

natural sex difference in respiration, but that in certain civilized races an artificial alteration has been produced by that vagary of fashion "tight lacing." No such difference exists among savage people. It is in the highest degree probable that this custom has been deleterious in very many ways to the health of civilized peoples even when practised in a modified form.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

## DRUIDISM.

BY DUDLEY WRIGHT.

THE Druids boasted a faith which appears to have been as imbued with life as that of any ancient or modern religious system, although little is known generally about it.

Although their religion was polytheistic in character the Druids recognized a supremacy among the gods, this Supreme being represented by the sun. Next in point of rank came the lesser divinities, who were symbolized by the moon and stars, and, in course of time, all the celestial bodies were venerated with divine honors. This characteristic was not more marked in Druidism than in other religions of a like nature where the elements were venerated. The sun as sun was not worshiped. The arch-god was B el, whose glory was manifested in the sun, and in singing hymns to the luminous orb they manifested their worship to the Supreme and not to the emblem, paying their adoration to what they regarded as the supreme power and eternal being.

It was doubtless this veneration of the celestial bodies which laid the foundation of the knowledge possessed by the Druids of astronomical science, to which C esar and other writers have borne testimony. They were certainly in possession of sufficient knowledge of the motion of heavenly bodies to enable them to fix definite times for their festivals and religious ceremonies, all of which were regulated by the sun and moon, and to calculate on a thirty-year cycle of lunar years in which the month began at the sixth day. In common with the Gauls, Teutons, and Jews, they reckoned time from evening to morning.

The Druids observed an extraordinary reticence with regard to the articles of their faith. Though great writers in other respects, they committed no part of their religious tenets or philosophy to writing, except in allegorical poems, the key to which was in the

possession only of the initiated and professed, to whom the doctrines were taught orally and by them committed to memory. The inspirer of Cæsar's account of Druidism is believed to be Divitiacus, the friend of Cæsar and Cicero and the Arch-Druid at the time of the Roman invasion. Caution must, however, be exercised in accepting as authentic all the statements Cæsar makes as to Druidical belief and worship, especially with reference to Britain, for it is obvious that he himself was not in Britain for the length of time sufficient to investigate the subject at first hand. Although, therefore, Cæsar expressly states that the Druids worshiped Mercury it must not be assumed that Mercury was the principal deity. In all probability he had noticed among the Druidical symbols the winged rod with the serpents entwined around it, which, in Rome, was one of the symbols which usually adorned the statue of Mercury. This symbol may be found engraved in conspicuous characters on the Druidical remains on the plains of Abury in Wiltshire as well as in the Thebais of ancient Egypt. The Druids had also a veneration for the cube which was another of the symbols of Mercury, but this, too, has been mentioned as a proof of the affinity alleged by some writers to exist between the religion of Druidism and the Order of Freemasons. According to Cæsar, the Druids represented Mercury as the inventor of all the arts. Hercules was also regarded as the patron of eloquence, arts, and commerce, but they called him Ogmios, a word which has for its meaning, "the power of eloquence."

*Helvetia Antiqua et Nova*, a work published in the sixteenth century, gives the following list of Druidical deities: Theutates or Taut, Hesus, Taranis, Belinus, Cisa, and Penninus.

Theutates or Taut is asserted to have been the supreme god or universal father. He combined apparently the attributes of Jupiter with those of Mercury, as the authority quoted states that he was the inventor of arts and a guide to travelers. The word *taut* is still preserved in Switzerland and applied to a lofty rock near Montreux, thought by some to be one of the scenes of ancient Druidical worship. In this connection it may be remembered that *tout* in some parts of England is still the name given to the highest point in a range of hills.

Hesus, the "strong and powerful," was the representative of Mars, the god of war, carnage, and bloodshed. In the German patois of Switzerland *hécés* still refers to a violent and quarrelsome person. Some writers have stated that this deity was pictured with the head of a dog. If so, it is probably identical with the barking Anubis of Egyptian mythology, who was claimed as the son of

Osiris and Nephthys and to have had the nature and characteristics of a dog. This deity had the special guardianship of the tropics.

Taranus is a word derived from *taran*, "thunder," and is identical with the Jupiter of Greece and Rome and the Thor of northern nations.

