When the Romans first invaded Britain, under Julius Cæsar, the inhabitants of it were famous, even among foreign nations, for their superior knowledge of the principles, and the great zeal for the rites of their religion.

To say nothing here of the profits which the Druids derived from the administration of justice, the practice of physic, and teaching the sciences, (which were all in their hands,) they certainly received great emoluments from those whom they instructed in the principles, and *initiated* into the *mysteries* of their theology; especially from such of them as were of high rank, and came from foreign countries.

Nothing can be affirmed with certainty, concerning the precise number of the British Druids, though, in general, we have reason to believe, that they were very numerous. Both the Gauls and the Britons of these times were much addicted to superstition; and among a superstitious people, there will always be many priests. Besides this, they entertained an opinion, as we are told by Strabo, which was highly favorable to the increase of the priestly order. They were fully persuaded, that the greater number of Druids they had in their country, they would obtain the more plentiful harvests, and the greater abundance of all things. Nay, we are directly informed by Cæsar, that great numbers of people, allured by the honors and privileges which they enjoyed, embraced the discipline of the Druids of their own accord, and that many more were dedicated to it by their parents. Upon the whole, therefore, we shall probably not be very much mistaken, if we suppose that the British Druids bore as great a proportion in number to the rest of the people, as the clergy in popish countries, bear to the laity, in the present age.

The Druids, as well as the Gymnosophists of India, the Magi of Persia, the Chaldeans of Assyria, and all the other priests of antiquity, had two sets of religious doctrines and opinions, which were very different from one another. The one of these systems they communicated only to the *initiated*, who were *admitted into their own order*, and at their admission were *solemnly sworn* to keep that system of doctrines a *profound secret* from all the rest of mankind. Besides this, they took several other precautions to prevent these secret doctrines from transpiring. They taught their disciples, as we are told by Mela, in the most private places, such as *caves* of the earth, or the *deepest recesses* of the *thickest forests*, that they might not be overheard by any who were not initiated. They never committed any of these doctrines to writing, for fear they should thereby become public. Nay, so jealous were some orders of these ancient priests on this head, that they made it an inviolable rule never to communicate any of these secret doctrines to *women*, lest they should blab them. The other system of religious doctrines and opinions was made public, being adapted to the capacities and superstitious humors of the people, and calculated to promote the honor and opulence of the priesthood.

It cannot be expected, that we should be able to give a minute detail of the secret doctrines of the Druids. The Greeks and Roman writers, from whom alone we can receive information, were not perfectly acquainted with them, and therefore they have left us only some general

hints, and probable conjectures about them, with which we must be contented. The secret doctrines of our Druids were much the same with those of the Gymnosophists and Brachmans of India, the Magi of Persia, the Chaldeans of Assyria, the priests of Egypt, and of all the other priests of antiquity. All these are frequently joined together by ancient authors, as entertaining the same opinions in religion and philosophy, which might be easily confirmed by an induction of particulars. The truth is, there is hardly anything more surprising in the history of mankind, than the similitude, or rather identity, of the opinions, institutions, and manners of all these orders of ancient priests, though they lived under such different climates, and at so great a distance from one another, without intercourse or communication. This amounts to a demonstration, that all these opinions and institutions flowed originally from one fountain. The secret doctrines of the Druids, and of all these different orders of priests, were more agreeable to primitive tradition and right reason, than their public doctrines; as they were not under any temptation, in their private schools, to conceal or disguise the truth. It is not improbable that they still retained, in secret, the great doctrine of one God, the creator and governor of the universe. This, which was originally the belief of all the orders of priests which we have mentioned, was retained by some of them long after the period we are now considering, [that is from the first invasion of England by the Romans under Julius Cæsar, fifty-five years before the Christian era, to the arrival of the Saxons, A. D. 449,] and might therefore be known to the Druids at this period. This is one of the doctrines which the Brachmans of India are sworn to keep secret: "That there is one God, the creator of heaven and earth." Cæsar acquaints us, that they taught their disciples many things about the nature and perfections of God. Some writers are of opinion, and have taken much learned pains to prove, that our Druids, as well as the other orders of ancient priests, taught their disciples many things concerning the creation of the world—the formation of man—his primitive innocence and felicity—and his fall into guilt and misery—the creation of angels—their rebellion and expulsion out of Heaven—the universal deluge, and the final destruction of this world by fire; and that their doctrines on all these subjects were not very different from those which are contained in the writings of Moses, and other parts of Scripture. There is abundant evidence that the Druids taught the doctrine of the immortality of the souls of men; and Mela tells us, that this was one of their doctrines which they were permitted to publish, for political rather than religious reasons. "There is

