

Vatican manuscripts.¹ Gorres prefixed an elaborate introduction which is not without interest at the present day as regards the Lohengrin Myth, many variants of which are collected. On the other hand, the PARZIVAL study is not a little confusing and chaotic, for example, identifying the Castle of Mont Salvatch with India and the regions of Paradise adjacent thereunto. The fact notwithstanding that the Grail is for Wolfram a jewelled Stone, it is described as a Cup by Gorres. It fell from Heaven, apparently into the terrestrial Eden, and was sent forth therefrom. So also Colonies of Priests emerged from the same region for the foundation of Sacred Cities over the whole world. For the rest, it is difficult to distinguish when the author is talking of PARZIVAL and when of Albrecht's TITUREL. It was the period of General Vallancey, when all etymologies were possible and all reveries based thereon passed as evidential: he is cited as "incontrovertible" by the German author, who proceeds on his own part to identify Lokrin with Lohengrin. He speaks also of St. Gervasius, an alleged kinsman of Jesus, who lived for 380 years, "which is not so surprising", in the opinion of Gorres, because Charlemagne's Master of the Horse, attained the age of 300, "though not of the family of Jesus". Other speculations suggest the perpetuation of an Ecclesiastical Tradition from old Druidic and Priestly Dynasties—for whom the Grail was a symbol apparently from time immemorial—together with a Secret Teaching of the Knights Templar, the latter belonging, however, to a later stage of the present critical apparatus.

Warton was followed by J. C. Dunlop, whose HISTORY OF FICTION went through several editions and was something of a standard work for a not inconsiderable period. It reappeared on a late occasion under the editorship of H. Wilson, by whom the text was revised and extended.² Dunlop regarded the earlier branches of GUIRON LE COURTOIS as "perhaps the finest of all the old fabulous histories of Britain", thus recalling the judgment of Robert Southey, who, speaking also of the earlier sections, recognises therein a certain unity of purpose which distinguishes it from many of the other Romances. Generally also its style is said to be distinctly marked, especially in dialogue, while the "tone of morals is infinitely superior" to all other productions of the kind. There is special reference to the Tristram Legend by Dunlop, together with analyses of the PALAMÈDES and of ISAIE LE TRISTE. These points are worth enumeration only to shew that at his comparatively early date Dunlop had a considerable speaking acquaintance with the literature of Chivalry in Northern French. On his errors and misapprehensions it would be idle to dwell, as they were inevitable at that date and signify nothing at the present day. Nor does the little that he says of the Grail Cycle demand particular reference, for it cannot be held that he contributed anything of consequence to the existing knowledge.

The testimony of Wolfram von Eschenbach to his source in Kyot de

¹ Appendix II, Part II.

² A fourth edition appeared in 1845.

Provence was not as yet challenged in the first decades of the nineteenth century, and there can be little question that students in England and France—few and far between—who had some first-hand knowledge of the PARZIVAL must have been impressed deeply with the salient distinctions from the Perceval Cycle represented by Chrétien de Troyes and more especially by the CONTE DEL GRAAL in its prose version of 1530, the poem being of course unprinted. An example in point is offered by Fauriel in his HISTOIRE DE LA POESIE PROVENÇALE, which assuredly marked an epoch and is even now without a serious competitor in its own tongue.¹ His familiarity with the extant remnants of Provençal literature shewed him that Kyot was non-existent outside the witness of his confessed German imitator; but he did not regard the fact as justifying a denial of the poet's historic actuality. The reasons, however, do not prove convincing, being (1) that the names of many past Troubadours have not come down to us and (2) that Wolfram among all Minnesingers is of high authority on the subject of Provençal literature, as it was one of his favoured studies. It is held to follow that the fact of a great epical Romance in the *langue d'oc*, with Kyot as author, cannot be called in question. But it is obvious that the survival of a few anonymous lyrics offers nothing to the point at issue and that the credibility of Wolfram's claim is itself the subject of consideration. Moreover, epic poetry was not cultivated in Provence, notwithstanding the isolated cases of SYR JAUFRE and FIERABRAS. There is one other argument adduced by Fauriel, and it happens to have held the field almost to the present day among those who believe in the alleged source of Wolfram, namely, that the PARZIVAL, from beginning to end, is sown with evidences of its Romance origin—for example, in the multitude of its neo-Latin names of places and persons and things. The value of this supposed testimony has been discounted now, while that which prevails brings us back to l'Abbé de la Rue, who in days preceding Fauriel registered his conviction that the authenticity of Kyot was comparable to that of the Arabic Grail MS. discovered by him at Toledo.² There is no space here or need to reproduce the grounds of judgment.

For the rest, Fauriel was disposed to conclude that the Grail side of Arthurian Legend was of monastic origin and that it delineated above all an ideal contrast, fostered by the Church itself, between earthly and heavenly Knighthood. So far as Germany is concerned the basis of comparison was between the Templar Institution, then presumably at its best, and the mundane Knightly Orders. But the Grail fable, "invented by the Romance writers of the Continent, passed, like other chivalrous stories, into Great Britain, where it was altered, modified and localised by Anglo-Norman authors", who produced the huge prose fictions of MERLIN THE ENCHANTER, LANCELOT OF THE LAKE, PERCEVAL LE GALLOIS and above all the GRAIL MYTHOS. The

¹ Appendix II, Part II.

² ESSAIS HISTORIQUES SUR LES BARDES, LES JONGLEURS ET LES TROUVÈRES, etc. 3 vols., 1834.

last is characterised by "a much greater religious development, more mystical exaltation and more of sacerdotal influence . . . The two rival Chivalries are constantly opposed to one another therein; they are at strife pre-eminently in the Quest of the Grail itself". The same opposition is found in *LANCELOT OF THE LAKE*, where they are designated openly as respectively terrene and celestial, "It was because he was tainted with love, because he had set all his desires and all his thoughts on Queen Guinevere, because in a word he was a terrene Knight, that Lancelot spent himself vainly in his search for the Grail. The finding of that Holy Vessel and the explanation of its great Mysteries were reserved for those who were pure from all sin—otherwise, for the Chivalry of Heaven".

Fauriel goes on to affirm that this distinction between the two Chivalries is continually summed up in the same terms. For example, on the threshold of the Great Quest and at Pentecost in the Court of King Arthur, the earthly and heavenly Knights began their contest—a reference to the Tournament prior to the manifestation of the Grail.¹ "The earthly Knights, who had earthly eyes and hearts, wore black robes, that is to say, they were clothed in sin and desecration. The others, who were the Celestial Knights, were vested in white robes, otherwise, in virginity and chastity. The fundamental idea . . . was to celebrate a Chivalry opposed to that of the age, a religious, austere and Christian Chivalry, in accordance with the desire and intent of the Church." So far as it is possible to say, the Romances were not the work of Ecclesiastics but rather of romantic poets, the fact notwithstanding that some manuscripts of the Great Grail Quest indicate that it was composed "by the order of Holy Church". However this may be, Fauriel is "very much inclined to imagine that the authors of the earlier Grail Romances found their basis and motive either in a lost Legend or in some popular Tradition, like that connected with the arrival, for example, of Lazarus and Magdalene at Marseilles".

The impressions with which I have dealt up to this point do not represent any serious study of a large literature, largely unprinted. Warton, a poet himself, was concerned through all its centuries with English poetry, and Dunlop with fiction all the wide world over. In his three notable volumes Fauriel dealt exhaustively with Provençal verse; but it connects with the Grail only through the mythical personality of Kyot de Provence. Apart from this, there is no Holy Grail in the literary remnants of Southern France; there is no Spear of Longinus; there is no Quest of Perceval; and no one hears of Miraculous Masses or of a legendary Bishop—unknown to Church History—who Consecrated the Body of the Lord for the first time after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Apostles appointed by Christ having died in their day and generation without fulfilling the Divine Command to "do this in remembrance of Me". These are implications of the claim which obviously are not to be found in any text of the

¹ See Malory's *MORTE D'ARTHUR*, Book XIII, cap. 6.

literature and much less in the GRAND SAINT GRAAL itself, to which we owe the invention of the Second Joseph Myth. We shall see in a later section that they suggest concealed purpose: the implications in any case have been missed throughout by criticism.

As regards the impressions of early Grail students they have been presented at a certain length, as the first explorations on the subject. It is these which came into the hands of later scholarship, better equipped as it was because texts were beginning to be published: the Metrical Romance of Borron in 1841, the CONTE DEL GRAAL between 1866 and 1871, the Didot Perceval in 1874, together with the GRAND SAINT GRAAL. Various editions of the PARZIVAL had appeared also in Germany. Those of Schulz and Simrock are important as rival versions in modern form which made the root-matter of the German Grail more readily accessible to those who cared in the Fatherland.¹ Now, the scholars in question were not only competitive translators but held mutually exclusive views. San Marte believed from the beginning in Wolfram's Kyot de Provence, though he identified him subsequently with Guiot de Provins, the poet of the BIBLE Guiot.² Simrock, on the other hand, sets out at considerable length and expresses strongly his grounds for rejecting Kyot as a Wolfram invention, while in respect of Guiot and his BIBLE they could have furnished only the name of another and not too famous French poet, under whose cloak Wolfram might do more than distract attention from his manifest debt to Chrétien. It is throughout a laboured argument; but some of the main considerations are exceedingly strong and justify Simrock's conclusion that the German poet created Kyot "in order to authenticate his own reshaping of the Saga", notwithstanding the authority and fame of Chrétien. For the rest, Simrock connected the Grail in its earliest form with the Legend of St. John the Baptist's Head, not on account of the Head on a Platter in the Welsh PEREDUR, nor yet because of that Baphometric Head which the Templars were accused of worshipping, but because (1) the Blood in the Grail Vessel is a vital element of the Myth and (2) a symbol of creative power, as well as of the reproductive virtue resident in the Blood of the slain God. On this and on other grounds, Wolfram's PARZIVAL is held to represent the Grail Mythos in its purest and oldest form.³ Unfortunately, however, the Grail in Wolfram is a Stone and not a Vessel; it does not contain blood; there is no Head on a Platter in the Grail Castle; and there is no allusion to the Baptist, with or without his Head, in the whole poem. It is to be noted finally that there is no Reliquary containing blood, precious or otherwise, while there is nothing which corresponds, literally or figuratively, with a dead or dying God.

For many years after Schulz and Simrock the work went on and in Germany was admirable after its own kind; but it is obvious that there

¹ Appendix II, Part I.

² WOLFRAM VON ESCHENBACH AND GUIOT VON PROVINS, GERMANIA, Vol. III, pp. 445, *et seq.*

³ Karl Simrock; PARCIVAL UND TITUREL, 1876.

can be no call here to present variations of opinion and the clash of debate, when we are concerned in reality only with final results on origins and intimations on meanings and intentions behind the literature at large. Lachmann and Gervinus had already set aside the identification of Guiot de Provins with Kyot de Provence, while the discovery of Guiot's Lyrical Poems had disposed Wackernagel in the other direction.¹ In 1855 there must be ranged on the side of denial the not unimportant name of A. Rochat. There was that also of Dr. Karl Rosenkranz, who had a great influence on scholars and students, as made evident by San Marte's criticism of certain changed views expressed by his and their "old teacher and friend of our youthful days". In 1833 he held that the PARZIVAL was completed so early as *circa* 1205, and he was possibly the first to question the identification of that unknown Albrecht who finished the YOUNGER TITUREL, with Albrecht von Scharfenberg. Later on Rosenkranz came to regard the PARZIVAL from a different standpoint and in place of dwelling on its high ethical and even spiritual values we are told (1) that many of its allusions point to heretical doctrine on the origin of evil; (2) that there is a Gnostic element in its history of Lucifer; (3) that the Grail itself—as a Stone from the Crown of Lucifer—represents the pre-cosmic genesis of evil, though it is overcome by the love of God incarnate as man. We must deal with this as we can, having regard to the fact that the Stone in the Crown of Lucifer does not happen to be found in the PARZIVAL but at a much later date in the WARTBURG-KRIEGE.² There are further grounds of suspicion based on the facts (1) That the Grail placed its *Templeisen* in complete independence, not only because it "clothed and fed its worshippers, bestowed life upon them through their contemplation of it and gave them commands in the shape of luminous inscriptions on its rim"; but on the spiritual side (2) that these Templars were themselves Priests (which, however, appears nowhere in the poem) and that they were not in subordination to ecclesiastical superiors, even the Pope; (3) that the Grail insured their future bliss; and finally (4) that it chose those whom it willed, according to its own way, and they were enrolled in its secret service.³ Proceeding further, Rosenkranz institutes a significant contrast between this so-called spiritual side of the PARZIVAL, culminating in the attainment of its hero, and the worldly or natural side, culminating in Gawain's Adventure at Chateau Merveille, and finds therein something more living and human than is presented by that other aspect, which is "weighed down by the fetishism of an

¹ K. Wackernagel: ALFRANZÖSISCHE LIEDER UND LEICHE, 1846.

² See Simrock's PARZIVAL UND TITUREL, *sub voce* Kyot, and also on the Myth of the Grail. According to this poem, which may be referable to the thirteenth century but is obviously later than Wolfram, "sixty thousand Angels, who wished to supplant God in Heaven, had a crown made for Lucifer. When the Archangel (Michael) plucked this from Lucifer's head, a Stone fell from it, and this Stone is the Grail." In such case, it was more likely to be a symbol of false Doctrine and Luciferian knowledge than of Divine Life.

³ San Marte on Wolfram's PARZIVAL and its critics, in GERMANIA, Vol. VII, pp. 55 *et seq.*

impersonal Relic". The judgment on Parzival himself assuredly strikes a revolutionary note for that still very early period of Grail criticism. (1) It is not only incomprehensible that the hero asked nothing about the wonders of the Grail Castle, but it suggests dullness of mind. (2) He went about subsequently for years, wherever his horse led him, and had lost all faith in the Providence of God. (3) When he is brought by the Hermit Trevrezent into a better frame of mind and undertakes the Quest of the Grail, he "does nothing really good, beautiful or great to deserve the good fortune which suddenly becomes his and brings his story to a complete spiritual standstill". (4) In other words, he attains the Kingdom of the Grail, as the *terminus ad quem* of all things desirable, but it is to be observed that this is conferred upon him "without any ecclesiastical mediation".¹ San Marte was grieved beyond words by these accusations and discoursed at length upon them without affecting their force. This is how matters stood *circa* 1855-1862; and, on my own part, I have tried to reduce the laudation of Parzivalian spiritualities within reasonable bounds. It would seem, however, that Rosenkranz produced little impression at his own date except among his individual pupils.

There is perhaps little need at the present day and in view of my particular design to present the various theses which were offered through the years on the Celtic origin of the Grail. When J. F. Halliwell edited the Thorton Romances, so early as 1844,² he recognised that SYR PERCYVELLE had its roots in the CONTE DEL GRAAL and that so also had the Mabinogi of PEREDUR. When Furnivall issued the GRAND SAINT GRAAL in 1861, under the auspices of the Roxburghe Club,³ he denied the Celtic origin. Meanwhile J. F. Campbell was at work on his delightful selection of POPULAR TALES OF THE WEST HIGHLANDS, a treasure at this day for all its fortunate possessors.⁴ He offered no dogmatic statements, but in the Lay of the Great Fool, in the destroyer of the Gloucester Sorceresses, in the CHERCHEUR DU BASSIN and in the Perceval who achieved the Grail, Campbell was inclined to recognise a single Celtic hero, with his Myth variously unfolded. Baring-Gould followed in 1867 with his CURIOUS MYTHS OF THE MIDDLE AGES,⁵ a deservedly popular work which went through several editions, and so far as regards its essay on the Holy Grail, the Celtic thesis therein, reflected from Villemarqué, was the accepted explanation of origins among the few who were concerned therein.

French scholarship was also at work in the publication of texts and occasionally of modernised versions, having critical studies attached thereto. Paulin Paris produced five volumes of the second class in his ROMANS DE LA TABLE RONDE, unfortunately with some fortuitous interpolations of the Metrical JOSEPH. This notwithstanding, his rendering of the great prose LANCELOT might be pleasant reading enough in English, even at this day and, with a little editing

¹ See Rosenkranz: DIE POESIE UND IHRE GESCHICHTELE, 1855.

² Appendix II, Part I.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ib.*, Part II.

⁵ *Ib.*

and illustrating, might appeal to young and old as a Tale of Faërie and Chivalry, written out at full length.¹ For Paulin Paris the Grail Legend was of Celtic origin but the *matière de Bretagne*, in the form of "lays", now no longer extant, was the channel through which it passed to the knowledge of French TROUVÈRES and later prose romancists. For this authority also the Grail reflected and registered the aspirations and ambitions of the British Church. As regards texts and their editors, Potvin considered the PERLESVAUS, published in the first volume of his CONTE DEL GRAAL, not only as the oldest Romance of the Grail Cycles but as going back in its foundation to the eleventh century. On this subject Evans, its English translator, followed the French editor with blind confidence and was entrapped accordingly in his essay attached to the HIGH HISTORY. Potvin furthermore was in agreement with Paulin Paris that the Grail Legend at large embodied or reflected a long struggle between Britain in alleged heresy and the hypothetically orthodox Rome. No one, including myself, seems to have seen at this day the French original of Bergmann's SAN GREAL, which appeared in English at Edinburgh in 1870, with no indication that it was translated matter. Whether he had read or even heard of the PERLESVAUS is an open question. The thesis is contradictory enough, maintaining, for example, (1) that the invention of the Grail Fable belongs of right to the Provençal Kyot, but the particulars concerning him in Wolfram, our only source of knowledge, are largely fictitious or erroneous; (2) that the myth is not of Celtic origin, yet the Welsh PEREDUR is authentic in the sense that it is an ancient folk-story. The alleged Kyot had conceived the idea of a Sacerdotal Chivalry and Royalty, created to guard the temporal and spiritual welfare of humanity: as this scheme is reflected by Wolfram, the Grail TEMPLEISEN "resemble an association formed without the pale of the Church, rather than a Catholic Community."² Bergmann's thesis lies within the measures of a pamphlet, and with its accounts of Kyot, of Mont Salvatch=Mont Salvage in wild or inaccessible Catalonian ranges, of the Migration of the Grail to India, of Albrecht's TITUREL and the Romance of Prester John, it should have attracted more attention than apparently it did in its place of publication, the Athens of Scotia, or elsewhere. It appealed, however, to the Rev. Walter W. Skeat, when he edited the JOSEPH OF ARMATHIE and other old English Grail and Joseph tracts for the Early English Text Society, in 1871.

In 1876 Zarncke moved the debate a stage further by rejecting alike the Celtic and Provençal origin of the Grail Mythos, substituting an exclusive source in Apocryphal New Testament texts—the GESTA PILATI, VINDICTA SALVATORIS, NARRATIO JOSEPHI, and so forth.³ With these I have dealt previously; and the fact that the earliest

¹ The LANCELOT transcript occupies three out of five volumes which constitute the work in question.

² Appendix II, Part II.

³ ZUR GESCHICHTE DER GRALSAGE, 1876.

historicity Grail poem has its root in these, and is itself the historical root of all the Northern French Cycles, has long since passed the region of debate. From this point of view, our problem is no longer as to the source of the Christian Legend but as to that which lies behind its evolution in the World of Romance.