Belinus, known in the Old Testament as Baal, is identified with Apollo, the god of the sun. A wood in the neighborhood of Lausanne is still known as Sauvebelin, i. e., *Sylva Belini*, and traces of the name are to be found in many parts of England. Cormac's *Glossary* mentions an annual convention which took place at Uisneach in Meath in the month of May, where the men of Ireland went to exchange their wares and jewels. "And at it they were wont to make a sacrifice to the arch-god, whom they adored, whose name was B el. It was likewise their usage to light two fires to B el in every district in Ireland at this season, and to drive a pair of each herd of cattle that the district contained between these two fires, as a preservative, to guard them against all the diseases of that year. It is from that fire thus made that the day on which the noble feast of the apostles Peter and James is held has been called Bealtine, i. e., B el's Fire." The origin of the proverb and phrase "between two fires" is also ascribed to the passing of beasts about to be sacrificed between these two sacrificial fires. This deity, however, according to the best authorities, appears to have been the principal deity and not the fourth in succession.

Cisa was more particularly worshiped in the Grisons or R etian Alps. Tuesday in some of the German cantons of Switzerland is called *Cistag* or *Zistag*.

With regard to Penninus, Pen, which in Celtic means summit or head, is applied to the mountainous region of the Apennines, and the monastery of St. Bernard stands on the site of the temple of the Pennine Jupiter. The prefix *pen-* is found in various parts of Wales, e. g., Penmanmawr, Pen-y-gwint, etc., and, of course, in many Cornish names of people and places.

The Druids represented the world as an enormous animal issuing out of the abyss from the abode of an evil spirit. In common with other nations and religious systems they had their Deluge tradition, but they represented that event as occurring in a lake called Llyn Llion, the waters of which burst forth and overwhelmed the face of the whole world. One vessel only escaped in the catastrophe and in this were a man and a woman and certain of the animal species. By these Britain was re-peopled with human beings and animals. The name given to the man thus miraculously preserved

was Hu the Mighty, but he is sometimes called Cadwaldr. He is frequently represented as the diluvial god and as such is generally attended by a spotted cow. The woman preserved in the ark from the deluge was called Ceridwen. She was regarded as the first of womankind, with the same attributes as Venus, in whom were personified the generative powers. She is mentioned in several of the poems of the Bards who lived under the Welsh princes. Culhelyn, a Bard of the sixth century, refers to her as Ogyrven Ahmad, or "the goddess of the various seeds," and from this and other references of a like nature, some authorities have connected her with the goddess Ceres. Ceridwen's first-born was named Morvran, or "the raven of the sea." As an outcome of this British tradition of the Deluge, the Druids consecrated certain lakes as symbols of the event and looked upon the small islands which rose to the surface as mystical sanctuaries, because they were emblems of the ark. A rock, when discovered, was hailed as typifying the place of debarkation of Hu the Mighty, and here, on certain occasions, would be celebrated by "the Druids of the Circle," the Druids of high or advanced degree, mystical rites believed to be in commemoration of the salvation of the race from the waters of the flood.

The greatest similarity among Deluge legends to the Druidical is, perhaps, that of the Incas, who believed that no living things survived except a man and a woman, who were preserved from the flood by being enclosed in a box. When the waters subsided they were commanded by the Creator of all things to settle in Huanaco, whither the wind had carried them. Then the Creator began to raise up peoples and nations by making male and female figures of clay and painting these clay figures with the kind of garments they were to wear. He then gave life and soul to each and commanded them to multiply. The first of each nation were transformed into stones which became objects of adoration. In some parts of Peru there are great blocks of stone, some of which are nearly the size of giants.

It was a Druidical belief that water was the first principle of all things and existed before the creation of the earth in unsullied purity, but that its qualities were diminished when it became blended with the earth. Thus water was venerated because it afforded a symbol by its inexhaustible sources of the continual and successive benefits bestowed upon the human race and because of the mystical sympathy existing between the soul of man and the purity of water. The air was regarded as the residence of beings of a more refined and spiritual nature than humans, while fire was looked upon as a

vital principle brought into action at the Creation. The earth was venerated because it was the mother of mankind, and particular honor was paid to trees as affording a proof of the immense productive power of the earth. For many centuries the Druids refused to construct enclosed temples, regarding it as an outrage to suggest that the deity could be confined within any limits, and the vault of the sky and the depth of the forest were originally their only sanctuary.