one thing which they teach their disciples, which hath been made known to the common people, in order to render them more brave and fearless; viz: "that souls are immortal, and that there is another life after the present." Cæsar and Diodorus say, that the Drûids taught the Pythagorean doctrine of the transmigration of souls into other bodies. This was perhaps their public doctrine on this subject, as being most level to the gross conceptions of the vulgar. But others represent them as teaching that the soul after death ascended into some higher orb, and enjoyed a more sublime felicity. This was probably their private doctrine, and real sentiments.\*

But however agreeable to truth and reason, the secret doctrines of the Druids might be, they were of no benefit to the bulk of mankind, from whom they were carefully concealed. For these artful priests, for their own mercenary ends, had embraced a maxim, which hath unhappily survived them, that ignorance was the mother of devotion, and that the common people were incapable of comprehending rational principles, or of being influenced by rational motives; and that they were therefore to be fed with the coarser food of superstitious fables. This is the reason assigned by Strabo, for the fabulous theology of the ancients. "It is not possible to bring women, and the common herd of mankind to religion, piety, and virtue, by the pure and simple dictates of reason. It is necessary to call in the aids of superstition, which must be nourished by fables and portents of various kinds. With this view therefore were all the fables of ancient theology invented, to awaken superstitious terrors in the minds of the ignorant multitude." As the Druids had the same ends in view with the other priests of antiquity, it is highly probable that their public theology was of the same complexion with theirs; consisting of a thousand mythological fables, concerning the genealogies, attributes, offices, and actions of their gods; the various superstitious methods of appeasing their anger, gaining their favor, and discovering their will. This farrago of fables was couched in verse full of figures and metaphors, and was delivered by the Druids from *little eminences* (of which there are many still remaining) to the surround-

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\* Man is placed, according to their [the Druids'] doctrine, says Dr. Lingard, in his history of England, in the circle of *courses*: good and evil are placed before him for his selection. If he prefer the former, death transmits him from the earth into the circle of *felicity*; but if he prefer the latter, death returns him to the circle of *courses*: he is made to do penance for a time in the body of a beast or reptile; and then permitted to re-assume the form of man. According to the predominance of vice or virtue in his disposition, a repetition of his probation may be necessary; but after a certain number of transmigrations his offences will be expiated, his passions subdued, and the circle of felicity will receive him among its inhabitants.—Edit.

ing multitudes. With this fabulous divinity, these poetical declaimers intermixed moral precepts, for the regulation of the lives and manners of their hearers; and were peculiarly warm in exhorting them to abstain from doing any hurt or injury to one another; and to fight valiantly in defence of their country. These pathetic declamations are said to have made great impression on the minds of the people, inspiring them with a supreme veneration for their gods, an ardent love to their country, an undaunted courage and sovereign contempt of death. The secret and public theology of the Druids, together with their system of morals and philosophy, had swelled to such an enormous size, in the beginning of this period, that their disciples employed no less than twenty years in making themselves masters of all their different branches, and in getting by heart, that infinite multitude of verses in which they were contained.

The sun seems to have been both the most ancient and most universal object of idolatrous worship; insomuch, that perhaps there never was any nation of idolators, which did not pay some homage to this glorious luminary. He was worshipped by the ancient Britons with great devotion, in many places, under the various names of Bel, Belinus, Belatucardus, Apollo, Grannius, etc., all which names in their language were expressive of the nature and properties of that visible fountain of light and heat. To this illustrious object of idolatrous worship, those famous circles of stones, of which there are not a few still remaining, seem to have been chiefly dedicated: where the Druids kept the *sacred fire*,\* the *symbol* of this *divinity*, and from whence, as being situated on eminences, they had a full view of the heavenly bodies.