Our next important name is that of A. Birch-Hirschfeld, who was praised so highly by Nutt for his "most searching and exhaustive analysis of the whole Cycle". It can be left at this, because at the present day the Cycle lies before us within the measures of this volume. It must not be left, however, without a note of regret on my own part that the Didot-Modena text—which presupposes the Metrical Romance of JOSEPH and the EARLY MERLIN—can never again figure in the world of criticism as the earliest Perceval Quest. Even at this late day I have read over the Birch-Hirschfeld arguments¹ in favour of this view, hoping for a way in which they could be made once more into hall-marked current coin of speculative debate. To make an end on this side of the subject, our author held that the Welsh tale of the Lance and Basin—the PEREDUR, in other words—is derived from Chrétien, while there is no authentic analogy between the Cauldron of the Dagda, or similar Celtic Fables, and the Reliquary of the Holy Grail. The latter was sacramental for Borron. There is one thing more: the almost unsearchable problem of the Question which had to be asked to insure the successful termination of the Unspelling Quest, meets with a solution in Birch-Hirschfeld. As Joseph of Arimathæa was compelled to make two demands on Pilate for the Body of the Master, so had the Grail-Seeker to come twice in search of its symbol, that outward sign of the Christ Life within. Well, it is a solution of sorts, and it may happen that one which is bad is better than none at all. But it is obvious unfortunately (1) that in the PERLESVAUS and DIU CRÔNE Perceval had no second chance; (2) that he was not on the Quest in Chrétien, on the occasion of his first visit to the Grail Castle, and could not be said therefore to apply; while (3) the proposition that the Mysterious Question had such an inconsequent source behind it seems fantasia at fever heat.²

There rose up E. Martin in 1878³ to shew cause why the conclusions reached by Birch-Hirschfeld should be set aside for the most part. He was certain that Wolfram had other sources than Chrétien and that hence in so far as the PARZIVAL differs from the CONTE its extraneous episodes and material are important for the Myth in its original guise. This notwithstanding, the oldest extant form of the Grail Mythos is that of Chrétien, but in affirming this Martin includes the several sequels of the CONTE, and so doing he reads himself definitely outside the lists of debate. It is to be understood, however, that the Metrical Romance of JOSEPH is the earliest example of the Christian Grail

¹ Appendix II, Part II.

² Birch-Hirschfeld suggested otherwise that the Perceval Question was an invention without meaning. Cf. Nutt's STUDIES, p. 171, a severe criticism of this view.

³ Appendix II, Part II.

Mythos, and that it was composed *circa* 1200 A.D. Yet a Christian origin for the subject itself cannot be accepted, because a flat or open Dish was used at the Last Supper, while the Blood of Christ on the Cross was received in a Bowl ; but this is obviously one of the points at issue in the story of Borron. It is said further that the idea of a Cup is one of the latest variants of the Legend ; but Borron's story is all the same the tale of a Pyx or Chalice ; and if this chaotic argument is to be taken seriously, then the earliest text of the Grail Christianised is later than the *QUESTE*, according to which the Grail Reliquary was the Dish in which the Lord and His Apostles " ate the lamb on Sher-Thursday."¹ For the rest, according to Martin, the Grail has a Celtic root which is still traceable after the story has turned good Christian.

In 1882 W. Herz published a study on the *PARZIVAL* and the Grail, in which he agreed with Birch-Hirschfeld that Robert de Borron stands first among the writers of Grail Cycles ; but he held further (1) that the Legend took form on British soil and was actuated by the Antipapal bent of the Church in Britain ; (2) that Perceval the Seeker belongs to the Great Fool far-diffused Fable ; (3) that the *PEREDUR* version and the Breton *PERONNIK* derived from Chrétien ; while (4) the English *SYR PERCYVELLE* presents the earliest extant form.² These things stand at their present depreciated values ; for no one mentions the *PERONNIK*, because the trail of Villemarqué's inventions is over all his Breton Sagas. We have also estimated sometime since the debt of *PEREDUR* to the *CONTE* ; we have found—either to our satisfaction or regret—that the question-in-chief regarding *SYR PERCYVELLE* is as to its high place among English Metrical Romances of the fourteenth century, and not the great antiquity of its root-matter, the evidence of which has failed us ; and we are motived in fine by a shrewd suspicion that the faculty of inventing stories has its records the wide world over, from time immemorial, and that their recurring likeness to one another may be due as often as not to simple matters of fact in mere experience. The seemingly foolish fellow who turns out hero or genius has not been found oncé only in the long course of the ages, so that his tale had to travel in order to be met with everywhere. "As a fact he has been found in all times and places, and is so well known that he is liable to have been invented sporadically where he does not happen to have been met."³

From 1882 to 1888 is a little like the short pace forward taken with the foot in something called Freemasonry ; and it brings us to Alfred Nutt, who first learned " to love Celtic Tradition " through J. F. Campbell and his ever-memorable Highland Stories. We are prepared therefore to find that Nutt's *STUDIES OF THE GRAIL LEGENDS*—as their sub-title explains—were undertaken with special reference to the hypothesis of its Celtic origin. Nutt was not only a man of learning

¹ *MORTE DARTHUR*, Book XVII, cap. 20.

² It is to be observed that we are now in the year 1882, when Hertz published his *SAGE VOM PARZIVAL UND DEM GRAL* at Breslau, and when the chief texts of the literature were available in printed form.

³ I have noted elsewhere a similar transparent but neglected point of fact in the case of Vengeance Legends.

in these matters but of notable general accomplishment, and some of his monographs remain of real value. The Grail STUDIES in particular have drawn together a wealth of material, the interest and consequence of which are not reduced materially by any fate of the assumptions which led to their collection.¹ I have intimated, however, that the speculative part is qualified rather than destroyed. It does not follow that Keating, who first published an account of the Tuatha de Danaan and other old Irish themes,² made it up out of his own head, any more than Moses de Leon invented the ZOHAR in the thirteenth century, though it was he who edited and he who issued to those who could buy copies. Criticisms vary and fashions of investigation change. Successive hypotheses rise like stars and rule in the speculative heaven of mind; they set ultimately and yield their place to others; they leave also their light behind them in the records of the past. I write as one who loves the Celtic "setting", of which Alfred Nutt talked. There are many things also which I cherish in the garnerings of Sir John Rhys. They do not "charm" alone "the Romantic Spirit of the Middle Ages" about which Nutt wrote; and I agree utterly with him, in the closing words of his STUDIES, when he testified³ (1) that "quickened by Christian symbolism they came to express and typify the noblest and most mystic longings of man"; (2) that the Grail Legend, fashioned by "the poets and thinkers" of that now far-away past "has still a lesson" and still a "meaning" for us; and (3) that it is part of our "yearning for the truth and beauty of the infinite and undying."

That is better and sweeter and holier than anything which ever came into the written word of Jessie Weston, though she told me once in a letter how, after all, she believed in her heart that it is "the Mass which matters." She was mainly reflective in speculation, though she made her little discoveries there and here. Her LEGEND OF LANCELOT and especially her LEGEND OF PERCEVAL are of lasting value, but mainly in respect of material, for no one knew better the Grail and Arthurian texts.⁴ As time went on, she offered much incense on Altars erected to Vegetation Gods, with the GOLDEN BOUGH as her oracle. We are in debt to her always for publishing the MODENA PERCEVAL, and I am thankful on my own part that she wrote FROM RITUAL TO ROMANCE, with which I shall be called to deal in a later section.

It was her last published volume, and we find ourselves brought thereby, as if with a sudden leap, to the year 1920. The publications of some intervening years by her and others have been either the subject of notice elsewhere in my text or are represented sufficiently in the Bibliography which appears at the end. There is a word, however, to add here on the exhaustive work of the late Dr. J. D. Bruce, to which

¹ Appendix II, Part II.

² That is to say, he gave very full account of it in a HISTORY OF IRELAND, published originally in the seventeenth century, but a more available edition by Joyce appeared at Dublin in 1880. See Book I in particular. Bruce—*Op. cit.*, I, 274—puts a note of interrogation against the account of Keating on the ground that his sources are unknown respecting the Talismans.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 259.

⁴ Appendix II, Part II.

reference has been made frequently throughout the present volume. No one has collected more fully or analysed more carefully the Arthurian and Grail texts ; no one has paid more serious attention to the views and variations of views on the part of recent official scholarship ; and no one has set aside more completely the speculations which have appeared, so to speak, in the outer courts and classes. They may be good, bad or indifferent ; but in a comprehensive work one would have thought that the fact of their existence should have been made known at least. There would have been no call, however, to dwell upon this point, except for the noteworthy fact that on one occasion Dr. Bruce has presented his intimations on the meaning which lies behind the subject matter of the Holy Grail ; and no one in the broad thoroughfares, byways or purlieus of—let us say—even occult reveries in Germany, France or England has failed more disastrously. He is discussing a theory of the Eucharistic origin of Chrétien's Grail Procession, in which I disbelieve utterly so far as the CONTE is concerned, or at least his share therein. He proceeds to argue (1) that if the Lance carried in this Procession is that of Longinus ; if the Grail is the Chalice ; if the Silver Platter is the Paten ; it becomes " plain "—God help us—that the Fisher-King is the Crucified Christ, because He has been riven through both thighs in a battle ; while his Father or " double," the " Mysterious King who is likewise lame " and has not left his room for fifteen years, " being sustained exclusively by the holy wafer," is the Holy Ghost.¹ A proposition like this does more than baffle commentary : it outrages contemplation, not alone by the ghastly *non sequitur* of identifying the Fisher with the Christ—Crucified or not—because forsooth he appears in a supposed Procession of the Blessed Sacrament, but because of the blasphemous follies involved : (1) the Divine Spirit becomes also the Eternal Father ; (2) God the Son must be healed by a twelfth-century version of the Great Fool Mythos personified ; (3) he is utterly dependent on being asked an arbitrary Question ; (4) the Fool Transformed is destined to take the place of the Second Person in the Holy Trinity ; while (5) the incapacitated Holy Spirit is nourished by the Body of His alleged Son. The force of mania cannot further go.

II

THE CLAIM IN RESPECT OF TEMPLAR INFLUENCE

I SUPPOSE that there is no one at this day, even on the outermost fringes of the wide world of books, who will need to be made acquainted with the fact that the old and glorious Chivalry of the Temple was instituted as a protection for the Christian Pilgrims who visited the Holy Places of Jerusalem in the first quarter

¹ EVOLUTION OF ARTHURIAN ROMANCE, I, pp. 257, 261, 262.

of the twelfth century. It was a military and religious organisation *ab origine symboli*, differing as such from the Hospital of St. John, which at its incorporation was a healing fraternity, and only assumed arms following the example of the *Militia Crucifera Evangelica* which had arisen suddenly at its side. Templar history is a great storehouse of enchanting hypothesis and also of unreclaimed speculation expanded from writer to writer. I know no greater sea on which ships of imagination and fantasy have launched more boldly: if they have reached no final harbour, they have paused to take in further stores at innumerable "summer isles" of an imaginary Eden "lying in dark purple spheres of sea;" and if in some undemonstrable way they have slipped their cables and eluded sporadic hostile vessels, this has been because the equipment of the latter has not been better than their own, while as regards credentials the letter of marque carried by the unwelcome visitor would often not bear much closer inspection than their own unchartered licence. Now, an Order which was established in the East for a specific Christian purpose, which embodied ideas of devotion that were ecclesiastical as well as religious, which accepted monastic vows—even those counsels of perfection that qualified for the Quest of the Grail—yet, in spite of these, which became wealthy in the corporate sense beyond the dreams of avarice, insolent and haughty beyond the prerogatives of feudal royalty, and had darker charges looming against it, does assuredly offer a picture to research the possibilities of which are likely to be exploited in all directions. The story of the Brotherhood and the things implied therein have been approached therefore from many points of view, enforced by many considerations and by much which passes for evidence in the absence of a valid title. I speak—as it will be understood—here of the things recognised or divined beneath its external surface, for on that side there is nothing more direct and more simple. We know that the Latin Church has a heavy account to balance in respect of the Order, and by the characteristics of the charges preferred it is responsible also for having brought the Templars—whether warrantably or otherwise, but at least all unwittingly—within the dubious circle of a Secret Tradition in Christian Times, for an unwary proportion of those who recognise the fact of such Tradition. It remains, however, that from this standpoint their story has never been told by anyone who spoke with knowledge on the involved subject. Here is no place to attempt it; but the Mystery of the Temple in a very minor degree interpenetrated the Mystery of the Grail, and something must be said concerning it in this connection. There is at the present time in England (1) an extending disposition to appreciate remotely and dimly an imbedded evidence that Romance-Literature did somehow shadow forth an initiatory process, as hinted previously, and as it remains over for later consideration at length; (2) that in some manner not yet understood the Knights Templar and the Grail Legend grew up together, and that they answer with strange voices if set to question one another across the void which intervenes between an Externalised

Chivalry in fact and an Ideal Chivalry in books. In a word, the literature has been held sometimes to represent, within clouds and under curious veils, something of the imputed Templar subsurface design ; or alternatively certain Grail texts do reflect at least indubitably after their own manner and on their own authority the Knight-hood of the Morning and of Palestine raised from the world of reflections into the world of the archetype.¹ The PERLESVAUS, for example, is not alone a work with an interior motive ; it is not only the story of a Suppressed Word and of the sorrow and suffering which were wrought by that suppression ; it is not only a prototypical correlative of the Masonic Eighteenth Degree in a form not less clear because it can be traced only by a specialist ; but—at least in adventitious ways—it has ever-recurring characters of Templar Symbolism. Now that which wears herein—and so through the French Cycle—little more than an aspect of accident, passes in the PARZIVAL of Wolfram into the appearance of a preconceived plan. Herein is the story of a Confraternity, partly military but in part also religious, connecting by the Legend of its lineage with a kind of Secret History in Christendom written under the guise of Knight-Errantry : it is the Romance of an Order of the Holy Grail whose members are chosen out of thousands, dedicated, set apart, and sometimes terrible in power, almost “ like Cedron in flood.” I do not wonder that before the face of this picture the criticism of the Grail literature has been haunted here and there with the dream of Templar intervention, and the only question which concerns us is the extent to which such an hypothesis can be justified. Even in the least illuminated circle the possibility has been regarded from time to time with increasing respect by students uncommitted thereto ; and apart from any claims on its own basis it would be difficult for this reason to pass it over entirely. The imputed fact, or the likelihood, that the literature was a vehicle, officially or otherwise, of some Occult or Mystical Tradition, without depending for any one on the merits of this hypothesis, would in certain minds be enhanced substantially thereby. But it is desirable to note, in the first place, that it is now an old speculation ; secondly, that recent years have not brought to light, that I am aware, any new facts on the subject ; and, lastly, that in so far as the contention is put freshly there is a disposition to dwell on the TEMPLEISEN depicted in the PARZIVAL as not only a militant body but also a governing theocracy, and one which above all things was not ecclesiastical. It is just this which impresses me as at least a little exaggerated in tone : I do not find that Anfortas and his Chivalry can be called a governing power² any more than the Company overruled by King Pelles of Lystenoy, about whose warfare we hear in the VULGATE

¹ Cf. Baron Tschoudy—less or more *passim*—in L'ÉTOILE FLAMBOYANTE, of which there were several editions at Paris, the Hague and so forth, early in the nineteenth century.

² The Grail itself governed, calling, choosing and commanding all by the power of the written word. The Chivalry had no voice in appointing the King who was to come, nor did it elect members. Those who were fed by the Talisman were under the yoke thereof, from which there was no appeal.

MERLIN. If Mont Salvatch was anything of the kind, it was obviously a Secret Kingdom ; but as much might be said of Corbenic and the Realm to which it belonged. Seeing also that the Keepers of the Grail and the Cohort of their Ministers had at no time a sacerdotal aspect—some express claims notwithstanding as to their geniture—the ecclesiastical note therein is wanting through all the Cycles. The distinction in chief between the TEMPLEISEN and the other Knights of the Grail is that in Wolfram the former are Theocratically organised, while the latter are either an inchoate gathering or they are like the retinue which would be attached to a Feudal Castle. In one case, which is that of the DIDOT-MODENA PERCEVAL, the House Mystic might be a simple Tower and, from all that we learn about it, little more than a Hermit's Hold.

It is obviously one thing to say that Wolfram modelled his Chivalry on the prototype of the Knights Templar—which is an interesting fact without consequence—and another that the modelling was inspired by familiarity with Templar secret intention ; and it is on this point, which is the motive behind the hypothesis, that reasonable evidence is wanted. The next step is to recognise *tendances suspectes* in the poem of Wolfram and to regard the Templar design—whatever it was otherwise—as anti-Catholic in its spirit. With the first ascription I have dealt when discussing the German Cycle in general ; of the second we can divine little, and then but darkly ; while in respect of the third I recur to that canon of criticism which has served me well already : in so far as the Templar Order is held to be not only anti-Papal but also anti-Catholic, it is antecedently and proportionately unlikely that any evidence will connect it with Grail literature, at that epoch of the world and amidst its strife of sects.

Whatever the origin of that literature, in one and all its forms, it is not merely on the surface a Catholic Legend but in forms of presentation it seems so to have issued from the heart and centre of Catholicity that it is almost in the likeness of an exotic, as if from some Sanctuary behind the external and visible Sanctuary of the Universal Church. If this is the heart of Romance going out in its yearning towards God, there was never a heart in Christendom “ which warmer beat and stronger.” It is like the voice—at its truest—of that Ideal City, the First City, the Spiritual City, of which Wagner wrote, and it is seldom heard on earth ; it seems to speak from the pictured home of the Soul, the place of pre-existence, with all the mystery and wonder of enchanted Hud and of Irêm in the Land of the Morning. And in the melody of that voice, within the verbal message thereof, we know that the country deep in Asia is not to be found in any Highlands beyond the Himalayas, or in the fabled Sarras. Again, it is the Country of the Soul and of the Soul's Legend : it is the Kabbalistic Place of the Palaces at the centre of the dimensions, sustaining all things.¹ We know also that we shall

¹ Vide the SEPPER HA ZOHAR in many places and Knorr von Rosenroth in KABBALA DENUDATA, I, s.v. *Palatia*.

look vainly for Corbenic on the wild coast of Wales, and for the local habitation of the Grail Castle of Mont Salvatch at any of the grand passes of the Pyrennees into Spain ; for this also is like the Rosicrucian Mountain of Abiegnus and the mystic Fir-Cone, a Mystery enfolded within and without by many meanings.¹

But if such is the position in respect of the Holy Grail, and if it follows therefrom that in some hands it has rested under a serious cloud of misapprehension, there is something to be said on the same subject, though not in the same sense, in respect of the Knights Templar. The eye which has turned from the Grail literature to the records of the Great Chivalry has been drawn in that direction chiefly because of the charge of heresy which was preferred of old against it. I am not designing to suggest that the side of criticism which is prominent in the open day is interested—or much less concerned seriously—in heresy as such, though I confess—if it be fitting to say so—that next to the truth which is of God and the deeps therein, whereof simple minds dream nothing, I am conscious of few things more fascinating than the ever-varied story of old condemned doctrines and of those who loved, followed and honoured them. It draws the mind for ever with vague and preposterous hopes ; and seeing further that I am on the side of any orthodox faith only in so far as the Old Mule which carries the Mysteries can be shewn to be on God's side—as the PERLESVAUS testifies—I do not doubt that many are the *choses suspectes* which might be gleaned from this book, while many there may still be who could wish to include its writer in the annals carried forward of Smithfield or Tyburn and those who went thither in the days of Mary or Elizabeth.

Here is cleansing confession ; but scholarship, as I have intimated, is detached, subject to its inoculation by the notion of pagan faiths perpetuated through Christian centuries—the stilettoes of which virus have pierced me also in both arms. But I believe, apart from such images, that I carry a lamp to enlighten these obscure ways, and much as I may love their crookedness, they do not deceive me. It is on this account that the alleged heresy of the Temple, so far as it concerns the Grail, can be dealt with shortly here, for which purpose I will go back so far as my knowledge of the criticism extends along these lines.

