

## THE PEN DRAGON SOCIETY

will be holding the Annual Get-Together of members and friends on Saturday, Nov: 15th. at the Friends' Meeting House, Hampton Road, from 2.p.m. --10.p.m.

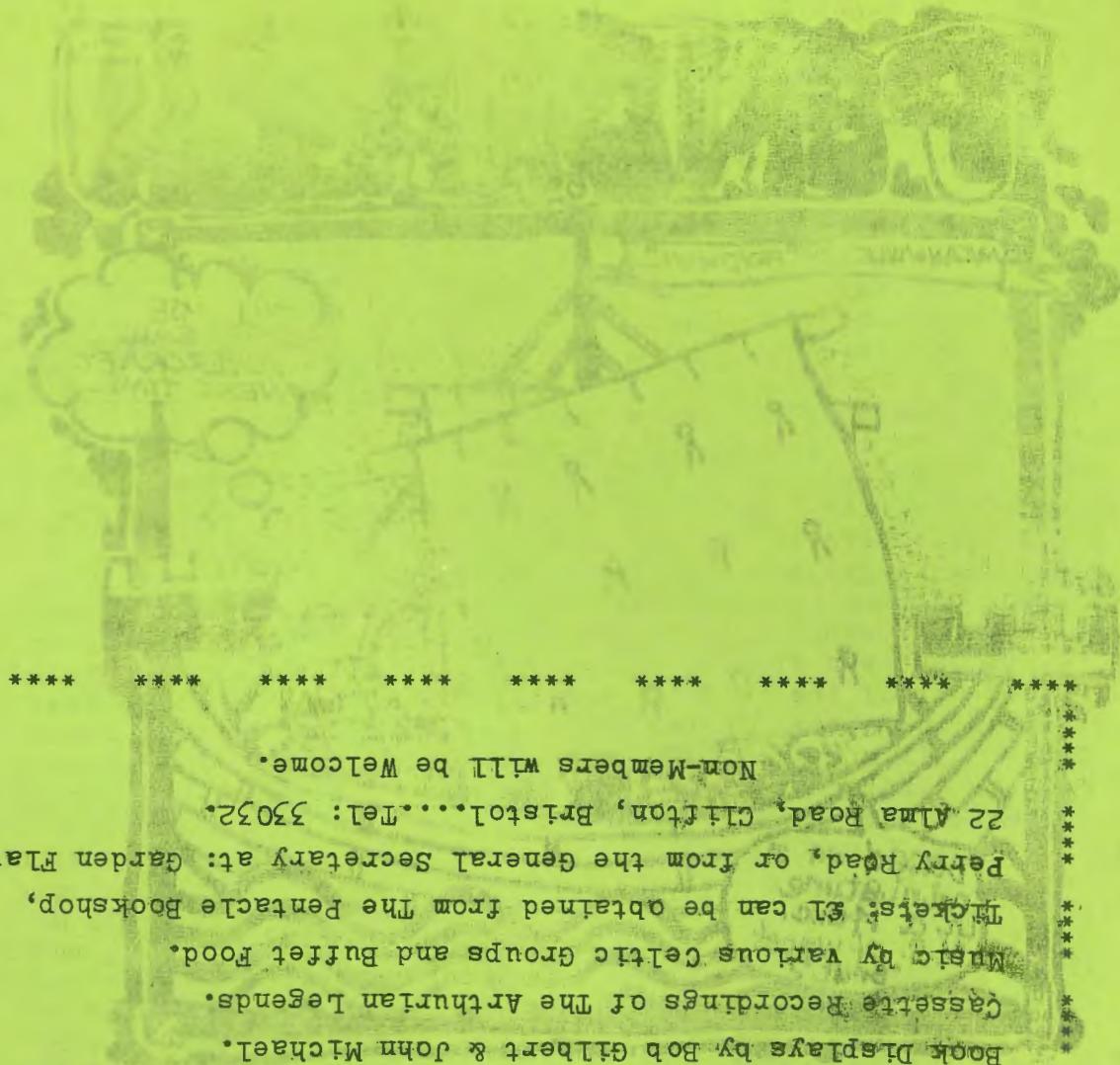
The programme will include talks by: John Williams, (on Dowsing), Stanley Messenger (the Master of Britain now), Mrs. Villiers-Stuart (Mazes), Mrs. Jean Bradbury (Compassion Message), Friends of the Earth (Ecology). Also a cassette recordings of the Arthurian Legends.