As the moon appeared next in lustre and utility to the sun, there can be no doubt, that this radiant queen of heaven obtained a very early and very large share in the idolatrous veneration of mankind. The Gauls and Britons seem to have paid the same kind of worship to the moon, as to the sun; and it hath been observed, that the circular temples dedicated to these two luminaries were of the same construction, and commonly contiguous. But a great number of the gods of Gaul and Britain, as well as of Greece and Rome, had been men, victorious princes, wise legislators, inventors of useful arts, etc.

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\* Like the ancient Jews and Persians, the Druids had a sacred, inextinguishable fire, which was preserved with the greatest care. At Kildare, (Ireland,) it was guarded from the most remote antiquity, by an order of Druidesses, who were succeeded in later times by an order of Christian Nuns."—(Higgins's Celtic Druids, p. 283.)—*Edit.*

They worshipped also several female divinities or goddesses ; as Andraste, who is supposed to have been the same with Venus or Diana ; Minerva, Ceres, Proserpine, etc. Nay, into such an abyss of superstition and idolatry were they sunk, that according to Gildas, they had a greater number of gods than the Egyptians ; and there was hardly a river, lake, mountain, or wood, which was not supposed to have some divinities, or genii residing in them.

As it hath always been one end of religious worship, to obtain certain favors from the objects of it, so prayers and supplications for these favors, have always made a part of the religious worship of all nations, and in particular of that of the ancient Britons. When in danger, they implored the protection of their gods ; prayers were intermixed with their praises, accompanied their sacrifices, and attended every act of their religion. It seems, indeed, to have been the constant, invariable practice of all nations, the Jews not excepted, whenever they presented any offerings or sacrifices to their gods, to put up prayers to them to be propitious to the persons by whom and for whom the offerings or sacrifices were presented ; and to grant them such particular favors as they desired. Offerings of various kinds constituted an important part of the religion of the ancient Britons. This was a mode of worship, which the Druids very much encouraged, and their sacred places were crowded with those pious gifts.

Mankind in all ages, and in every country, have betrayed a consciousness of guilt, and dread of punishment from *superior beings*, on that account. In consequence of this, they have employed various means to expiate the guilt of which they were conscious, and to escape the punishment of which they were afraid. The means which have been most universally employed by mankind for these ends, were sacrifices of living creatures to their offended gods ; which constituted a very essential part of the religion of the ancient Britons, and of almost all other ancient nations. The animals which were sacrificed by them, as well as by other nations, were such as they used for their own food ; which being very palatable and nourishing to themselves, they imagined would be no less agreeable to their gods. These victims were examined by the Druids with great care, to see that they were the most perfect and beautiful in their several kinds ; after which they were killed, with various ceremonies, by priests appointed for that purpose. On some occasions the victims were consumed entirely by fire upon the altar ; but more commonly they were divided into three parts, one of which was consumed upon the altar, another fell to

the *share* of the *priests* who officiated; and on the third, the person who bought the sacrifice, feasted with his friends.

It had been well, if our British ancestors had confined themselves to the sacrificing of oxen, sheep, goats, and other animals; but we have undoubted evidence, that they proceeded to the most horrid lengths of cruelty in their superstition, and offered human victims to their gods. It had unhappily become an article in the Druidical creed, "That nothing but the life of man could atone for the life of man." In consequence of this maxim, their altars streamed with human blood, and great numbers of wretched men fell a sacrifice to their barbarous superstition. They are said indeed to have preferred such as had been guilty of theft, robbery, and other crimes, as most acceptable to their gods; but when there was a scarcity of criminals, they made no scruple to supply their place with innocent persons. These dreadful sacrifices were offered by the Druids for the public, at the eve of a dangerous war, or in the time of any national calamity; and for particular persons of high rank, when they were afflicted with any dangerous disease. By such acts of cruelty did the ancient Britons endeavor to avert the displeasure, and gain the favor of their gods.

