

known that the preservation of Gnostic symbols by Freemasons was, and remains so to this day, exceedingly sedulous.

We will terminate this part of our long dissertation, which commenced with the explanation of the descent, or the genealogy, or the generation of the famous 'fleurs-de-lis' of France—the noblest and sublimest symbol, in its occult or mysterious meaning, which the 'monarch sun' ever saw displayed to it, inexpressibly mean and repellant as the 'Lis' seems: we will finish, we say, thus far, by commenting in a very original and unexpected, but strictly corroborative, manner upon some words of Shakespeare which have hitherto been passed wholly without remark or explanation.

We may premise by recalling that the *luce* is a pike (*pic*), or Jack: Jac, Iacc (*B* and *I* are complementary in this mythic sense), Bacc, Bacche, Bacchus. Shakespeare's well-known lampoon, or satirical ballad, upon the name of 'Lucy' may be cited as illustrative proof on this side of the subject:

Lucy is lowsie, as some volke miscalle it.

The Zodiacal sign for February is the 'fishes'. Now, the observances of St. Valentine's Day, which point to courtship and to sexual love, or to loving invitation, bear direct reference to the 'fishes', in a certain sense. The arms of the Lucys—as they are at present to be seen, and where we not long since saw them, beautifully restored upon the great entrance-gates of Charlecote Hall, or Place, near Stratford-upon-Avon—are 'three luces or pikes, *hauriant, argent*'.

'The dozen white luces' are observed upon with intense family pride by Shallow (Lucy), in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*:



' *Shallow*. It is an old coat.

' *Evans*. The dozen white *louses* do become an old coat well'. The significant part of the passage follows to this effect, though deeply hidden in the sly art of our knowing, but reticent, Shakespeare: ' I agrees well *passant*' (we would here read *passim*, ' everywhere', which makes clear sense). ' It is a familiar beast to Man, and signifies—love' (the generative act).—*Merry Wives of Windsor*, act i. sc. I.

We commend the above history of the ' Fleur-de-Lis' to the thoughtful attention of our reader, because he will find under it the whole explanation of the arms of France. And yet, although the above is all-essentially ' feminine', this is the country that imported amidst its Frankish or Saxon progenitors (Clodio, the ' long-haired', to the example, who first passed the Rhine and brought his female ' ultramarine' to supersede and replace, in blazon, the martial, manly ' carmine' or ' gules' of the Gauls)—this is the country that adopted and maintains '*la Loi Salique*'.





## CHAPTER THE NINTH

### SACRED FIRE

THE appearance of God to mortals seems always to have been in brightness and great glory, whether He was angry and in displeasure, or benign and kind. These appearances are often mentioned in Scripture. When God appeared on Mount Sinai, it is said 'The Lord descended upon it in Fire' (*Exod. xix. 18*). And when Moses repeats the history of this to the children of Israel, he says 'The Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the Fire' (*Deut. iv. 12*). So it was when the Angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush: 'The bush burned with Fire, and the bush was not consumed' (*Exod. iii. 3*). The appearances of the Angel of God's presence, or that Divine Person who represented God, were always in brightness; or, in other words, the Shechinah was always surrounded with glory. This seems to have given occasion to those of old to imagine fire to be what God dwelt in.

'Ipse' (Darius) 'solem Mithren, sacrumque et æternum invocans IGNEM, ut illis dignam vetere gloria majoremque monumentis fortitudinem inspirarent.'  
—Q. Curtius, l. iv. c. 13.

Whether it was that any fire preceded from God, and burnt up the oblation in the first sacrifices, as some ingenious men have conjectured, we know not. It is certain that in after ages this was the case. We are sure that a fire from the Lord consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering of Aaron (*Lev. ix. 24*); and so it did



the sacrifice of Gideon, 'both the flesh and the unleavened cakes' (*Judg.* vi. 21). When David 'built an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and called upon the Lord, He answered him from heaven by Fire, upon the altar of burnt-offerings' (*1 Chron.* xxi. 26). The same thing happened at the dedication of Solomon's temple: 'The fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the house' (*2 Chron.* vii. 1). And much about a hundred years afterwards, when Elijah made that extraordinary sacrifice in proof that Baal was no god, 'The Fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench' (*1 Kings* xviii. 38). And if we go back long before the times of Moses, as early as Abraham's days, we meet with an instance of the same sort: 'It came to pass that when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace and a burning lamp, that passed between these pieces' (*Gen.* xv. 17).

The first appearance of God, then, being in glory—or, which is the same thing, in light or fire—and He showing His acceptance of sacrifices in so many instances, by consuming them with fire, hence it was that the Eastern people, and particularly the Persians, fell into the worship of fire itself, or rather they conceived fire to be the symbol of God's presence, and they worshipped God in, or by, fire. From the Assyrians, or Chaldæans, or Persians, this worship was propagated southwards among the Egyptians, and westward among the Greeks; and by them it was brought into Italy. The Greeks were wont to meet together to worship in their *Prytaneia*, and there they consulted for the public good; and there was a constant fire kept upon the altar, which was dignified



by the name of Vesta by some. The fire itself was properly Vesta ; and so Ovid :

Nec te aliud Vestam, quam vivam intelligere flammam.

The *Prytaneia* were the *atria* of the temples, wherein a fire was kept that was never suffered to go out. On the change in architectural forms from the pyramidal (or the horizontal) to the obeliscar (or the upright, or vertical), the flames were transferred from the altars, or cubes, to the summits of the typical uprights, or towers ; or to the tops of the candles, such as we see them used now in Catholic worship, and which are called 'tapers', from their tapering or pyramidal form, and which, wherever they are seen or raised, are supposed always to indicate the divine presence or influence. This, through the symbolism that there is in the living light, which is the last exalted show of fluent or of inflamed brilliant matter, passing off beyond into the unknown and unseen world of celestial light (or occult fire), to which all the forms of things tend, and in which even idea itself passes from recognition as meaning, and evolves—spiring, as all flame does, to escape and to wing away.

Vesta, or the fire, was worshipped in circular temples, which were the images or the miniatures, of the 'temple' of the world, with its dome, or cope, of stars. It was in the *atria* of the temples, and in the presence of, and before the above-mentioned lights, that the forms of ceremonial worship were always observed. It is certain that Vesta was worshipped at Troy ; and Æneas brought her into Italy :

manibus vittas, Vestamque potentem,  
 Æternumque adytis effert penetralibus Ignem.  
 —Æneid ii. 296.

Numa settled an order of Virgin Priestesses, whose



business and care it was constantly to maintain the holy fire. And long before Numa's days, we find it not only customary, but honourable, among the Albans to appoint the best-born virgins to be priestesses of Vesta, and to keep up the constant, unextinguished fire.

When Virgil speaks (*Æneid* iv. 200) of Iarbas, in Africa, as building a hundred temples and a hundred altars, he says :

vigilemque sacrauerat Ignem,  
Excubias Divum æternas,

that he had 'consecrated a fire that never went out'. And he calls these temples and these lights, or this fire, the 'perpetual watches', or 'watch-lights', or proof of the presence, of the gods. By which expressions he means, that places and things were constantly protected, and solemnized where such lights burned, and that the celestials, or angel-defenders, 'camped', as it were, and were sure to be met with thickly, where these flames upon the altars, and these torches or lights about the temples, invited them and were studiously and incessantly maintained.

Thus the custom seems to have been general from the earliest antiquity to maintain a constant fire, as conceiving the gods present there. And this was not only the opinion of the inhabitants in Judæa, but it extended all over Persia, Greece, Italy, Egypt, and most other nations of the world.

Porphyry imagined that the reason why the most ancient mortals kept up a constant, ever-burning fire in honour of the immortal Gods, was because Fire was most like the Gods. He says that the ancients kept an unextinguished fire in their temples to the Gods, because it was most like them. Fire was not like the Gods, but it was what they appeared in to



mortals. And so the true God always appeared in brightness and glory, yet no one would say that brightness was most like the true God, but was most like the *Shechinah*, in which God appeared. And hence the custom arose of keeping up an unextinguished fire in the ancient temples.

Vesta is properly an Oriental word, derived from the Hebrew *אש*, *As*—'Fire'. Thence the word *Astarte*, in the Phœnician dialect. The signification of the term is the same as the *πῦρ ἄσβεστον*, the *ignis æternus*, the perpetual fire itself. They that worshipped either Vesta or Vulcan, or the master-power of nature which is known under those names, were properly Fire-worshippers.

God, then, being wont to appear in Fire, and being conceived to dwell in Fire, the notion spread universally, and was universally admitted. First, then, it was not at all out of the way to think of engaging in friendship with God by the same means as they contracted friendship with one another. And since they to whom God appeared saw Him appear in Fire, and they acquainted others with such His appearances, He was conceived to dwell in Fire. By degrees, therefore, the world came to be over-curious in the fire that was constantly to be kept up, and in things to be sacrificed; and they proceeded from one step to another, till at length they filled up the measure of their aberration, which was in reality instigated by their zeal, and by their intense desire to mitigate the displeasure of their divinities—for religion was much more intense as a feeling in early days—by passing into dreadful ceremonies in regard to this fire, which they revered as the last possible physical form of divinity, not only in its grandeur and power, but also in its purity. It arose from this view that human sacrifices came to be offered to the deities in many



parts of the world, particularly in Phœnicia, and in the colonies derived from thence into Africa and other places. In the intensity of their minds, children were sacrificed by their parents, as being the best and dearest oblation that could be made, and the strongest arguments that nothing ought to be withheld from God. This was expiation for that sad result, the consequence of the original curse, issuing from the fatal curiosity concerning the bitter fruit of that forbidden 'Tree',

whose mortal taste  
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden,

according to Milton. That peculiar natural sense of shame in all its forms lesser and larger, and with all the references inseparably allied to propagation in all its multitudinous cunning (so to speak), wherever the condemned material tissues reach, puzzled the thoughtful ancients as to its meaning. This they considered the convicted 'Adversary', or Lucifer, 'Lord of light'—that is, material Light, 'Eldest Son of the Morning'. Morning, indeed! dawning with its light from behind that forbidden Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. What is this shame, urged the philosophers, this reddening, however good and beautiful, and especially the ornament of the young and inexperienced and of children, who are newest from the real, glowing countenance of Deity, with the bloom of the first angelic word scarcely yet fading from off their cherub faces, gradually darkening and hardening in the degradation and iniquity of being here as presences in this world, although the most glorious amidst the forms of flesh? What is this shame, which is the characteristic singly of human creatures? All other creatures are sinless in



this respect, and know not the feeling of that—correctly looked at—strange thing which men call ‘shame’, something which is not right that the sun even should see, and therefore stirring the blood, and reddening the face, and confusing the speech, and causing man to hang down his head, and to hide himself, as if guilty of something: even as our guilty first parents, having lost the unconsciousness of their child-like, innocent first state—that of sinless virginity—hid themselves and shunned their own light in the umbrage of Paradise, all at once convicted to the certainty that they must hide, because they were exposed, and that they had themselves broken that original intention regarding them.

‘Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven’.

That is, the innocent children should come up for salvation, who, though suffering under the mortal liability incurred by all flesh in that first sin (and incident in the first fall, which has empoisoned and cursed all nature), are yet free by the nature of their ungrown possibility, and from their unconsciousness of it. They know not the shame of the condition adult, and therefore they bear not the badge of men, and are not of this world really, but of another world.

To recur for a moment to the theory of human sacrifices which once largely prevailed. Interwoven inseparably with the forms of architecture from the earliest times, proof of which we see constantly in classical buildings particularly, and in the Italian modifications displayed in the cities of Europe, was the habit of exposing as talismans the members (and particularly the heads) of human sacrifices. This is observable in the innumerable masks (or heads full-faced) placed on the keystones of arches or portals. They are either deified mortals or demigods. Some-



times, but very rarely (because it is a sinister *palladium*), the head of Medusa is seen. Exposure of the heads of criminals on town-gates, over bridges, or over arches, follows the same idea, as ranging in the list of protecting, protesting, or appealing *Palladia*, which are supposed to possess the same objurgating or propitiating power as the wild, winged creatures—children of the air—affixed in penitential, magic brand or exposure on the doors of barns, or on the outside of rustic buildings. All this is ceremonial sacrifice, addressed to the harmful gods, and meant occultly and entreatingly for the eyes of the observant, but invisible, wandering angels, who move through the world—threading unseen the ways of men, and unwitted of by them, and most abundant and most active there where the mother of all of them is in the ascendant with her influences; or when Night is abroad, throned in her cope of stars—letters, from their first judiciary arrangement in the heavens, spelling out continually new astrological combinations. For Astrology was the mother, as she was the precursor, of Astronomy, and was once a power; into whatever mean roads the exercise of the art of her servants has strayed now, in unworthy and indign divination, and in the base proffer of supposed Gipsy arts—ministration become ridiculous (or made so), which was once mighty and sublime.

The pyramidal or triangular form which Fire assumes in its ascent to heaven is in the monolithic typology used to signify the great generative power. We have only to look at Stonehenge, Ellora, the Babel-towers of Central America, the gigantic ruins scattered all over Tartary and India, to see how gloriously they symbolized the majesty of the Supreme. To these uprights, obelisks, or *lithoi*, of the old world, including the *Bethel*, or Jacob's Pillar, or Pillow, raised in the



Plain of 'Luz', we will add, as the commemorative or reminding shape of the fire, the Pyramids of Egypt, the Millenarius, Gnomon, Mete-Stone, or Mark, called 'London Stone', all Crosses raised at the junction of four roads, all Market-Crosses, the Round Towers of Ireland, and, in all the changeful aspects of their genealogy, all spires and towers, in their grand hieroglyphic proclamation, all over the world. All these are *Phalli*, and express a sublime meaning.