Book Displays by Bob Gilbert & John Michael.

Mosaic by various Celtic groups and Buffet Food.

Markets: will be attended from The Pentacle Bookshop, Petty Road, or from the General Secretary at: Garden Flat, 22 Alma Road, Clifton, Bristol. Tel: 33032.

Non-Members will be welcome.



## P E N D R A G O N

Journal of the Pendragon Society.

Vol. 9. No. 3.

May, 1976.

All correspondence should be addressed to the Hon. Sec., at the Garden Flat, 22 Alma Road, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 2BY..

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Our printing machine has been repaired so our "boiler room staff" can function again though not altogether without blood, sweat, toil and tears.

Readers persevering beyond Page 1 will learn that we are preparing to return to our dig in Gower though, sad to relate, this year the farmhouse will not be available to us for lodging. At the time of writing we are trying to find alternative shelter in the event of emergency. We are also glad to print this bit of news on behalf of Peter Weeks and a few stalwart colleagues:

## A REVIVED INTEREST IN CADBURY.

Members with an interest in past activities at Cadbury will recall the persistent stories and rumours pertaining to the possible existence of subterranean passages and caves.

For a long time the Society has sought means of verifying or refuting these theories by investigation of the site with electrical equipment capable of detecting air-filled cavities.

This has recently been made possible thanks to the Bristol University Department of Physics who have kindly allowed the Society the use of a piece of equipment called a "Tellohm". This is essentially a device for measuring the resistivity of the ground -- air-filled cavities will show up as anomalies in the normal readings obtained.

There has been one sortie to Cadbury with the instrument so far this year, and it is hoped there will be several more weekend excursions in the coming months to try and gain conclusive evidence.

Other groups with an interest in this method of locating underground cavities are the recently-formed "Subterrания Britannica" and various pot-holing clubs, one of which in Bristol shares with Pendragon an overlap interest in the "Tellohm/Cadbury Project".

Newsletter No.2 from the Institute of Geomantic Research notes: "It has recently come to our notice that certain parts of the Glastonbury Zodiac have come under threat from a long-term plan to convert the peat-diggings in the area into lakes, like the Norfolk Broads. Called the Avalon Lakes Scheme, a large area of the Zodiac will be transformed from its former state, with little regard to the old boundaries, hence the Zodiacial effigies."

The way things are going in this country at the moment we can only say, "Perhaps it won't happen."