A summary of the views held and of the speculative hypotheses advanced may be grouped chronologically after the following manner. (1) So far back as 1809, Dr. F. H. v. d. Hagen was concerned in the editorship of a MUSEUM FÜR ALTDEUTSCHE LITERATUR and affirmed in the first volume² that a connection between the TEMPLEISEN and Knights Templar is not to be doubted, being indicated abundantly by the names. He believed, however, that the two Chivalries were related but not identical and that Wolfram's Grail Knights repre-

¹ GEHEIME FIGUREN DER ROSENKREUZER AUS DEM 16 TEN UND 17 TEN JAHRHUNDERT, etc. Called otherwise an ABC BOOKLET FOR YOUNG SCHOLARS IN THE SCHOOL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. Altona, 1785.

² Other editors were B. T. Doun and J. G. Büsching. The place of publication was Berlin.

sented in reality an Order of San Salvador de Montreal, founded *circa* 1120, by Alphonso III, the warrior King of Arragon and Castile. Moreover, King Alphonso built or fortified a town called Montreal to resist the Moors in Valencia and there established the Chivalry. Here—so far as Grail connections are concerned—is obviously pure speculation, not only destitute of evidence but of anything to justify its promulgation. In a presumably later dissertation Von Hagen appears to have changed his ground and to have affirmed that all the old Romances treating of the Holy Grail were written to glorify the Order of Knights Templar.¹ (2) In the year 1811 the orientalist J. von Hammer-Pugstall published his well-known and long-remembered *MYSTERIUM BAPHOMETIS REVELATUM*, in the course of which he identified certain Baptismal Fonts or Vases—which he included among antique memorials of the Templars—as examples of the true San Graal Vessel; and since he inter-related Templar Secret Doctrine and Gnostic Theosophies, he remembered that, according to Epiphanius, the Marcosians made use of three large Vases in their Celebration of the Eucharist. They were filled with white wine, which was supposed to undergo a transformation of colour and other magical changes. He held also that the poem of *TITUREL*—presumably that of Albrecht—is nothing but an allegory devoted to the Society and Doctrines of the Knights Templar and that the Grail Temple, its Altars and its sculptures, are significant of Templar Churches. He notes further that the origin of the Holy Grail is referred always to the East, and that the praises of the Vessel are celebrated throughout the *TITUREL* in terms of mystical exaltation, with special reference to its abstruse Secrets. The Chalice itself is a symbol of the Gnostic Sophia, while its twelve Seniors or Archons, the instituted Guardians of the Grail, were Initiates of Gnostic Mysteries. On these and other considerations, he concludes that this most celebrated Cup of the Middle Ages was not only a Templar symbol but an outward evidence of an inward Wisdom-Knowledge preserved and perpetuated in the Order.² The Baphometric Mystery itself lies outside our subject, being the question of an idol which the Templars were supposed to worship; but it may be said that on this part of his thesis the views of Von Hammer did not survive criticism even at his own period. As to the Grail reveries, it is to be questioned whether any one was at pains concerning them: they are likely to have passed unnoticed. At the present day, even an unversed reader will see that they are mere impressions expressed dogmatically, and as the author had no evidence to produce in support of his contentions so none has emerged since. The Templars may have had a Secret Doctrine, but nothing has transpired respecting it and nothing above all to connect it with Gnostic Theosophies. (3) In the year 1828, the Abbé Grégoire expressed—as we have seen—a conviction

¹ This is cited by Fauriel and is therefore at second hand, without particular reference.

² Von Hammer's thesis seems to have appeared originally in *DER FUNDGRUBEN DES ORIENTS*, VI, part 4.

that Christ transmitted to St. John the Evangelist a Secret Doctrine which descended ultimately to the Templars.¹ (4) In the year 1834 Gabriele Rossetti affirmed that the Templars belonged to Secret Societies and that they professed doctrines inimical to Rome; but though much has been hazarded concerning their opinions, nothing has been ascertained conclusively. He held further that they were of Egyptian derivation and that from them the Albigenses emanated, which of all speculations brought forward on the subject in hand is assuredly the most unfounded.² (5) Between 1836 and 1841 San Marte—otherwise, Albert Schulz—produced the first modern German version of the PARZIVAL and laid stress on Templar correspondences with the German Grail Mythos in the Introduction prefixed thereto. The denomination TEMPLEISEN not only recalls the Templars but customs followed by these recall the poem of Wolfram. For example, at the Baptism of Feirfeis the Grail Liturgy uses the opening words of the Gospel according to St. John, and it is claimed that these words were an apparently essential part of the Eucharistic Ceremony among the Knights Templar. Moreover, the supposititious Baphometric Idol which the Knights were accused of worshipping and to which they looked not only for wealth but for all the fruits of the earth is in obvious correspondence with the food-providing powers of the Grail Talisman. In a later and revised edition of the work under notice³ San Marte dwells on the alleged Secret Teaching of the Templars and on the rigidity with which their alliance was shut off from all without its pale, corresponding in these points with the Grail Chivalry isolated at Mont Salvatch from all intrusion, with guarded passes and ruled by Hereditary Kings.⁴ He says further that in Spain and the South of France—connected obviously in his mind with the Provençal source of Wolfram—"there were not wanting Spiritual Societies which differed in essential points from the dogmas of Catholic Teaching"; that soon after 900 A.D. "journeys were undertaken from France and other European countries to the Arabs in Spain" for the study of Islamic sciences; that schools arose in this manner for the practice of Astrology and Natural Magic, at which Mohammedans, Jews and Christians were, so to speak, bound together and united in one purpose; that the Grail Saga may have arisen in these centres; that its Cult and its Kingdom constitute a poetic representation of the Kingdom of God in "the spirit of a knightly layman set free from rigid traditional and ecclesiastical forms".⁵ Finally, in his monograph on Welsh Tradition and its influence, San Marte affirms (a) that the Grail Legend

¹ Abbé Grégoire: HISTOIRE DES SECTES RELIGIEUSES. He seems to have regarded a certain LEVITIKON as so far authentic that it was "an exposition of the Religious Doctrine of the initiated." The initiates, however, were those modern French Templars—*circa* 1805 and subsequently—who derived from Fabré-Palaprat's notorious Charter of Larmenius.

² DISQUISITIONS ON THE ANTIPAPAL SPIRIT WHICH PRODUCED THE REFORMATION, 2 vols., 1834. The translation was by Miss Caroline Ward and appeared concurrently with the Italian original.

³ Both editions were published at Magdeburg, the second in 1887.

⁴ Introduction to the second edition.

⁵ *Ibid.*

did not assume a defined form till after the Institution of the Templars ; (b) that as the MILES TEMPLI fought for the honour of the Cross and the protection of Pilgrims, so also fought the TEMPLEISEN for the glory of the Grail and the Sanctuary wherein it was preserved ; (c) that the Templars chose their own Grand Master and might appoint one of the most remote members, while the coming King of the Grail was liable to be summoned from " the most distant corner of the earth " by its appointed Messenger, the so-called Sorceress Kundrie ; (d) that the Grand Master of the Temple was subordinate to the Pope alone, and the Grail King lived " in angelic purity " in the sight of God upon earth ;¹ (e) that only children of pure birth could be chosen as Servants of the Grail and that Knights only, or the Sons of Knights, lawfully begotten of noble ladies, were eligible as Templar Candidates ; (f) that everything was in common with the Templars, while the Grail provided TEMPLEISEN with all human necessities. There are other and yet more frivolous analogies which it would serve no purpose to enumerate. It should be obvious to all that if consanguinities can be established on lines like these they might be found everywhere. The GRAND PALAMÈDE and the GRAND PERCEFOREST may be Templar Romances, for no better reason than because they post-date the foundation of the Templar Chivalry ; whosoever has fought for the glory of anything while that Chivalry lasted may have been in the bonds thereof ; whosoever lived in purity under the eye of Heaven was to all intents and purposes a Knight Templar ; and so was every heir to any and every throne who happened to be *in absentia* when his predecessor passed out of this life. There is no need to add that a food-providing Talisman bears no relation to community of goods ; and in this manner we are left only with the law of legitimacy as a ground of union between the German Grail of Wolfram and Albrecht and its postulated source.² Now it happens, as regards the Northern French Cycle, that Galahad, the *Haut Prince*, certified as such by the Inscription on the Siege Perilous, was a natural son of Lancelot. I have said elsewhere and maintain that Galahad and the Great QUESTE are the head and crown of the Grail Legend, whatever we elect to think of Parzival and the poet who gave a new and wonderful life to the creation of Chrétien : now, the putative stigma connected with Galahad's birth counts for nothing in the light of his story at large, his dedication and his final

¹ One is left to speculate on the supposed ground of analogy between angelical purity and subordination to the Pope alone. Readers who wish to verify the author's text may be referred to AN ESSAY ON THE INFLUENCE OF WELSH TRADITION UPON THE LITERATURE OF GERMANY, FRANCE AND SCANDINAVIA, translated from the German of Albert Schulz. Llandovery, 1841, p. 121.

² Compare San Marte's implied counter-views at a later point of the Introduction already cited : the " blessed contemplation " of the Grail on Montsalvatch preserved " the servant of the Holy Vessel from every deadly sin " and herein presumably resides the kind of perfection attained by Parzival in the pleasant married life of his Kingship. It did nothing of the sort unfortunately in the case of his precursor, Anfortas. It may be noted, as a matter of curiosity, that at this stage of his thesis the Grail has become for San Marte an exceedingly conglomerate symbol, being (1) a Stone fallen from the crown of Lucifer, (2) the same Stone converted into a Cup, and (3) as such the Holy Vessel which received the Blood from the side of Christ when it was pierced by Longinus.

attainment. (6) In the year 1852 Dr. Karl Simrock expressed an opinion that the Doctrine and Tradition of the Templars were based on the Tradition of the Grail; that Christ had been instructed by the Essenes; that He confided a Secret Knowledge to some of His Disciples; and that this was imparted subsequently to Priests of the Templar Chivalry.¹ As regards the first point, the Grail owed nothing to the Temple, while in respect of the second it is not suggested that the alleged Secret Knowledge bore any relation to that which *ex hypothesi* may be imbedded in the Grail literature. Simrock, however, cannot be said to have been concerned seriously with the Templar thesis and was inclined rather to look for light on the Grail in the direction of Traditions connected with St. John the Baptist. (7) In the year 1854 it was sustained by Eugène Aroux that all the archaic Romances of the Holy Grail were written to glorify the Order of the Temple and to present its Doctrine in the form of Romance.² (8) In the year 1858 the same writer went further in a fantastic work and affirmed that the Templars were parties to a concealed programme for the creation at Jerusalem of a religious and military rival to the power and orthodoxy at Rome.³ It would be impossible to present his thesis in any reasonable space, and it has nothing to do with the Grail. As regards glorification of the Temple in the Grail Romances, the affirmation is justified by crediting the Chivalry with Albigensian and other views for which there is no evidence. (9) In 1865 Louis Moland, in his *ORIGINES LITTÉRAIRES* considered that the Grail Legend and the Templar Order were expressions in literature and life of the same ideal, being the union of Knighthood with Sanctity, and he stated further (a) that there was a strange Templar reflection in a literature which was unquestionably and closely related with the principles of that Chivalry; (b) that the Roman Curia interdicted the Grail Romances coincidentally with the suppression of the Knightly Order.⁴ It will be seen that the root of this thesis is identical with that of Schulz. (10) So far as I am aware, the debate appears to have slept till 1890, when F. Naef published at Nismes a volume of moderate dimensions on the religious opinions which he ascribed to the Templars, in connection with which he had strong personal views on the Grail Legend and that which lay behind it. Taken generally, he traced a decided religious tendency and what he termed a symbolical mysticism in the Romances of the Round Table. As regards the Grail itself, it has next to nothing in common with Catholic Legends, while the Cultus of the mysterious Chalice far surpassed in grandeur and exaltation the relative worship paid by the Church even to the most Sacred Relics. Now, from his

¹ The *PARZIVAL* of Wolfram von Eschenbach, translated into modern German.

² See his *DANTE: HÉRÉTIQUE, REVOLUTIONNAIRE ET SOCIALISTE*.

³ *MYSTÈRES DE LA CHEVALERIE ET DE L'AMOUR PLATONIQUE AU MOYEN AGE*.

⁴ More than fifty years later, Miss Weston asks whether the Grail Romances were forbidden or whether they were merely discouraged; and she answers herself by saying that "probably we shall never know." *FROM RITUAL TO ROMANCE*, p. 177. It is needless to say that we look to Moland in vain for evidence, nor does he enable us to see after what manner Templar principles were reflected into Grail Romances.

point of view, "it is just this exaltation of mystery and of holiness which unveils so clearly the symbol and the allegory" of the entire conception. He goes on to say that the mystical symbolism was a protest raised from time to time "by superior souls, to escape from the scholastic absurdities and the despotism of the Roman Church." Having enlarged further on these and connected subjects, it is proposed that they suggest the idea of Initiation into some Instituted Mystery, and the Order of Knights Templar, being that alone which was ready to his hand at the period, is made to serve his purpose. He rejected the scandals repeated by writers like von Hammer and affirmed that their Secret Doctrine was a Christian Gnosis—whatever the term may mean—"concealed in the mysterious assemblies of the Order".¹ It was supposed to come from the East, meaning obviously that it was met with in Palestine or thereabouts. Naef adds cautiously that we have no ground of speculation as to its nature. The sole basis on which this reverie rests is the fact at its value that the Templars appear to have possessed a variant version of the Fourth Gospel, a verse of which has survived and is quoted by the author under notice. It occurs at the end of the Gospel and Jesus is supposed to be speaking. The words are: "In truth, I say unto you, I am not of this world. But John will be unto you a Father until he comes with Me into Paradise." They may suggest to some minds the possibility of a Johannine Tradition within the Temple. (II) The dream of the Grail and the Temple—after 1890—passed on, as it may be said, from mouth to mouth and contributions thereto and thereon will be found more especially in occult works and periodicals, the writers, in all cases practically, depending on those who had preceded. They are records of added impressions and sometimes of added inventions which there is no space or cause to cite. Thirty years later Miss Weston published the last word, so to speak, which as yet has been delivered on the subject.² She is in the course of affirming that Grail Romances repose on the ruins of an august Ritual and not on a poet's imagination; but about this, its import and its value we shall hope to ascertain later. The force of religious evolution had driven the august Rite from its high estate into caves and mountain fastnesses, or island isolations, "where those who craved for a more sensible (not necessarily sensuous) contact with the unseen Spiritual Forces of Life than the orthodox development of Christianity afforded, might, and did, find satisfaction". The accent of assurance may be noted, as if something evidential and exceeding contradiction had come at last into Miss Weston's hands. She goes on, however, to ask a simple question: "Were the Templars such? Had they, when in the East, come into touch with a survival of the Naassene, or some kindred sect?" The answer is simple also, after its own manner: "It seems exceedingly probable". An expatiation follows, and we learn that in such case

¹ OPINIONS RELIGIEUSES DES TEMPLIERS.

² FROM RITUAL TO ROMANCE, pp. 176, 177.

many problems would be cleared up, as if once and for all. We should understand (1) the puzzling connection of the Order with the Knights of the Grail; (2) the doom which fell upon them; (3) why they were held to be heretics; and (4) in what their heresy consisted. It was something which struck at the root and vitals of Christianity, if the intimations cherished by Miss Weston are based on fact. She affirms also that we can understand in such case why the Church knows nothing of the Grail, and why that Sacred Vessel encompassed by an atmosphere of reverence and "equated with the central Sacrament of the Christian Faith, yet appears in no Legendary, is figured in no picture, comes on the scene in no Passion Play". This notwithstanding, "the Church of the eleventh and twelfth centuries knew well what the Grail was", and it is possible for us to know on our own part, if we accept her thesis on its genesis: we shall know also why, with all the splendour and wonder of the Grail Cycles, it "vanished utterly and completely from the world of literature". The explanation is that it belonged to a cult of Vegetation Gods perpetuated into the Christian centuries, passing *ex hypothesi* with the Templars, but still, as we shall see, not wholly beyond recovery for those who know where to look. I have mentioned that this speculation will recur for our inspection later: at the moment we have only to notice that, even from Miss Weston's point of view, the question of Templar connections with strange or Secret Doctrines in the East is only a matter of probability by her own admission. It may prove to be even less.

The summary above has omitted of necessity many allocations and many hazards of hypothesis which might have been collected from other sources. Our next step is to ascertain from the authentic charges made against the Templars during the course of the processes instituted by the Ecclesiastical Courts of France and elsewhere what were the heresies of Doctrine and Practice imputed to the Chivalry in the accusations of the dominant Orthodoxy. Setting aside those which constitute alleged infringement of the Decalogue and sins "crying to Heaven for vengeance",¹ the major counts were two: that Candidates for Reception into the Order were called upon to deny Christ and offer a ceremonial outrage to the Cross as the Symbol of His Passion. The minor points were many, but after disentangling the alleged Cultus of the Baphometric Head and some other things which may be ruled outside our concern,² they are reducible also to two, being (1) the secular

¹ It has to be remembered (1) that the Templars were men of action, not men of contemplation; (2) that they were bound by monastic vows but were leading their life in the world and on fields of battle; (3) that as Soldiers of the Cross and otherwise, incorporated for perpetual warfare, they were men of great physical power, having all the advantages, all the dangers and temptations implied by that vocation; (4) that inevitable results in any or all directions must have stared Rome in the face; and (5) that Roman astuteness would never have proceeded against the Templars on mere charges of incontinence: authentic or fraudulent, they had another and larger dossier.

² The ruling obtains definitely in respect of the Head, because the worship of idols lies outside the Grail subject. Those, if any, who wish to pursue the subject will do well to accept one word of warning, avoiding therefore occasional occult dissertations and their source in Von Hammer-Purgstall. They will be threading idle mazes. Let them have recourse to Michelet's *PROCÈS DES TEMPLIERS*, 2 vols., 1841-43, containing the Latin

absolution from sin which was said to be given by the Grand Master in Open Chapter and possibly also by the Preceptors of local Com-manderies and Encampments; (2) a practice in respect of the Eucharist which did not involve exactly a denial of Doctrine but exhibited hostility thereto. The first is important because in a qualified form it was the only charge which was held proven against the Templars as a result of examinations in England; ¹ but it is on the second that the whole thesis with which we are concerned appears to break down. The accusation was that in Consecrating the Blessed Sacrament, the necessary and efficacious Words were omitted.² The evidence adduced on this question included that of an English Priest who had officiated once for the Templars and who was forbidden to recite the Clauses of Institution.

I do not propose to report upon the validity of the charges in whole or in detail: with a single exception, they lie outside our subject, and those who are concerned must be referred—if they can summons such patience for their aid—to the Latin Process of the Trial, which was published many years since in France, and to which I have had recourse in notes. The Templars have been accused by learned people of Gnos-ticism, Manichæanism, Albigensianism, not however, on the authority of those memorials, which speak with another voice. There is no evidence in either case: it is wanting also for the other speculations which are included in my summary above; and, in fine, there is none also for the suggested Grail connections, though I confess that my far-off researches were begun in an expectation of the kind. The Templars, if guilty, as affirmed of old on the worst of all possible authority, were in the position of some heresies in Southern France: they reduced, denied, derided, or stood in fear of the Eucharist, and therefore the abyss intervenes between them and a literature which exists to exalt it. As regards the German PARZIVAL, it possesses the putative *tendances suspectes* to which I have referred in more than one connection. It may be said that the Host which came from Heaven was a designed antithesis to the Host consecrated on earth; but I believe that this is fantasy,³ because to hear an ordinary Mass was as much a duty of Knighthood according to Wolfram, as we find it in the QUEST OF GALAHAD, the LONGER PROSE PERCEVAL and any of the other Romances.⁴ I believe in my heart that the instituted analogy

records of the Trials, printed from one of two copies made at the time, the second being delivered to Pope Clement. It will tell them precisely what the Prosecution understood by the Head and what they extracted thereupon from their victims, under or after torture, and otherwise.

¹ C. G. Addison: THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR.