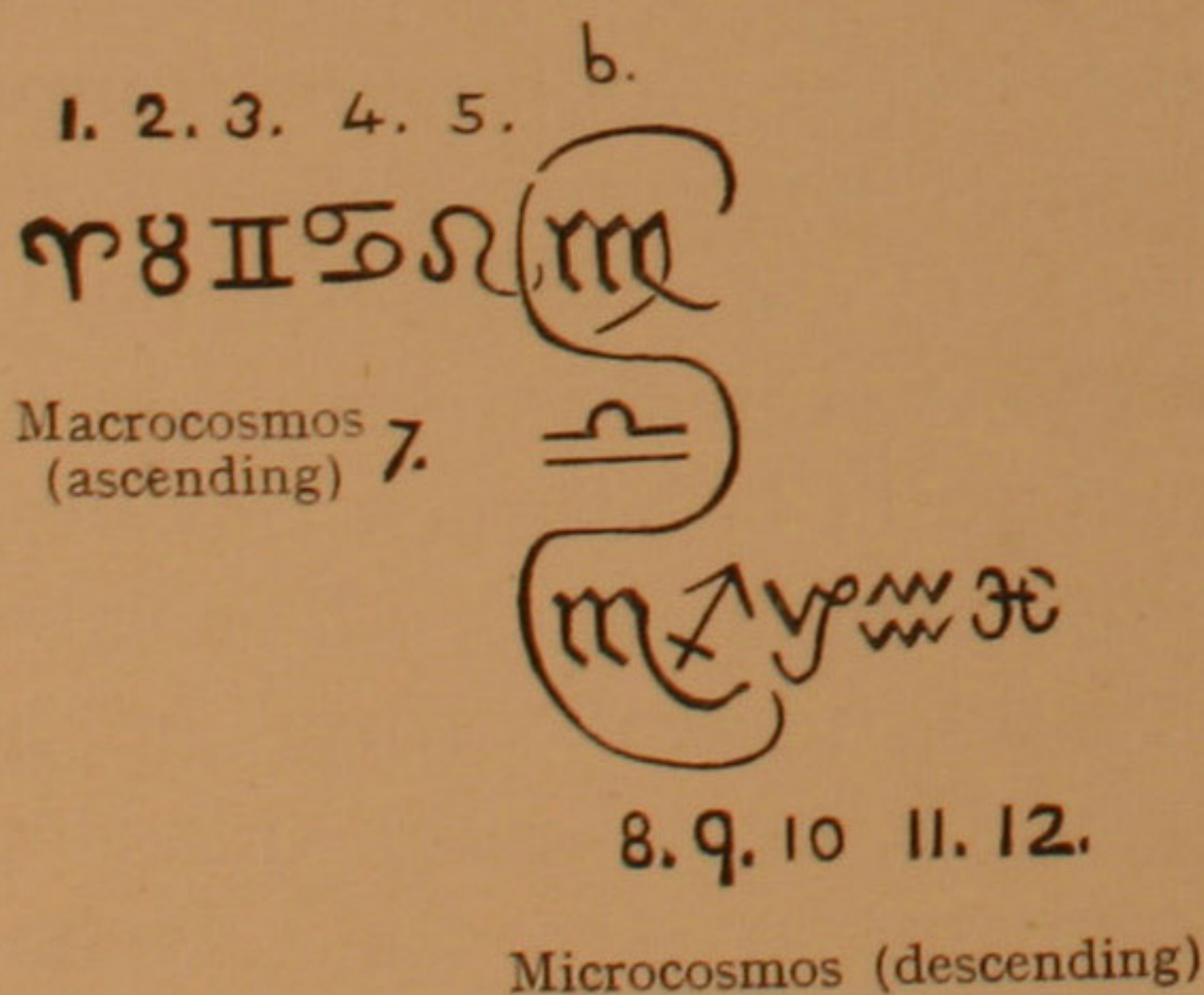
(♈) Aries, (♉) Taurus, (♊) Gemini, (♋) Cancer, (♌) Leo, (♍) Virgo, are the first six 'Signs'; and they collectively (in their annual succession) form the 'Macrocosmos' of the Cabalists. Then succeeds the 'turning-point', 'balances', or 'nave' (*navel*), of the astronomical wheel, represented by the sign 'Libra' (♎), which, be it remembered, was added by the imaginative (and therefore practically inventive) Greeks. The foregoing, up to 'Libra', represent the 'ascending signs', or six of the spokes, so to speak, of the annual zodiacal wheel, circling to the zenith or vertex. The last six 'Signs' of the zodiac are called 'descending signs', and they are the sinister, autumnal, or changing, in reverse, monthly spaces, each of thirty degrees, and again comprising six *radii* of this celestial wheel, or this 'Ezekiel's Wheel'. The turning-point is 'Virgo-Scorpio', which, until separated in the mythical interruption from without at the 'junction-point' between ascent and descent, were the same 'single sign'. The latter half (or left wing of this grand zodiacal 'army', or 'host of heaven', drawn up in battle array, and headed—as, by a figure, we shall choose to say—by the 'Archangel Michael', or the Sun, at the centre, or in the 'champion', or 'conquering point') is called by the Cabalists—and therefore by the Rosicrucians—the abstract 'Microcosmos'—in which 'Microcosm', or 'Little World',



in opposition to the 'Macrocosm', or 'Great World', is to be found 'Man', as produced in it from the operations from above, and to be saved in the 'Great Sacrifice' (Crucifixion-Act), the phenomena of the being (Man) taking place 'in the mythic return of the world'. All this is incomprehensible, except in the strange mysticism of the Gnostics and the Cabalists; and the whole theory requires a key of explanation to render it intelligible; which key is only darkly referred to as possible, but refused absolutely, by these extraordinary men, as not permissible to be disclosed. As they, however, were very fond of diagrams and mystic figures, of which they left many in those rarities (mostly ill-executed, but each wonderfully suggestive) called 'Gnostic gems', we will supply a seeming elucidation of this their astrological assumption of 'what was earliest'; for which see the succeeding figure.

(♎) Libra (the Balances) leads again off as the 'hinge-point,' introducing the six winter signs, which are: (♎) Libra again, (♏) Scorpio, (♐) Sagittarius, (♑) Capricornus, (♒) Aquarius, and (♓) Pisces.

Fig. 12 (A) 'Ezekiel's Wheel'



Turning-point—Libra. (The sign 'Libra' was added by the Greeks.)

The first six signs, or ascending signs, are repre-



sented by the celestial perpendicular, or de-  
scending ray, as thus:



Fig. 13


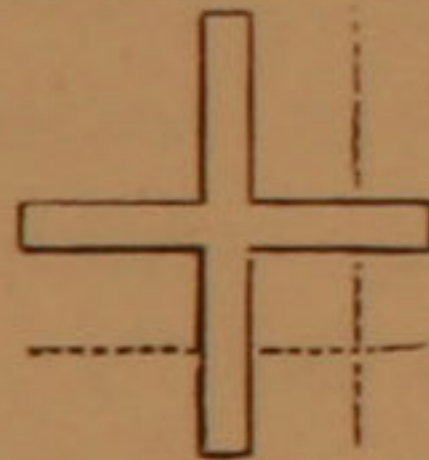
The last six signs, or descending signs, are represented by the terrestrial ground-line, or horizontal, or 'equatorial' (symbol or sigma),  as thus:

Fig. 14

The union of these (at the intersection of these rays) at the junction-point, or middle point, forms the 'Cross', as thus:

Fig. 15 (B) 'Cross'



(C)



Fig. 16



Fig. 17

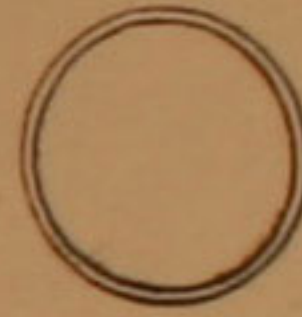


Fig. 18



Fig. 19

In figure C, the union of fig. 16 and fig. 17 forms the cross. Fig. 18 is the mundane circle. Fig. 19 is the astronomical cross upon the mundane circle. The union of fig. 18, fig. 17, and fig. 16, in this respective order, gives the crux-ansata, so continual in all the Egyptian sculptures, which mark or sign is also the symbol of the Planet Venus, as below.



Fig. 20: The Crux Ansata



Fig. 21: Mark of the Planet Venus

Their origin is thus traced clearly to the same original meanings, which reappear under all sorts of disguises, and are varied in innumerable ingenious ways, in all



the mythologies—incessantly disclosing, and inviting, and as continually evading and escaping discovery. This abstruse mark particularly abounds in the Egyptian temples, where every object and every figure presents it. Its real meaning is, however, intended to be buried in profound darkness.

In regard to the mysteries implied in the Christian Cross, the schismatics contended (1st) 'that Christ, alive upon the cross, humbled Himself, *usque ad inferni tremenda tormenta*, even unto the dreadful torments of hell'. (Paget's *Catech. Latin.*) (2nd) 'Endured for a time those torments, *qualis reprobi in æternum sensuri sunt*, which the reprobates shall everlastingly suffer in hell'. (Pisc. in *Luc. xii. 10.*) 'Even despaired of God's mercy, finding God, at this time, *Non patrem sed tyrannum*, not a Father, but a Tyrant: and overcame despair by despair; death by death; hell by hell; and Satan by Satan' (Ferus in *Matth. 27*): 'suffered actually all the torments of hell for our redemption, and descended into the heaviest that hell could yield; endured the torments of hell, the second death, abjection from God, and was made a curse; that is, had the bitter anguish of God's wrath in his soul and body, which is the fire that shall never be quenched'.—*Faith and Doctrine* (Thomas Rogers), London, 1629. Jacob Böhmen produces some of these most stringent and dark shades in his profound mysticism—although essentially Christian.

It may be here distinctly mentioned that it is a great mistake to suppose any of the Egyptian hieroglyphics tell the story of that most profound and most ancient religion. There are various series of hieroglyphics, more or less reserved, but the real beliefs of the Egyptian Priests were never (indeed, they *dared not* so have been) hazarded in sign, or writing, or hieroglyphic of any kind—being forbidden



to be spoken, still more written. Consequently all supposed readings of hieroglyphics are guesswork only—implying earnest and plausible but mistaken effort alone.





## CHAPTER THE TENTH

### FIRE-THEOSOPHY OF THE PERSIANS

THE Fire-Philosophers, or *Philosophi per ignem*, were a fanatical sect of philosophers, who appeared towards the close of the sixteenth century. They made a figure in almost all the countries of Europe. They declared that the intimate essences of natural things were only to be known by the trying efforts of fire, directed in a chemical process. The Theosophists also insisted that human reason was a dangerous and deceitful guide ; that no real progress could be made in knowledge or in religion by it ; and that to all vital—that is, supernatural—purpose it was a vain thing. They taught that divine and supernatural illumination was the only means of arriving at truth. Their name of Paracelsists was derived from Paracelsus, the eminent physician and chemist, who was the chief ornament of this extraordinary sect. In England, Robert Flood, or Fludd, was their great advocate and exponent. Rivier, who wrote in France ; Severinus, an author of Denmark ; Kunrath, an eminent physician of Dresden ; and Daniel Hoffmann, Professor of Divinity in the University of Helmstadt—have also treated largely on Paracelsus and on his system.

Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Paracelsus was born in 1493, at Einsiedeln, a small town of the Canton of Schwitz, distant some leagues from Zurich. Having passed a troubled, migratory, and changeful life, this great chemist, and very original thinker, died on the



24th of September 1541, in the Hospital of St. Stephen, in the forty-eighth year of his age. His works may be enumerated as follow: 1. The German editions: Basil, 1575, in 8vo; lb. 1, 1589-90, in 10 vols. 4to; and Strasbourg, 1603-18, in 4 vols. folio. 2. The Latin editions: *Opera Omnia Medico-chymico-chirurgica*, Francfort, 1603, in 10 vols. 4to; and Geneva, 1658, in 3 vols. folio. 3. The French editions: *La Grand Chirurgie de Paracelse*, Lyons, 1593 and 1603, in 4to; and Montbéliard, 1608, in 8vo. See Adelung, *Histoire de la Folie Humaine*, tom. vii; *Biographie Universelle*, article 'Paracelse'; and Sprengel, *Histoire Pragmatique de la Médecine*, tom. iii.

'Akin to the school of the ancient Fire-Believers, and of the magnetists of a later period', says the learned Dr. Ennemoser, in his *History of Magic* (most ably rendered into English by William Howitt), 'of the same cast as these speculators and searchers into the mysteries of nature, drawing from the same well, are the Theosophists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These practised chemistry, by which they asserted that they could explore the profoundest secrets of nature. As they strove, above all earthly knowledge, after the divine, and sought the divine light and fire, through which all men can acquire the true wisdom, they were called the Fire-Philosophers (*philosophi per ignem*). The most distinguished of these are Theophrastus Paracelsus, Adam von Boden, Oswald Croll; and, later, Valentine Weigel, Robert Flood, or Fludd, Jacob Böhmen, Peter Poiret, etc.' Under this head we may also refer to the *Medico-surgical Essays of Hemmann*, published at Berlin in 1778; and Pfaff's *Astrology*.

As a great general principle, the Theosophists called the soul a fire, taken from the eternal ocean of light.

In regard to the supernatural—using the word in



its widest sense—it may be said that ‘ all the difficulty in admitting the strange things told us lies in the non-admission of an internal causal world *as absolutely* real : it is said, in *intellectually* admitting, because the influence of the arts proves that men’s feelings always have admitted, and do still admit, this reality’.

The Platonic philosophy of vision is, that it is the view of objects really existing in interior light, which assume form, not according to arbitrary laws, but according to the state of mind. This interior light, if we understand Plato, unites with exterior light in the eye, and is thus drawn into a sensual or imaginative activity ; but when the outward light is separated, it reposes in its own serene atmosphere. It is, then, in this state of interior repose, that the usual class of religions, or what are called inspired visions occur. It is the same light of eternity so frequently alluded to in books that treat of mysterious subjects ; the light revealed to Pimander, Zoroaster, and all the sages of the East, as the emanation of the spiritual sun. Böhmen writes of it in his *Divine Vision or Contemplation*, and Molinos in his *Spiritual Guide*—whose work is the ground of Quietism : Quietism being the foundation of the religion of the people called Friends or Quakers, as also of the other mystic or meditative sects. We enlarge from a very learned, candid, and instructive book upon the Occult Sciences.