\* PREIDDEU ANNWN....THE SPOILS OF ANNWN \*

\* PRAISE TO THE LORD, THE SUPREME RULER OF THE HEAVENS,  
who has extended his rule to the shores of the world.  
Perfect was the prison of Gwair in Caer Sidid, Spiral Castle,  
through the warning (or spite) of Pwyll and Pryderi.  
Before him no one went into it.  
\* A heavy blue chain held the youth firmly.  
And for the spoils of Annwn he sings gloomily,  
and till doomsday shall he continue his lay.  
Three freights of Prydwen we went into it -  
none except seven returned from Caer Sidi.  
\* I am a seeker of praise, if my song is heard.  
In Caer Pedryfan, the Four-cornered Castle four times revolving,  
when was the first word from the cauldron spoken ?  
By the breath of nine maidens it is gently kindled.  
The cauldron of the chief of Annwn - is not its fashion  
a ridge of pearls around its edge ?  
It will not boil the food of a coward or of one forsworn.  
\* A bright flashing sword will be brought to it  
and left in the hand of Llwch Llawynnawc.  
And before the gates of the cold place lamps shall be burning,  
and when we accompanied Arthur in his splendid labours  
none except seven returned from Caer Feddwyd, Castle of  
Intoxication.  
I am a seeker of praise, if my song is heard.  
\* In Caer Pedryfan, in the Island of the Strong Door,  
where twilight and the black of night mingle,  
bright sparkling wine was drunk by the host.  
Three freights of Prydwen we went on sea;  
none except seven returned from Caer Rigor, the Royal Castle.  
\* I will not allow praise to (?from) the lords of literature.  
Beyond Caer Wydyr, the Glass Fort, they behold not the prowess  
of Arthur.  
Three score hundred men stood on the wall.  
\* It was difficult to converse with their sentinel.  
Three freights of Prydwen we went with Arthur;  
none except seven returned from Caer Colur, Hidden Castle.  
\* I will not allow praise to (?from) men with long shields.  
They do not know on what day, or who caused it,  
or at what hour of early day Cwy was born,  
or who prevented him from going to the dales of Defwy.  
They do not know Ych Brych, the Speckled Ox, with his stout  
halter,  
with seven score joints in his collar.  
When we went with Arthur of mournful memory,  
none except seven returned from Caer Fanwy, Lofty Castle.  
\* I will not allow praise to (?from) men with long....  
They do not know on what day the chief arose,  
Or at what hour of early day the owner was born,  
or what animal they guard with a silver head.  
When we went with Arthur of mournful contention,  
none except seven returned from Caer Ochren, Sloping Castle.

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THE SPOILS OF ANNWN....A COMMENTARY.

The poem consists of two main levels:

- (a) Taliesen, the poet, haranguing other poets for their ignorance of mythology;
- (b) the outline story of an expedition by Arthur and three shiploads of men (including Taliesen) to the Otherworld.

Preiddeu Annwn is attributed to Taliesen (6th. cent.) but, although found in a 13th century MS, has been dated to the 9th century at least. Its details though sparse can be filled out by Irish tales, and by other Welsh texts including Culwch ac Olwen and Branwen. The story basically is this: An expedition is undertaken to the Otherworld (sometimes identified with Ireland). This includes as an objective the retrieval of a cauldron of varying magical properties. There is a battle, and in some accounts only seven of the expedition return.

What was this Otherworld, Annwn? Put simply, it reflected Celtic aspirations about life after death and its relation to the present material world. It had little in common with the after-life of Christian theology. Entrance to it was obtained under hills and lakes, in islands and under the sea. In Preiddeu Annwn it is given eight by-names as Caers or Castles, and it is clear that these are synonyms for the tomb under the burial mound, through which all men enter the next world.

What we apparently have here is a record of a ritual involving entry into the burial chamber by initiates (the name merely means "those who go in"). Various details can be picked out which probably relate to this ritual and which can be corroborated by archaeological evidence.

PRYDWEN: Arthur's magic ship (in later literature, his shield, perhaps by analogy with a coracle). "Thrice the fulness" of this ship is carried over the sea "to the shore of the world" to Caer Sidi, the Spiral (or Faery) Castle, and this represents the crossing of a ditch of a barrow.

CAER SIDI: Spiral Castle is named from the "clue" to the entry of the sepulchral cave. This clew is the plan of the labyrinth supplied by the Mother Goddess through her intermediaries.

GWAIR: the first to enter Caer Sidi, he was to remain until doomsday surrounded by the barrow's ditch Ocean (the heavy blue chain). His name means "hay", and it may be relevant to note that the Irish god Cu Roi had a castle which revolved (spirally?) like a millstone grinding grain.