It seems to have been one article in the creed of the ancient Britons and of all the other nations of antiquity, that the gods whom they worshipped had the government of the world, and the direction of future events in their hands; and that they were not unwilling upon proper application, to discover these events to their pious worshippers. "The gods (says Amianus,) either from the benignity of their own natures, and their love to mankind, or because men have merited this favor from them, take a pleasure in discovering impending events by various indications." This belief gave rise to astrology, augury, magic, lots, and an infinite multitude of religious rites and ceremonies; by which deluded mortals hoped to discover the counsels of Heaven, with regard to themselves and their undertakings. We learn from Pliny, that the ancient Britons were greatly addicted to divination, and excelled so much in the practice of all its arts, that they might have given a lesson to the Persians themselves.

The British sovereigns of this period had not much authority either in the making or executing the laws, which are the principal acts of government in peaceful times. In that great relaxation of political union and civil government which prevailed in times of peace, their religion seems to have been the chief bond of union among the British tribes and nations; and the Druids, who were the ministers of that reli-

gion, appear to have professed the sole authority of making, explaining, and executing the laws; an authority to which the clergy of the church of Rome long and eagerly aspired, but never fully obtained. One great reason of the superior success of the Druids in their ambitious schemes was this: the laws among the ancient Britons, and some other ancient nations, were not considered as the decrees of their princes, but as the commands of their gods; and the Druids were supposed to be the only persons to whom the gods communicated the knowledge of their commands, and consequently the only persons who could declare and explain them to the people. The violations of the laws were not considered as crimes against the prince or state, but as sins against Heaven; for which the Druids, as the ministers of Heaven, had alone the right of taking vengeance. All these important prerogatives of declaring, explaining, and executing the laws, the Druids enjoyed and exercised in their full extent. "All controversies, says Cæsar, both public and private are determined by the Druids. If any crime is committed, or any murder perpetrated; if any disputes arise about the division of inheritances, or the boundaries of estates, they alone have the right to pronounce sentence; and they are the only dispensers both of rewards and punishments. These ghostly judges had one engine which contributed much to procure submission to their decisions. This was the sentence of excommunication or interdict, which they pronounced against particular persons, or whole tribes, when they refused to submit to their decrees. The interdicts of the Druids were no less dreadful than those of the Popes, when their power was at its greatest height. The unhappy persons against whom they were fulminated, were not only excluded from all sacrifices and religious rites; but they were held in universal detestation, as impious and abominable; their company was avoided as dangerous and contaminating; they were declared incapable of any trust or honor, put out of the protection of the laws, and exposed to injuries of every kind.\* A condition which must have rendered life intolerable, and have brought the most refractory spirits to submission.

The first day of May was a great annual festival, in honor of Bel-

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\* Here doubtless is the source of the severity said to be enjoined upon the masonic brotherhood towards backsliding or contumacious members; but the tolerant spirit of the age has, no doubt, left the threats held out in this case, a mere dead letter. Masons expel their members for immoral conduct, and so do all other religious societies. They have a practice, however, in this regard, that appears reprehensible, which is, to publish in their registers, the names of all those who have had the misfortune to be expelled from the order. This tends to fix an indelible stigma upon the character of an offending brother, prejudicial not only to himself, but to his family connections. The list containing names of delinquents, should never be permitted to go beyond the walls of the lodge room.—Edit.

inus, or the sun. On this day prodigious fires were kindled in all their sacred places, and on the tops of all their cairns, and many sacrifices were offered to that glorious luminary, which now began to shine upon them with great warmth and lustre. Of this festival there are still some vestiges remaining, both in Ireland and in the Highlands of Scotland, where the first of May is called Beltain, that is, the fire of Bel, or Belinus.\* Midsummer-day and the first of November, were likewise annual festivals; the one to implore the friendly influences of heaven upon their fields, and the other to return thanks for the favorable seasons and the fruits of the earth; as well as to pay their yearly contributions to the ministers of their religion. Nay, it is even probable, that all their gods and goddesses, their sacred groves, their hallowed hills, lakes, and fountains, had their several anniversary festivals; so that the Druidish calendar was perhaps as much crowded with holidays as the popish one is at present. On these festivals, after the appointed sacrifices and other acts of devotion were finished, the rest of the time was spent in feasting, singing, dancing and all kinds of diversions.