Regard Fire, then, with other eyes than with those soulless, incurious ones, with which thou hast looked upon it as the most ordinary thing. Thou hast forgotten what it is—or rather thou hast never known. Chemists are silent about it ; or may we not say that it is too *loud* for them ? Therefore shall they speak fearfully of it in whispers. Philosophers talk of it as anatomists discourse of the constituents (or the parts) of the human body—as a piece of mechanism,



wondrous though it be. Such the wheels of the clock, say they in their ingenious expounding of the 'whys' and the 'wherefores' (and the mechanics and the mathematics) of this mysterious thing, with a supernatural soul in it, called world. Such is the chain, such are the balances, such the larger and the smaller mechanical forces; such the 'Time-blood', as it were, that is sent circulating through it; such is the striking, with an infinity of bells. It is made for man, this world and it is greatly like him—that is *mean*, they would add. And they do think it, if they dare add their thinkings. But is this all? Is this the sum of that casketed lamp of the human body—thine own body, thou unthinking world's machine—thou Man! Or, in the fabric of this clay lamp (lacquered in thy man's Imperial splendours), burneth there not a Light? Describe that, ye Doctors of Physics! Unwind the starry limbs of *that* phenomenon, ye heavy-browed doctorial wielders of the scalpel—useful, however, as ye be, in that 'upholstery warehouse' of nature to which bodies and their make be referred by the materialists as the godless origin of everything. Touch at *its* heart, ye dissectors of fibres and of valves; of sinews and of leaves (hands, perchance); of the vein-work, of the muscles, as bark-integument; of the trunk! Split and pare, as with steel tools and wedge, this portent, this 'Tree' (human though it be), round which ye cluster to examine, about which ye gather, with your 'persuasions' to wind into the innermost secret of. Cyclops—one-eyed and savage—break into meaning this portent, Man, on your science-wheels.

Note the goings of the Fire, as he creepeth, serpentineth, riseth, slinketh, broadeneth. Note him reddening, glowing, whitening. Tremble at his face, dilating; at the meaning that is growing into it, to



you. See that spark from the blacksmith's anvil—struck, as an insect, out of a sky containing a whole cloud of such. Rare locusts, of which Pharaoh and the Cities of the Plain read of old the secret! One, two, three sparks; dozens come: faster and faster the fiery squadrons follow, until, in a short while, a whole possible army of that hungry thing for battle, for food for it—Fire—glances up; but is soon warned in again—lest acres should glow in the growing advance. Think that this thing is bound as in matter-chains. Think that he is outside of all things, and deep in the inside of all things; and that thou and thy world are only *the thing between*; and that outside and inside are both identical, couldst thou understand the supernatural truths! Reverence Fire (for its meaning), and tremble at it; though in the Earth it be chained, and the foot of the Archangel Michael—like upon the Dragon—be upon it! Avert the face from it, as the Magi turned, dreading, and (as the Symbol) before it bowed askance. So much for this great thing—Fire!

Observe the multiform shapes of fire; the flame-wreaths, the spires, the stars, the spots, the cascades, and the mighty falls of it; where the roar, when it grows high in Imperial masterdom, is as that of Niagara. Think what it can do, what it is. Watch the trail of sparks, struck, as in that spouting arch, from the metal shoes of the trampling horse. It is as a letter of the great alphabet. The familiar London streets, even, can give thee the Persian's God: though in thy pleasures, and in thy commerce-operations, thou so oft forgettest thine own God. Whence liberated are those sparks? as stars, afar off, of a whole sky of flame; sparks deep down in possibility, though close to us; great in their meaning, though small in their show; as distant single ships of whole fiery



fleets ; animate children of, in thy human conception, a dreadful, but, in reality, a great world, of which thou knowest nothing. They fall, foodless, on the rejecting, barren, and (on the outside) the coldest stone. But in each stone, flinty and chilly as the outside is, is a heart of fire, to strike at which is to bid gush forth the *waters*, as it were, of *very Fire*, like waters of the rock ! Truly, out of sparks can be displayed a whole acreage of fireworks. Forests can be conceived of flame—palaces of the fire ; grandest things—soul-things—last things—all things !

Wonder no longer, then, if, rejected so long as an idolatry, the ancient Persians and their masters the Magi—concluding that they saw ‘ All ’ in this supernaturally magnificent element—fell down and worshipped it ; making of it the visible representation of the very truest ; but yet, in man’s speculation, and in his philosophies—nay, in his commonest reason—impossible God : God being everywhere, and in us, and, indeed, *us*, in the God-lighted man ; and impossible to be contemplated or known outside—being All !

Lights and flames, and the *torches*, as it were, of fire (all fire in this world, the last background on which all things are painted), may be considered as ‘ lancets ’ of another world—the last world : circles, enclosed by the thick walls (which, however, *by the fire* are kept from closing) of this world. As fire waves and brandishes, will the walls of this world wave, and, as it were, undulate from about it. In smoke and disruption, or combustion of matter, we witness a phenomenon of the *burning* as of the edges of the matter-rings of this world, in which world *is* fire, like a spot ; that dense and hard thing, matter, holding it in. Oxygen, which is the finest of air, and is the means of the quickest burning out, or the



supernatural (in this world) exhilaration of animal life, or extenuation of the Solid ; and above all, the heightening of the capacity of the Human, as being the quintessence of matter : this oxygen is the thing which feeds fire the most overwhelming. Nor would the specks and spots and stars of fire stop in this dense world-medium, in this tissue or sea of things—could it farther and farther fasten upon and devour the solids : eating, as it were, through them. But as this thick world is a thing the thickest, it presses out, thrusts, or gravitates upon, and stifles, in its too great weight ; and conquers not only that liveliest, subtlest, thinnest element of the solids, the finest air, by whatever chemical name—*oxygen*, *azote*, *azone*, or what not—it may be called ; which, in fact, is merely the nomenclature of its *composition*, the naming of the ingredients which make the thing (but not the thing). The denseness of the world not only conquers this, we repeat ; but, so to figure it, matter stamps upon, effaces, and treads out fire : which, else, would burn on, back, as in the beginning of things, or into itself—consuming, as in its great revenge of any thing being created *other than it*, all the mighty worlds which, in Creation, were permitted out of it. This is the teaching of the ancient Fire-Philosophers (re-established and restored, to the days of comprehension of them, in the conclusions of the Rosicrucians, or *Illuminati*, of later times), who claimed to have discovered the Eternal Fire, or to have found out ‘ God ’ in the ‘ Immortal Light ’.

There are all grades or gradations of the density of matter ; but it all coheres by the one law of gravitation. Now, this gravitation is mistaken for a force of itself, when it is nothing but the sympathy, or the taking away of the supposed thing between two other things. It is sympathy (or appetite) seeking its food,



or as the closing-together of two like things. It is not because one mass of matter is more ponderable or attracting than another (out of our senses, and in reality), but that they are the same, with different amounts of affection, and that like seeks like, not recognizing or knowing that between. Now, this thing which is, as it were, slipped between, and which we strike into show of itself, or into fire—surprised and driven out of its ambush—is Fire. It is as the letter by which matter spells itself out—so to speak.

Now, matter is only to be finally forced asunder by heat; flame being the bright, subtle something which comes last, and is the expansion, fruit, crown, or glory of heat: it is the vivid and visible soul, essence, and spirit of heat—the last evolvment before rending and before the forcible closing again of all the centre-speeding weights, or desires, of matter. Flame is as the expanding-out (or even *exploding*) flower to this growing thing, heat: it is as the bubble of it—the fruit (to which before we have likened it), or seed, in the outside Hand upon it. Given the supernatural Flora, heat is as the gorgeous plant, and flame the glorying flower; and as growth is greater out of the greater *matrix*, or matter of growing, so the thicker the material of fire (as we may roughly figure it, though we hope we shall be understood), so the stronger shall the fire be, and of necessity the fiercer will it be perceived to be—result being according to power.

Thus we get more of fire—that is, heat—out of the hard things: there being more of the thing Fire in them.

Trituration, mechanical division, multiplication, cutting up, precipitating, or compounding, are states into which the forces outside can place matter, without searching into and securing its bond, and gathering up (into hand off it) its chains, and mastering it.



These changes can be wrought in matter, and, as it were, it can be taken in pieces ; and all this dissolution of it may be effected without our getting as at the fire-blood of our subject.

But Fire disjoints, as it were, all the hinges of the house—laps out the coherence of it—sets ablaze the dense thing, matter—makes the dark metals run like waters of light—conjures the black devils out of the minerals, and, to our astonishment, shows them much libelled, blinding, angel-white ! By Fire we can lay our hand upon the solids, part them, powder them, melt them, fine them, drive them out to more and more delicate and impalpable texture—firing their invisible molecules, or imponderables, into cloud, into mist, into gas : out of touch, into hearing ; out of hearing, into seeing ; out of seeing into smelling ; out of smelling, into nothing—into real NOTHING—not even into the last blue sky. These are the potent operations of Fire—the crucible into which we can cast all the worlds, and find them, in their last evolution, not even smoke. These are physical and scientific facts which there can be no gainsaying—which were seen and found out long ago, ages ago, in the reveries first, and then in the practice of the great Magnetists, and those who were called the Fire-Philosophers, of whom we have spoken before.

What is that mysterious and inscrutable operation, the striking fire from flint ? Familiar as it is, who remarks it ? Where, in that hardest, closest pressing together of matter—where the granulation compresses, shining even in its hardness, into the solidest *laminæ* of cold, darkest blue, and streaky, core-like, agate-resembling white—lie the seeds of fire, spiritual flame-seeds, to the so stony fruit ? In what folds of the flint, in the block of it—in what invisible recess—speckled and spotted in what tissue—crouch the fire-



sparks?—to issue, in showers, on the stroke of iron—on the so sudden clattering (as of the crowbars of man) on its stony doors: Stone caving the thing Fire, unseen as its sepulchre; Stroke warning the magical thing forth. Whence comes that trail of the fire from the cold bosom of the hard, secret, unexploding flint?—children as from what hard, rocky breast; yet hiding its so sacred, sudden fire-birth! Who—and what science-philosopher—can explain this wondrous darting forth of the hidden something, which he shall try in vain to arrest, but which like a spirit, escapes him? If we ask what fire is, of the men of science, they are at fault. They will tell us that it is a *phenomenon*, that their vocabularies can give no further account of it. They will explain to us that all that can be said of it is, that it is a last affection of matter, to the results of which (in the world of man) they can only testify, but of whose coming and of whose going—of the place from which it comes, and the whereabouts to which it goeth—they are entirely ignorant—and would give a world to know!

The foregoing, however feebly expressed, are the views of the famous Rosicrucians respecting the nature of this supposed familiar, but yet puzzling, thing—Fire.

We will proceed to some of their further mystic reveries. They are very singular.

But the consideration of these is exceedingly abstract, and difficult. The whole subject is abstruse in the highest degree.

In regard to the singular name of the Rosicrucians, it may be here stated that the Chemists, according to their *arcana*, derive the Dew from the Latin *Ros*, and in the figure of a cross (+) they trace the three letters which compose the word *Lux*, Light. Mosheim is positive as to the accuracy of his information.



## CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH

### IDEAS OF THE ROSICRUCIANS AS TO THE CHARACTER OF FIRE

SPARK surrenders out of the world, when it disappears to us, in the universal ocean of Invisible Fire. That is its disappearance. It quits us in the supposed light, but *to it* really darkness—as fire-born, the last level of all—to reappear in the true light, which is *to us* darkness. This is hard to understand. But, as the real is the direct contrary of the apparent, so that which shows as light to us is darkness in the supernatural; and that which is light to the supernatural is darkness to us: matter being darkness, and soul light. For we know that light is material; and being material, it must be dark. For the Spirit of God is not material, and therefore, not being material, it cannot be light to us, and therefore darkness to God. Just as (until discovered otherwise) the world it is that is at rest, and the sun and the heavenly bodies in daily motion—instead of the very reverse being the fact. This is the belief of the oldest Theosophists, the founders of magical knowledge in the East, and the discoverers of the Gods; also the doctrine of the Fire-Philosophers, and of the Rosicrucians, or *Illuminati*, who taught that all knowable things (both of the soul and of the body) were evolved out of Fire, and finally resolvable into it: and that Fire was the last and only-to-be-known God: as that all things were capable of being searched down into it, and all things were capable of being thought up into it. Fire,



they found—when, as it were, they took this world, solid, to pieces (and also, as metaphysicians, distributed and divided the mind of man, seeking for that invisible God-thing, coherence of ideas)—fire, these thinkers found, in their supernatural light of mind, to be the latent, nameless matter started out of the tissues—certainly out of the body, presumably out of the mind—with groan, disturbance, hard motion, and *flash* (when forced to sight of it), instantly disappearing, and relapsing, and hiding its Godhead in the closing-violently-again solid matter—as into the forcefully resuming mind. Matter, the agent whose remonstrance at disturbance out of its Rest was, in the winds, murmur, noises, cries, as it were, of air; in the waters, rolling and roaring; in the piled floors of the sky, and their furniture, clouds, circumvolence, contest, and war, and thunders (defiant to nature, but groans to God), and intolerable lightning-rendings; matter tearing as a garment, to close supernaturally together again as the Solid, fettered and chained—devil-bound—in the Hand upon it, ‘To Be!’ In this sense, all noise (as the rousing or conjuration of matter by the outside forces) is the agony of its penance. All motion is pain, all activity punishment; and fire is the secret, lowest—that is, foundation-spread—thing, the ultimate of all things, which is disclosed when the clouds of things roll, for an instant, off it—as the blue sky shows, in its fragments, like turquoises, when the canopy of clouds is wind-torn, speck-like, from off it. Fire is that floor over which the coats or layers, or the spun kingdoms of matter, or of the subsidences of the past periods of time (which is built up of objects), are laid: tissues woven over a gulf of it: in one of which last, We Are. To which Fire we only become sensible when we start it by blows or force, in the rending up of atoms, and



in the blasting out of them that which holds them, which then, as Secret Spirit, springs compelled to sight, and as instantly flies, except to the immortal eyes, which receive it (in the supernatural) on the other side.