THREE FREIGHTS: In the Welsh Triads Gwair is imprisoned in Caer Oeth ac Anoeth, another castle-tomb. Arthur is rescued from here by his cousin Goreu ("the best"), and also from the Castle of Pendragon, and from the Dark Prison under the flagstone of Echymeint. It seems then that the three ferryings might be to the one prison under three different names.

CAER PEDRYFAN: the four-cornered castle is a cist burial chamber. We now have a description of the magic cauldron which Gwair lacked in the previous stanza. We learn that nine priestesses tend the cauldron, Peir pen annwlyn, in the tomb before which lamps burn.

LLWCH LLAWYNNAWC: From Culhwch ac Olwen we learn that Llenlleawg the Irishman slew many of his compatriots, guardians

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- \* of the cauldron, with a sword called Caledfwlch ('Hard Notch'). \*
- \* Caledfwlch (from which we get Caliburn and Excalibur) was called
- \* Calad-bolg in Ireland, where it was the magic sword of the Ulster hero Cu Chulainn (who also raids the Otherworld). In this
- \* poem the sword is wielded by Llwch Llawynnawc (Lug Windy-hand) who is the Irish god Lug. \*

\* CAER FEDDWYD: After a ritual concerning the cauldron and the\*  
\* sword of Lug, the company in the Four-Cornered Castle drink some\*  
\* wine, thereby transforming Caer Pedryfan into Caer Feddwyd, the \*  
\* Castle of Intoxication. The Strong Door of the Island may be con-  
\* nected with the flagstone of Echymeint over the Dark Prison, \*  
\* mentioned in the Triads as containing Arthur, and comparable \*  
\* with the two flagstones Blocc and Bluigne at Tara in Ireland. \*  
\* These two latter stones were part of an elaborate ritual of re- \*  
\* birth concerning the Irish kingship. Thus it is no surprise to \*  
\* find that the tomb is also referred to as the Royal Castle.

CAER WYDYL: The 9th century monk Nennius talks about a turris vitrea visited by a fleet of 30 ships (ten times three freights of Prydwen ?) This was a "tower of glass, whose summit seemed covered with men, to whom they spoke but received no answer". Caer Wydyl, the Glass Fort, similarly had great numbers of men, the dead buried in the chambered tombs --hence the difficulty in conversing ! The mound is thus also Caer Colur, the Gloomy Castle, glimpsed through a "glass" darkly - the reflection of the mound in a surrounding mirror of water.

CAER FANDWY: Scholars, like the men with long shield, are  
 \* in the dark as regards the story of Cwy and his non-arrival at \*  
 the dales of Defwy. But Ych Brych, the Speckled Ox, is known  
 \* from Culhwch as being yoked to Melyn Gwanwyn (Yellow-Palewhite), \*  
 one of three pairs Culhwch has to fetch for his future father-  
 \* in-law. The remainder of the poem is obscure and difficult to \*  
 translate; Caer Fandwy (Lofty Castle) refers perhaps to the  
 \* height some Bronze Age mounds could achieve, and Caer Ochren \*  
 (Sloping Castle) to the curvature of the earth mound.

Can we discern a ritual related to a Celtic (or even pre-Celtic cult of the dead from the sparse details contained in this Dark Age poem ? The burial of the dead in open boat-like coffins, perhaps, including a princely personage; food eaten and wine drunk by initiates waiting in the night outside the tomb, lit by torches before the portal; tales told from the old mythology whose significance is lost on the majority of listeners....

There is much detail missing in the poem. For those who are interested a table is given comparing versions of the raid on the Otherworld extant in Welsh literature. Students of Irish literature and of the Grail stories will have noticed points of contact already.

Chris Lovegrove.

The illustrations show:

- (a) a gold model boat from C. Derry, Ireland, 1st century AD.
- (b) an engraved maze from Locmariaquer, Brittany.
- (c) a bronze sword-hilt from North Grimston, Yorks, 2nd c.B.C.

\*      **Quote from A Celtic Miscellany:**      \*

## A Vain Pilgrimage.

- \* Coming to Rome, much labour and little profit ! The King whom you seek here, unless you bring Him with you you will not find him.