² As if the Templars believed and were afraid—a notable and significant point, on assuming for a moment that the charge had a ground in fact.

³ From another point of view, it might be very much more than fantasy, were there ground for believing that behind the earthly wonders of the *Lapis exilis*, the Stone which fed and the Stone which clothed, the Oracle which called the Elect and reigned and ruled in all, Wolfram was intimating another Arch-Natural Eucharist, which came down from Heaven and communicated Bread of Life and Wine of the Kingdom. But for this I find no evidence.

⁴ We have seen that Albrecht's TITUREL is precisely the kind of creation which would have been called disdainfully an ultramontane poem in the later nineteenth century.

between the TEMPLEISEN of Mont Salvatch and the great Order of Chivalry was natural and irresistible in the mind of the poet who conceived it ; I believe that it is the only connection and, as I have said, that nothing follows therefrom. I believe that the sole Eucharistic privilege enjoyed by the Templars was a decree which permitted them to celebrate one Mass annually in places under interdict ; that there were next to no instances in which they renounced their faith, much as they may have dishonoured it by their lives ; and that their foundation under the patronage of *la douce mère de Dieu*¹ represented their ecclesiastical ideal. I believe in fine that their first principles were expressed on their behalf in the Epistle of St. Bernard *ad Milites Templi*. It was written at the instance of Hugo, the first Commander, and this fact is all that need be derived from the Prologue. The text itself exhorts the new Institution to strive with intrepid souls against the enemies of the Cross of Christ, because those to whom death is a reward and life is Christ need fear nothing. Let them stand for Christ therefore, rather desiring to be dissolved, that they may be with Him. Let them live in good fellowship, having neither wives nor children. A later section concerns that external Temple from which their particular title was taken, and it compares the glories of the House built by Solomon for the Glory of God with the inward grace of that Inward Temple to which the Order was attached in the spirit. In other words, this was for St. Bernard a House not made with hands, since the Chivalry was itself a Temple, and, like that of Masonry, the edifice was erected in the heart. The Brethren are in fact described as a Holy City ; they are connected with the idea of the Church itself ; and the enumerated details of the Holy Place are used for spiritual exhortation addressed to the Knighthood. The promise to Zion that its wilderness shall become an abode of all delights, its solitude a Garden of the Lord, echoing with joy and gladness, with thanksgiving and the voice of praise, is said to be the heritage of the Order, and to watch over their Heavenly Treasure should be their chief care—so acting that in all things He should be magnified Who guides their arms to the battle and their hands to the warfare.

Whether it profits to add more I question, but this may be said at least—that I am sacrificing all my predilections and making my task much harder by throwing over the Templar hypothesis, not alone in its connection with the Grail on the historical side, but as one of the Channels through which the Secret Tradition may have passed in Christian Times.

I have searched many highways and byways with an anxious eye for evidence, and I have been haunted with the dreams of those who went before me in the way ; but I have returned so far with empty hands. I can say therefore only : *magis amica veritas*.²

¹ Appendix I, Note 18.

² Appendix I, Note 19.

III

THE SECTS OF SOUTHERN FRANCE

PERHAPS no Christian sects have been the subject of more unbridled speculation and plenary misapprehension than those numerous groups which pass under the general denomination of Albigensis and Catharist in Southern France during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The affirmation obtains in several directions but more especially in that of writers who represent the borderland of occult thought. Against the monstrous iniquity of Albigensian persecution in the past there is the incompetence, not unmixed with dishonesty, of old Protestant apologists—as, for example, the grossly uncritical expatiations of the Rev. G. S. Faber¹ at the beginning of the nineteenth century. We have to deal, however, at the moment with a particular enthusiasm which attempted—between 1854 and 1858—to connect the sects and their exponents with the literature of the Holy Grail and we have to ascertain, if possible, what, if anything, may lie behind it. The initial impulse in this direction is to be found in special pleadings, criticisms and modes of interpretation with which France made us familiar some eighty years since, while their leading was followed much later by certain English exponents who scarcely knew their subject. For the purpose of the present analysis it is immaterial whether the Albigenses and their consanguinities were “pure Christians”, as pure Christianity was understood at the period, according to arbitrary canons, or whether they were Manichæans—to cite one out of many suppositions. The sole and all-important question is as to that light under which they presented Eucharistic Doctrine, and from this standpoint it seems clear, on the surface at least, that they could have had no connection with the development of any Grail Cycle, unless indeed its component texts were so devised that they maintained outwardly that which was denied within. If Albigensians and Catharists were Manichæans at heart and in practice, they had a tinkered Eucharist, from which nothing followed in relation to authentic Sacramental Mystery. If, on the other hand, they were Protestants of their period, they would deny as such most of the Sacraments, while in respect of Doctrine at least they would almost certainly have tampered with the Eucharist.

Postponing for a moment those French speculations which have nothing to tell us regarding Albigensian or Catharist teachings and deal only, as we shall see shortly, with a particular construction of a great body of romantic literature, it may be said—and is needful to note in order to clear the issue—that the merely Protestant standpoint in all matters of this kind, being naturally one of militant

¹ Remembered in perpetuity for the materials apart from the thesis of his *ORIGIN OF PAGAN IDOLATRY*.

opposition to the Latin Church, ignored or denied the Church theory that the Sects of Southern France, including the Paulicians, who have been proposed as their predecessors, were Manichæans, while the connected Sect of Waldenses, or disciples of Peter Valdo, were originally Donatists.¹ With these questions in themselves we have no concern, till we come to the later part of the present thesis, nor yet with an old contention that there was a line of succession in perpetuity from Apostolic Times through the Waldensians. There is no reason to suppose that the hypothesis is valid, and it matters little to our purpose if it was. There may be placed in the same category a not less romantic supposition, namely, that the Vaudois had been located in the Cottian Alps since the time of the Apostles and that their system had never varied from the tenets and practices of primitive Christianity. It is not of necessity a seal or mark of favour if these facts are undoubted; but actually they are questionable enough, like that apologetical *pièce de résistance* which accounts for the smallness of the Vaudois Community by inferring from the Apocalypse that the Church, during a certain disastrous period, would be reduced within very narrow limits and that for this reason—among contentions not less logical—the Vaudois, Waldenses and Albigenses constituted during those internecine days the one and truly Catholic Church.² Another field of reverie connects the so-called Waldensian Church with the Church Primitive through the Albigensians themselves; and if the last Sect had really the Paulicians for their ancestors they date back to a considerable antiquity; while, as regards distribution, it is said that the earlier “heresy” had its Houses of Assembly established all the way from Thrace to Gascony. They came from the East originally, or this is their Legend, but their early traces have disappeared, supposing that the story is true outside the imagination of apologists. However this may be, the Paulicians, so far as history is concerned, arose in Armenia, where they were founded by one Constantine about the middle of the seventh century. They were mixed up with the Milesians, who made common cause with Constantine, but they were proscribed by the Emperors of Byzantium and the so-called heretic was himself put to death. The same Paulicians have been identified with the Cathari, and these are said to have been in union with the Waldenses, whose first stronghold was among the Alpine valleys of Piedmont. On the other hand, the Paterins, whose chain of dissemination is affirmed to

¹ The *ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF RELIGION AND ETHICS* recognises the presence both of Paulician and Manichæan elements.

² My readers must be dissuaded from assuming that I am concerned in reality with the claims or principles of any Official Church or with the construction or destruction of any thesis which attempts to define Catholicity. I do not think, with old-fashioned Protestantism, that Rome represents the unity of slumbering intellects, nor with Anglicanism *in excelsis* that the “Holy Catholic Church” is a denomination applied and applicable to a general collocation of internecine sects. *Ecclesia Catholica in corde ædificata est et tabernaculum ejus in spiritu sancto nostro*. Meanwhile, I am concerned with presenting an exploded thesis on the Grail Legend in the course of a three-fold exposition of the critical apparatus thereon. We are to ascertain in conclusion that which arises, if anything, from later lights on the historical side of the subject.

have extended from Bulgaria through Lombardy to the Atlantic, have been represented as a variety of the Albigensian sect, if not identical therewith. These views constitute a cloud upon the problematic Sanctuary, in respect of its origin. Other accounts say that they appeared in Italy during the first years of the eleventh century, with which may be compared the counter-suggestion that their most probable founder was Peter of Lyons more than a hundred years later. Persecution may well have joined distinct elements of sect till they became merged in one another; it caused them also to move, like the Grail, Westward, and thus they entered Southern France, where those who had pre-existed under more than one name received the title of Albigenses—as it is thought, from their headquarters at Albi. Here also they fell under proscription, and because at that period men believed—and never more strongly—that they were doing God's work by annihilating those who worshipped Him under another code of doctrine, there was not only a crusade of extermination declared against them but we encounter St. Dominic fighting the heresy with other weapons than the Sword of the Spirit—in the belief that this also might be either as the Word of God in activity or its working substitute. This was under Innocent III, who occupied the Chair of Peter between 1198 and 1216 and who—prior to defining Transubstantiation—proclaimed the great Crusade against the Albigenses and their consanguinities in 1208, its leader-in-chief being Simon, Count of Montfort, while Folquet, a Troubadour Bishop of Marseilles, was one of its most violent partisans. There is no opportunity and fortunately no need to trace in these pages the merciless career of Montfort, the plunderings and massacres which characterised the war of extermination carried on under his auspices. At Lavarn the widowed Lady of the City, described as the bounteous Giralda, and her daughter were flung into a well and stones rolled down upon their bodies. At the beginning of 1213 Innocent declared the Crusade at an end,¹ but this prohibition was rescinded in the following year, the Pope himself passing to his reward in 1216. He was succeeded by Honorius III, who pursued the policy of destruction with increased vigour. Montfort was killed in the third Siege of Toulouse on June 25th, 1218. The persecution and the war dragged on, and it is said that after 1229 Albigensian history is mainly associated with that of the Holy Inquisition. It was not until 1244 that the last stronghold of the Catharists, the supposed impregnable Montségur,² fell into the hands of the enemy, and its Suzeraine, the Princess Esclairmonde de Foix, sealed her faith in her blood—or rather in fire—with many others of the Perfect Brethren. So do Official Churches illustrate their construction of the emblematic paradox concerning that Prince of Peace Who came with a Sword. If ever the Scarlet Woman of Apocalyptic Parable was seated on the Hills of Rome it was in the thirteenth century of the pseudo-Christian

¹ According to an alternative account, the further preaching of the Crusade was prohibited by the Council of Lateran in 1215.

² Appendix I, Note 20.

era ; and if ever she was " drunk with the blood of the Saints," the place of vintage at that period was in Southern France. It was then and there also, if ever, that the mystery of all iniquity came from the deeps in its power. The literature, the language and great masses of the population were destroyed in the years of ravage ; the remanent of Catharists, Albigenses and the rest fled to Piedmont, Austria, Bohemia and even England, though the last statement has been challenged. But the Sects die hard, like the persecuting Churches : it has been even said that a few of the Perfect Believers survived in Bosnia *circa* 1875.¹

There is very full evidence that the unremitting persecution brought many individuals into occasional outward conformity and to denials in public of that which they held in secret. On the basis of their enforced confessions, they repudiated Manichæan derivations and principles, claiming to follow primitive Christian teaching as they construed it from the New Testament or certain parts thereof, since it does not appear that they accepted all the Epistles : there are, moreover, persistent rumours about a Catharist version of the Fourth Gospel. A Dominican Missionary and Inquisitor who recounted in a poem which survives his debates with an Albigensian Theologian, accuses the Sect (1) of denying Baptism and regarding Satan as the creator of this world ; (2) of rejecting Confession and teaching that those who had Sons and Daughters were outside the pale of salvation ; (3) of claiming inspiration from the Holy Spirit and making a traffic therein amongst their disciples ; (4) of denying the Resurrection and affirming that the souls of the redeemed would assume a new body, having a certain resemblance to the old and yet differing therefrom ; and in fine (5) of maintaining that the souls of men are those of lost angels—the difficulty about this, in the mind of the Dominican, being apparently that we have no recollection of our past. The importance of this text is that although it embodies accusations included in the proscription of the sect it may also have reflected current fluidic opinions in orthodox circles at the period. Other charges affirm (1) that the Baptism which was recognised by the Albigenses was that of Fire or of the Spirit, recalling the Mysterious Office of the Paraclete which is often a subject of reference in the Grail literature ; (2) that the wandering preachers of the sect distributed nourishment of the body as well as the Bread of Angels—here recalling the two-fold ministry of the Grail ; (3) that they rejected the Books of Moses ; (4) that they regarded this sublunary world as the only hell ; (5) that their subsurface working was that of a New and Secret Priesthood which was to dispossess and succeed the Papal Hierarchy, as if here also there was a special succession from the apostles having kinship with the Super-Apostolic Succession of the Grail Priesthood.

Such fantastic analogies notwithstanding, it is clear on the old findings, for and against, that the sects of Southern France—as

¹ See ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF RELIGION AND ETHICS, I, s.v. Albigenses.

presented by either hypothesis—offer nothing to our purpose. From eclectic Gnosticism, which took over from Christianity that which coincided with its purpose, to Vaudois and Lollards, there is not one which sought to develop, exalt or exaggerate the sacramental teaching of the ancient Church. We know that, on the authority of Origen, the Marcionites taught the communication to the soul of man of a Divine and Sanctifying Spirit added by the Redeemer, Who imparted it in the Eucharist ; and if this meant the Descent of the Paraclete, the perpetuation of such a Doctrine might help us to understand why the Voice of the Grail was that of the Holy Ghost and yet in some mysterious way was that also of Christ.¹ But of such perpetuation there is no trace whatever. As regards the Albigenses, there is no question historically that they denied Transubstantiation, though they accepted some qualified Sacramental Teaching concerning the Lord's Supper, which they commemorated in woods and forests on a cloth spread upon the ground, or in their own houses. On these considerations it would be worse than idle to suppose that they had any hand in the Grail Legend, and this would remain substantially true even if we elected to suppose (1) that the Mythical Kyot was actually a poet of his period ; (2) that he belonged to one of the Sects ; and—going still further—if we suggested (3) that his poem conveyed, after a hidden or an open manner, some part of Albigensian Teaching.

Passing now for the time being from these external questions of fact and doctrine, a word must be said to dispose of that other claim to which I have adverted at the beginning. It took all Chivalrous Romance for its subject, and it claimed to have demonstrated that a large European literature had been written by Albigenses for the edification of Albigenses and to put forth in a veiled manner Albigensian Doctrine. There are certain precursors who do not prepare the way, for they open up issues which end either in a *cul de sac* or take the seeker through by-paths which can be followed interminably without leading to a true goal. The author of this demonstration was Eugène Aroux, who published in 1858 the MYSTERIES OF CHIVALRY AND OF PLATONIC LOVE IN THE MIDDLE AGES. Its inspiration in chief was derived from Gabriele Rossetti and particularly from the ANTI-PAPAL SPIRIT WHICH PRECEDED THE REFORMATION. Both works have exercised an influence on certain later schools of occult thought in England ; but Rossetti does not speak of the Grail, and hence there is no call that here I should speak of him. The monument of M. Aroux was preceded by other of his works designed to shew that Dante was (a) heretical, revolutionary and socialistic ; (b) connected with an

¹ LE ROMAN DU SAINT-GRAAL (of Robert de Borron), edited by Francisque Michel, 1841, p. 103, ll. 2459, 2460. Joseph prays for the counsel of Christ on the need of his people in the presence of the Holy Vessel ; but that which answers is said to be the Voice of the Holy Spirit :

Lors ha à Joseph la vouiz dist,
Ki venue est dou Saint-Esprist.

Joseph, however, receives the direction given as *le commandement notre Seigneur*, p. 107, ll. 2555, 2556.

alleged fusion between the Albigenses, Templars and Ghibellines for the creation of Emblematic Freemasonry ; (c) himself so far implicated in Freemasonry that the DIVINE COMEDY is really Masonic in its purpose. In further support of these views Aroux had translated the whole *Commedia* into literal French verse and had commented on it "according to the spirit." Finally, he had instituted comparisons between Dante and the writers of the Grail Cycle. It came about thus that the products of this Cycle were included by his general ingarnering, but he shews little familiarity with his subject, and he wrote at a period when the literature was still practically unprinted. He puts forward the talismanic proposition that the Holy Grail was a mysterious association¹ and that the mission of its Initiates was "to recover the vessel of truth with luminous characters wherein was received the Precious Blood of the Saviour." According to his peculiar canon of criticism this signified the design of "leading back the Christian Church to Apostolic Times and the faithful observation of the Gospel precepts."² M. Aroux wrote as a defender of the Roman Church, and, after all that has been said and done upon the whole subject, it has not occurred to any one—perhaps least of all to him—that the true mission of the Church may have been to get away from apostolic times and to put aside, like St. Paul, in its maturity the things which belong to the child. For the rest, M. Aroux confused in a grotesque manner the Grail Knights with those of the Round Table, and appeared to suppose that Wolfram's PARZIVAL and the TITUREL of Albrecht are representative of the entire literature.³

As regards Chivalry, his thesis can be stated shortly : The actual, historical, feudal Chivalry was an institution more or less savage, and the Chivalry set forth in the Romances had no existence on earth. This is equivalent to saying that the heroes and heroines of Mrs. Radcliffe, the modes and manners which she depicts, the spirit which characterises her episodes, perhaps even the scenes which she describes so graphically at hearsay, are never found in real life, though sentimentalism is always sentimentalism, mountains are always mountains, and as regards the Pyrenees in particular they are situated indubitably between France and Spain. The thing goes without saying in each case, for the Romance, one would say, is—well, precisely a Romance. But on the basis of this transparent fact, M. Aroux builds his theory that the Books of Chivalry were the *corpus doctrinale* and literary body-politic of the Protestantism of its period, reduced to this resource because of the intolerant powers that were. And this is just what appears to be so highly ridiculous, not because a

¹ Itself described as "an ascetic Freemasonry," meaning presumably that it was an Instituted Mystery. LA COMÉDIE DE DANTE, II, p. 1279.

² MYSTÈRES DE LA CHEVALERIE, p. 73.

³ Aroux depended on Fauriel for his knowledge of the German Grail, and it is to be questioned whether he knew any of the French Grail texts at first hand. Were there anything in his speculations, he should have found a mine of opportunity in the 1530 printed prose version of the CONTE DEL GRAAL ; but seemingly he had not heard of its existence.

literature cannot have concealed motives, or that of the Grail among them, but because it might be shewn in a no less pseudo-conclusive manner that the CONFESSIOAL OF THE BLACK PENITENTS was the final rescript of the followers of Manes. And this seems to be intolerable.

Speaking generally as to the canon of criticism, it is in all respects like that of the late Mrs. Henry Pott in the Bacon and Shakespeare controversy: he, as she, proves far too much for his own credit. If the canons of Mrs. Pott demonstrate that Bacon was the concealed author of the disputed Plays, then the same canons shew—and the claim is before us—that he must have written the works of Marlowe, Massinger, Ford, and the bulk of Elizabethan literature. In the same way, the evidences adduced by M. Aroux are either insufficient to prove his point or alternatively a similar scheme has given us, according to their inward sense, the NIGHTS of Straparola, the NIEBELUNGEN SAGAS, the ROMANCE OF THE ROSE and the entire literature of the Troubadours, to say nothing of the Welsh MABINOGION, REYNARD THE FOX and things innumerable of the German Minnesingers.¹ This is indeed the expressed thesis of M. Aroux, and the only reason that he omitted the Latin literature of Alchemy—which might have proved more to his purpose—is because he had not come across it. There is no need to outline the nature of his evidence; but, to speak generally concerning it, the same canon might be applied with the same success to Mrs. Radcliffe's ROMANCE OF THE FOREST and to the MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO. The principle, in other words, would repeat itself everywhere with fatal facility.