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 The Fire-Philosophers maintained that we transcend everything into Fire, and that we lose it there in the flash; the escape of fire being as the door through which everything disappears to the other side. In their very peculiar speculations, and in this stupendous and supernatural view of the universe, where we think that fire is the exception, and is, as it were, *spotted over the world* (in reality, to go out *when it goes out*), they held that the direct contrary was the truth, and that we, and all things, were *spotted upon fire*: and that we conquer patches only of fire when we put it out, or win torches (as it were) out of the *great flame*, when we enkindle fire—which is our master in the truth, making itself, in our beliefs (in our human needs), the slave. Thus fire, when it is put out, only goes into the under world, and the matter-flags close over it, like a grave-stone.

When we witness Fire, we are as if peeping only through a door into another world. Into this, all the (consumed into microscopical smallness) things of this world, the compressed and concentrate matter-heaps of defunct tides of Being and of Time, are in combustion rushing: kingdoms of the floors of the things passed through—up to this moment held in suspense in the invisible inner worlds. All roars through the hollow. All that is mastered in the operations of this Fire, and that is rushing through the hollow made by it in the partition-world of the Knowable—across, and out on the other side, into the Unknowable—seeks, in the Fire, its last and most perfect evolution into ABSOLUTE NOTHING—



as a bound prisoner urges to his feet, in his chains, and shrieks for freedom when he is smitten. In Fire, we witness a grand phenomenon of the subsidiary (or further, and under, and inner, and multiplied) birth and death, and the supernatural transit of microscopic worlds, passing from the human sense-worlds to other levels and into newer fields. Then it is that the Last Spirit, of which they are composed, is playing before us; and playing, into last extinction, out of its rings of this-side matter; all which matter, in its various stages of thickening, is as the flux of the Supernatural Fire, or inside God.

It will appear no wonder now, if the above abstractions be caught by the Thinker, how it was that the early people (and the founders of Fire-Worship) considered that they saw God, standing face to face with Him—that is, with all that, in their innermost possibility of thought, they could find as God—in Fire. Which Fire is not our vulgar, gross fire; neither is it the purest material fire, which has something of the base, bright lights of the world still about it—brightest though they be in the matter which makes them the *Lightest* to the material sight; but it is an occult, mysterious, or inner—not even magnetic, but a supernatural—Fire: a real, sensible, and the only possible Mind, or God, as containing all things, and as the soul of all things; into whose inexpressibly intense, and all-devouring and divine, though fiery, gulf, all the worlds in succession, like ripe fruit to the ground, and all things, fall—back into whose arms of Immortal Light: on the other side, as again receiving them, all things, thrown off as the smoke off light, again fall!

At the shortest, then, the theory of the Magi may be summed up thus. When, as we think, fire is spotted over all the world, as we have said, it is we who make



the mistake, necessitated in our man's nature ; and we are that which is spotted over it — just as, while we think we move, we are moved ; and we conclude the senses are in us, while we are in the senses ; everything—out of this world—being the very opposite of that which we take it. The views of these mighty thinkers amounted to the suppression of human reason, and the institution of magic, or god head, as all. It will be seen at once that this knowledge was possible but for the very few. It is only fit for men when they seek to pass out of the world, and to approach—the nearer according to their natures—God.

The hollow world in which that essence of things, called Fire, plays, in its escape, in violent agitation—to us, combustion—is deep down inside of us ; that is, deep-sunk inside of the time-stages ; of which rings of being (subsidences of spirit) we are, in the flesh—that is, in the human show of things, in the OUTER. It is exceedingly difficult, through language, to make this idea intelligible ; but it is the real mystic dogma of the ancient Guebres, or the Fire-Believers, the successors of the Buddhists, or, more properly, Bhuddists.

What is explosion ? It is the lancing into the layers of worlds, whereinto we force, through turning the edges out and driving through ; in surprisal of the reluctant, lazy, and secret nature, exposing the hidden, magically microscopical stores of things, passed inwards out of the accumulated rings of worlds, out of the (within) supernaturally buried wealth, rolled in, of the past, in the procession of Being. What is smoke but the disrupted vapour-world to the started soul-fire ? The truth is, say the Fire-Philosophers, in the rousing of fire we suddenly come upon Nature, and start her violently out of her ambush of things, evoking her secretest and immortal face to us. There-



fore is this knowledge not to be known generally of man ; and it is to be assumed at the safest in the disbelief of it : that disbelief being as the magic casket in which it is locked. The keys are only for the Gods, or for god-like spirits.

This is the true view of the religion of the leaders of the ancient Fire-Believers, and of the modern *Illuminati*.

We shall proceed to demonstrate, in the chapters following, other strange things, hitherto wholly unsuspected in the philosophical short-sight of the modern metaphysicians.

We imagine that it will be said that it is impossible that any religionists could have seriously entertained such extraordinary doctrines ; but, incredible as it may seem, because it requires much preparation to understand them, it is certainly true, that it is only in this manner the ideas of the divinity of fire, which we know once prevailed largely, can be made intelligible—we mean, to the philosopher, who knows how properly to value the ancient thinkers, who were as giants in the earth. We shall shortly show that the monuments raised to this strange faith still remain, and that, surviving from the heathen times, the forms still linger and lurk largely amidst the Christian European institutions—the traces of the idolatry, if not the idolatry itself.

Obelisks, spires, minarets, tall towers, upright stones (Menhirs), monumental crosses, and architectural perpendiculars of every description, and, generally speaking, all erections conspicuous for height and slimness, were representatives of the sworded, or of the pyramidal, Fire. They bespoke, wherever found, and in whatever age, the idea of the First Principle, or the male generative emblem.

Having given, as we hope, some new views of the



doctrine of Universal Fire, and shown that there has been error in imagining that the Persians and the ancient Fire-Worshippers were idolaters simply of fire, inasmuch as, in bowing down before it, they only regarded Fire as a symbol, or visible sign, or thing placed as standing for the Deity—having, in our preceding chapters, disposed the mind of the reader to consider as a matter of solemnity, and of much greater general significance, this strange fact of Fire-Worship, and endeavoured to show it as a portentous, first, all-embracing as all-genuine principle—we will proceed to exemplify the widespread roots of the Fire-Faith. In fact, we seem to recognize it everywhere.

Instead of—in their superstitions—making of fire their God, they obtained Him, that is, all that we can realize of Him ; by which we mean, all that the human reason can find of the Last Principle—out of it. Already, in their thoughts, had the Magi exhausted all possible theologies ; already had they, in their great wisdom, searched through physics—their power to this end (as not being distracted by world's objects) being much greater than that of the modern faith-teachers and doctors ; already in their reveries, in their observations (deep within their deep souls) upon the nature of themselves, and of the microcosm of a world in which they found themselves, had the Magi transcended. They had arrived at a new world in their speculations and deductions upon facts, upon all the things behind which (to men) make these facts. Already, in their determined climbing into the heights of thought, had these Titans of mind achieved, past the cosmical, through the shadowy borders of Real and Unreal, into Magic. For, is Magic wholly false ?

Passing through these mind-worlds, and coming out, as we may figure it, *at the other side*, penetrating



into the secrets of things, they evaporated all Powers, and resolved them finally into the Last Fire. Beyond this, they found nothing; as into this they resolved all things. And then, on the Throne of the Visible, they placed this—in the world, Invisible—Fire: the sense-thing to be worshipped *in the senses*, as the last thing of them, and the king of them—that is, that which we know as the phenomenon, Burning Fire—the Spiritual Fire being impalpable, as having the visible only for its shadow; the Ghostly Fire not being even to be thought upon; thought being its medium of apprehension when it itself had slipped; the waves of apprehension of it only flowing back when it—being intuition—had vanished. We only know that a thought is in us when the thought is off the object and in us: another thought being, at that simultaneous instant, in the object, to be taken up by us only when the first has gone out of us, and so on; but not *before* to be taken up by us—that thought being *all of us*, and a deceptive and unreal thing to pass at all to us through the reason, and there being no resemblance between it and its original: the true thing being ‘Inspiration’, or ‘God in us’, excluding all matter or *reason*, which is only built up of matter. It is most difficult to frame language in regard to these things. Reason can only unmake God; He is only possible in His own development, or in His seizing of us, and ‘in possession’. Thus Paracelsus and his disciples declare that Human Reason become our master, that is, in its perfection—but not used as our servant—transforms, as it were, into the Devil, and exercises *his* office in leading us away *from* the throne of Spiritual Light—other, and, in the world, seeming *better*; in his false and deluding World-Light, or Matter-Light, really showing himself God. This view of the Human Reason, intellectually trusted,



transforming into the Angel of Darkness, and effacing God out of the world, is borne out by a thousand *texts of Scripture*. It is equally in the belief and in the traditions of all nations and of all time, as we shall by and by show. Real Light is God's shadow, or the soul of matter; the one is the very brighter, as the other is the very blacker. Thus, the worshippers of the Sun, or Light, or Fire, whether in the Old or the New Worlds, worshipped not Sun, or Light, or Fire—otherwise they would have worshipped the Devil, he being all conceivable Light; but rather they adored the Unknown Great God, in the last image that was possible to man of anything—the Fire. And they chose that as His shadow, as the very opposite of that which He really was; honouring the Master through His Servant; bowing before the manifestation, Eldest of Time, for the Timeless; paying homage to the spirit of the Devil-World, or rather to the Beginning and End, on which was the foot of the ALL, that the ALL, or the LAST, might be worshipped; propitiating the Evil Principle in its finite shows, because (as by that alone a world could be made, whose making is alone Comparison) it was permitted as a means of God, and therefore the operation of God Downwards, as part of Him, though Upwards dissipating as before Him—before HIM in whose presence Evil, or Comparison, or Difference, or Time, or Space, or anything, should be Impossible: real God being not to be thought upon.

But it was not only in the quickening Spirit of Divinity that these things could be seen. Otherwise than in faith, we can hope that they shall now—in our weak attempts to explain them—be gathered as not contradictory, and merely intellectual, and seen as vital and absolute. They need the elevation of the mind in the sense of 'inspiration', and not the



quickenings and the *sharpening* of the Intellect, as seeking wings—devil-pinions—wherewith to sail into the region only of its own laws, where, of course it will not find God. Then step in the mathematics, then the senses, then the reason—then the very perfection of matter-work, or this world's work, sets in—engines of which the Satanic Powers shall realize the work. The Evil Spirit conjures, as even by holy command, the translucent sky. The Archangelic, clear, child-like rendering-up in intuitive belief—intense in its own sun—is FAITH. Lucifer fills the scope of belief with imitative, dazzling clouds, and built splendours. With these temptations it is sought to dissuade, sought to rival, sought to put out Saints' sight—sought even to surpass in seeming a further and truer, because a more solid and a more sensible, glory. The apostate, real-born Lucifer is so named as the intensest Spirit of Light, because he is of the things that perish, and of the things that to Mind—because they are all of Matter—have the most of glory! Thus is one of the names of the Devil, the very eldest-born and brightest Star of Light, that of the very morning and beginning of all things—the clearest, brightest, purest, as being soul-like, of Nature; but only of Nature. Real law, or Nature, is the Devil; real Reason is the Devil.

Now we shall find, with a little patience, that this transcendental, beyond-limit-or-knowledge ancient belief of the Fire-God is to be laid hand upon—as, in a manner, we shall say—in all the stories and theologies of the ancient world—in all the countries (and they, indeed, *are* all) where belief has grown—yea, as a thing with the trees and plants, as out of the very ground, in all the continents, and in both worlds. And out of this great fact of its universal diffusion, as a matter of history the most innate and coexistent,



shall we not assume this fire-doctrine as being of truth—as a thing really, fundamentally, and vitally true? As in the East, so in the West; as in the old time, so in the new; as in the preadamite and postdiluvian worlds, so in the modern and latter-day world; surviving through the ages, buried in the foundations of empires, locked in the rocks, hoarded in legends, maintained in monuments, preserved in beliefs, suggested in tradition, borne amidst the roads of the multitude in emblems, gathered up—as the recurring, unremarked, supernaturally coruscant, and yet secret, evading, encrusted, and dishonoured jewel—in rites, spoken (to those capable of the comprehension) in the field of hieroglyphics, dimly glowing up to a fitful suspicion of it in the sacred rites of all peoples, figured forth in the religions, symbolized in a hundred ways; attested, prenoted, bodied forth in occult body, as far as body can—in fine, in multitudinous fashions and forms forcibly soliciting the sharpness of sight directed to its discovery, and spelt over a floor as underplacing all things, we recognize, we espy, we descry, and we may, lastly, ADMIT the mysterious sacredness of Fire. For why should we not admit it?

Of course, it will not for a moment be supposed that we mean anything like—or in its nature similar to—ordinary fire. We hope that no one will be so absurd as to suppose that this in any manner could be the mysterious and sacred element for which we are contesting. Where we are seeking to transcend, this would be simply sinking back into vulgar reason. While we are seeking to convict and dethrone this world's reason as the real devil, this would be distinctly deifying common sense. Of common sense, except for common-sense objects, we make no account. We have rather in awed contemplation the divine, ineffable, transcendental SPIRIT—the Immortal fer-



your—into which the whole World evolves. We have the mystery of the Holy Spirit in view, called by its many names.

It is because theologies will contest concerning divers names of the same thing, that we therefore seek, in transcending, but to identify. It is because men will dispute about forms, that we seek philosophically to show that all forms are impossible—that, when we take the human reason into account, all forms of belief are alike. Reason has been the great enemy of religion. Let us see if this world's reason cannot be mastered.

We are now about—in a new light—to treat of facts, and of various historical monuments. They all bear reference to this universal story of the mystic Fire.

We claim to be the first to point out how strikingly—and yet how, at the same time, without any suspicion of it—these emblems and remains, in so many curious and unintelligible forms, of the magic religion are found in the Christian churches.





