

## MISCELLANEOUS.

### EROS AND PSYCHE.

The story of Eros and Psyche reflects the religious life of classic antiquity more than any other book, poem, or epic, not excepting the works of Hesiod and Homer, who are said to have given to the Greeks their gods. The Theogony describes the origin of the gods and gives to them a definite shape. Homer introduces their figures into his grand epic; but the popular tale of Cupid and Psyche reflects the sentiment with which the gods were regarded, and describes the attitude of man toward the problems of life, especially the problem of problems—the mystery of death and the fate of the soul in the unknown beyond.

The orthodox Greek religion consisted in the performance of certain rites which were attended to by priests in the name of the state, and for the public benefit. Neither faith nor morality was required, but it was of paramount importance to give all the gods their due according to established tradition and thus to fulfil the duties that men may have toward the invisible powers, upon whose beneficence their welfare depends. But the performance of sacrifices and other ceremonies left the heart empty; they were attended to in a perfunctory way by persons duly elected either according to descent or station in life and were kept up simply from fear lest any deity might be offended by the neglect. The personal attitude of the people demanded a satisfaction of the religious cravings of their hearts which resulted in a religious movement originating with the importation of new thoughts from Egypt, Chaldæa, Phœnicia and Syria, and finding at last a definite expression in the mysteries and secret teachings of Orpheus, Dionysus, Demeter, and other deities. These innovations were not revolutionary. New gods, it is true, were introduced such as Dionysus, and new prophets such as Orpheus, but the old ones remained in power; the change was not in name, but in interpretation; as such, however, it was none



EROS AND PSYCHE TOGETHER WITH THE  
GOOD SHEPHERD.<sup>1</sup>  
(Pagan Sarcophagus.)

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<sup>1</sup> Reproduced from Kraus, *Geschichte der christlichen Kunst*, I., p. 102.

the less radical, for the very nature of the old gods underwent a thorough transformation and gained a deepening of their religious significance.

Nor is it difficult to describe (at least in its main outlines) the character of these innovations for they are obvious and unmistakable, because they became the chief factors in the formation of the Greek type in its classic period and left their imprint upon all philosophers and poets as well as upon the public life of ancient Hellas. The great problem of Greek thought was the riddle of the sphinx finding its solution in Greek conception of man's soul as worked out by Plato.

How much Plato again and his doctrines affected Christianity is well known and so we may in the evolution of religion regard the hopes and dreams of the Mysteries, especially the Eleusinian Mysteries as one of the most important preparation of and transition to Christianity.

All these views found expression in the fairy tale *Eros and Psyche*—the only fairy tale of ancient Greece that has come down to us in the bizarre satirical romance of Apuleius, *The Golden Ass*. A symptom of the consanguinity of the ideas that pervade the story of Eros and Psyche and the rising belief of Christianity may be found in the fact that the Christian emblem of the good shepherd was chiselled on a sarcophagus side by side with the figures of Eros and Psyche.

We offer the story to our readers in a new version for the sake of its religious significance and reproduce with it Paul Thumann's beautiful illustrations which in their spirit are as genuinely classic as any production of Phidias or Praxiteles.

Paul Thumann's illustrations were published for the first time by Adolf Titzel, of Leipsic, a publisher whose firm is justly famous for high class work in illustrating classics.

P. C.

## THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESSES AT THE WORLD'S EXHIBITION AT PARIS, IN 1900.

It must be gratifying to the inaugurators and promoters of the Chicago World's Congresses that the French Exhibition will follow its precedent and carry out the same idea, with such modifications only as will be necessary in a country where European customs and principles prevail. There will be a series of congresses with most fascinating programs, worked out by scholars and capable men, and directed with discretion. The religious congress will not resemble the Chicago Parliament of Religions, in so far as it will not be a congress of representatives of the various religions now living, but a convention of scholars, especially of Orientalists, who as students of the history of religions will discuss the subject purely from a theoretical point of view, and without any reference to the practical questions of to-day. The president of the religious congresses is Prof. A. Réville, Nouvelle Dieppe, Seine-Inférieure, France.

The sections of the Congress of the History of Religion are eight in number and will be divided according to the requirements of the hour into sub-sections. The main eight sections are as follows: (1) Religions of non-civilised peoples. The religions of the pre-Columbian American civilisations. (2) History of the religions of the far Orient (China, Japan, Indo-China, Mongolia, etc.). (3) History of the religions of Egypt. (4) History of the so-called Semitic religions: (a) Assyria Chaldæa, anterior Asia; (b) Judaism and Islamism. (5) History of the religions of India and Persia. (6) History of the religions of Greece and Rome. (7) History of the religions of the Germans, Celts, and Slavs. Pre-historic archaeology