I should not have dealt with these fantastic matters except for the interest which they have raised in schools of thought which are not always so far from my own; because in the last resource they constitute an attempt, after their own manner, to shew the hand of supposed Secret Orders in the development of the Grail literature; and because there is another point of view from which, after these debates, the Grail subject can be approached in connection with Southern France, whether or not we shall reach ultimately the same term. I conclude for the moment as follows: (1) that the Chivalry of the Romances—Grail, Arthurian and others—was an ideal conception, corresponding as such to the atmosphere, characteristics and subject-matter of other Cycles of Romance; and (2) that the Historical Chivalry of the period corresponded to the impression which we obtain of the period by reading old Chronicles, like those of Froissart. For the rest, M. Aroux's canon of interpretation is exceedingly simple: (1) any Heroine of the Romances signifies the Albigensian Church; (2) any Hero signifies one of its Apostles or Teachers; (3) the enemies of both are the dominant opposing Church; (4) the Holy Vase of the Grail is its Divine and Hidden Doctrine.

¹ Cf. LES MYSTÈRES DE LA CHEVALERIE, in which these texts are studied: for the *Nights* see pp. 146-154; for the Sagas, pp. 110-115; for *Le Roman de la Rose*, pp. 138-141; for *Reynard the Fox*, pp. 130-137; for the Minnesingers, pp. 188, 189.

Against these speculations and these significances, fantastically inread, there is fortunately one fragmentary record of Albigensian Belief which has survived the Montfort Crusade, and defaced though it is it offers some light on the subject which was unknown seemingly to Eugène Aroux, not to speak of the Protestant Apologists. Perhaps in his case it was overlooked rather than unknown, as Schmidt, writing a few years earlier, was acquainted therewith and cited it in his still important work on the Sects of Southern France.¹ I refer to the Cathar Ritual of Lyons, which is now well known among us, having been translated and published in 1898 by Mr. F. C. Conybeare as Appendix VI to THE KEY OF TRUTH, being a Manual of the Paulician Church of Armenia. The Lyons Codex² contains (1) the New Testament in the Langue d'Oc;³ (2) Latin Prayers which are manifestly Trinitarian, as shewn by the recurring Benediction: *Pater et Filius et Spiritus Sanctus parcat vobis omnia peccata vestra*;⁴ (3) the *Pater-noster* with *Panem nostrum super substancialem*, instead of *panem quotidianum*; (4) the Service=*Servitium*, or Prayer; (5) the Reception of a Believer; (6) the *Consolamentum*; (7) certain Prayers for the Sick; and (8) St. John, I, 1-17 in Latin: *In principio erat verbum*, etc. There is no Eucharistic Celebration. As regards the Believer's Reception, this signifies his Reception of the Lord's Prayer, whereby presumably he became a Member of the Church and was thus qualified for the Office of Spiritual Baptism, termed *Consolamentum*. He could apply for it at once, but in most cases this crowning Ceremonial was postponed to a much later period and was taken often *in examine mortis*, when it served as a Viaticum for the departing soul. Mr. Conybeare institutes a close correspondence between the Albigenses=Catharists and the Paulicians, otherwise the Adoptionist Church, being "a phase of the Christian Church so old and outworn that the very memory of it was well nigh lost". It was held by the latter (1) that Jesus was man only till He received the Baptism of John—whence it follows, however, that John must have been more than man, in that he was able to communicate that super-efficacious Rite which could transform "mere" man into a Son of God. Yet it does not appear that Adoptionists were Christians of St. John, Mandæans and so forth. (2) That we in turn can become the Adopted Sons of God: *-et ille Christus et nos Christi*. (3) That "the Paulicians adored their elect ones as living representatives of Christ". (4) That the Transubstantiation of their Eucharist was not of the Elements but of the bodies of those who partook of them. (5) That it was Celebrated at night, like the Last Supper, in an ordinary house and sitting at a common table. (6) That

¹ HISTOIRE ET DOCTRINE DE LA SECTE DES CATHARES OU ALBIGEOIS, by C. Schmidt, 2 vols., Paris, 1849.

² The MS. is in the BIBLIOTHÈQUE MUNICIPALE DE LYON. It was published in facsimile by M. L. Clédât, anno 1887.

³ *Il présente des traits dialectaux propres à la région qui comprend le Tarn, l'Aude, la Haute-Garonne et l'Ariège, région qui est celle où les Albigeois étaient le plus répandus.* Louis Palauqui: LA VÉRITÉ SUR L'ALBIGÉISME, n.d., p. 12.

⁴ Cf. *Adhoremus Patrem et Filium et Spiritum Sanctum* (repeated three times).

it was not merely figurative, the Eucharistic Meal having a mystical value. (7) That it made use of a single loaf.

We have seen, however, that the Cathar Communion is wanting in the Lyons Manuscript, while the Trinitarian Formula in the Latin Prayers is identical with that of Rome, whereas the Adoptionist Formula appears to have been *In nomine Dei Patris et Filii Spiritus Sancti*, implying—if it can be called translatable—a very curious procession of the Divine Persons.¹ Our other sources of information are in the records and testimonies of the persecuting Church, and they stand at their dubious value, whatever it is. One example is Isaac Catholicos and his summary of Paulician tenets, according to which “Christ did not hand down to us” an instruction to celebrate the offering of Bread in Churches, the homes of the faithful being consecrated sufficiently by the presence of the Elect therein. There is otherwise the evidence of Eckbert on the Cathar Sacrament, identified with that of the Paulicians. The Perfecti were Shrines of the Christ Spirit, the Vessels of Christ, before whom the ordinary believers prostrated themselves. The flesh of the Perfecti was that of Christ, Whose body they were; and it was therefore one and the same thing to affirm the conversion of Eucharistic Elements into their body and blood or into that of the Saviour. From another point of view the Elements were lifeless in themselves, the change being in the body of the Elect, and their conversion was communicated to the Bread and Wine in the Office of Blessing, comparable seemingly to the tingeing power of the Stone in Alchemy. The points are put more strongly when Eckbert speaks of the heretics whom he found in the neighbourhood of Trèves and Cologne about 1160. It is certified (1) that the Masses celebrated in Churches were disdained by them; (2) that the true Priests were to be found among them only; (3) that they alone could “make the Body of Christ at their tables”. The witness, however, was deceitful, from Eckbert’s standpoint, as they were not referring to “the true Body of Christ”, born of the Blessed Virgin, but to their own flesh nourished at their own tables and regarded as the Body of the Lord.

Schmidt brings together some important testimonies on the hostile side in his study of Albigensian Doctrines and Customs, dwelling on the simplicity of the cult and its religious usages, the absence of ornaments, statues, pictures and especially of the Cross, which was regarded with horror as the instrument-in-chief of the Passion. His account of the Eucharistic Service is given at some length, citing Gretser, Reinerius, the Council of Narbonne (1243), Canon 29, and other sources. It may be rendered as follows.² “Before taking seat at the table the

¹ *Les Cathares substituaient au dogme catholique de l'unité de la substance divine et de la trinité des personnes égales entre elles, la doctrine d'un Dieu-Père existant de toute éternité, aux emanations infinies, d'un Fils et d'un Esprit Saint (Paraclet), dieux par origine, mais anges par destinée, inférieurs au Père quoique consubstantiels à lui.* L. Palauqui, *Op. cit.*, p. 16, citing Schmidt and J. Guiraud: *CARTULAIRE DE N.-D. DE PROUILLE.*

² Schmidt, *Op. cit.*, I, p. 129.

Lord's Prayer was said and the Blessing pronounced. Thereafter a Minister or the eldest among the Perfecti, took bread, blessed and distributed it in morsels to all present, saying: May the Grace of our Lord be with you for ever. Each communicant partook thereupon of his portion in silent recollection." This, according to Schmidt, represented the primitive agape or Love-Feast, symbolical of Brotherhood. In his opinion many believers regarded the Bread as really blessed and termed it Bread of God or Bread of the Holy Prayer. In the days of persecution the Perfecti went about in the houses of the faithful and blessed the Household Bread, so that it could be eaten in private at convenient times, in which manner they were never without the nourishment of souls. Notwithstanding, however, the importance thus attached obviously to the Communion Service and its Office in Bread,¹ Schmidt affirms that the Sect rejected all mystical signification relative to the Body of Jesus Christ, in the sense ascribed thereto by the orthodox Eucharistic System. Above all they recognised no supernatural transformation resulting from the Blessing of Bread, which never represented the material Body of Christ, since this was phantasmatic only, according to Catharist dualism.

In so far as Conybeare is right in his contention that the Paulician or Adoptionist Church was fundamentally one and the same with that of the Albigenses, it will be seen that Schmidt's evidences are at issue therewith, as the following excerpt from the KEY OF TRUTH will establish more clearly. "That our Mediator and Intercessor Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, took the Bread in His hands and blessed it, this the Holy Evangelists declare. That is to say, He earnestly besought the Almighty Father that He would change the Bread into His (Christ's) true precious Body. This is why the texts say He blessed, that is, He prayed the Lord (Father) that He would change the Bread truly into His (Christ's) Body. And so it was changed assuredly by the Spirit of the Heavenly Father. And when He (Jesus) saw that the Bread was changed into His Body, then He thanked the Almighty Father for having made it into His Body and Blood."² If this means anything, the Bread and Wine were transubstantiated at the Last Supper by the Prayer of Jesus, the power of God the Father and of His Holy Spirit into the living Flesh and Blood of the Nazarene Christ. We may compare a further passage from the same text as follows. "Now, our Lord Jesus Christ willed to distribute his Holy Flesh and Blood unto disciples and believers. He began with the following figure. He opened their minds, saying: My Flesh is the true food and my Blood is the true drink. Again he said: I am the Bread of Life which came down from Heaven. He that eateth this Bread shall live for ever. When our Lord had ended these figures, many of the Disciples turned back. Then he said to the remaining Disciples: Do ye go and get ready for us the Table of Holiness, where I shall presently perform the Mystery of Salvation, for My own Believers and Beloved

¹ *Ib.*, p. 132.

² Conybeare, *Op. cit.*, p. 123.

Ones. And when it was eventide Jesus went and sat down, and the twelve with Him. He took one loaf and said: Take ye, eat. This is My BODY which for you and many is distributed unto the expiation and remission of sins. (So also saith He in regard to the Cup)”.¹ It will be seen that in this manner the KEY OF TRUTH bears witness in one place to a literal conversion and suggests in another that the words of Christ on the subject were speech in figures. It is not surprising therefore that Conybeare lamented the loss or destruction of the Paulician and Catharist Sacramentaries. In the case of the Paulicians, however, it seems clear on the whole that the Celebrant or Minister not only stood, by his Office, in the place of Christ but was actually transfigured into Him mystically, from which it would follow that in Blessing or Consecrating the Eucharistic Elements, using the words of the Master, they became, for those who believed, that which they were to the recipients at the Last Supper, whether by way of representation in the Tertullian sense or by the Transubstantiation of Roman Doctrine.

These evidences and counter-evidences may be compared with the Sieur de Joinville's story of certain Albigensians who came to Simon de Montfort and invited him to see with his own eyes the miracle of Bread and Wine, which had become visible Flesh and Blood in the hands of their Priest at the Consecration. Simon answered: See it on your own part, if you do not believe; but as for me I have firm faith in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar as the Church teaches, and hence I shall look for that blessing in Heaven which awaits those who have not seen and yet have believed. It is said that St. Louis was fond of telling this story, obviously not on account of the alleged sectarian miracle but as an illustration of perfect faith. The Joinville Memoirs belong to the close of the thirteenth century and Montfort died under the walls of Toulouse in 1216, when Louis IX was a child. He succeeded his father in 1226. It would look as if there were strange claims about concerning the Eucharist as practised by some or other of the Sects in Southern France, where the Albigensian Crusade was raging. Many things passed at that period by general and ignorant ascription under the Albigensian name, but they correspond badly enough with all that we know of the Catharists, while the rest are not to be distinguished one from another at this day.

The Albigensian collection at Lyons includes a Provençal New Testament in use by that Sect, and it has been said—not unexpectedly—to be characterised by peculiar features; but I cannot trace that it has been edited. There remains, however, one other text, the authenticity of which does not seem to have been challenged, and it is decisive from the doctrinal standpoint. This is the BOOK OF JOHN THE EVANGELIST, LIBER SANCTI JOANNIS, extant only in Latin and printed originally by I. Benoist in his HISTOIRE DES ALBIGEOIS, Paris, 1691, Vol. I, pp. 283–296. It was transcribed by or for him from the Archives of the Inquisition at Carcassonne, and an inscription on the MS. affirms

¹ Conybeare, *Op. cit.*, p. 123.

that "this is the Secret Book of the Heretics of Concorèze, brought from Bulgaria by their Bishop Nazarius: full of errors." Whether the heretics in question were pure Albigensians and Catharists must remain an open question. It was included by J. C. Thilo in his *CODEX APOCRYPHUS N.T.*, and a variant text was published by Döllinger in *BEITRÄGE ZUR MITTELALTERLICHEN SEKTENGESCHICHTE*, from a fourteenth-century MS. at Vienna, described as imperfect towards the end. The Archives of the Inquisition at Carcassonne demand and would repay exploration. My full knowledge of the *LIBER* is a debt owing to Mr. M. R. James' *APOCRYPHAL GOSPELS*, impression of 1926, which made me acquainted also with the work of Benoist. He describes the *BOOK OF JOHN* as a Bogomile production, and in respect of Bishop Nazarius there is cited his examination by Rainer in *CONTRA WALDENSES*, Vol. VI. It follows that there is a connection established with this Sect, whether or not Nazarius was himself a Waldensian Prelate. It is obvious that there is no need or opportunity to investigate or report here upon these obscure questions. The Johannine text comprises an interlocutory discourse between the Beloved Disciple and "our Lord Jesus Christ," recorded by the former and revealing that which he learned as he lay upon the Master's breast.¹ It includes a hectic account of Satan, his estate before the Fall, the activities connected with his rebellion and that which followed thereon. At a certain stage Satan cried to the Father for mercy, on the ground that he would pay all. It was granted for "even unto seven days," and during this period Satan made the world, separating the earth from the waters, kindling the light of the moon and the light of stars, commanding the earth to produce living things, and finally creating man, apparently in his own likeness, but whose body of clay was animated by an Angel belonging to the Third Heaven. An Angel of the Second Heaven entered into the body of the woman. Satan also made Paradise. The Fall of man followed, by the evil spirit tempting Adam and Eve to fulfil the act of sex, begetting in this manner sons of the Serpent and sons of the devil, "even unto the end of this world." That is to say, the sex act continues, bringing fallen Angels into the bodies of women—presumably by the fact of conception—where they "receive flesh from the lust of the flesh." It is added: "so is the kingdom of Satan accomplished."

The Mosaic Revelation was the work of the evil spirit and it seems to have been preceded by a Secret Teaching in sixty-seven Books, written by Enoch, when Satan had raised him "upon the firmament" and "shewed him his godhead." They taught "the custom of sacrifice and unrighteous Mysteries." When the Father sent Christ into the world His Angel Mary had preceded Him. He "entered in by the ear and came forth by the ear." To hinder this Divine Mission Satan raised up his own Angel, "even Elias the Prophet, baptizing with water." It is added that the "Disciples of John marry and are given

¹ Appendix I, Note 21.

in marriage," but not those of Jesus, who are as the Angels of Heaven. The Disciples of Jesus are baptized also with water, and it is their title to see the Kingdom of Heaven. The Albigensian Baptism of the Paraclete is apparently a later revelation and is not mentioned in the BOOK OF JOHN, which proceeds to describe the Last Days and the coming of Christ to Judgment.

There is only one conclusion to be drawn from the evidence thus collected briefly, and it is this, namely, that the attempt to connect the Catharists, Perfecti and other Sects of Southern France, as we know them by the evidence surviving, with the literature of the Holy Grail is a marriage of things which can never be brought together. We may be all of us Catharists at heart in the depths of our sympathy, when we remember the Albigensian Crusade; but we can have no part in their views, though they may awaken a curious interest, like the latest decoded Babylonian Myth. There is one thing more. On the hypothesis that the Grail Mythos is itself a veil, we must be content to admit that it is like the Veil of Isis which no man can raise rather than tolerate the suggestion that these nightmare faiths are behind it.

It is not manifestly impossible that a cryptic literature like Alchemy, which has proclaimed from the beginning that its use of specific terms is not to be taken literally, may be concerned with a very different object from its supposed transmutation of metals. It is not impossible that some persons who adopted its terminology may have used it on their own part in a sense which differed from others, so that there may have been two schools of practitioners. It is intolerable, however, to propose that the literature of the Holy Grail, though it treats on the surface of Secret Eucharistic Words, of an Arch-Natural Mass and of the most Sacred Relics in all the world of Relics, was committed in reality, but deeply beneath that surface, to denial and rejection of the Mass and disdain of Relics. But this is a highly economical picture of the utter contradiction in terms between outward Grail texts and their inward meaning if Grail literature was put forward, so to speak, in secret by Albigensian and Catharist Sects; if it was part of a subversive movement in respect of Roman Doctrine and Practice; if it was heretical on the Person of Christ, heretical on Sacramental Efficacy, on Trinitarian Theology and on the status of the Blessed Virgin. This being the logical position of the case, it is permissible to proceed and indicate that such a thesis has never been advanced by any writer who was adequately equipped in the matter of critical knowledge concerning Grail texts. It is an old story of the past which called to be set aside then on this ground only, and it recurs occasionally, both in France and England, with no better offset. But it serves now, as it served then, to create and magnify an aspect of suspicion about the subject at large, which is sufficiently difficult in view of its own claims, and it has seemed to demand consideration from this standpoint.¹

¹ Appendix I, Note 22.

BOOK XI

FURTHER CRITICAL APPARATUS: THE RITUAL HYPOTHESIS

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BOOK XI

FURTHER CRITICAL APPARATUS: THE RITUAL HYPOTHESIS

I

THE GRAIL AND ELEUSIS

THE Books of the Holy Grail are either of purely literary, antiquarian and knightly interest, or they are more and other. If literary, antiquarian and chivalrous only, they can and should be left to the antiquaries, the critics and the folk-lore societies, without attempting to discover subversive meanings therein. But if they exceed these measures it is not improbable antecedently, having regard to their subject, that the excess belongs to religion on its deeper side, not excluding the mystical element, and to those generally who recognise—being themselves mystics—that the Legends of the Soul are met with in many places, often unexpectedly enough, and that wherever found they have issues outside all that is understood, commonly and critically, by Comparative Religion and the origin of Religious Belief. The mystical element—to repeat the conventional description—outside the considerations put forward, is for such persons of all importance, while it is otherwise and invariably the only thing that is really vital in Legends.

The impression which is left upon the mind by the conclusions already established is assuredly that the "divine event" is not that, especially or only, "towards which the whole creation moves", but is a term, both here and now, to which souls can approximate and wherein they can rest by the centre. Across the threshold of the Galahad Quest we pass, as if out of worlds of enchantment, worlds of faërie, worlds of the mighty Morgan le Fay into realms of parable and then—all parable transcending—into a region of dual meaning, more deeply unrealised. So also, after having reflected on the external side of the Romances and the preliminary analogies of things that are inward, we pass, as we approach the end of our research, into a world of which nothing but the veils and their emblazonments have been declared so far. No other Romances of Chivalry exhibit the characteristics which we discern in the Books of the Holy Grail at their best and highest; but if we do not know categorically why and how Romance came to be

a vehicle for the expression under symbols of man's deepest experience, we have reasons—and more than enough—to determine that it was not automatic, not arbitrary, and yet that it was not fortuitous: it came about in the nature of things by the successive exaltation of a Legend which had capacity for exaltation into transcendence. The story of Galahad is not like the institution of the Ritual belonging to the Third Craft Grade in Masonry, which seems without antecedents that are traceable in the primitive elements of the early Building Guilds.¹ By successive steps the Legend of the Grail was built up till it reached that stage when the Hierarchies could begin to come down and the soul of Galahad could ascend. It is important to establish this fact, because in that which remains to be said I must guard against any supposition that a conventional Secret Society or Sect took over the Romances, edited them and interpenetrated the texts with mystical elements. That is the kind of hypothesis which occult interests might have manufactured sincerely enough in the old days—had they known their way through the literature—and it would have had a certain warrant, because there is evidence that this is exactly the kind of work which in a few given cases was performed by Concealed Orders.² The Grail as a literature came into other hands, which worked after their own manner and worked well, though not, it must be admitted, in harmony with the art of story-telling. They were not, as we shall see, those of an Incorporated Order in the modern notion of the words.