## CHAPTER THE TWELFTH

### MONUMENTS RAISED TO FIRE-WORSHIP IN ALL COUNTRIES

WE think that we shall be able fully in our succeeding chapters to place beyond contradiction an extraordinary discovery. It is, that the whole round of disputed emblems which so puzzle antiquaries, and which are found in all countries, point to the belief in Fire as the First Principle. We seek to show that the Fire-Worship was the very earliest, from the immemorial times—that it was the foundation religion—that the attestation to it is preserved in monuments scattered all over the globe—that the rites and usages of all creeds, down even to our own day, and in everyday use about us, bear reference to it—that problems and puzzles in religion, which cannot be otherwise explained, stand clear and evident when regarded in this new light—that in all the Christian varieties of belief—as truly as in Bhuddism, in Mohammedanism, in Heathenism of all kinds, whether Eastern, or Western, or Northern, or Southern—this ‘Mystery of Fire’ stands ever general, recurring, and conspicuous—and that in being so, beyond all measure, old, and so, beyond all modern or any idea of it, general—as universal, in fact, as man himself, and the thoughts of man; and, as being that beyond which, in science and in natural philosophy, we cannot further go, it must carry truth with it, however difficult to comprehend, and however unsuspected:



that is, as really being the manifestation and Spirit of God, and—to the confounding and annihilation of Atheism—Revelation.

Affirmatively we shall now, therefore, offer to the attention of the reader the universal scattering of the Fire-Monuments, taking up at the outset certain positions about them.

Narrowly considered, it will be found that all religions transcend up into this spiritual Fire-Floor, on which, to speak metaphysically, the phases of Time were laid. Material Fire, which is the brighter as the matter which constitutes it is the blacker, is the shadow (so to express, or to speak, necessarily with 'words', which have no meaning in the spirit) of the 'Spirit-Light', which invests itself in it as the mask in which alone it can be possible. Thus, material light being the very opposite of God, the Egyptians—who were undoubtedly acquainted with the Fire-Revelation—could not represent God as light. They therefore expressed their Idea of Deity by darkness. Their chief adoration was paid to *Darkness*. They bodied the Eternal forth under Darkness.

In the early times before the Deluge—of which 'phenomenon', as there remains a brighter or fainter tradition of it among all the peoples of the globe, it must be true—Man walked with the Knowledge of Spirit in him. He has derogated, through time, from this primeval, God-informed Type. Knowledge of Good and Evil, or the *power of perceiving difference*, became his faculty, with his power of propagation, only in his fallen state—that is, his gods only came to him in his fallen state. As one of two things must of necessity be under the other, and as 'one' and 'two' are double in succession—one being, as a matter of course, before the other—and 'positive' or 'particled', existence being in itself denial of 'ab-



stract', or 'imparticled', existence—existence needing something other than itself to find itself—logicians must see at once in this that Comparison is constituted; from out of which *difference* is built Light and Shadow, or a world, whether the moral world or the real world.

The immemorial landmark, in the architectural form, is the upright. We find the earliest record of this in the setting-up of monumental stones. Seth is said to have engraved the wisdom of the Antediluvians upon two pillars—one of brick, the other of stone—which he erected in the 'Siriadic land'—a *Terra Incognita* to modern antiquaries. This raising of the 'reminding-stone' prevails in all places, and was the act of all time. It is the only independent thing which stands distinct out of the clouds of the past. It would seem universally to refer to the single Supernatural Tradition—all that is heired out of Time. A mysterious Cabalistic volume of high repute, and of the greatest antiquity, is *The Book of Light*, whose doctrine divides. The first dogma is that of 'Light-Enlightened', or 'Self-Existent', which signifies God, or the Light Spiritual, which is darkness in the world, or Manifestation or Creation. This Light-Enlightened is Inspiration, or blackness to men (God), opposed to knowledge, or brightness to men (the Devil). The second Light is the Enlightening Light, or the Material Light, which is the producer, foundation, and God of *this World*—proceeding, nevertheless, from God; for He is All. It is in reverence to this second light, and to the Mysterious Identity of both (the third power Three in One)—but only in the necessity of 'being'—all dark-being constituting all bright-being in the Spirit, and Both, and their identity, being One—that these monumental pillars are raised—being really the mark

cf. "Lucifer"



and the signal (warning on, in Time) of supernatural, or magic, knowledge.

Stones were set up by the Patriarchs: the Bible records them. In India, the first objects of worship were monoliths. In the two peninsulas of India, in Ceylon, in Persia, in the Holy Land, in Phœnicia, in Sarmathia, in Scythia, everywhere where worship was attempted (and in what place where man exists is it not?), everywhere where worship was practised (and where, out of fears, did not, first, come the gods, and then their propitiation?)—in all the countries, we repeat, as the earliest of man's work, we recognize this sublime, mysteriously speaking, ever-recurring monolith, marking up the tradition of the supernaturally real, and only real, Fire-dogma. Buried so far down in time, the suspicion assents that there *must* somehow be truth in the foundation; not fanciful, legendary, philosophical creed-truth, unexplainable (and only to be admitted without question) truth; but truth, however mysterious and awing, yet cogent, and not to be of philosophy (that is, illumination) denied.

The death and descent of Balder into the Hell of the Scandinavians may be supposed to be the purgatory of the Human Unit (or the God-illuminate), from the Light (through the God-dark phases of being), back into its native Light. Balder was the Scandinavian Sun-God, and the same as the Egyptian Osiris, the Greek Hercules, Bacchus, and Phœbus, or Apollo, the Indian Crishna, the Persian Mithras, the Aten of the empires of insular Asia; or, even of the Sidonians, the Athyr or Ashtaroth. The presences of all these divinities—indeed, of all Gods—were of the semblance of Fire; and we recognize, as it were, the mark of the foot of them, or of the Impersonated Fire, in the countless uprights, left, as memorials, in the great



ebb of the ages (as waves) to nations in the latter divisions of that great roll of periods called Time; yet so totally unguessing of the preternatural mystery—seeming the key of all belief, and the reading of all wonders—which they speak.

It is to be noted that all the above religions—all the Creeds of Fire—were exceedingly similar in their nature; that they were all fortified by rites, and fenced around with ceremonies; and that, associated as they were with mysteries and initiations, the disciple was led through the knowledge of them in stages, as his powers augmented and his eyes saw, until, towards the last grades (as he himself grew capable and illuminate), the door was closed upon all after-pursuing and unrecognized inquirers, and the Admitted One was himself lost sight of.

There was a great wave to the westward of all knowledge, all cultivation of the arts, all tradition, all intellect, all civilization, all religious belief. The world was peopled westwards. There seems some secret, divine impress upon the world's destinies—and, indeed, ingrain in cosmical matter—in these matters. All faiths seem to have diverged out, the narrower or the wider, as rays from the great central sun of this tradition of the Fire-Original. It would seem that Noah, who is suspected to be the Fo, Foh, or Fohi, of the Chinese, carried it into the farthest Cathay of the Middle Ages. What is the Chinese Tien, or Earliest Fire? The pagodas of the Chinese (which name, *pagoda*, was borrowed from the Indian; from which country of India, indeed, probably came into China its worship, and its Bhuddist doctrine of the exhaustion back into the divine light, or unparticled nothingness, of all the stages of Being or of Evil)—the Chinese pagodas, we repeat, are nothing but innumerable gilt and belled fanciful repetitions



of the primeval monolith. The fire, or light, is still worshipped in the Chinese temples; it has not been perceived that, in the very form of the Chinese pagodas, the fundamental article of the Chinese religion—transmigration, through stages of being, out into nothingness of this world—has been architecturally emblemed in the diminishing stories, carried upwards, and fining away into the series of unaccountable discs struck through a vertical rod, until all culminates, and—as it were, to speak heraldically of it—the last *achievement* is blazoned in the gilded ball, which means the final, or Bhuddist, glorifying absorption. Buildings have always telegraphed the *insignia* of the mythologies; and, in China, the fantastic speaks the sublime. We recognize the same embodied *Mythos* in all architectural spiring or artistic diminution, whether tapering to the globe or exaltation of the Egyptian *Uræus*, or the disc, or the Sidonian crescent, or the lunar horns, or the *acroterium* of the Greek temple, or the pediment of the classic *pronaos* itself (crowning, how grandly and suggestively, at solemn dawn, or in the ‘spirit-lustres’ of the dimming, and, still more than dawn, solemn twilight, the top of some mountain, an ancient of the days). Here, besetting us at every turn, meet we the same mythic emblem: again, in the crescent of the Mohammedan fanes, surmounting even the Latin, and therefore the once Christian, St. Sophia. Last, and not least, the countless ‘churches’ rise, in the Latter-day Dispensation, sublimely to the universal signal, in the glorifying, or top, or crowning Cross: last of the Revelations!

In the fire-towers of the Sikhs, in the dome-covered and many-storied spires of the Hindoos, in the vertically turreted and longitudinally massed temples of the Bhudds, of all the classes and of all the sects, in the religious buildings of the Cingalese, in the upright



flame-fanes of the Parsees, in the original of the *campaniles* of the Italians, in the tower of St. Mark at Venice, in the flame-shaped or pyramidal (*pyr* is the Greek for fire) architecture of the Egyptians (which is the parent of all that is called architecture), we see the recurring symbol. All the minarets that, in the Eastern sunshine, glisten through the Land of the Moslem; indeed, his two-horned crescent, equally with the moon, or disc, or two-pointed globe of the Sidonian Ashtaroth (after whose forbidden worship Solomon, the wisest of mankind, in his defection from the God of his fathers, evilly thirsted); also, the mystic *discus*, or 'round' of the Egyptians, so continually repeated, and set, as it were, as the forehead-mark upon all the temples of the land of soothsayers and sorcerers—this Egypt so profound in its philosophies, in its wisdom, in its magic-seeing, and in its religion, raising out of the black Abyss a God to shadow it—all the minarets of the Mohammedan, we say, together with all the other symbols of moon, of disc, of wings, or of horns (equally with the shadowy and preternatural beings in all mythologies and in all theologies, to which these adjuncts or *insignia* are referred, and which are symbolized by them)—all these monuments, or bodied meanings, testify to the Deification of Fire.

What may mean that 'Tower of Babel' and its impious raising, when it sought, even past and over the clouds, to imply a daring sign? What portent was that betrayal of a knowledge not for man—that surmise forbidden save in infinite humility, and in the whispered impartment of the further and seemingly more impossible, and still more greatly mystical, meanings? In utter abnegation of self alone shall the mystery of fire be conceived. Of what was this Tower of Belus, or the Fire, to be the monument?



When it soared, as a *pharos*, on the rock of the traditional ages, to defy time in its commitment to 'form' of the unpronounceable secret—stage on stage and story on story, though it climbed the clouds, and on its top should shine the ever-burning fire—first idol of the world, 'dark, save with neglected stars'—what was the Tower of Babel but a gigantic monolith? Perhaps to record and to perpetuate this ground-fire of all; to be worshipped, an idol, in its visible form, when it should be alone taken as the invisible *thought*: fire to be waited for (spirit-possession), not waited on (idolatry). Therefore was the speech confounded, that the thing should not be; therefore, under the myth of climbing into heaven by the means of it, was the first colossal monolithic temple (in which the early dwellers upon the earth sought to enshrine the Fire) laid prostrate in the thunder of the Great God! And the languages were confounded from that day—speech was made babble—thence its name—that the secret should remain a secret. It was to be only darkly hinted, and to be fitfully disclosed, like a false-showing light, in the theosophic glimmer, amidst the world's knowledge-lights. It was to reappear, like a spirit, to the 'initiate', in the glimpse of reverie, in the snatches of sight, in the profoundest wisdom, through the studies of the ages.

We find, in the religious administration of the ancient world, the most abundant proofs of the secret fire-tradition. Schweigger shows, in his *Introduction into Mythology* (pp. 132, 228), that the Phœnician Cabiri and the Greek Dioscuri, the Curetes, Corybantes, Telchini, were originally of the same nature, and are only different in trifling particulars. All these symbols represent electric and magnetic phenomena, and that under the ancient name of twin-fires,



hermaphrodite fire. The Dioscuri is a phrase equivalent to the Sons of Heaven : if, as Herodotus asserts, ' Zeus originally represented the whole circle of heaven '.

According to the ancient opinion of Heraclitus, the contest of opposing forces is the origin of new bodies, and the reconcilment of these contending principles is called combustion. This is, according to Montfauçon, sketched in the minutest detail in the engravings of the ancient Phœnician Cabiri.

From India into Egypt was imported this spiritual fire-belief. We recognize, again, its never-failing structure-signal. Rightly regarded, the great Pyramids are nothing but the world-enduring architectural attestation, following (in the pyramidal) the well-known leading law of Egypt's templar-piling—mound-like, spiry—of the universal Flame-Faith. Place a light upon the summit, star-like upon the sky, and a prodigious altar the mighty Pyramid then becomes. In this tribute to the world-filling faith, burneth expressed devotion to (radiateth acknowledgment of) the immemorial magic religion. There is little doubt that as token and emblem of fire-worship, as indicative of the adoration of the real, accepted deity, these Pyramids were raised. The idea that they were burial-places of the Egyptian monarchs is untenable, when submitted to the weighing of meanings, and when it comes side by side with this better fire-explanation. Cannot we accept these Pyramids as the vast altars on whose top should burn the flame—flame commemorative, as it were, to all the world? Cannot we see in these piles, literally and really transcendental in origin, the Egyptian reproduction, and a hieroglyphical signalling-on, of special truth, eldest of time? Do we not recognize in the Pyramid the repetition of the first monolith—all the uprights con-



stituting the grand attesting pillar to the supernatural tradition of a Fire-Born World ?