* DATE	900	950	1050	*
* OTHERWORLD	: Annwn	: Ireland	: Ireland	*
*	:	:	:	*
* TITLE	: Spoils of Annwn	: Culhwch	: Branwen	*
*	:	:	:	*
* CAULDRON:	: Peir pen annwfn	: Diwrnach	: Peir dadeni	*
* OWNER &	: Chief of Annwn	: (steward)	: 1. Llasdar	*
* FUNCTION	: "will not boil	: to boil meat	: Gyfnewid	*
*	: food of coward	: of Ysbyddaden	: 2. Bran	*
*	: or one forsworn	:	: 3. Matholwch	*
*	:	:	: Re-birth,	*
*	:	:	: renewal	*
*	:	:	:	*
* SWORD:	: "Bright-flashing	: Caledfwlch	: ?	*
* NAME &	: Lluch Llawynnawc	: Llenlleawc	: ?	*
* OWNER	:	: slew Irish	: Irish slain	*
*	:	:	:	*
RETURNING	: Seven, includ-	: "Light force"	: Seven:	*
* HEROES:	: ing Arthur.	: Arthur	: Pryderi	*
* NUMBER &	: Taliesin	: Cei	: Taliesen	*
* NAMES	: ?Goreu	: Bedwyr	: Manawydan	*
*	:	: Cynddylig	: Glifieu	*
*	:	: Gwrhyr	: Ynawg	*
*	:	: Gwalchmei	: Gruddieu	*
*	:	: Menw	: Heilyn	*
*	:	:	:	*

\* There is still, apparently, difficulty in translating this poem, and the version given above is an amalgamation of two others, one by J. Rhys (given in Chambers, Arthur of Britain, Chapter 3) and the other by D. W. Nash presumably (given in Graves' The White Goddess, Chapter 6). Translations of Culhwch and Olwen and Branwen are in "The Mabinogian", Everyman Edition.

\*\*\*\*\*NOTICE\*\*\*\*\*

Despite the heat, cold, rain and spiders of previous years the Llanellen dig will be resumed at Whitsun, May 29th -- June 5th this year.

No doubt those who have taken part in this dig during past years will find urgent business in the Tashkent or Timbuktoo areas this Pentecost. However, should you wish to take part, contact Jess at Alma Road, giving details of dates you would like to be with us, and whether you will require transport from Bristol to Gower. As the farmhouse is not available other accommodation is being sought. Happy campers are encouraged.

Note: Please bring a plentiful supply of insect repellant!





For those who attended the famous Garden Party at Calne last summer, and who support John Michell's AntiMetrciation Campaign, believing that our ancient Measures are Sacred and Metrciation a profanity of the French Revolution, we include an extract from a recent article in The Times written by Bernard Levin. (Let us spread a little joy where we can !)

These are early days, but if the 1976 Hapsburg Medal for Services to Imbecility is not won by the Metrciation Board for its latest advertisement I shall be astonished. Couched in the Noddy-language affected by those set in authority over us (and particularly by bodies set up to exercise functions which it would never have occurred to anyone to exercise until the organisations concerned were offered ample supplies of other peoples' money to spend on demonstrating the necessity for their own existence) the advertisement is ostensibly designed to familiarise the public with metric measures, and right from the opening sentence it strikes the customary note of fatuous and largely tautological breeziness that runs through the prouncements of those who are busily engaged in fending off self-doubt as to their own usefulness by demonstrating with extraordinary plausibility the truth of the old adage that satan finds work for idle hands to do.