It was an article in the Druidical creed, "That it was unlawful to build temples to the gods: or to worship them within walls and under roofs." All their places of worship therefore were in the open air, and generally on *eminences*, from whence they had a full view of the heavenly bodies, to whom much of their adoration was directed. But that they might not be too much incommoded by the winds and rains, distracted by the view of external objects, or disturbed by the intrusion of unhallowed feet, when they were instructing their disciples, or performing their religious rites, they made choice of the deepest recesses of groves and woods for their sacred places. These groves were planted, for that purpose, in the most proper situations, and with those trees in which they most delighted. The chief of these was the strong and spreading oak, for which tree the Druids had a very high and superstitious veneration. These sacred groves were watered by some consecrated fountain or river, and surrounded by a ditch or mound, to prevent the intrusion of improper persons.† In the centre of the grove was a

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\* I am inclined to think the author has mistaken the cause of these illuminations, and that they were originally signals for a general purification, mentioned by Pluche, in which every thing subject to decay, for the benefit of health, was consumed by fire, on the first of February in Egypt. They were called the festival of the *fire-brands*; which name probably became changed, in consequence of the origin and intention of the custom having been lost.—Edit.

† Where (says masonry) did our ancient brethren meet, before lodges were erected? Answer. Upon *holy ground*, or the *highest hill*, or lowest vale, or any other secret place; the better to guard against cowans and enemies.—Edit.

circular area, inclosed with one or two rows of large stones set perpendicular in the earth; which constituted the temple, within which the altar stood, on which the sacrifices were offered. In some of their most magnificent temples, as particularly in that of Stone-henge, they had laid stones of prodigious weight on the tops of the standing pillars, which formed a kind of circle aloft in the air, and added much to the grandeur of the whole.

The British Druids were in the zenith of their power and glory at this period; enjoying an almost absolute authority over the minds and persons of their own countrymen; and being greatly admired and resorted to by strangers. But as the Romans gained ground in this island, the power of the Druids gradually declined, until it was quite destroyed. For that victorious people, contrary to their usual policy, discovered every where a very great animosity against the persons and religion of the Druids. They deprived the Druids of all authority in civil matters, and showed them no mercy when they found them transgressing the laws, or concerned in any revolt.

Such of the Druids as did not think fit to submit to the Roman government, and comply with the Roman rites, fled into Caledonia, Ireland, and the lesser British isles, where they supported their authority for some time longer. Many of them retired into the isle of Anglesey, which was a kind of little world of their own; and where the Arch Druid of Britain is thought to have had his stated residence. But they did not long remain undisturbed in this retirement. For Suetonius Paulinus, who was governor of Britain under Nero, A. D. 61, observing that the isle of Anglesey was the great seat of disaffection to the Roman government, and the asylum of all who were forming plots against it, determined to subdue it. Having conducted his army to the island, and defeated the Britons, who attempted to defend it, though they were animated by the presence, the prayers, and the exhortations of a great multitude of Druids and Druidesses, he made a very cruel use of his victory. Not content with cutting down their sacred groves, demolishing their temples, overturning their altars, he burned many of them in the fires, which they had kindled for sacrificing the Roman prisoners, if the Britons had gained the victory. So many of the Druids perished on this occasion, and the unfortunate revolt under Boadicia, queen of the Iceni, which happened soon after, that they were never able to make any considerable figure after this period.

But though the dominion of the Druids in South Britain was destroyed at this time, many of their superstitious practices continued

much longer. Nay so deeply rooted were these principles in the minds of the people both of Gaul and Britain, that they not only baffled all the power of the Romans, but they even resisted the superior power and divine light of the gospel for a long time after they had embraced the Christian religion. This is the reason that we meet with so many edicts of emperors, and canons of councils, in the sixth, seventh, and eight centuries, against the worship of the sun, moon, mountains, rivers, lakes, and trees. This superstition continued even longer in Britain than in some other countries, having been revived first by the Saxons, and afterwards by the Danes. It is a sufficient proof of this, that so late as the eleventh century, in the reign of Canute, it was found necessary to make the following law against those heathenish superstitions: "We strictly *discharge* and forbid all our subjects to worship the gods of the gentiles; that is to say, the sun, moon, fires, rivers, fountains, hills or trees, and wood of any kind."