The ever-recurring globe with wings, so frequent in the sculptures of the Egyptians, witnesses to the Electric Principle. It embodies the transmigration of the Indians, reproduced by Pythagoras. Pythagoras resided for a long period in Egypt, and acquired from the priests the philosophic 'transition'-knowledge, which was afterwards doctrine. The globe, disc, or circle of the Phœnician Astarte, the crescent of Minerva, the horns of the Egyptian Ammon, the deifying of the ox—all have the same meaning. We trace among the Hebrews, the token of the identical mystery in the horns of Moses, distinct in the sublime statue by Michael Angelo in the Vatican ; as also in the horns of the Levitical altar : indeed, the use of the 'double hieroglyph' in continual ways. The *volute*s of the Ionic column, the twin-stars of Castor and Pollux, nay, generally, the employment of the double emblem all the world over, in ancient or in modern times, whether displayed as points, or *radii*, or wings on the helmets of those barbarian chiefs who made war upon Rome, Attila or Genseric, or broadly shown upon the head-piece of the Frankish Clovis ; whether emblemed in the rude and, as it were, savagely mystic horns of the Asiatic idols, or reproduced in the horns of the Runic Hammerer (or Destroyer), or those of the Gothic Mars, or of the modern devil ; all this double-spreading from a common point (or this figure of HORNS) speaks the same story.

The Colossus of Rhodes was a monolith, in the human form, dedicated to the Sun, or to fire. The Pharos of Alexandria was a fire-monument. Heliopolis, or the City of the Sun, in Lower Egypt (as the name signifies), contained a temple, wherein, combined with all the dark superstitions of the Egyptians, the



flame-secret was preserved. In most jealous secrecy was the tradition guarded, and the symbol alone was presented to the world. Of the Pyramids, as prodigious Fire-Monuments, we have before spoken. Magnificent as the principal Pyramid still is, it is stated by an ancient historian that it originally formed, at the base, 'a square of eight hundred feet, and that it was eight hundred feet high'. Another informs us that 'three hundred and sixty-six thousand men were employed twenty years in its erection'. Its height is now supposed to be six hundred feet. Have historians and antiquaries carefully weighed the fact (even in the *name* of the Pyramids), that *Pyr*, or *Pur*, in the Greek, means *Fire*? We would argue that that object, in the Great Pyramid, which has been mistaken for a tomb (and which is, moreover, rather fashioned like an altar, smooth and plain, without any carved work), is, in reality, the vase, urn, or depository, of the sacred, ever-burning *fire*: of the existence of which ever-living, inextinguishable fire, to be found at some period of the world's history, there is abundant tradition. This view is fortified by the statements of Diodorus, who writes that 'Cheops, or Chemis, who founded the principal Pyramid, and Cephren, or Cephrenus, who built the next to it, were neither buried here, but that they were deposited elsewhere'.

Cheops, Cephrenus, and Mycerinus, the mighty builders of these super-gigantic monuments, of which it is said that they look as if intended to resist the waste of the ages, and, as in a front of supernatural and sublime submission, to await, in the undulation of Time (as in the waves of centuries), the expected revolution of nature, and the new and recommencing series of existence, surely had in view something grander, something still more universally portentous, than sepulture—or even death!



Is it at all reasonable to conclude, at a period when knowledge was at the highest, and when the human powers were, in comparison with ours at the present time, prodigious, that all these indomitable, scarcely believable, physical efforts—that such achievements as those of the Egyptians—were devoted to a mistake? that the Myriads of the Nile were fools labouring in the dark, and that all the magic of their great men was forgery? and that we, in despising that which we call their superstition and wasted power, are alone the wise? No! there is much more in these old religions than, probably, in the audacity of modern denial, in the confidence of these superficial-science times, and in the derision of these days without faith, is in the least degree supposed. We do not understand the old time.

It is evident from their hieroglyphics that the Egyptians were acquainted with the wonders of magnetism. By means of it (and by the secret powers which lie in the hyper-sensual, 'heaped floors' of it), out of the every-day senses, the Egyptians struck together, as it were, a bridge, across which they paraded into the supernatural; the magic portals receiving them as on the other and *armed* side of a drawbridge, shaking in its thunders in its raising (or in its lowering), as out of flesh. Athwart this, in trances, swept the adepts, leaving their mortality behind them: all, and their earth-surroundings, to be resumed at their reissue upon the plains of life, when down in their humanity again.

In the cities of the ancient world, the Palladium, or Protecting Talisman (invariably set up in the chief square or place), was—there is but little doubt—the reiteration of the very earliest monolith. All the obelisks—each often a single stone, of prodigious weight—all the singular, solitary, wonderful pillars



and monuments of Egypt, as of other lands, are, as it were, only tombstones of the Fire! All testify to the great, so darkly hinted secret. In Troy was the image of Pallas, the myth of knowledge, of the world, of manifestation, of the fire-soul. In Athens was Pallas-Athene, or Minerva. In the Greek cities, the form of the deity changed variously to Bacchus, to Hercules, to Phœbus-Apollo; to the tri-formed Minerva, Dian, and Hecate; to the dusky Ceres, or the darker Cybele. In the wilds of Sarmathia, in the wastes of Northern Asia, the luminous rays descended from heaven, and, animating the Lama, or 'Light-Born', spoke the same story. The flames of the Greeks, the towers of the Phœnicians, the emblems of the Pelasgi; the story of Prometheus, and the myth of his stealing the fire from heaven, wherewith to animate the man (or ensoul the visible world); the forges of the Cyclops, and the monuments of Sicily; the mysteries of the Etrurians; the rites of the Carthaginians; the torches borne, in all priestly demonstrative processions, at all times, in all countries; the vestal fires of the Romans; the very word *flamen*, as indicative of the office of the officiating sacerdote; the hidden fires of the ancient Persians, and of the grimmer (at least in name) Guebres; the whole mystic meaning of flames on altars, of the ever-burning tombs-lights of the earlier peoples, whether in the classic or in the barbarian lands—everything of this kind was intended to signify the deified Fire. Fires are lighted in the funeral ceremonies of the Hindoos and of the Mohammedans, even to this day, though the body be committed whole to earth. Wherefore fire, then? Cremation and urn-burial, or the burning of the dead—practised in all ages—imply a profounder meaning than is generally supposed. They point to the transmigration of Pythagoras, or to the



purgatorial reproductions of the Indians, among whom we the earliest find the dogma. The real signification of fire-burial is the commitment of human mortality into the last of all matter, overleaping the intermediate states ; or the delivering over of the man-unit into the Flame-Soul, past all intervening spheres or stages of the purgatorial : the absolute doctrine of the Bhudds, taught, even at this day, among the *initiate* all over the East. Thus we see how classic practice and heathen teaching may be made to reconcile—how even the Gentile and Hebrew, the mythological and the (so-called) Christian, doctrine harmonize in the general faith—founded in magic. That magic is indeed possible is the moral of our book.

We have seen that Hercules was the myth of the Electric Principle. His pillars (Calpe and Abyla) are the Dual upon which may be supposed to rest a world. They stood in the days when giants might really be imagined—indeed, they almost look as impressive of it *now*—the twin prodigious monoliths, similar in purpose to the artificial pyramids. They must have struck the astonished and awed discoverer's gaze, navigating that silent Mediterranean (when men seemed as almost to find themselves alone in the world), as the veritable, colossal, natural pillars on which should burn the double Lights of the forbidden Baal : witness of the ever-perpetuated, ever-perpetuating legend of the fire-making ! So to the Phœnician sailors, who, we are told, first descried, and then stemmed royally through, these peaked and jagged and majestic Straits—doorway to the mighty floor of the new blue ocean, still of the more Tyrian crystal depth—rolling, in walls of waves, under the enticing blaze of the cloud-empurpled, all-imperial, western sun, whose court was fire indeed—God's, not Baal's !



—so to these men of Sidon, emblemed with the fire-white horns of the globed Astarte, or Ashtaroth, showed the monster rocks: pillar-portals—fire-topped as the last world-beacon—to close in (as gate) that classic sea, and to warn, as of the terrors of the unknown, new, and second world of farthest waters, which stretched to the limits of possibility. Forsaking, indeed, daringly, were these Iberi their altars, to tempt perils, when they left behind them that mouth of their Mediterranean: that sea upon whose embayed and devious margin were nations the most diverse, yet the mightiest of the earth. The very name of the Iberia which they discovered, and to which they themselves gave title, hints the *Cabiri*, who carried, doubtless, in their explorations, as equally with their commerce and their arts, their religious usages and their faith, as pyramidically intensifying, until it flashed truth upon the worlds in the grand Fire-Dogma—that faith to which sprung monuments from all the sea-borders at which glittered the beak—itsself an imitation flame—of every many-oared, single ship of their adventurous, ocean-dotting fleets—the precursors of the exploring ships of the Vikings.

We claim the cauldron of the witches as, in the original, the vase or urn of the fiery transmigration, in which all the things of the world change. We accept the sign of the double-extended fingers (pointed in a fork) or of *horns*, which throughout Italy, the Greek Islands, Greece, and Turkey, is esteemed as the counter-charm to the Evil Eye, as the occult Magian telegraphic. The horns, or *radii* of the Merry-Andrew, or Jester, or Motley, and the horns of Satan, indeed, the figure of horns generally<sup>1</sup>, even have a strange

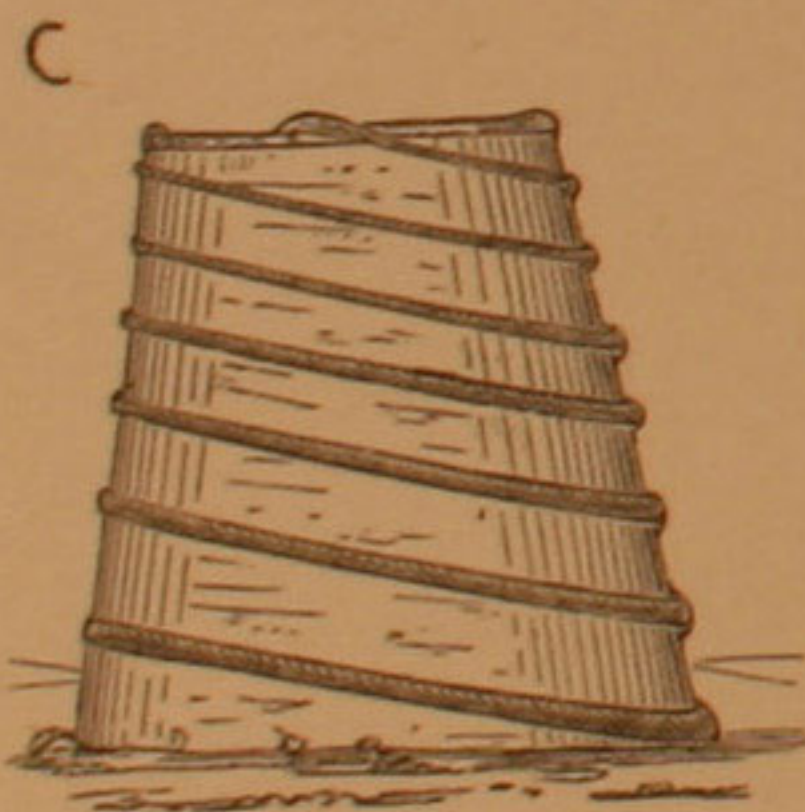
<sup>1</sup> Horns generally—whether the horns of the *cocu*, which need not be those of the 'wittol', or contented, betrayed husband, but generally implying the mysterious ultra-natural scorn, ranging



affinity in the consecrate and religious. The horse-shoe, so universally employed as a defensive charm, and used as a sign to warn-off and to consecrate, when—as it so frequently is—displayed at the entrance of stables, outhouses, and farm-buildings in country places, speaks the acknowledgment of the Devil, or Sinister Principle. The rearing aloft, and ‘throwing out’ as it were, of protesting, and—in a certain fashion—badge-like, magic signs, in the bodies of bats, and wild nocturnal creatures, fixed upon barn doors, we hold to be the perpetuation of the old heathen sacrifice to the harmful gods, or a sort of devil-propitiation. Again, in this horse-shoe we meet the *horse*, as indicative of, and connected with, spirit power: of which strange association we shall by and by have more to say. The horse-shoe is the mystic symbol of the Wizard’s Foot, or the *sigma*, or sign, of the abstract ‘Four-footed’, the strangely secret, constantly presented, but as constantly evading, magic meaning conveyed in which (a tremendous cabalistic sign) we encounter everywhere. May the original, in the East, of the horse-shoe arch of the Saracens, which is a foundation-form of our Gothic architecture—may the horse-shoe form of all arches and cupolas (which figure is to be met everywhere in Asia)—may these strange, rhomboidal curves carry reference to the ancient mysterious blending of the ideas of the horse and the supernatural and religious? It is an awing thought; but Spirits and supernatural embodiments—unperceived by our limited, vulgar senses—may make their daily walk amidst us, invisible, in the ways of the world. It may indeed be that they are sometimes suddenly *happened upon*, and, as it were, in meaning with the ‘attiring’ and stigmatizing of Actæon turned into the stag, and hunted by his own hounds, for surprising Diana naked.



surprised. The world—although so silent—may be noisy with ghostly feet. The Unseen Ministers may every day pass in and out among our ways, and we all the time think that we have the world to ourselves. It is, as it were, to this *inside*, unsuspected world that these recognitive, deprecatory signs of horse-shoes and of charms are addressed; that the harming presences, unprovoked, may pass harmless; that the jealous watch of the Unseen over us may be assuaged in the acknowledgment; that the unrecognized presences amidst us, if met with an unconsciousness for which man cannot be accountable, may not be offended with carelessness in regard of them for which he may be punishable.





## CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH

### DRUIDICAL STONES AND THEIR WORSHIP

THE monolith, talisman, mysterious pillar, or stone memorial, raised in attestation of the fire-tradition, and occupying the principal square or place, Forum, or middle-most or navel-point of the city in ancient times, is the original of our British market-crosses. The *cromlech*, or *bilithon*, or *trilithon*; the single, double, or grouped stones found in remote places—in Cornwall, in Wales, in various counties of England, in by-spots in Scotland, in the Scottish Isles, in the Isle of Man, and in Ireland—all these stones of memorial—older than history—speak the secret faith of the ancient peoples. These stones are also to be found in Brittany, in various parts of France and Spain; nay, throughout Europe, and occurring to recognition, in fact, in all parts of the world—old and new.