Pomponius Mela tells us that the immortality of the soul was a Druidical doctrine which the Druids permitted to be published for political reasons. "There is one thing," he says, "which they teach their disciples, which hath been made known to the common people, in order to render them more brave and fearless, namely, that souls are immortal and that there is another life after the present." The precise character of this after-life has been the occasion of debate with authorities. Some hold that the Druidical belief in life after death included the tenet of transmigration, similar to the Buddhistic but differing from the Theosophical reincarnation; that is to say, that they believed in the possibility of the descent of the human into the animal species. They were apparently believers in the evolution theory, maintaining that the soul commenced its course in the lowest water-animalcules and passed through several successive gradated bodies until it reached the human species. Here the authorities diverge. According to some, at death, if the good qualities had preponderated over the evil, the soul would pass into Gwynvyd, or a state of bliss. But if the evil qualities had preponderated, then the soul would pass into an animal displaying the characteristics exhibited by the human being while on earth, though it would have further opportunities of ascent to the human and of ultimate translation to Gwynvyd, even though repeated falls should postpone this latter step for ages. Others have maintained that the Druids endeavored to persuade their followers that death was but an interlude in a succession of progressive human existences. In this or in some other world the soul would find a new body and lead another human life and so onward in an infinite cycle of lives. This latter seems to be the more probable when it is remembered that one of their maxims was that money lent in this world would be repaid in the next and that they also believed that letters given to dying persons or thrown upon the funeral pile would be faithfully delivered in the next world. In one of these two ways, however, the fear of death was removed and the people were thus instilled with courage in battle and warfare.

Another debatable topic has been the question as to whether human sacrifices were practised by the Druids, though it seems hardly open to question in view of the categorical statement of Cæsar. Divitiacus is scarcely likely to have inspired or consented to the publication of the statement if it had not been true. Possibly, however, the explanation may be found in the assertion of some writers that the practice of human sacrifices was the survival of a pre-Druidic custom, particularly as human sacrifices do not appear to have formed part of the Irish Druidical practices, though in Britain, members of the Druidic community not only took part in, but presided at, these ceremonies. These human sacrifices were, in the main, legal executions, and an interval of five years generally elapsed between sentence and execution. They believed also that those who killed themselves to accompany their friends to the next world would live with them there so that there was no lack of victims who, in time of trouble, came forward as volunteers to offer themselves as expiation. Eager to rejoin their dear departed in a happier sphere, eager to ascend to the circle of felicity, the Celts gladly mounted the sacrificial stone and death came to them in the midst of a song of joy. The old Mosaic law of "a life for a life" was also required by the laws of Cymry, but the fatal punishment inflicted by the executioner was regarded as the requital of the debt due to God and man. According to the laws of Dyonwal Moelmund the three forms of capital punishment practised were beheading, hanging, and burning. It is possible that the practice of burning was derived from Phenicia, where the yearly sacrifice of human beings by fire, which was part of the worship of Moloch, may have given rise to the custom of burning malefactors and prisoners taken in war and other immolations practised by the Druids.

The Romans issued stringent laws forbidding the continuance of the practice, affecting to regard human sacrifices with horror, though they were occasionally guilty of such practices themselves, even in their most civilized ages. Augustus ordered three hundred senators and *equites*, who had sided with Antony, to be sacrificed on the altar of Julius Cæsar.

According to Justin, the Druids declared that in times of public calamity the people could not be rid of the pestilence or trouble until they had dipped the gold and silver secured by them in a time of war in a lake, and he gives the following description of a similar ceremony: "Many persons resorted to a lake at the foot of the Gevaudan mountain, consecrated to the moon under the name of Helanus, and thither cast, some the entire human habits, linen, cloth,

and entire fleeces ; other cast in cheese, wax, bread, and other things, every one according to his ability ; they then sacrificed animals and feasted for several days."

Cæsar says that the Druids were the judges on all points of law and equity and the distributors of all punishments and rewards. They had the power of excommunication against all who did not submit to their decrees, of excluding people of all ranks from all benefits of society and even from society itself ; of deposing princes and even of condemning them to death, a power not infrequently exercised ; and of declaring war and peace. The Druids themselves were exempt from bearing arms and paying taxes. Divitiacus, the Arch-Druid, however, we learn from Cæsar, was permitted to carry arms and was even entrusted with the command of a corps in one of Cæsar's campaigns. He gives the following account of the effect of excommunication : "If any person, either private or public, does not acquiesce in their decisions, they interdict him from their sacrifices. That is, among them, the severest punishment. Those who are thus interdicted are reckoned impious and accursed ; all men depart from them ; all shun their company and conversation, lest they should sustain some misfortune from their contagion ; the administration of justice and the protection of the laws is denied to them and no honor is conferred upon them." The excommunicated had also to walk with bare feet and wear black garments for the remainder of his life.

The Druids regarded repentance and purification as necessary duties. They observed one day in seven as peculiarly sanctified and made holy by the great Creator and were wont to dedicate one tenth of all their substance to religious purposes.

The Druidical philosophy and religion were certainly equal, if not superior, to any of the philosophies and religions current in other parts of the world in their day. Manxmen ascribe to the Druids the excellent laws by which their island has always been governed, and the ancient Greeks, on their own confession, learned part of their philosophy and many of their fables from the Gauls.