*Extract from Dr. Lingard's History of England.*

To the veneration which the British Druids derived from their sacerdotal character, must be added the respect which the reputation of knowledge never fails to extort from the ignorant. They professed to be the repositories of a *sacred science*, far above the comprehension of the vulgar: and their schools were opened to none but the sons of illustrious families. Such was their fame, that the Druids of Gaul, to attain the perfection of the institute, did not disdain to study under their British brethren. They professed to be acquainted with the nature, the power, and the providence of the divinity; with the figure, size, formation, and final destruction of the earth; with the stars, their position and motions, and their supposed influence over human affairs. They practiced the art of *divination* and magic. Three of their ancient astrologers were able, it is said, to foretel whatever should happen before the day of doom. To medicine also they had pretensions: but their knowledge was principally confined to the use of the miseltoe, vervain, savin, and trefoil; and even the efficacy of these simples was attributed not the nature of the plants, but to the influence of *prayers* and *incantations*.

*From the Edinburgh Encyclopedia.*

The garments of the Druids were remarkably long; and, when employed in religious ceremonies, they always wore a *white surplice*.

They generally carried a *wand* in their hands; and wore a kind of ornament enchased in gold about their necks, called the *Druid's egg*. Their necks were likewise decorated with gold chains, and their hands and arms with bracelets: they wore their hair very short, and their beards remarkably long.

The Druids had one chief, or Arch-druid, in every nation, who acted as high-priest, or *pontifex maximus*. They had absolute authority over the rest: and commanded, decreed, punished, etc. at pleasure. He was elected from amongst the most eminent Druids, by a plurality of votes.

They worshipped the Supreme Being under the name of *Esus*, or *Hesus*,\* and the symbol of the oak; and had no other temple than a wood or a grove, where all their religious rites were performed. Nor was any person admitted to enter that *sacred recess*, unless he carried with him a *chain*, in token of his absolute dependence on the Deity.

The *consecrated groves*, in which they performed their religious rites, were fenced round with stones, to prevent any persons entering except through the passages left open for that purpose, and which were *guarded* by some *inferior Druids*, to prevent any *stranger* from intruding into their *mysteries*. These groves were of different forms; some quite circular, others oblong, and more or less capacious as the votaries in the districts to which they belonged were more or less numerous.

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In the *chain* carried by the ancient Britons, in the performance of their religious rites, is to be seen the archetypé of the cable-tow, or tow-rope, worn about the neck of the aspirant to masonic secrets; which is the subject of much ridicule among the uninitiated *profane*, and, indeed, the fraternity themselves do not seem to be aware of its true import. They are not conscious that this humble badge is a testimony of their belief in God, their dependence on him, and their solemn obligations to devote themselves to his will and service.

The candidate for masonic instruction should be looked upon as an untutored, wild man of the woods: a mere child of nature, unregenerated and destitute of any knowledge of the true God, as well as the conveniences and comforts of civilized life. For

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\* "Horus, says Pluche, assumed the casque and buckler, when levies or recruits were intended. He was then called *Harits*, that is, *the mighty, the formidable*, (violentes. Job xv. 20.) The Syrians softened this word and pronounced *Hazis*. We find the same word *hazis* or *hesus*, used to signify *the terrible in war*. "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." Ps. xxiv. 8. Others pronounced it without aspiration, and said *Ares*; others with a very harsh and rough aspiration, and pronounced *Warets*. This figure of Horus in a warlike dress, became the god of combats. He evidently is the *Asis* of the inhabitants of Edesse, the *Hezus*, of the Gauls, the *Ares* of the Greeks, the *Warts* or *Mars* of the Sabines and Latins."—*Edit.*

this reason, he is exhibited blindfolded, "Neither naked nor clothed," but about halfway between both.