Stonehenge, with its inner and outer circles of stones, enclosing the central mythic object, or altar; all the Druidic or Celtic remains; stones on the tops of mountains, altar-tables in the valley; the centre measuring, or obelisk, stones, in market-places or centre-spaces in great towns, from which the highways radiated, spaced—in mileage—to distance; that time-honoured relic, 'London Stone', still extant in Cannon Street, London; the Scottish 'sacred stone', with its famous oracular gifts, vulgarly called Jacob's Pillow, transported to England by the dominant Edward the First, and preserved in the seat of the Coronation Chair in Westminster Abbey; even the



placing of upright stones as tombstones, which is generally accepted as a mere means of personal record—for, be it remembered, the ancients placed *tablets* against their walls by way of funeral register; all follow the same rule. We consider all these as variations of the upright commemorative pillar.

The province of Brittany, in France, is thickly studded with stone pillars, and the history and manners of its people teem with interesting, and very curious, traces of the worship of them. In these parts, and elsewhere, they are distinguished by the name of *Menhirs and Peulvans*. The superstitious veneration of the Irish people for such stones is well known. M. de Fréminville says in his *Antiquités du Finistère*, p. 106: 'The Celts worshipped a divinity which united the attributes of Cybele and Venus'. This worship prevailed also in Spain—as, doubtless, throughout Europe—inasmuch as we find the Eleventh and Twelfth Councils of Toledo warning those who offered worship to stones that they were sacrificing to devils.

We are taught that the Druidical institution of Britain was Pythagorean, or patriarchal, or Brahminical. The presumed universal knowledge which this order possessed, and the singular customs which they practised, have afforded sufficient analogies and affinities to maintain the occult and remote origin of Druidism. A Welsh antiquary insists that the Druidical system of the Metempsychosis was conveyed to the Brahmins of India by a former emigration from Wales. But, the reverse may have occurred, if we trust the elaborate researches which would demonstrate that the Druids were a scion of the Oriental family. The reader is referred to Toland's *History of the Druids*, in his *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. ii, p. 163; also to a book published in London in 1829, with the title *The Celtic Druids; or, An Attempt*



to show that the Druids were the Priests of Oriental Colonies, who emigrated from India, by Godfrey Higgins. A recent writer confidently intimated that the knowledge of Druidism must be searched for in the Talmudical writings; but another, in return, asserts that the Druids were older than the Jews.

Whence and when the British Druids transplanted themselves to this lone world amid the ocean, no historian can write. We can judge of the Druids simply by the sublime monuments which are left of them, surviving, in their majestic loneliness, through the ages of civilization. Unhewn masses or heaps of stones tell alone their story; such are their *cairns*, and *cromlechs*, and *corneddes*, and that wild architecture, whose stones hang on one another, still frowning on the plains of Salisbury.

Among the most remarkable ancient remains in Wales (both North and South) are the Druidical stones: poised in the most extraordinary manner—a real engineering problem—the slightest touch will sometimes suffice to set in motion the *Logan*, or rocking, stones, whether these balanced masses are found in Wales or elsewhere. We think that there is very considerable ground for concluding that all these mounted stones were oracular, or, so to express it, speaking; and that, when sought for divine responses, they were caused first to tremble, then to heave, and finally, like the tables of the modern (so-called) Spiritualists, to tip intelligibly. To no other reason than this could we satisfactorily refer the name under which they are known in Wales: namely, ‘bowing-stones’. For the idea that they were denominated ‘bowing-stones’ because to the people they formed objects of adoration is a supposition infinitely less satisfactory. The reader will perceive that we admit the phenomenon, when the mysterious *rapport* is effected,



of the spontaneous sensitiveness and ultimate sympathetic motion of solid objects. No one who has witnessed the strange, unexplained power which tables, after proper preparation, acquire of supplying intelligent signals—impossible as it may seem to those who have not witnessed and tested these phenomena—but will see that there is great likelihood of these magic stones having been reared and haunted by the people for this special sensitive capacity. This idea would greatly increase the majesty and the wonder of them; in other respects, except for some extraordinary and superstitious use, these mysterious, solitary stones appear objectless.

The famous 'Round Table' of King Arthur—in regard to which that mystic hero is understood to have instituted an order of knighthood<sup>1</sup>—may have been a magical consulting-disc, round which he and his peers sat for oracular directions. As it is of large dimensions, it presents a similarity not only to some of the prophesying-stones, but also, in a greater degree, to the movable enchanted drums of the Lapps and Finns, and to the divining-tables of the Shamans of Siberia. There lies an unsuspected purpose, doubtless of a mysterious (very probably of a superstitious and supernatural) character, in this exceedingly ancient memorial of the mythic British and heroic time at Winchester.

When spires or steeples were placed on churches, and succeeded the pyramidal tower, or square or round towers, these pointed erections were only the perpetuations of the original monolith. The universal signal was reproduced through the phases of architecture. The supposition that the object of the steeple was to point out the church to the surrounding

<sup>1</sup> It was also something else—to which we make reference in other parts of our book.



country explains but half its meaning. At one period of our history, the signal-lights abounded all over the country as numerously as church-spires do in the present days. Exalted on eminences, dotting hills, spiring on cliffs, perched on promontories—from sea inland, and from the interior of the country to broad river-side and to the sea-shore—rising from woods, a universal telegraph, and a picturesque landmark—the tower, in its meaning, spoke the identical, unconscious tradition with the blazing Baal, Bael, or Beltane Fires: those universal votive torches, which are lost sight of in the mists of antiquity, and which were so continual in the Pagan countries, so reiterated through the early ages, and which still remain so frequent in the feudal and monastic periods—these were all connected closely with religion. The stone tower was only, as it were, a ‘stationary flame’. The origin of beacons may be traced to the highest antiquity. According to the original Hebrew (which language as the Samaritan, is considered by competent judges as the very oldest), the word ‘beacon’ may be rendered a mark, monolith, pillar, or upright. At one time the ancient Bale, Bel, or religious fires of Ireland were general all over the country. They have been clearly traced to a devotional origin, and are strictly of the same character as the magic, or Magian, fires of the East. During the political discontents of 1831 and 1832, the custom of lighting these signal-fires was very generally revived amidst the party-distractions in Ireland. In the ancient language of this country, the month of May is yet called ‘*nic Beal tienne*’, or the month of Beal (Bel or Baal’s) fire. The Beltane festival in the Highlands has been ascribed to a similar origin. Druidical altars are still to be traced on many of the hills in Ireland, where Baal (Bel or Beal) fires were lighted. Through the countries, in the present



day, which formed the ancient Scandinavia, and in Germany, particularly in the North, on the first of May, as in celebration of some universal feast or festival, fires are even now lighted on the tops of the hills. How closely this practice accords with the superstitious usages of the Bohemians, or 'Fire-kings,' of Prague, is discoverable at a glance. All these western flames are representative of the early fire, which was as equally the object of worship of the Gubhs, Guebres, or Gaur's of Persia, as it is the admitted natural principle of the Parsees. Parsees, Bohemians, the Gipsies or Zingari, and the Guebres, all unite in a common legendary fire-worship.

Beside the ancient market-crosses and wayside Gothic uprights, of which so many picturesque specimens are yet to be found in England, Wales, and Scotland, we may enumerate the splendid funeral-crosses raised by the brave and pious King Edward to the memory of his wife. Holinshed writes: 'In the ninetéenth yeare of King Edward, quéene Elianor, King Edward's wife, died, upon saint Andrew's euen, at Hirdebie, or Herdelie (as some haue), neere to Lincolne. In euerie towne and place where the corpse rested by the waie, the King caused a crosse of cunning workmanship to be erected in remembrance of hir'. Two of the like crosses were set up at London—one at 'Westcheape' (the last but one), 'and the other at Charing', which is now Charing Cross, and where the last cross was placed.

The final obsequies were solemnized in the Abbey Church at Westminster, on the Sunday before the day of St. Thomas the Apostle, by the Bishop of Lincoln; and the King gave twelve manors and hamlets to the Monks, to defray the charges of yearly *obits*, and of gifts to the poor, in lasting commemoration of his beloved consort.



Some writers have stated the number of crosses raised as above at thirteen. These were, Lincoln, Newark, Grantham, Leicester, Stamford, Geddington, Northampton, Stoney-Stratford, Woburn, Dunstable, St. Alban's, Waltham, Westcheape (Cheapside), not far from where a fountain for a long time took the place of another erection, and where the statue of Sir Robert Peel now stands. The last place where the body rested, whence the memorial-cross sprung, and which the famous equestrian statue of King Charles the First now occupies, is the present noisy highway of Charing Cross; and, as then, it opens to the royal old Abbey of Westminster. What a changed street is this capital opening at Charing Cross, Whitehall, and Parliament Street from the days—it almost then seeming a river-bordered country road—when the cross spired at one end, and the old Abbey closed the views southwards.

In regard to the royal and sumptuous obsequies of Queen Eleanor, Fabian, who compiled his *Chronicles* towards the latter part of the reign of Henry VII, speaking of her burial-place, has the following remark: '*She hathe II wexe tapers brennyng upon her tombe both daye and nyght. Which so hath contynned syne the day of her buryng to this present daye*'.

The beacon-warning, the Fiery Cross of Scotland, the universal use of fires on the tops of mountains, on the seashore, and on the highest turrets of castles, to give the signal of alarm, and to telegraph some information of importance, originated in the first religious flames. Elder to these summoning or notifying lights was the mysterious worship to which fire rose as the answer. From religion the beacon passed into military use. On certain set occasions, and on special Saints' Days, and at other times of observance, as the traveller in Ireland well knows,



the multitude of fires on the tops of the hills, and in any conspicuous situation, would gladden the eyes of the most devout Parsee. The special subject of illumination, however we may have become accustomed to regard it as the most ordinary expression of triumph, and of mere joyous celebration, has its origin in a much more abstruse and sacred source. In Scotland, particularly, the reverential ideas associated with these mythic fires are strong. Perhaps in no country have the impressions of superstition deeper hold than in enlightened, thoughtful, educated, and (in so many respects) prosaic Scotland; and in regard to these occult and ancient fires, the tradition of them, and the ideas concerning their origin, are preserved as a matter of more than cold speculation. Country legendary accounts and local usages—obtained from we know not whence—all referring to the same myth, all pointing to the same Protean superstition, are traceable, to the present, in all the English counties. Cairns in Scotland; heaps of stones in by-spots in England, especially—solitary or in group—to be found on the tops of hills; the Druidical mounds; the raising of crosses on the Continent, in Germany, amongst the windings of the Alps, in Russia (by the roadside, or at the entrance of villages), in Spain, in Poland, in lonely and secluded spots; probably even the first use of the ‘sign-post’ at the junction of roads; all these point, in strange, widely radiant suggestion, to the fire-religion.

Whence obtained is that word ‘sign’ as designating the guide, or direction, post, placed at the intersection of cross-roads? Nay, whence gained we that peculiar idea of the sacredness, or of the ‘forbidden’, attaching to the spot where four roads meet? It is *sacer*, as sacred, in the Latin; ‘extra-church’, or ‘heathen’, supposedly ‘unhallowed’, in the modern



acceptation. The appellative *ob* in the word 'obelisk' means occult, secret, or magic. *Ob* is the biblical name for sorcery. It is also found as a word signifying converse with forbidden spirits, among the negroes on the coast of Africa, from whence—and indicating the practices marked out by it—it was transplanted to the West Indies, where it still exists.

It is well known that a character resembling the Runic alphabet was once widely diffused throughout Europe. 'A character, for example, not unlike the hammer of Thor, is to be found in various Spanish inscriptions, and lurks in many magical books. Sir William Jones', proceeds our author—we quote from the *Times* of the 2nd of February 1859, in reviewing a work upon Italy by the late Lord Broughton—'has drawn a parallel between the deities of Meru and Olympus; and an enthusiast might perhaps maintain that the vases of Alba Longa were a relic of the times when one religion prevailed in Latium and Hindûstan. It is most singular that the Hindoo cross is precisely the hammer of Thor'. All our speculations tend to the same conclusion. One day, it is a discovery of cinerary vases; the next, it is etymological research; yet again, it is ethnological investigation; and, the day after, it is the publication of unsuspected tales from the Norse; but all go to heap up the proofs of our consanguinity with the peoples of History—and of an original general belief, we might add.

What meaneth the altar, with its mysterious lights? What mean the candles of the Catholic worship, burning even by day, borne in the sunshine, blazing at noon? What meaneth this visible fire, as an element at Mass, or at service at all? Wherefore is this thing, Light, employed as a primal witness and attestation in all worship? To what end, and expressive of what mysterious meaning—surviving through the



changes of the faiths and the renewal of the Churches, and as yet undreamt—burn the solemn lamps in multitude, in their richly worked, their highly wrought, cases of solid gold or of glowing silver, bright-glancing in the mists of incense, and in the swell or fall of sacredly melting or of holily entrancing music? Before spiry shrine and elaborate drop-work tabernacle; in twilight hollow, diapered as into a ‘glory of stone’, and in sculptured niche; in the serried and starry ranks of the columned wax, or in rows of bossy cressets—intertwine and congregate the perfumed *flames* as implying the tradition eldest of time! What meaneth, in the Papal architectural piles, wherein the Ghostly Fire is enshrined, symbolic *real fire*, thus before the High Altar? What speak those constellations of lights? what those ‘silvery stars of Annunciation’? What signifieth fire *upon* the altar? What gather we at all from altars and from sacrifice—the delivering, as through the *gate of fire*, of the first and the best of this world, whether of the fruits, whether of the flocks, whether of the primal and perfectest of victims, or the rich spoil of the ‘world-states’? What mean the human sacrifices of the Heathen; the passing of the children through the fire to Moloch; the devotion of the consummate, the most physically perfect, and most beautiful, to the glowing Nemesis, in that keenest, strangest, yet divinest fire-appetite; the offered plunder, the surrendered lives, of the predatory races? What signifies the sacrifice of Iphigenia, the burning of living people among the Gauls, the Indian fiery immolations? What is intended even by the patriarchal sacrifices? What is the meaning of the burnt offerings, so frequent in the Bible? In short, what read we, and what seem we conclusively to gather, we repeat, in this mystic thing, and hitherto almost meaningless, if not contradictory and silencing



institution of sacrifice by fire? What gather we, otherwise than in the explanation of the thing signified, by it? We speak of sacrifice as practised in all ages, enjoined in all holy books, elevated into veneration, as a necessity of the highest and most sacred kind. We find it in all countries—east, west, north, and south; in the Old equally as in the New World. From whence should this strange and unexplainable rite come, and what should it mean? as, indeed, what should mean the display of bright fire *at all* in the mysteries, Egyptian, Cabiric, Scandinavian, Eleusinian, Etrurian, Indian, Persian, Primal American, Tartarian, Phœnician, or Celtic, from the earliest of time until this very modern, instant, English day of candles on altars, and of the other kindred religious High-Church lightings?—respecting which there rankleth such scandal, and intensifieth such purposeless babble, such daily dispute! What should all this inveterate ritualistic (as it is absurdly called) controversy, and this ill-understood bandying, be about? Is it that, even at this day, men do not understand anything about the symbols of their religion, and that the things for which they struggle are mere words? really that the principles of their wonderful and supernatural faith are perfectly unknown, and that they reason with the inconclusiveness, but with nothing of the simplicity of children—nothing of the divine light of children?