So far I have defined, but in one sense only, the position of the literature. It remains to be said that what has been termed from the beginning the major implicits, as they project vaguely and evasively upon the surface, are integral elements of the mystical aspect. But they must be taken here in connection with one feature of the Quest which is in no sense implied, because it will concern us in an important manner at or towards the close of all. I refer to the Recession of the Grail. There is no need to remind anyone after so many enumerations that the final testimony of all the French Quests is—in one or another way—that the Grail was withdrawn. It is not always by a removal in space; it is not always by assumption into Heaven. In the German Cycle the Temple was inaccessible from the beginning and the Palladium never travelled, till—once and for all—it was carried, as in a great Procession, to the furthest East. Wolfram left it in primeval concealment; but this did not satisfy one of the later poets, who married more closely—as we have seen—the Grail Legend to that of Prester John. Now it might be more easy to attain translation, like St. Paul, than to find that Sanctuary in India where, by the assumption,

¹ See my *NEW ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF FREEMASONRY*, Vol. I, pp. 334, 335, 366–368 and elsewhere.

² It is proposed, for example, that the Mysteries of Mithra drew something at a late period from those of Attis and later still from Christianity itself. The Rites of Attis seem also to have borrowed from the Mithraic Cult. In modern days Emblematic Freemasonry was developed from old Craft Constitutions with the help of a Hiramic Myth, itself indebted to Jewish Theosophy—at however far a distance—for its idea of a Lost Word.

it must be assumed to remain. Wolfram was within the measures of his own symbolism when he left the Grail at Mont Salvatch, not removing to the East that which in his case did not come therefrom. Albrecht, who tells of the transit, took first the precaution to change the Hallowed Object. It may well be that ultimate removal was inherent to the whole conception from the beginning, concurrently with the Secret Words, and, at a later period, with the peculiar claim concerning Sacerdotal Succession.¹ The testimony itself was twofold, because in addition to the withdrawal of the living Sign, certain texts tell us of the House that is emptied of its Hallows: these are in particular the PERLESVAUS and the Quest of Galahad. There is also Manessier's conclusion of the CONTE DEL GRAAL; but no very important inference can be drawn therefrom.² One of our immediate concerns will be to find the analogies of this prevailing conception elsewhere in the world of symbols. It is at this point curiously that one element of Grail history which has been ascribed somehow to Kyot comes to our assistance, providing—*sub nomine* Wolfram, or otherwise—an intermediary between the literature of Mystical Romance and—as we shall learn—the obvious text-books of the Secret Schools. It opens, I think, strange vistas of intellectual wonder and enchantment. We have heard already that the Stone which is identified with the Grail in Wolfram was at one time a Stone in the crown of Lucifer; and seeing that, according to other Legends, the thrones left vacant by the fallen angels are reserved for human souls,³ it becomes intelligible why the Grail was brought, in the hypothesis, to earth and what may have been signified by the mystical jewel. The Stone in the crown of Lucifer symbolises the great estate from which the archangel fell. It was held by the Fathers of the Church that, when still in the delights of Paradise, Lucifer was adorned by all manner of precious stones, understanding mystically of him what in the text of the prophet Ezekiel is said literally of the Prince of Tyre: *In deliciis paradisi Dei fuisti; omnis lapis preciosus operimentum tuum: sardius, topazius, et jaspis, chrysolithus, et onyx, et beryllus, sapphirus, et carbunculus, et smaragdus*⁴—nine kinds of stones, according to Gregory the Great, because of the nine Choirs of Angels. And Bartolucci, the Cistercian,⁵ following all authorities, understands these jewels to signify the knowledge and

¹ The Secret Words were the Mystery of a Mass in the Transcendence, while the thesis of Super-Apostolical Succession—though it ignored the Secret Words—created *ex hypothesi* a Priesthood for the Celebration of a Mass which could be said by no other Ministry in the world of Christendom. These now familiar intimations suggest a Secret Church, as it might be, speaking at a venture, of those who—out of all public view, knowledge or suspicion—put in practice the Mysteries of Inward Experience shadowed forth in the Mystical Theology, *sub nomine* Dionysius. But again it would be no organised Church, equipped with Liturgy and Sacraments, under a Hierarchic Rule. I am devoting some later sections to historical developments of this subject when the canon of Grail literature had closed. They will serve as object-lessons, from which we can look back upon the past to the possibilities of the Grail period.

² See Book XII, Sect. 2.

³ See W. W. Comfort: *THE QUEST OF THE HOLY GRAIL*, translated from the critical text of Albert Pauphilet, 1923, p. 174. Cf. Pauphilet, *Op. cit.*, p. 215.

⁴ *PROPHETIA EZECHIELIS*, *cap.* XXVIII, 13.

⁵ *MAGNA BIBLIOTHECA RABBINICA*, I, pp. 309–316, and especially p. 312, col. 1.

other ornaments of grace with which Lucifer was adorned in his original state as the *perfecta similitudo Dei*—in other words, the light and splendour of the Hidden Knowledge. It would follow on this interpretation (1) that the Grail Stone in no sense belongs to folk-lore; (2) that it offers in respect of its origin no connection with the idea of physical maintenance, except in the sense that the things which sustain the soul maintain also the body, because the *panis quotidianus* depends from the *panis supersubstantialis*; (3) that the Wisdom of the Grail is an Eucharistic Wisdom, because the descent of an Arch-Natural Host takes place annually—even in the Wolfram version—to renew the virtues thereof; (4) that the correspondence of this is, in other Cycles of the Legend, the Host which is consecrated extra-validly by the Secret Words, and so also the correspondence of the Stone which comes from Heaven is the Cup which goes thereto; but in fine (5) that the jewel in the crown of Lucifer is called also the Morning Star, and thus it is not less than certain that the Grail returns whence it came.¹

The various problematical aspects of the Grail Legend, and the several schools of thought which have offered light thereon, having been examined up to this stage, a question arises whether they have points of correspondence with any scheme of the Instituted Mysteries, whether any element which is present in the Romances can be regarded as an approximate or far-off reflection of something which at that time or previously was known and done in any of the Secret Schools. The possibility has presented itself frequently to the mind of scholarship, which, having performed admirable work in its study of the Grail texts, has been and is still in search of some final explanation concerning them. The shadow of the old Order of the Temple has haunted them in dreams fitfully, and they have lingered almost longingly over vague imagined analogies with the Orgies of Adonis and Tammuz. As behind the Christian Symbolism of the extant literature there spreads the whole world of pagan folk-lore—with its Cauldrons, Cups and Talismanic Stones—so, at least antecedently, there might be implied also some old scheme of Initiation. The examination of this thesis, if not in itself acceptable, may enable us to offer an alternative, under proper judgments of reserve, as something which may be held tentatively until later circumstances of research either lead it into demonstration or furnish a more adequate substitute.

We have seen that in the year 1842 Karl Simrock published a version of Wolfram's *PARZIVAL* in modern German.² In the critical observations attached thereto the Great Reliquary was connected with the Germanized Myth of Herodias and St. John the Baptist, with Myths of Freyja and Odin, the death of Wotan at or about the summer Solstice, the death of Balder, and so backward to the Greek story of

¹ I am speaking obviously in the sense of parable, the sense in which Gregory the Great understood Ezekiel and Bartolucci talked about Lucifer. It is not the sense of the so-called level-headed man, for whom the Sacred Host is a wafer of unleavened bread and the Morning Star is a moving light in a mundane sky.

² It went through successive editions, the last appearing at Stuttgart in 1876.

Venus and Adonis, the Phrygian Attis and the Egyptian Osiris. The Grail, like these, shadowed forth "the creative power dwelling in the blood of the dying god". We are brought thus early in the criticism of the Grail subject to the thesis of the Vegetation God as its root and essence. It was pointed out that the blood of Adonis produced the Anemone in the year following his death; that of Attis brought to birth the Violet; while the healing Johanniskrant sprang from the blood of St. John the Baptist.¹ It seems obvious that these slender fables belonged to poetic fancy rather than motivated Myth; and so far as I am aware Simrock's suggestion passed unnoticed. As regards the decapitation of the Precursor, it has no connection with the Grail; a head in a Dish is carried in no Procession except in the Mabinogi of Peredur, which we have found to derive from Chrétien, with the Grail omitted.² As regards furthermore the creative power dwelling in the blood of the Dying God, if the Reliquary of the Romances is derived from this Mythos, so also by implication is the whole Christian story of Redemption, following the hypothesis of the reverie, a point which Simrock presumably was not proposing to affirm. It happens, moreover, that the Precious Blood of the Christian Mystery is not creative but redemptive, unless in the sense that it brought forth Children of the Second Birth; and this, I suggest, is a Christo-Mystical aspect of the subject which was beyond the purview of the German scholar. Finally, neither the Grail nor its content manifests creative power in any one of its aspects. When it figures as a Food-providing Talisman, it may be said to maintain but does not originate life. It answers so little to any scheme of a Vegetation-God-Culture that if and when the failure to ask "one little Question" causes blight in the land, the Reliquary or Talisman can do nothing to mend matters: for the termination of those woes and enchantments, there is one who must return whence he came and fulfil that which was neglected previously; and through years of adventure, years of Quest and years of God-forgetting, the task remains with him.

I conclude that Simrock's thesis is of the same value as that of Ernst Martin, another PARZIVAL editor, who maintained much later³ (1) that the maimed King of the Grail was the wounded Arthur, taken for his healing to Avalon and expected to return therefrom; (2) that Arthur represented the Vegetation God. It happens, however, that in Classical Mythos the God who dies is also the God who rises, and vegetation therefore reappears; but Arthur has not returned in any Arthurian Saga, whence it follows that seedtime might indeed continue, but no harvest could be reaped. As to the identification of Arthur with the Grail King, again the mania of hypothesis could not further go. It means

¹ We may compare the mysterious undescribed herb which is found in the neighbourhood of the Grail. See Book VI, sect. 2.

² We have seen that "a glorious Head" is carried by an Angel in the codex of the GRAND SAINT GRAAL which was used by Dr. Furnivall.

³ See ZUR GRALSAGE, which appeared at Strasbourg in 1880, pp. 31 *et seq.* Also the Introduction to Martin's edition of Wolfram, Strasbourg, 1900-1903, pp. lviii *et seq.*

(1) that the Grail King of the CONTE DEL GRAAL dies when Perceval is with Arthur at the Royal Court, so that there is a dead and living Arthur, of whom the latter attends the Coronation of Perceval, the new King; (2) that in the Didot-Modena text, Brons, who is Arthur in the dream, dies and is assumed by Angels, which notwithstanding, and at the same time, he is sitting with his Knights at the Round Table: afterwards he is carried over a great water to Avalon; (3) that he dies also in the PERLESVAUS but subsequently visits the new Grail King, Perceval, at the Grail Castle; (4) that in the Galahad QUESTE he joins a Company of White Monks, and so ends his days presumably; that in DIU CRÔNE he is one of the Dead-Alive in the Grail Castle and vanishes when the spell is broken: yet Gawain returns to Court; (6) that in the PARZIVAL, as in the CONTE, Perceval is with Arthur when he is called to the Grail Kingdom; but Anfortas, who is Arthur, is also at the Grail Castle, is there healed by Perceval and remains with him. It may seem preposterous to offer this exposure of an exposition which exposes itself; but I am concerned with elucidating the career of the Vegetation-God-hypothesis in Grail literature, and it is no part of my design to conceal the fact when it fails signally.

Through the days of Birch-Hirschfeld and others of the competent German school the subject slept, or was only stirred in its sleep by a casual reference in some French, German or other class-review, till Prof. W. J. Nitze arose under the auspices of the Modern Language Association of America and produced his elaborate and suggestive study of the FISHER KING IN THE GRAIL ROMANCES, which is the first methodical thesis on the so-called Ritual Theory and is referable to the year 1909.¹ The speculation supposes that the Grail in its origin belongs to an Agrarian Cult and as such connects with Eleusis at a far distance, the intermediaries being Rites practised in later times, on or about the Mediterranean littoral, and finally a Celtic Cultus which apparently had seedtime and harvest for its subject and which drew from that region. As there is no trace of the Rite in any place or time of the Celtic world, it would be idle to examine, from this point of view, the very numerous fashions of Mystery in Herculaneum, Pompeii and other cities of the sea-board in Southern Europe. At the root it seems idle also to discuss the hypothesis itself; but it must be remembered (1) that my task includes the whole critical apparatus of the Grail subject, and (2) that the Ritual Theory once earned a certain auditorium in England, chiefly through Miss Weston's insistence, and is not to be ignored in consequence. As regards Prof. Nitze, there is perhaps no other theme in which it would be tolerated for a moment to suggest a vital connecting link when there is no evidence for its existence. Looking back upon some of my own researches, what might I not have achieved with the talismanic problems (1) of Spiritual

¹ See PUBLICATIONS OF THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, Vol. XXIV, pp. 365-418, a desirable collection of materials. A sympathetic and imaginative heart drew me to Nitze when he dared to think, so late as 1903, that the Grail might have had a Latin Original, little as I could share the dream.

Alchemy, if I could have postulated a decisive but vanished text, antedating Heinrich Khunrath and Jacob Böhme ;¹ (2) of the Rosy Cross, had I dared to imagine a codex of its Traditional History midwise in the fifteenth century, or perhaps much earlier ;² (3) of the Hiramic Myth in Emblematic Freemasonry, if I ventured to postulate an undiscovered Old Constitution—so called—behind it ?³ There are many yesterdays of reflection and research when things of this kind were possible, but I should be read out of court to-day.

Let us glance, however, for a moment at those Mysteries of Eleusis which lie behind the thesis of Prof. Nitze, remembering that we are not concerned with the Processions and Spectacles but with a bare question of outline. They communicated not only an assured pledge that, for those who received them, a life of bliss followed the experience of death but that it was reserved to them alone. For the Profane there was indeed another life, but it was one of desolation and misery. The guarantee, it is to be remarked, was unconditional,⁴ not consequent, for example, on an earthly life shaped thereafter in conformity with the prospect unfolded. The fact of Initiation sufficed. It is useful to dwell upon this and compare the conditions of the Quest in that story "told for one of the truest and holiest that is in this world", the Galahad story of the Holy Grail. At the same time the experience of Initiates was something more than a sight of the Pageants, of the terror and darkness of Hades, or the splendours and felicities of Elysium. On the authority, at its high value, of comparatively recent research, there were certain secrets revealed to safeguard the progress of the soul on its way through the world beyond ; and these secrets were couched in verbal formulæ.⁵ It belongs to the old magical doctrine of words and names which compelled the Gods themselves.⁶

The Legend of Demeter and Kore, otherwise Persephone, is the Legend of Eleusis—its Traditional History, in the modern parlance of Initiations—and Demeter was a Goddess of Agriculture who taught Attica the Mysteries of Seed and Harvest, by which it emerged from savage into civilised life. When the Initiate of Eleusis attained its highest Grade, and became an Epopit there was shewn to him by the Hierophant an Ear of Wheat, as the last message of the Rite. It follows that seedtime and harvest symbolised somehow the story of the soul. The dead body descends into the underworld of the grave, but the soul comes forth alive. In so far as late Platonism, testifying concerning the Mysteries with golden mouths, may be held to connote

¹ See THE SECRET TRADITION IN ALCHEMY, 1926.

² See THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE ROSY CROSS, 1924.

³ See EMBLEMATIC FREEMASONRY, 1925.

⁴ *Pas plus chez les Grecs que chez les Égyptiens, il n'y a l'idée de mérite ou de démérite ; il n'y a pas des bons et des méchants, mais des initiés et des non-initiés.* Foucart : RECHERCHES SUR L'ORIGINE ET LA NATURE DES MYSTÈRES D'ELEUSIS, 1895, p. 22. There is also his MYSTÈRES D'ELEUSIS, published in 1914, and I refer occasionally to LES GRANDS MYSTÈRES D'ELEUSIS which appeared in 1900, and was reprinted like the RECHERCHES from the MÉMOIRES DE L'ACADÉMIE DES INSCRIPTIONS ET BELLES LETTRES.

⁵ Paul Foucart : LES MYSTÈRES D'ELEUSIS, 1912.

⁶ François Lenormant : LA MAGIE CHEZ LES CHALDÉENS, 1874.

experiences drawn from the Rites of Eleusis, I have shewn elsewhere¹ that, like Plato before them, they beheld the Rites through his and their own glass of vision, and ascended with him through contemplation to "the Intelligible Beauty", even "Communion with the Gods". There is no need here to retrace this ground and much less to explore it further. It is mentioned firstly to check the purely automatic beatitude which Initiation conferred on the Recipient in the world to come. There was more in the Mysteries for some than was found by others: they communicated to each as he was able and willing to receive. It is certain, in the second place, that if Demeter and Kore were Goddesses originally of a Vegetation Cultus, they must have suffered a great transformation at Eleusis, for it follows from all the records that the Rites delineated the *post mortem* story of the human soul, though without abandoning utterly the first matter or body-general of the symbolism: otherwise, an Ear of Corn would not have been uplifted at the close of all, as *Summa totius Mysteriorum*. It may seem an inadequate type to invest with high meanings and encompass by high pageants; but we must remember (1) that life is life, and life of all things sacred; (2) that life is one and is actually that Isis whose veil has not been raised by any science of man; and (3) that the Ear of Corn is the matter of that daily bread which maintains our life on earth. It is the greatest of all symbols; but if there is another to compare therewith, it is Wine beyond all question; and we know after what manner a Greater Mystery than Eleusis has found and symbolised the *Latens Deitas* within the *Magnalia Signa* of Bread and Wine.

What, however, was the story of the human soul, as delineated in the Mysteries? What its life of the world to come? Has research discovered anything to justify the striking comparison of Plutarch, who says (1) that death is like a Rite of Advancement, and (2) that the after life is even as another Initiation and a celebration of August Rites? There were in reality three stages or Degrees of Initiation and Advancement, of which the First and the Third were like a Prologue and Epilogue to the elaborate pageant of the Second. The First was the Lesser Mysteries and conferred the title of *Mustai* on all who were admitted. It took place at the Eleusinion of Athens for those Candidates who were assembled at Athens, and in the Court of the Temple for others at Eleusis itself.² We know nothing whatever about the Ceremonies of the first day, except that they began with a Proclamation concerning those who were excluded from Initiation by the Law of the Mysteries.³ On the second day the purification of Candidates took place in the sea, as also that of their living sacrifices, the pigs which they must offer to Demeter, an observance that would have appeared to have followed, possibly forthwith or alternatively on the third

¹ NEW ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF FREEMASONRY, Vol. I, s.v. Eleusinian Mysteries.

² *Ibid.*, I, p. 107.

³ Persons who were excluded, in addition to so-called Barbarians—being those outside what may be regarded as the Greek Empire—were above all murderers and persons who were ritually unclean.

day.¹ So far as we are aware, this completed the Ceremonial Offices of the Lesser Mysteries, and the *Mustai* passed out of view for a period.