Here also may be seen the type of the masonic Tiler, an *inferior officer*, with a drawn sword, to guard the lodge from the impertinent intrusion of cowans, or rather covins, and eavesdroppers. It will not be pretended that a sword is needed in this case; it is a mere ensign of office, in conformity to the Druidical custom.

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The following extracts from Hume's History of England, will account for the slow introduction of Christianity among the ancient Britons.

The most memorable event which distinguished the reign of this great prince [Ethelbert,] was the introduction of the Christian religion among the English Saxons. The superstition of the Germans, particularly that of the Saxons, was of the grossest and most barbarous kind, and being founded on traditionary tales received from their ancestors, not reduced to any system, nor supported by political institutions like that of the Druids, it seems to have made little impression on its votaries, and to have easily resigned its place to the new doctrine promulgated to them.

On the contrary, the constant hostilities which the Saxons maintained against the Britons, would naturally indispose them for receiving the Christian faith, when preached to them by such inveterate enemies.

The Saxons, though they had been long settled in the island, seem not as yet, [early part of the ninth century,] to have been much improved beyond their German ancestors, either in arts, civility, knowledge, humanity, justice, or obedience to the laws. Even Christianity though it opened the way to connections between them and the more polished states of Europe, had not hitherto been very effectual in banishing their ignorance, or softening their barbarous manners. As they received that doctrine through the corrupted channels of Rome, it carried along with it a great mixture of credulity and superstition, equally destructive to the understanding and to morals. The reverence toward saints and reliques, seems to have almost supplanted the adoration of the Supreme Being. Monastic observances were esteemed more meritorious than the active virtues; the knowledge of natural causes was neglected, from the universal belief of *miraculous interposition* and *judgments*; bounty to the church atoned for every violence against society: and the remorse for cruelty, murder, treachery, assassination, and the more robust vices, were appeased, not by amendment of life,

but by penances, servility to the monks, and an abject and illiberal devotion. \* \* \* The ecclesiastics, in those days of ignorance, [middle of the ninth century,] made rapid advances in the acquisition of power and grandeur; and in inculcating the most absurd and most interested doctrines. Not content with the donations of land made them by the Saxon Princes and nobles, they had cast a wishful eye on a vast revenue, which they claimed as belonging to them, by a sacred and indefeasible title. However little versed in the scriptures, they had been able to discover, that, under the Jewish law, a tenth of all the produce of land was conferred on the priesthood; and, forgetting what they themselves taught, that the moral part only was obligatory on Christians, they insisted that this donation *conveyed a perpetual property, inherent, by divine right*, in those who officiated at the altar. During some centuries, the whole scope of sermons and homilies was directed to this purpose; and one would have imagined, from the general tenor of these discourses, that all the practical parts of Christianity were comprised in the exact and faithful payment of the tithes to the clergy. Encouraged by their success in inculcating these doctrines, they ventured farther than they were warranted, even by the Levitical law, and pretended to draw the tenth of all industry, merchandize, wages of laborers, and pay of soldiers; nay, some canonists went so far as to affirm, that the clergy were entitled to the tithe of the profits made by courtesans in the exercise of their profession.

### *Slavery in England.*

As slaves are not admitted into the society of Freemasons, it may be interesting to some of my readers, unacquainted with the fact, to know the vast extent of the evils of slavery in England at the time when this institution is supposed to have been established, and the great proportion of the inhabitants, particularly of the mechanical and laboring classes, that were consequently excluded from a participation in its charitable and benevolent purposes. I, therefore, give the following extract from Dr. Henry's History of the different ranks of people, in Britain, from the arrival of the Saxons, A. D. 449, to the landing of William, duke of Normandy, 1066.