But, we would boldly ask, what should all this wealth of fire-subjects mean, of which men guess so little, and know less? What should this whole principle of fire and of sacrifice be? What should it signify but the rendering over, and the surrender-up, in all abnegation, of the state of man, of the best and most valued 'entities' of this world, past and through the fire, which is the boundary and border and wall



between this world and the next?—that last element of all, on which is all—Fire—having most of the light of matter in it, as it hath most of the blackness of matter in it, to make it the fiercer; and both being copy, or shadow, of the Immortal and Ineffable Spirit-Light, of which, strange as it may sound, the sun is the very darkness! because that, and the whole Creation—as being Degree, or even, in its wonders, as Greater or Less—beautiful and godlike as it is to man, is as the shadow of God, and hath nothing of Him; but is instituted as the place of purification, ‘being’, or punishment: the opposite of God, the enemy of God, and, in its results, apart from the Spirit of God—which rescues supernaturally from it—the denier of God! This world and its shows—nay, Life—stands mystically as the Devil, Serpent, Dragon, or ‘Adversary’, typified through all time; the world terrestrial being the ashes of the fire celestial.

The torches borne at funerals are not alone for light; they have their mystic meaning. They mingle largely, as do candles on altars, in all solemn celebrations. The employment of light in all religious rites, and in celebration in the general sense, has an overpoweringly great meaning. Festival, also, claims flame as its secret signal and its password to the propitious Invisible. Lights and *flambeaux* and torches carried in the hand were ever the joyous accompaniment of weddings. The torch of Hymen is a proverbial expression. The ever-burning lamps of the ancients; the steady, silent tomb-lights (burning on for ages), from time to time discovered among the mouldering monuments of the past in the *hypogea*, or sepulchral caves, and buildings broken in upon by men in later day; the bonfires of the moderns; the fires on the tops of hills; the mass of lamps disposed



about sanctuaries, whether encircling the most sacred point of the mosque of the Prophet, the graded and cumulative Grand Altar in St Peter's, or the saint-thrones in the churches of the Eternal City, or elsewhere, wherever magnificence riseth into expansion, and intensifieth and overpowereth in the sublimity which shall be *felt*; the multitudinous grouped lamps in the Sacred Stable—the Place of the Holy Nativity, meanest and yet highest—at Bethlehem; the steady, constant lights ever burning in mystic, blazing attestation in Jerusalem, before the tomb of the Redeemer; the *chappelle ardente* in the funeral observances of the ubiquitous Catholic Church; the congregated tapers about the bed of the dead—the flames in mysterious grandeur (and in royal awe), placed as in waiting, so brilliant and striking, and yet so terrible, a court, and surrounding the stately *catafalque*; the very word *falcated*, as bladed, sworded, or scimitared (as with the guard of waved or sickle-like flames); the lowly, single candle at the bedside of the poverty-attenuated dead—thus by the single votive light only allied (yet in unutterably mystic and godlike bond) as with the greatest of the earth; the watch-lights everywhere, and in whatever country; the crosses (spiry memorials, or monoliths) which rose as from out the earth, in imitation of the watching candle, at whatever point rested at night, in her solemn journey to her last home, the body of Queen Eleanor, as told in the English annals (which flame-memorials, so raised by the pious King Edward in the spiry, flame-imitating stone, are all, we believe, obliterated or put out of things, but the well-known, magnificent, restored cross at Waltham); all these, to the keen, philosophic eye, stand as the best proofs of the diffusion of this strange Fire-Dogma: mythed as equally, also, in that 'dark veiled Cotytto':



She to whom the flame  
Of midnight torches burns.

'She', this blackest of concealment in the mysteries, Isis, Io, Ashtaroth, or Astarte, or Cybele or Proserpine; 'he', this Baal, Bel, 'Baalim', Foh, Brahm, or Bhudd; 'it'—for the Myth is no personality, but sexless—Snake, Serpent, Dragon, or Earliest at all of Locomotion, under whatever 'Letter of the Alphabet'—all these symbols, shapes, or names, stand confessed in that first, absolutely primal, deified element, Fire, which the world, in all religions, has worshipped, is worshipping, and will worship to the end of time, unconsciously; we even in the Christian religion, and in our modern day, still doing it—unwitting the meaning of the mysterious symbols which pass daily before our eyes: all which point, as we before have said, to Spirit-Light as the soul of the World—otherwise, to the inexpressible mystery of the Holy Ghost.

Little is it suspected what is the myth conveyed in the Fackeltanz and Fackelzug of Berlin, of which so much was heard, as a curious observance, at the time of the marriage of the Princess Royal of England with the Prince Frederick William of Prussia. This is the Teutonic perpetuation of the 'Bacchic gloryings', of the Saturnian rout and flame-brandishing of the earliest and last rite.

The ring of light, glory, *nimbus*, *aureole*, or circle of rays, about the heads of sacred persons; the hand (magnetic and mesmeric) upon sceptres; the open hand borne in the standards of the Romans; the dragon crest of Maximin, of Honorius, and of the Barbarian Leaders; the Dragon of China and of Japan; the Dragon of Wales; the mythic Dragon trampled by St. George; the 'crowned serpent' of the Royal House of Milan; the cairns, as we have already



affirmed, and the Runic Monuments; the Round Towers of Ireland (regarding which there hath been so much, and so diverse and vain speculation); the memorial piles, and the slender (on seashore and upland) towers left by the Vikings, or Sea-Kings, in their adventurous and predatory voyages; the legends of the Norsemen or the Normans; the vestiges so recently, in the discovery of the forward-of-the-old-time ages, exposed to the light of criticism, in the time-out-of-mind antique and quaint cities of the extinct peoples and of the forgotten religions in Central America: the sun or fire-worship of the Peruvians, and their vestal or virgin-guardians of the fire; the priestly fire-rites of the Mexicans, quenched by Cortez in the native blood, and, the context of their strange, apparently incoherently wild, belief; the inscriptions of amulets, on rings and on talismans; the singular, dark, and in many respects, uncouth *arcana* of the Bohemians, Zingari, Gitanos, or Gipsies; the teaching of the Talmud; the hints of the Cabala: also that little-supposed thing, even, meant in the British golden collar of 'S.S.', which is worn as a relic of the oldest day (in perpetuation of a *mythos* long ago buried—spark-like—and forgotten in the dust of ages) by some of our officials, courtly and otherwise, and which belongs to no known order of knighthood, but only to the very highest order of knighthood, the Magian, or to Magic; all these point, as in the diverging radii of the greatest of historical light-suns, to the central, intolerable ring of brilliancy, or the phenomenon—the original God's revelation, eldest of all creeds, survivor, almost, of Time—of the Sacred Spirit, or Ghostly Flame—the baptism of Fire of the Apostles!

In this apparently strange—nay, to some minds, alarming—classification, and throwing under one head, of symbols diametrically opposed, as holy and unholy,



benign and sinister, care must be taken to notice that the types of the 'Snake' or the 'Dragon' stand for the occult 'World-Fire', by which we mean the 'light of the human reason', or 'manifestation' in the general sense, as opposed to the spiritual light, or un bodied light; into which, as the reverse—although the same—the former transcends. Thus, *shadow* is the only possible means of demonstrating light. It is not reflected upon that we must have means whereby to be lifted. After all, we deal only with *glyphs*, to express inexpressible things. Horns mean spirit-manifestation; Radius signifies the glorying absorption (into the incomprehensible) of that manifestation. Both signify the same: from any given point, the One Spirit working downwards, and also transcending upwards. From any given point, in height, that the intellect is able to achieve, the same spirit downwards intensifies into Manifestation; upwards, dissipates into God. In other words, before any knowledge of God can be formed at all, it must have a shape. God is an abstraction; Man is an entity.





## CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH

### INQUIRY AS TO THE POSSIBILITY OF MIRACLE

THE definition of a miracle has been exposed to numerous erroneous views. Inquirers know not what a miracle is. It is wrong to assume that nature and human nature are alike invariably, and that you can interpret the one by the other. There may be in reality great divergence between the two, though both start from the common point—individuality. A miracle is not a violation of the laws of nature (because nature is not everything), but a something independent of all laws—that is, *as we know laws*. The mistake that is so commonly made is the interpreting—or rather the perceiving, or the becoming aware of—that thing we denominate a miracle through the operation of the human senses, which in reality have nothing whatever to do with a miracle, because they cannot know it. If nature, as we understand it, or law, as we understand it, be universal, then, as nothing can be possible to us which contradicts either the one or the other (both being the same)—nature being law, and law being nature—miracle must be impossible, and there never was, nor could there ever be, such a thing as a miracle. But a miracle works outwardly from us at once, and not by a human path—moves away from the world (that is, man's world) as a thing impossible to it, though it may be true none the less, since our nature is not all nature, nor perhaps any nature, but even a philosophical delusion. In the conception of a miracle, however, the thing appre-



hended revolves *to us*, and can come to us in no other way, and we seize the idea of it through a machinery—our own judgment—which is a clear sight compounded of our senses—a synthesis of senses that, in the very act of presenting an impossible idea, destroys it as *humanly* possible. Miracle can be of no date or time, whether earlier, whether later, if God has not withdrawn from nature; and if He has withdrawn from nature, then nature must have before this fallen to pieces of itself; for God is intelligence—not life only; and matter is not intelligent, though it may be *living*. It is not seen that during that space—which is a space taken out of time, though independent of it—in which miracle is possible to us, we cease to be men, because time, or rather sensation, is man's measure; and that when we are men again, and back in ourselves, the miracle is gone, because the conviction of the possibility of a thing and its non-possibility has expelled it. The persuasion of a miracle is intuition, or the operation of God's Spirit active in us, that drives out nature for the time, which is the opposite of the miracle.

No miracle can be justified to men's minds, because no amount of evidence can sustain it; no number of attestations can affirm that which we cannot in our nature believe. In reality, we believe nothing of which our senses do not convince us—even these not always. In other matters, we only believe *because we think we believe*; and since the conviction of a miracle has nothing of God except the certain sort of motive of possessed, excluding exaltation, which, *with the miracle*, fills us, and to which exaltation we can give no name, and which we can only feel as a certain something in us, a certain power and a certain light, conquering and outshining another light, become fainter—it will follow that the conviction of the



possibility of a miracle is the same sort of unquestioning assurance that we have of a dream *in the dream itself*; and that, when the miracle is apprehended in the mind, it just as much ceases to be a miracle when we are in our senses, as a dream ceases to be that which it was, a reality, and becomes that which it is, nonentity, when we awake. But to the questions, what is a dream?—nay, what is waking?—who shall answer? or who can declare whether in that broad outside, where our minds and their powers evaporate or cease, where nature melts away into nothing that we can know as nature, or know as anything else, in regard to dreams and realities, the one may not be the other? The dream may be man's life to him—as another life other than his own life—and the reality may be the dream (in its various forms), which he rejects as false and confusion simply because it is as an unknown language, of which, out of his dream, he can never have the alphabet, but of which, in the dream, he has the alphabet, and can spell well because *that* life is natural to him.

'A pretence that every strong and peculiar expression is merely an Eastern hyperbole is a mighty easy way of getting rid of the trouble of deep thought and right apprehension, and has helped to keep the world in ignorance.'—*Morsels of Criticism*, London, 1800.

It is very striking that, in all ages, people have clothed the ideas of their dreams in the same imagery. It may therefore be asked whether that language, which now occupies so low a place in the estimation of men, be not the actual waking language of the higher regions, while we, awake as we fancy ourselves, may be sunk in a 'sleep of many thousand years, or at least, in the echo of their dreams, and only intelligibly catch a few dim words of that language of God, as sleepers do scattered expressions from the



loud conversation of those around them'. So says Schubert, in his *Symbolism of Dreams*. There is every form of the dream-state, from the faintest to the most intense, in which the gravitation of the outside world overwhelms the man-senses, and absorbs the inner unit. *In fact, the lightest and faintest form of dream is the very thoughts that we think.*

A very profound English writer, Thomas de Quincey, has the following: 'In the English rite of Confirmation, by personal choice, and by sacramental oath, each man says, in effect: "Lo! I rebaptize myself; and that which once was sworn on my behalf, now I swear for myself." Even so in dreams, perhaps, under some secret conflict of the midnight sleeper, lighted up to consciousness at the time, but darkened to the memory as soon as all is finished, each several child of our mysterious race may complete for himself the aboriginal fall.'

As to what is possible or impossible, no man, out of his presumption and of his self-conceit, has any right to speak, nor can he speak; for the nature of his terms with all things outside of him is unknown to him. We know that miracle (if once generally believed in) would terminate the present order of things, which are perfectly right and consistent in their own way. Things that contradict nature are not evoked by reason, but by man in his miracle-worked imagining, in all time; and such exceptions are independent of reason, which elaborates to a centre downwards, but exhales to apparent impossibility (but to real truth) upwards, that is, truth out of this world.

Upwards has nothing of man; for it knows him not. He ceases there; but he is made as downwards, and finds his man's nature there, lowest of all—his mere bodily nature there perhaps, even to be found originally among the four-footed; for by the raising