The Greater Mysteries took place at Eleusis alone, the statues of Demeter and Kore being carried thereto in procession, with other sacred objects, a solemn ceremonial which started on the fifth day of the Mysteries and ended in torchlight on the sixth, the latter beginning at sunset. In the Hall of Initiation the *Mustai* beheld in dramatic form (1) the Rape of Kore by Pluto, being the known mythological story, with additions and variants peculiar to the Mysteries and reserved to the Initiates alone; (2) the pilgrimage of the soul in the underworld, with instructions on the methods by which it could be brought to a happy issue. The *Mustai* were caused "to traverse successively the two regions of the kingdom of Demeter and Pluto, the first with its obstacles, its dangers and the monsters which confronted the deceased; the second, which represented the Elysian fields, with their serene light".² We are assured also that "in the course of the journey the Hierophant instructed the *Mustai* on the route which must be followed in this last and terrible experience, on the Secret Names of the divinities which they would have to pronounce, the all-powerful formulæ which, recited with appropriate modulations, would put enemies to flight and open an entrance to the blessed dwellings". The result of this instruction inspired them "with no vague hope but the certain assurance of beatified life in the world below".³

The Lesser and Greater Mysteries are grouped together by criticism, as if they were one Degree, the second being that of the *Epoptai*, for which Candidates became eligible originally at the expiration of twelve months, but later—and in the Christian era—after the lapse of five years.⁴ Those who were to be made *Epoptai* witnessed therein the marriage union of Zeus and Demeter, ending, as we have seen, with the Ritual Elevation of the Symbolic Ear of Corn.⁵ It is the one and only remanent of a seedtime and harvest cultus that research has discovered at Eleusis. The point which concerns ourselves is that the Mysteries had as their single object the safeguarding of initiated souls on the other side of life. This is their claim and by this are they to be judged alone. They revealed a way of escape for those who chose to take it on the conditions offered and at the price demanded.⁶ The alternative was to be plunged in slime and "lead therein a wretched existence which deserved not the name of life".⁷ It happens, however,

¹ It is more likely to have followed at once, or the sacrificial victims would have needed another purification.

² Foucart, *LES GRANDS MYSTÈRES*, p. 137.

³ *RECHERCHES*, p. 53.

⁴ According to Foucart, there were two classes of Initiates only—the *Mustai* and the *Epopts*. The Lesser Mysteries were a preparation only, the Greater Mysteries imparted the revelation which constituted Initiation, properly so-called.

⁵ *Pour figurer l'union du Dieu et de la Déesse, les deux acteurs sacrés descendaient dans une retraite obscure.* Foucart: *RECHERCHES*, p. 48.

⁶ M. Foucart has shewn that the Fees for Reception and the connected expenses were fairly high.

⁷ *Ib.*, p. 21.

that the testimonies concerning eternal beatitude in the Elysian Fields compare unfavourably with even the Spiritistic Revelations of Andrew Jackson Davis on the subject of Posthumous Life in the Summer Land. On the authority of Plutarch, the *Mustai* beheld "pure places and prairies resounding with voices and dances." Sacred words were pronounced, and divine apparitions inspired a religious respect. The perfected Initiate was free to go and come: he celebrated Mysteries, wearing a crown on his head, and lived with holy men. Finally, he had the felicity of beholding the uninitiated plunged in mire and darkness. This also is on Plutarch's authority; but Aristophanes before him had mentioned the bosks of myrtle where, in the midst of a beautiful light, the Initiates danced and sang to the sound of flutes. If there was anything otherwise done and said at Eleusis to justify the later Greek Philosophers and Theosophists, we are without a record concerning it: the inscriptions fail us, like the Greek and Latin authors, those of the Christian faith included.

In the light of this brief and more than inadequate summary, we can return now to Prof. Nitze and his thesis on the Fisher King; but in the first place to his notion of the Grail Knight, meaning the Knight on Quest, who is the Initiate of the Mysteries coming down from Eleusis. The latter, however, had no single Postulant, as the Candidates came in great numbers.¹ The alleged Grail Knight is therefore not a personality but a type, and this may seem perhaps the worst interpretation which has been offered unto this day of Galahad, Perceval or Bors. It is unavoidable, however, for the same Ritual procedure applies to all comers and does not distinguish between them. As regards the hypothetical Grail Initiate, it is proposed (1) that he was responsible for the success of the Grail Service, which is ridiculous in view of Greek Mysteries; (2) that in the case of his failure the crops also failed and the springs ran dry. But Athens and Agra knew nothing of these disasters, since the days of the Rape of Kore and Demeter's wanderings, when as yet there were no Mysteries and consequently no Candidates; (3) That on his long-delayed success he becomes an *Epopt*, because he beholds the vision and succeeds the Fisher King. But Perceval beheld it in his failure, even as he did in his triumph, and in the Galahad Quest the attaining Knights not only saw the Grail but carried it away, thus putting an end to the Mysteries, once and for all. Finally, the supposed correlation between supposed Grail Initiations and those of Eleusis reaches its crowning anticlimax when we are reminded that the Grail Knight succeeds the Grail King. *Mustai* or *Epoptai*, it did not happen that any one of the multitude who owed and paid their pig to Demeter, or beheld the Ear of Corn, became the next Hierophant. But all were entitled to succeed, according to this hypothesis.

Having been assured categorically that the Grail Knight's failure to

¹ We have to remember that Greek Initiation was a business proposition, a source of revenue and a State institution redounding to the credit of the State.

ask the Grail question causes the crops to fail,¹ we are to learn in the next place that the land lies waste because of the Fisher King's infirmity, which notwithstanding he is said to be the representative of the other world and the Guide thereto. He is nothing of the kind in any of the Grail Romances and, if he were, the Greek Hierophant is he who guides, counsels and safeguards the way through Hades rather than one who leads thereto. Moreover, he is not maimed, he is not without strength in his bones, has no correspondence with "Nature's declining strength" and finds no consolation in fishing. He is not under the Spell of a Question; he is not one of whom anyone would dare to ask; he expounds but does not answer. Supposing that the Grail Romances at once conceal and offer intimations concerning a Rite of Initiation, that which will least of all suffer comparison therewith is the ceremonial congeries of Eleusis.

It must be pointed out in conclusion that Prof. Nitze misrepresents unconsciously the Records of the Grail when he says that it is primarily a Food-Providing Vessel. It figures as such only in (1) The prose LANCELOT, (2) The Galahad Quest, (3) The still later GRAND SAINT GRAAL, all of the Vulgate Cycle—and of course in the German PARZIVAL. It has no such office in Chrétien or in the JOSEPH of Robert de Borron. But these are the primary texts. It has none also in the DIDOT-MODENA PERCEVAL or in the PERLESVAUS.

II

THE GRAIL AND THE MYSTERIES OF ADONIS

THE life of the soul in God and the story of its deep experience have been portrayed in later Schools of Western Mysticism under the symbolism of a Second Birth, a Life of Regeneration, a Mystical Death, a Resurrection and an *Ascensio Mentis vel Animæ in Deo*. It is implied here and there in Catholic Mysticism—in Eckhart, Tauler and Bona, among others—but was adopted and developed more especially in later types—among the followers of Jacob Böhme and by Louis Claude de Saint-Martin. It is the life of Christ in the soul and the life of the soul in Christ. There is no question that these symbolical representations correspond literally with the states and stages of the soul's experience on the path of return to God, answering after its own manner to the

¹ The reader may refer at this point to Book II, sect. 9, but the collation therein could have been carried much further, had space availed. It is to be understood that the Land of Logres is described in some texts as wasted, that water ceased to flow in certain cases and that crops once or twice are said to fail. But the sorcery, distress and interdiction are more often on a larger scale. In Pseudo-Wauchier, Perceval's failure to ask the required Question works the destruction of kingdoms; in Manessier the work of the Broken Sword not only destroyed Logres but all the surrounding country; in the PERLESVAUS there was war everywhere. But all the desolation and all the waste seems to be purely nominal, a stated fact which is nowhere exemplified.

Eastern recovered knowledge of the Unity. I have been looking all my life for the analogies of this figurative representation in the records of the past; and as a student of the Instituted Mysteries there is perhaps no need to say that the Doctrine of Rebirth therein, and the pictured symbolism concerning the Death and Resurrection of the God, suggested intimations of analogous experience in pre-Christian days. In this manner I was brought into contact with those past explanatory hypotheses of the Mysteries which supposed that the Candidate for Initiation took the part of the God in his ordeals; that in him the God died and in him also arose. When Mrs. Atwood wrote her *SUGGESTIVE INQUIRY* into what was termed by her the Hermetic Mystery, she supposed that adept Hierophants put the Candidate into deep trance and that the soul was led therein through states of inward experience into something that answered for her to intellection of the Supreme Oneness.¹ She did not express it thus clearly, for she was lost amidst a cloud of words and images derived from late Platonism; but it was and is easy to see that her thesis was false at the root, since it is not by travelling in the Spirit Vision or by a vicarious illumination that any true end is attained. It is a work in one's own life. So also it was easy to see that another and greater scholarship, which explains the Mysteries as presenting in picture fashion the annual story of seedtime and harvest, was reducing them to a hollow show, writing out at full length the judgment of Thomas de Quincey when he affirmed that the Mysteries were the great imposture of the classical world. But if seedtime and harvest are the story of the soul in incarnation, life, growth, and the great harvesting of death, leading to other life, symbolised by the ear of corn exhibited in pregnant silence, as if by the Gods in their Olympus, then the Mysteries are not a cheat but at least the shewing of a vision. And if the Birth, Death and Resurrection of the God are the story of the soul awaking from life and illusion of the senses to an apprehension of the Great Reality; if the Death of the God is significant of the soul dying to all that itself can perish; and if the Resurrection is to life in God, then the Mysteries in their own day and after their own manner portray the story of the soul which dies to earthly things, that it may rise into the knowledge and attainment of those things that are eternal. Plotinus, Iamblichus, Porphyry, Proclus—these and the rest of them—testifying to the import of the Mysteries as understood in their days by them, encourage us to look at them from a point of view like this; but they have left us no evidence that the experience of Candidates was more than that of minor activities and witness in great pageants, in shows that shewed. They took part in Processions, they bore the Thyrsus, they went through Lustrations; but there was nothing individual. For the rest, they beheld and heard and carried away that which they could and would.

¹ A SUGGESTIVE INQUIRY INTO THE HERMETIC MYSTERY AND ALCHEMY, . . . BEING AN ATTEMPT TOWARDS THE RECOVERY OF THE ANCIENT EXPERIMENT OF NATURE, 1850.

As regards the second Birth, Initiation was its actuating cause by the hypothesis of the Mysteries, and it presupposed a Figurative Death, the Birth itself being also obviously emblematic. Mr. H. P. Cooke reminds us in a recent study¹ that, according to Julius Firmicus Maternus, "the intending *Mystes* of Attis was admitted as *moriturus*"—one who is about to die. But seeing that the Mysteries worked in symbolism, obviously also they could communicate nothing automatically. How should Alkibiades, for example, profit by a Figurative Death? As much and as little as some and many of those who pass through the Death and Raising of the Third Degree in Craft Masonry. The Initiations of Eleusis took place in crowds, and there is nothing to indicate that even its Greater Mysteries were communicated individually. Mr. Cooke presents a Talismanic speculation on the Neophyte of alleged Egyptian Rites acting "the part of the Deity"; but there is no evidence before us, except that he quotes John Yarker, who wrote long years ago a chaotic volume entitled *ARCANE SCHOOLS*,² and it was published towards the end of his life by Tait of Belfast.³ Yarker was one of my occasional correspondents in those days, and so also was the excellent William Oxley, who paid one visit to Egypt, if I remember rightly, and returned with revelations which impressed Yarker and no one else presumably in the wide world of Research.⁴ It is difficult to believe one's eyes on finding both or either figuring as speaking with authority on Egyptian antiquities or on any of the Mystery Schools, except Freemasonry in Yarker's case. Even on that subject, which he had followed in every direction, his contributions are stultified by fantastic hypotheses and by the omission of important references which could alone enable some of his most debatable statements to be checked.

I have looked vainly for indisputable records of such Initiations and such Advancements; but there is only the affirmation of Proclus, according to which the Body of the Candidate was buried in "the most secret of all Initiations", the head only excepted. Mr. Cooke, who is otherwise of interest, fails therefore—but inevitably—over the most vital point of his thesis, and the subject must be left at this point. There is nothing to help us in the vast collection of Sir James Frazer on the Dying God or in the researches of Sir Wallis Budge on *OSIRIS AND THE EGYPTIAN RESURRECTION*. According to Graillot, the Candidates for simple Initiation in the Attis Rites were many, but the Rite of Enthronement at a later and higher stage presupposes a single *Mystes*. Unfortunately they are scarcely of my concern in the present collection.

¹ *OSIRIS: A STUDY IN MYTHS, MYSTERIES AND RELIGION*, by Harold P. Cooke, M.A., 1931.

² The work appeared in 1909 and, according to its sub-title, included a General History of Freemasonry.

³ Yarker on the Holy Grail, pp. 191 *et seq.*, proves an amazing study, a burlesque of blunders, based on casual reading at second and third hand. Chrétien, for example, gave us the Titirel Legend, and his poem is entitled: *SIR COULES DEL GRAIL*.

⁴ *EGYPT: WONDERS OF THE LAND OF THE PHARAOKS*, circa 1886. My impression is that it appeared originally in the columns of the *MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK*, to which Oxley was a frequent contributor.

It remains therefore that the Birth, Death and Resurrection of the God in Ritual cannot be affirmed to portray those states and stages of the soul's experience to which I referred at the beginning. A little mixed and confusing, their best offering was a lesson of hope to come hereafter in Elysian Fields.¹ So also the mythological Pageants of other Mysteries conveyed analogous messages; but at their best and highest—as it seems to me—the Epopot's Vision of the Gods has little at this day to tell those who are in search of the union. Above all, in those rare cases where the Epopot became the God M. Graillot makes evident—more or less unawares—how far from the term of veridic experience was the Candidate's spectacular enthronement.

Here in a sense are preliminary considerations to the critical thesis which follows in the present section; and they are offered (1) because my readers must not be in doubt on my own position respecting those Ancient Mysteries which have been connected occasionally with the Grail; (2) because of that which will be found in my twelfth book to emerge from the QUEST OF GALAHAD, when its close is reached at Sarras. I pass now to the more immediate matter in hand.

It has been pointed out that Prof. Nitze is in debt to Frazer, whose vast collection of instances and examples on matters of primitive belief and custom, with and without its hypotheses, is a time-saving source of reference ready to the hands of all. In matters of research upon points of fact along such lines, it would be folly to go further till the riches of THE GOLDEN BOUGH have been put under contribution. Obviously also Prof. Nitze is in debt otherwise to this common source of knowledge because he reflects therefrom the theory of Nature and Vegetation Cults, the most accredited exponent of which is Sir James Frazer. Miss Weston, to whose views and imaginings I proceed in the next place, described herself as "an impenitent believer" in Frazer's main theory,² and she was such indeed unconditionally, though she read into the Vegetation Cultus, the Seedtime and Harvest Rites, higher or deeper intention than had been ever acknowledged by him. It would enlist all my own interest had she held one ounce of real evidence in her hands or had even portrayed in adequate outline its supposed measure and term. But the living nature of its "glorious great intent" does not emerge in her pages, leading to the irresistible influence that it was something supposed only but of which she was unable to speak, except at a distance and vaguely. It is to be understood, however, that when "fresh from the study" of Frazer's GOLDEN BOUGH, she was "struck by the resemblance between certain features of the Grail story and characteristic details of the Nature Cults described."³

¹ We can imagine a possible inference which could have been drawn from their experience by some prepared Postulants: that the Death and Resurrection of the God was in truth their own story, not alone because man dies physically and rises in the soul to other life, but may die also mystically to that which is evil within him and arise into Divine Life. There is nothing, however, to shew that this lesson was taught in the Mysteries, unless we elect to affirm that their Pageants were designed to teach it. Evidence unfortunately is wanting here as well, so it can be only a devout opinion.

² FROM RITUAL TO ROMANCE, p. 10.

³ *Ib.*, p. 3.

She asked herself finally whether in this "mysterious" Legend "we might not have the confused record of a Ritual once popular and later surviving under conditions of strict secrecy". Miss Weston pursued her inquiries, making such progress and attaining such conviction that she became qualified at last in her own opinion to affirm that the "origin of the Grail will be in dispute no longer by any fair-minded critics".¹ It does not appear unfortunately that at or about the date of her chief contribution on the subject she enlisted assent or approval from other scholars, and in 1923 her thesis was set aside more or less definitely by Dr. J. D. Bruce.

However this may be, in the course of explorations after a Grail source in Ritual, Miss Weston reached another conviction, namely, that it was "a fatal mistake to seek in the direction of Eleusis": the explanation is that she had taken to heart a counsel of Cumont, namely, to remember that in so far as the Mysteries influenced Christianity, we must look to those of Hellenised Asia rather than Greece proper, because the first Christian Communities rose up amidst Oriental, Semite, Phrygian, and Egyptian populations.² She turned therefore to "the Phœnician Greek divinity" known as Adonis and to the Rites connected with his death, exile and return or resurrection, though instead of giving an intelligible account of these—so far as available materials permit—she draws, chiefly from Frazer and his sources, miscellaneous examples of supposed Nature Ritual to illustrate "the widespread character of Mediæval and Modern Survivals" of the particular Mystery Cult. It leaves us at a loose end as regards the Cult itself, but it serves to introduce a surprising, if subsidiary thesis on its survival to this day, as we shall find a little later on.

Eleusis is dismissed in a paragraph, and it may be noted in this connection that Miss Weston knew nothing apparently of Foucart's researches, though their latest edition appeared so far back as 1914, while as regards the Mother of the Gods, and as regards Adonis, Attis and Tammuz, she has consulted Baudissin, Langdon, Farnell and others, in addition to Frazer, but has passed over the mine of research in Graillot's *CULTE DE CYBÈLE*, which belongs to 1912.³ From this source alone, not to speak of the others, it is possible to estimate the extraordinary complexity which arose from the interpenetration of Cults passing under the names of Adonis, Tammuz and Attis, as well as to realise how slight and inadequate is their treatment under Miss Weston's auspices and how special is the pleading which insists on seeing their reflection everywhere in the Legend of the Holy Grail. I am not speaking as one who has an axe to grind, for I am concerned with the Grail as it appears in Grail Texts, a Christian Talisman which entails a Christian Quest; and if something of pre-Christian Myth is reflected therein, it is *nihil ad rem meam*, as I have made plain already.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 5.

² See *LES RELIGIONS ORIENTALES DANS LE PAGANISME ROMAIN*, p. x.

³ Henri Graillot: *LE CULTÉ DE CYBÈLE, MÈRE DES DIEUX, À ROME ET DANS L'EMPIRE ROMAIN*.

But it has proved—and we have seen also—that the Welsh PEREDUR is not an antecedent of Perceval in any of his guises, from the Chrétien section of the CONTE DEL GRAAL to his beatification in the late PERLESVAUS. It proves also that, while magical Cups and Cauldrons are far and wide in Myth, not excepting that of Sumerian times,¹ it is impossible to hold any opinions on the Cauldron of the Dagda, as it is first heard of in unquestioned record no earlier than the seventeenth century.² It remains now to be seen whether Miss Weston's appeal to Rites connected with the names of Tammuz, Attis and Adonis can be held to fare better. We are concerned of course with the case as presented by herself and not with its possible approach from some other point of view.