The lowest order of people among the Anglo-Saxons, and the other nations of Britain, in this period, were slaves, who with their wives and children were the property of their masters. Besides those who were native slaves, or slaves by birth, others frequently fell into this wretched

state, by various means; as, by an ill run at play,—by the fate of war, or by forfeiting their freedom by their crimes, or even by contracting debts which they were not able to pay. These unhappy people, who were very numerous, formed an article, both of internal and foreign trade; only if the slave was a Christian, he was not to be sold to a Jew or a Pagan; or if he belonged to the same nation with his master, he was not to be sold beyond the sea. Slaves were, however, of various kinds, among the Anglo-Saxons, employed in various works, and were not all in an equal state of thralldom. Some of them were called *villani*, or *villains*, because they dwelt at the villages belonging to their masters, and performed the servile labors of cultivating their lands, to which they were annexed, and transferred with these lands from one owner to another. Others were domestic slaves, and performed various offices about the houses and families of their masters. Some of these domestic slaves of the king and the nobility, were taught the mechanic arts, which they practised for the benefit of their owners; and the greatest number of the mechanics of those times seem to have been in a state of servitude. Slaves were not supposed to have any family or relations who sustained any loss by their death; and, therefore, when one of them was killed by his master, no mulct was paid, because the master was supposed to be the only loser; when slain by another, his price or manbote was paid to his master. In a word, slaves of the lowest order, were considered merely as animals of burden, and parts of their owners' living stock. In the laws of Wales it is expressly said: "That a master hath the same right to his slaves as to his cattle."

The horrors of this cruel servitude were gradually mitigated; and many of those unhappy wretches were raised from this abject state to the privileges of humanity. The introduction of Christianity contributed not a little, both to alleviate the weight of servitude, and diminish the number of slaves. By the canons of the church, which were in those times incorporated with the laws of the land, and of the same authority, Christians were commanded to allow their slaves certain portions of time to work for their own benefit, by which they acquired property,—the bishops had authority to regulate the quantity of work to be done by slaves,—and to take care that no man used his slave harshly but as a fellow-Christian. The bishops and clergy recommended the manumission of slaves as a most charitable and meritorious action; and in order to set the example, they procured a law to be made, that all English slaves of every bishop should be set at liberty at his death, and that every other bishop and abbot in the kingdom should set three

slaves at liberty. But after all these mitigations of the severities of slavery, and diminutions of the number of slaves, the yoke of servitude was still very heavy, and the greatest part of the laborers, mechanics, and common people, groaned under that yoke at the conclusion of this period.

The next class or rank of people in Britain, in this period, was composed of those who were called *frilazin*; who had been slaves, but had either purchased, or by some other means obtained their liberty. Though these were in reality free-men, they were not considered as of the same rank and dignity with those who had been *born* free; but were still in a more ignoble and dependent condition, either on their former masters, or on some new patrons. This custom, the Anglo-Saxons seemed to have derived from their ancestors in Germany, among whom those who had been made free did not differ much in point of dignity or importance in the state, from those who continued in servitude. This distinction, between those who had been made free, and those who enjoy freedom by descent from a long race of freemen, still prevails in many parts of Germany; and particularly in the original seats of the Anglo-Saxons. Many of the inhabitants of towns and cities in England, in this period, seem to have been of this class of men, who were in a kind of middle state, between slaves and freemen.

The third class, or rank of people in Britain, in the period we are now considering, consisted of those who were completely free, and descended from a long race of freemen. This numerous and respectable body of men, who were called *ceorls* constituted a middle class, between the laborers and mechanics, who were generally slaves, or descended from slaves on the one hand, and the nobility on the other. They might go where they pleased, and pursue any way of life that was most agreeable to their humor.—vol. iii. p. 320

In the time of the Anglo-Saxon rule, says Dr. Lingard, not less than two thirds of the population of Britain, existed in a state of slavery. And the sale and purchase of slaves publicly prevailed during the whole of this period. These unhappy men were sold like cattle in the market. The Northumbrians, like the savages of Africa, are said to have carried off, not only their own countrymen, but even their friends and relatives, and to have sold them as slaves in the ports of the continent. The men of Bristol were the last to abandon this nefarious traffic. Their agents travelled into every part of the country; they were instructed to give the highest price for females in a state of pregnancy; and the slave ships regularly sailed from that port to Ireland, where they were secure of a ready and profitable market.