'Going metric', it begins, 'is easier in practice than it sometimes sounds. All it really means is that you will be coming across more and more things being sold in metric quantities.' The assurance is presumably designed to set at rest fears of those who were under the impression that 'going metric' meant, say, that a man from the ministry was going to come round to cut bits off the larger citizens and stick them on the smaller ones. The introduction, however, is only there to whet the appetite for the feast, for the main part of the advertisement consists of a series of rhyming couplets, the whole surrounded by a dotted line that bears the legend: 'Why not cut this out and keep it?' together with a pair of scissors, no doubt included in case some of those wishing to adopt the metrciation board's ingenious suggestion should be under the impression that to cut things out of a newspaper one uses a hammer, a fork, a collapsible umbrella, a teaspoon, and electrically-operated circular saw or a toothbrush.

Levin quotes the childlike verses used by Lord Orr-Ewing's board and produces some choice gems of his own. For instance:

The foot, the inch, the yard, the ell:  
To all of these we bid farewell.  
They've served their turn a thousand years  
(O Pioneers ! o Pioneers !)  
Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
And ring the foolish changes, too."

His concluding verse wraps it up nicely:

I greatly fear that Lord Orr-Ewing  
Does not know what the hell he's doing.

The article had a heading:

I AM SURE OTHERS WILL HELP TO DRAG US KICKING AND SCREAMING  
INTO THE WHITE HEAT OF THE TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION

Latest publications from the Institute of Geomantic Research  
Zodiac House, 7 Hugon Road, Fulham, and from 142 Pheasant  
Rise, Bar Hill, Cambridge, CB3 8SD are entitled Ancient  
Hill Figures of England, and "Central European Geo-  
mancy".

Annual subscription £2. 00.

Catalogue of previous publications lists 11 other titles and a  
number of Occasional Papers.

### SPECTRUM

Produced by Mike Howard from la Church Hill, Purley, Surrey, CR2 3QN. A very good quarterly magazine carrying articles on Mysticism, Alchemy, Occultism et al. Original and interesting articles invited, 1500 - 2000 words, accompanied by S.A.E. Copious book reviews and information about other groups, societies and publications. 35 P per copy.

A monthly bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society. Central Office 334 N. Robinson St. Los Angeles, Ca. 90026. Devoted to the study, discussion and enjoyment of the works of Tolkien, Charles Williams & C.S. Lewis. Dues: \$8.00 for a 12 month period. Branches in Honolulu, Baton Rouge, Philadelphia and other cities.

"WAX AND WANE" is a quarterly magazine of traditional witchcraft and other cities. "Price 20 P from 82 Dedworth Road, Windsor, Berks....Again, contributions are invited by the Editor.

### MYTHPRINT

A quarterly, well-illustrated magazine covering astronomy, archaeology, geology and related sciences. Annual subscription \$ 3.00. Sells sets of slides showing Stonehenge, Avebury, West Kennet, Glastonbury, Abbotsbury, British Hills and other sites. Cost per set \$ 2.00.

### BOOKSHOPS

Secondhand and Antiquarian books on Folklore, the Occult, Theology etc. Books bought, single volumes or whole libraries. At 26 Upper Maudlin Street, Bristol, BS2 1DJ. Bookseller: R.A. Gilbert.

### THE PENTACLE BOOKSHOP

New and Paperback. Bookseller: John Michael, 6 Perry Road, Bristol 1.

Quote from Robert Bridges which seems topical: "Our stability is but balance, and conduct lies in masterful administration of the unforeseen."



## AN INTRODUCTION TO THE KABBALAH

By R.A. Gilbert.

Part 2 (of 3 parts)

Within the great monotheistic religions of Western tradition, the final aim of the mystic has been the attainment of a personal, experiential knowledge of God, but despite the common end there has never been a common means for reaching that end. The Kabbalah -- the pre-eminent expression of Jewish mysticism -- provides, through its teachings, a means of approaching God by an understanding of His true and hidden nature, although the doctrines involved in these teachings are extremely complex and difficult to express in the unambiguous language of everyday speech. The starting point from which all Kabbalistic doctrine proceeds is the unknowability of God and the necessity of intermediary stages on the way of the soul's ascent to the Unknowable. This is expressed in the concept of the Sephiroth, the ten stages of emanation from the Godhead.