Miss Weston's main thesis opens on a personal note, from which it appears that she found refuge in Nature Cults as a possible explanation of Grail origins, (1) because "the theory of Christian origin breaks down when faced with the awkward fact that there is no Christian Legend concerning Joseph of Arimathæa and the Grail";³ and (2) because she had failed to find any folk-lore prototype of the Grail story, containing "the Waste Land, the Fisher King, the Hidden Castle with its solemn Feast and Mysterious Feeding Vessel, the Bleeding Lance", and the rest.⁴ She was in a dual dilemma therefore, and her research of half a century had turned to ashes in her hand, though it happens that she had been one of the chief English contributors to that side of the subject which insisted on folk-lore explanations. It happens, however, on the side of Christian origin, that the Grail is of no vital interest if its source is only in Christian Apocryphal Legends. I have said much earlier that its place in this event is among the annals of Relics, as a notable development therefrom in the World of Romance. It is important because of its claim on a Christian Secret and a non-Roman perpetuation, because of its implicit postulate concerning a doctrine and practice of which the Church at large knew nothing, and because of its open affirmation of a direct descent from Christ instead of from an appointed apostolate. It is more than true in one sense that "the Church knew nothing of it": from that point of view, it could not afford to know. But there is another from which, I think, that it suspected if it did not know, but kept a politic silence, leaving such things to pass as figments of Romance. What it would have done with a Sect presenting such claims there is no need to speculate, remembering Southern France in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

In any case, Miss Weston took the Nature Cults and drew from there and here, but always from sound authorities, on Tammuz and Attis and Esmun and Adonis, but the last especially, regarded as best known and his Ritual as "the classic form of the Cult". Of the Rite

¹ Appendix I, Note 23.

² That is to say in THE GENERAL HISTORY OF IRELAND, by Geoffrey Keating, D.D., translated from the original Irish by Dermot O'Connor, 1726.

³ FROM RITUAL TO ROMANCE, p. 2.

⁴ *Ib.*, p. 3.

itself I have intimated that she has little to tell, in part because little indeed has come down. She presents some familiar features, including (1) the traditional history of "a fair youth, beloved of Aphrodite, who, wounded in the thigh by a wild boar"—read, in the generative organs—"died of his wounds". At the prayers of the goddess, he was permitted by Zeus to return for certain months of the year, like Persephone, and (2) thus divided his time between Aphrodite—presumably in Olympus—and Persephone in Hades, by whom he was beloved also.

It would seem therefore that in the underworld, as above, his virility was restored to him, (1) because a maimed youth, however beautiful, would have scarcely appealed to Greek Goddesses, and (2) because Adonis, *ex hypothesi*, "represents in anthropomorphic form the principle of Animate Nature," and an unsexed symbol would not have served the purpose, would not have stood for the "virile activity on which vegetable and human life depends." Miss Weston stresses therefore the sex-complex of the Cultus, with special reference to Baudissin,¹ Bellay,² Dulaure³ and Miss J. E. Harrison.⁴ She cites also the evidence of Lucien—if indeed it be he who wrote *DE DEA SYRIÆ*. He affirms (1) that the women votaries of the Cultus, whose business it was to lament the death of Adonis, had either to be shorn of their locks, an outrage which redounded somehow to the honour of the God, or must sell themselves—for one day only—to strangers, either in the market-place or even in the Temple itself, the profits of this traffic defraying the costs of the sacrifices offered to Aphrodite; (2) that the Priests of Adonis inflicted mutilation on themselves and thus suffered with their God, a very curious practice in connection with a supposed Fertility Rite. We may remember also that, according to Ovid, the rejoicings on the Resurrection of Adonis degenerated into orgies at Rome.

Miss Weston makes no secret and manifests no reluctance on these points of fact: she cites some of them expressly, though she may not have remembered that, according to Gerald Massey, "Nature is not ashamed of her symbols". It is ashamed, however, of excesses and maniacal outrage. It may have seemed to her indeed that the excesses were intelligible in view of the Mysteries concerned and were almost emblematic like these. They do not prevent her from maintaining that the Nature Cults—which include the worship of Adonis—were (1) "the medium of imparting high spiritual teaching", and (2) that "the Vegetation Deities, Adonis-Attis, and more especially the Phrygian God"—who is Attis—"were the chosen guides to the knowledge of, and union with, the Supreme Spiritual Source of Life, of which they were the communicating mediums". A considerable part of her evidence for these things is found in the Mystery Feast, of

¹ ADONIS UND ESMUN.

² Annales du Musée Guimet, s.v. ADONIS.

³ DES DIVINITÉS GÉNÉRATRICES.

⁴ THEMIS, A STUDY IN GREEK SOCIAL ORIGINS.

which the initiated alone were privileged to partake in "the Orgiastic Ritual of the Priests of Kybele", worshipped as the Great Mother. The authority is Cumont, who affirms (1) that they communicated the aliment of Spiritual life—presumably *ex hypothesi*; (2) that it was calculated to sustain the Initiate in his ordeals; and (3) that for these and other reasons "the Phrygian fable became a traditional mould into which subtle exegetes boldly poured" their philosophical speculations, not only on creative and fecundating forces as principles of material form, but on "the liberation of the Divine Souls plunged in the corruption of this material world".¹

The suggestion is characteristic of the period, and we have seen how Greek Philosophers were affected by the Rites which they had presumably received, all which notwithstanding the Attis Initiate may "have eaten from the tympanum" and may "have drunk from the cymbals", but he profited solely and only according to his own measures. To say otherwise is to rave.

Miss Weston draws also from a Naassene document given in the PHILOSOPHUMENA of Hippolytus and translated by G. R. S. Mead in the first volume of his THRICE GREATEST HERMES. But it serves her only because it identifies Attis, the Son of Rhea, with "Thrice-longed-for" Adonis, with Osiris, Adama of the Samothracians, and Pan—otherwise, as she puts it, "all the Mystery-Gods with the Vegetation Deity, Adonis-Attis".² In fine the document adds: "the True Gate is Jesus the Blessed". Whether He also belongs to a Nature Cult is not discussed; but Miss Weston proceeds to ask triumphantly whether the Naassene text does not "provide a complete and overwhelming justification" of those scholars who have "insisted upon the importance" of Vegetation Rites. Especially and *per se*, one would have thought not, because it is so obvious that such Rites must belong to one another and live in one another's likeness, that it all goes without saying. Let us suppose, however, that an affirmative answer is the right and reasonable and only thing; that the importance is magnified further when the text compares Aphrodite in love with Adonis to Aphrodite desiring Soul, and the Mother of the Gods who emasculates Attis to "the Blessed Nature above of the super-Cosmic and Æonian spaces which called back the masculine power of Soul to herself".

On this understanding at its value we can proceed to the next point. Pan is dead, with the rest of the Gods in his likeness, and the Rites to them belonging, though Frazer and other scholars have collected Fertility practices through all time even to this day, and all the wide world over. Who shall bridge the gulf between that death and the Grail epoch? Dr. Bruce calls it a thousand years.³ The question is virtually asked by Miss Weston, and she devotes certain chapters to an attempted answer. The result is a consultation of her authorities,

¹ LES RELIGIONS ORIENTALES DANS LE PAGANISME ROMAIN, p. 84.

² FROM RITUAL TO ROMANCE, p. 148.

³ *Op. cit.*, I, p. 284.

already cited, and a selection of mediæval and modern folk customs—mostly modern and mostly crudest mummery, not apart from a mocking spirit—which represents somehow the Death and Resurrection, so called, of the Vegetation Spirit. They are there at their value, curious enough and likeable on that account as a miscellaneous garnering; but they bear precisely the same relation to the historical Rite of old as the Coronation of a May Queen to that of a Royal Potentate, or a Village Council to a State Parliament.

Above all they are ridiculous when utilised to enforce a suggestion that the old Rites continued, that one of their aspects is to be found in the Grail Mythos, and that they are with us in concealment and not less alive than of old even at this day. It may seem incredible on the part of an accomplished scholar who used to be taken seriously; but here is the unadorned fact. The beginning of the reverie is in the second volume of her *LEGEND OF SIR PERCEVAL*, published in 1909; it is reiterated in a little conspectus of the whole subject entitled *THE QUEST OF THE HOLY GRAIL*, and it appears at full length in her final experiment, *FROM RITUAL TO ROMANCE*, which is more especially under examination in this section. In presenting so extraordinary a subject I shall be well advised to express it practically in her own words. At the opening of the study in question, Miss Weston informs her readers that having worked out a possible solution of Grail problems on a Ritual basis, she became aware of certain links which were "missing in the chain of evidence" and that the search after these involved her in some nine or ten years of additional research. Between these statements she introduces the following unexpected disclosures: (1) that "no inconsiderable part" of the information at her disposal "depended upon personal testimony", derived from those "who knew of the continued existence of such a Ritual", and "had actually been initiated into its Mysteries", (2) a Ritual namely, of which the Grail Mythos is a confused record.¹ The revelation rests at this till the close of her volume, when she adopts a more oracular tone and affirms (1) "without entering into indiscreet details," that "students of the Mysteries are well aware of the continued survival of this Ritual", being apparently a Worship of Mithra, "under circumstances which correspond exactly with the indications of two of our Grail Romances"²—neither Romances nor indications being specified, presumably for discreet reasons; (2) at the "risk of startling her readers", Miss Weston retells the story of the Young Squire in the *PERLESVAUS* who dreams that he is smitten because of a stolen candlestick of gold and awakens to find a knife in his side, while the precious spoil is hidden in his hose. She affirms that it portrays the test applied to a Candidate for Initiation on "the Astral Plains", with its fatal reaction on the physical.³

It is obvious that from 1909—or even earlier—to 1920 Miss Weston was in the course of being "spoon-fed" by a group of occult students,

¹ *FROM RITUAL TO ROMANCE*, p. 4.

² *Ib.*, pp. 169-172.

³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 162-164.

connected with one of those very numerous so-called Orders which were mushroom growths of the period but were paraded invariably among believers who fell into their toils as institutions of remote antiquity. A considerable part of my life has been spent in exploring and exploding the pretensions of their predecessors, in and behind the nineteenth century; but they were abroad at the opening of the twentieth, and they are abroad and clamorous to-day, especially in America. They work very often by dupes who are sincere on their own part and act as emissaries. Some of them are operating by type-script—of which copies are in my possession—and in this case the emissaries act as local centres from which the scripts are circulated. Sometimes they work in Ritual; and I suppose there is a baker's dozen extant under the style and title of The Rosy Cross; for it happens that spurious Masonic Orders and Degrees are neither in fashion at the moment nor to be put forward easily, in view of the vigilance of Grand Lodges, Chapters and Conclaves. An Eastern Source is favoured in certain quarters, for it makes inquiry difficult; but the best and most baffling refuge is the Astral Plane, because it defies research when a Postulant for Initiation or a Member in the early stages is assured that the Rites and the knowledge derive from that quarter. The Grail has not been forgotten in the manufacture of such Mysteries; and I have a feeling that somewhere in my archives there is a Mithraic Rite, reflecting in the far distance and with the Bull in the background, so far as sacrificial offerings are concerned. Had I time and inclination for an extended memorial on Modern Occult and Pseudo-Mystical Schools, there might be some rough unveilings. Those who, like Miss Weston, have taken such dreams and inventions seriously may demand our sympathy, but their opinions have ceased to signify. An illustration in her case is the mental state which permitted her to presume and expect credence for her concealed sources of supposititious knowledge, a certain alleged BOOK OF THOTH possibly included.¹

We are in sympathy also when she who had dwelt so long in the paths of Celtic Scholarship, had reflected so much from its German ingatherings and methods is brought not merely to say (1) that a path which leads only "into a Celtic Twilight can only be a by-path"² but that "visits to the Other Worlds are not always derivations from Faërie Lore, because that World" is not a myth but a reality,³ and because in all ages there have been souls willing to brave the great adventure of its exploration, on the chance of bringing back with them some assurance of the future life. We are in sympathy, but I at least know a little of her inspiring source in the dogmatic part of her statements and that regions of occult practice and their dubious lights amidst Cimmerian darkness are still less an adequate goal for a life's research than any Celtic by-path.

It is time now to make clear in a few words her position on that part of her subject with which alone we are concerned in reality. It can

¹ Appendix I, Note 24.

² *Op. cit.*, pp. 3, 176.

³ *Ib.*, pp. 175, 176.

be presented in a plenary sense by her dogmatic statement that "the Grail Romances repose eventually not upon a poet's inspiration but upon the ruins of an august and ancient Ritual; a Ritual which once claimed to be the accredited guardian of the Deepest Secrets of Life."¹ It is not that of "Adonis, Attis and their congeners", because these after all—many pages of panegyric notwithstanding—prove to be half-gods. It is therefore either the originally Persian Cult of Mithra, the chief authorities for which are two well-known works of M. F. Cumont, and on these Miss Weston depends in part, or it is something undemonstrable and perhaps a figment of debate in the esoteric circles to which she alludes and into which she may have been admitted personally before the close of her life. Those kinds of doors open rather easily to such as are predisposed and likely to prove *personæ gratæ* by virtue of a believing heart. Her reticence notwithstanding—as if it were needful to confuse a simple issue—I conclude or assume that she refers to "the popular religion of the Roman Legionaries" which celebrated that union of Mithra and the Goddess Anahita, which Miss Weston assures us was regarded as equivalent to the marriage of Attis-Kybele, the Phrygian Deities. There was a time, as we learn from Cumont, when Mithraism lacked the spiritual significance which was subsequently attached thereto—by the philosophers presumably, to whom I have referred previously, and presumably also at that time when it was competing with Christianity for predominance. It is difficult to connect Roman Legionaries with cults "imparting the highest religious teaching" and following "chosen guides to . . . union with the Supreme Spiritual Source of Life."² It is impossible to connect them with a God who imposed strict chastity on his Initiates. In any case the "august and ancient Ritual" had perished as such between seven and eight centuries before the Grail literature arose, and this is after making allowance for the Worship of Mithra, which is said to have been still practised during the fifth century in certain remote cantons of the Alps and Vosges.³ It is to be submitted in all reason that at that period it was no longer an august Rite.

It survives, however, for Miss Weston, firstly in the Grail Mythos and secondly in those alleged esoteric circles which have been considered at some length and put definitely out of court. They belonged and belong now to the class of testimony respecting which no one in their senses can believe any witness, however amiable and personally sincere, except with all archives before us. The head and centre of the august Rite, as laid bare by scholarship, appears to represent a concordat between the Mithra Cult and the sister Phrygian Mystery of Kybele and Attis, and is that which Cumont describes as celebrating a Festival which was "an aliment of Spiritual Life."⁴ As such it was common seemingly to both; but Miss Weston's deposition is a little confused and confusing, so that it is difficult to know when she is dealing

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 176, 191.

³ *Ib.*, pp. 161, 162.

² FROM RITUAL TO ROMANCE, p. 149.

⁴ LES RELIGIONS ORIENTALES, etc., p. 137.

with the one and when with the other. The Feast is said to have become "the centre of the whole religious action."¹ This is on the authority of Dieterich, and Miss Weston terms it "a close parallel with the Grail Romances." It is nothing of the sort because, on her own shewing, in the "Attis Feast" the Initiates "ate and drank" from the Sacred Vessels; but no one partakes of the Sacred Grail content when this is the Precious Blood. Otherwise, people are fed by Magic, destroying the whole analogy. Moreover, it is folly to look behind the gulf of centuries when a "close parallel" is ready to our hands in the Christian Eucharistic Rites, which recall demonstrably those of the Grail, the latter with a non-Roman Form of Consecration, a non-Roman and a wonder-side. As to the spiritual sustenance and the alleged supernatural communications to the soul, Miss Weston had only to study orthodox Eucharistic *Theosophia* of the Grail period to find all the desired parallels without assuming the secret perpetuation of a dead Pagan Rite.

So also there is an arbitrary parallel instituted between a supposititious Death and Resurrection of the Candidate in the Phrygian Rites and postulated ceremonial in the Grail Mythos. But again there is no analogy, for there is no Death or Resurrection in any Grail literature; and Miss Weston has to content herself with a phantom substitute in "the healing of the Fisher King".² She dwells much also on the wasting and restoration of the land, on the suspension and freeing of waters in Grail texts, and on their reflections from folk-lore; but in so far as they are found occasionally they are not of real service on questions of origin, the MATIÈRE DE BRETAGNE being obviously ready to the hands and in the hearts of Grail Romancers, even as I at this day, though I may be writing on the Mystery of Union must give evidence inevitably of a hundred extrinsic issues, because the matter of the twentieth century is not only ready to my hands but has its conscious and subconscious images like a crowded population of my mind.

Miss Weston is keen on affirming the august nature of the Mithraic Rite, but passes over an important feature of the Sister Mystery which may have belonged ultimately to both. Cumont can be consulted here, but his two works on the subject have become rare in these days. There is, however, the *CULTE DE CYBÈLE*, by Henri Graillet, an exhaustive and admirable study, which may be consulted on the subject of the *Taurobolium* and its revolting Baptism of Blood. The Candidate for its Mystery descended into a pit, so that the Sacrificial Bull

¹ FROM RITUAL TO ROMANCE, p. 139.

² It is perfectly clear that an infirm King who, whether healed for the moment or not, dies subsequently and is in no case restored to life, has no relation to any Fertility Myth and is still less "a deeply symbolic figure, . . . the essential centre of the whole cult, a being semi-divine, semi-human; standing between his people and land, and the unseen forces which control their destiny" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 128, 129). Miss Weston sets out by stating that her theory will be established on a firm basis if the Fisher King is proved to be an integral part of her Imagined Ritual, while, on the other hand, if he does not fit into the framework, her theory will be seriously incomplete, if not what she terms *manqué*. She has satisfied herself on the affirmative side of her thesis, but it will convince no one else.

was above him. It was immolated by himself in this position, and the blood poured over him ; over body, over face ; and in the mouth itself he received *la rouge pluie*. The genitals of the slaughtered beast were carried into the Temple, where they were consecrated to the Great Mother and were interned in a Holy Place, under a commemorative Altar. The *Taurobolist* who had performed this ceremony became regenerated *ex hypothesi* in his health and vital force. Citing Tobæus and Prudentius, Grailot affirms (1) that the pit was a sepulchre in which the discarded remains of what is termed the old man were left ; (2) that an Office of the Dead was chanted about the Candidate ; (3) that when he emerged from the figurative tomb, a bloody apparition, he was hailed as pure of pure and holy of holies ; (4) that the assistants at this foul business fell down and worshipped before him. There seems evidence even that certain Candidates mutilated themselves in honour of the goddess.¹ To quote once again my old and by now almost proverbial sentence, it is from such orgies, in the view of Miss Weston, that there has come down to us " a story told for one of the truest and holiest that is in this world "—the Quest of the Holy Grail.² It is small wonder that in one of her craziest dicta Miss Weston lays down that the Quest of Galahad does not, properly speaking, belong to the Grail at all but to the Lancelot Legend :³ it certainly does not, if the Grail at the long last of all its variant interpretations, emerges as a veiled example of such a Rite.

III

THE GRAIL AS A MYSTERY OF INITIATION

ELEUSIS and the Rites connected with the Name and Myth of Adonis have proved of no effect for our purpose, each in its turn ; but the fact remains that no one acquainted with their peculiar characters and seals, their *mise-en-scène* and atmosphere, can fail to be reminded of Initiations, old and new, when they contemplate the Quest of the Grail. Like the Hermit of the GRAND SAINT GRAAL, it must be recognised among those who know by something borne thereon.⁴ They will observe also that it can be distinguished into certain Degrees, as if Lesser and Greater Mysteries, the one ending in failure and the other in a crown of success. So did the Perceval of Gerbert give the wrong Battery on the Gate of the Earthly Paradise, and so did it cost him another seven years of wandering and probation. But the end of the Mysteries is ever to approve their Candidates, if in any wise this be possible, and the end is also to receive them, lest Initiation itself should perish. Thus, in the case

¹ Grailot, *Op. cit.*, pp. 155-157, 158.

² It is Caxton's Colophon, Book XVII of Malory's MORTE DARTHUR, at the end of the story concerning the Sangreal.

³ FROM RITUAL TO ROMANCE, p. 195.

⁴ Sommer, VULGATE ARTHURIAN ROMANCES, I, p. 10.