To the Kabbalist, the orthodox idea of the Creation was utterly wrong. Creation "ex nihilo" was inconceivable, as an impure world could never have come into being through a direct act on the part of a God wholly pure. In its place they developed the doctrine of emanation, deriving it from Neo-Platonism. All created beings were formed by a descending series of out-poured universal qualities or attributes: the ten Sephiroth, themselves reflected in a descending series of four "worlds", progressively less spiritual and further removed from the God-head. In one sense these worlds are not to be thought of as successive, for they exist simultaneously and represent the hierarchical structure of all that there is.

Behind everything stands En-soph, the Infinite that is God, alone and unknowable, God as transcendent. From him sprang the emanations in three groups of three, the tenth sephirah being added to balance the system. The first sephirah is, effectively, a manifestation of God as Creator and is called the Crown (Kether), from which proceed Wisdom (Chokmah) and intelligence (Binah). These attributes are seen as male and female respectively, and illustrate two further points of Kabbalistic doctrine; firstly, the division of the attributes into pairs to create harmony, and secondly, the sexual personification of the Sephiroth as a mirror of the process of creation. The union of Wisdom and Intelligence results in Reason (Daath), although this is not a distinct emanation and is thus not considered to be a part of the sephirotic system. The products of the remaining sephirotic pairs, however, are all seen as emanations in their own right.

The second pair consists of Mercy (Chessed) and the feminine Justice, or Severity (Geburah). These two qualities counterbalance one another and from them issues the sixth sephirah, Beauty (Tiphereth), thus completing the second triad which represents the indwelling moral power of God, just as the first triad shows the immanence of God as thought. The final triad shows God active in the dynamic structure of the created universe: Foundation (Yesod) being the product of the third sephirotic pair, Victory (Netzach) and Glory (Hod).

Below this final triad comes the Kingdom (Malkuth) which is the harmony of the triads, the matter in extension which provides a symmetry for the uncreated infinite.

The whole sequence --usually described as the sephirotic Tree of Life -- is further to be thought of as existing at the same time in the four worlds of Divine Emanation (Atziluth), Creation (Briah), Formation (Yetzirah) and Action (Assiah). Each sephirah manifests in all four worlds, and it is wrong to think of the sephirotic Tree as divided, with one triad in each world, although such doctrinal distortions are the stock-in-trade of many modern occultists. Divine Will manifests at all levels of existence and it is only by knowing all the divine attributes at each of these levels that we can ascend to a true understanding of the Godhead and finally dwell in him.

Our ascent, however, is achieved not by idle speculation but by right study of the true and revealed Word of God. This Word is the Torah, the Law of Israel and a foundation stone of the greater Law of Christ. To the Kabbalist, the Law is not a man-made account of the Will of God but a living expression of God Himself, pre-existent in its fundamental structure. From this it follows that the outward meaning of the Law hides an inner, secret meaning; which meaning expounds the Names of God and unravels the mystery of the Great Name of God, the Tetragrammaton, YHWH. One method of expounding this secret meaning is by Gematria, the analysis and interpretation of the numerical values of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet as they appear in the words of the Books of the Law.

Such "practical" Kabbalah is not without its hazards. If the purpose of this manipulation of letters and numbers is not properly understood it can lead to the employment of gematria and kindred processes in the construction of amulets for purely superstitious or magical ends. Magical practices crept into Kabbalism from another direction too. With its similarity to Gnostic speculation, the Kabbalistic doctrine of emanations encouraged the Gnostic belief in angels as active agents of God and as semi-divine intermediaries between God and the created universe. Such angels were not necessarily good and might require the use of words of power to control or propitiate them. Alien as these ideas might be to orthodoxy, they survived in folk belief and formed the basis of much of the debased Kabbalism that developed into the magical rituals cirdulated at the time of the Renaissance and much in vogue with certain occult schools of the present day. To the true Kabbalists, this debasing of their doctrines was painful in the extreme, concerned as they were not with magic but solely with God.

The sephirotic system represents God under two aspects, as transcendent in the concept of the En-soph and as immanent in the emanations from the En-soph. This in itself is not unorthodox, but the Kabbalistic interpretation of the immanence of God in the world, the concept of the Shekinah, certainly is. In Judaism both ancient and modern, the Shekinah is not seen as separate from God, since it is God, ever present with his people. For the Kabbalist the Shekinah is

the feminine, immanent aspect of God as opposed to His masculine, transcendent aspect. This is a logical extension of the Kabbalistic desire for harmonising everything in pairs in order to produce a perfect unity. The feminine Shekinah is further seen as both the Soul and as the mystical Church of Israel. Union of the Soul with God thus embodies the same kind of sexual symbolism as is found in the writings of many of the great mystics of Christianity.

Perhaps as an unconscious attempt to overcome this apparent division of the One, Kabbalistic doctrine also incorporates the idea of the primal man: Adam Kadman. Although treated as sexless, the Adam Kadman is nonetheless correlated in his parts with the sephiroth and is taken as a heavenly Type of earthly man. As with many other Kabbalistic doctrines, the parallels with Christian doctrine are easily discernable although they were almost certainly not made intentionally by the Kabbalists themselves. Indeed, the tortuous complexities of Kabbalistic doctrines, as they recede ever further from the true end of mysticism, militate against both Christianity and Judaism.

In spite of this, the essence of the Kabbalah, once distilled from the rank growth of wild speculation, is of abiding value to man in his efforts to achieve Union with the Divine. How this essence has been applied within Christian mysticism will be considered in the final part of this study.

Note: Diagrams of the Tree of Life, together with a brief reading list, will be included in Part 3.



#### HAVE WE ANY BRASS-RUBBERS IN THE SOCIETY ?

A new member writes to tell us that she has recently run a very successful Course in Brass-Rubbing. There may be some Pendragons who would be interested to know that further Courses are planned; they will consist of two days work and lectures and one day in Oxford looking at brasses in churches and colleges. Mrs. Catto is planning to conduct these Courses at the Queen Elizabeth College and the fee will probably be in the region of £10.

"The reason for doing this," Mrs. Catto writes, "is that we have all been much concerned about people coming from other countries, (especially Canada and the U.S.A.) rubbing like mad, taking their rubbings home to hang on their walls --and not having the slightest idea of what they have done. We hope to remedy this in some small way."

Genuine historical information should certainly add to the interest of wall decorations so we commend the idea to our residents and tourists alike.

Details from Mrs. Chauncy Catto, 40 Kensington Park Gardens, London, W.11.



\*\* We have never printed fiction before, but there must always be \*\*  
a first time for everything, so here is the story of

F R A N K

\*\* This is a story of what might have happened when Wessex was  
invaded around the year 500 AD. Frank is an invented char-  
acter, though some of his countrymen have left their traces  
hereabouts, including a francisca recently found near Frith-  
am, where I make Frank lose his. Artuir, or King Arthur as  
we call him, is emerging as a historical figure under the  
influence of historical research and archaeology, but his  
activities are still controversial enough for me to imagine  
him as defender of the great riverside earthwork at Downton.

\*\*\*      \*\*\*      \*\*\*      \*\*\*

I was too old to take part in the assault on Sorbiodunum \*\*  
last year, but Thor alone knows the fighting I have done in over  
half a century of frontier warfare. Now that their stronghold  
has fallen the Weala are retreating to the north west, and at  
last I can relax. That is how I come to write, with a hand more \*\*  
used to throwing an axe than pushing a quill. You may ask why I,  
a warrior all my life, can write at all, and where did I get the  
vellum and quills and ink from? But you see I was brought up \*\*  
in a royal hall, the grandson of a Frankish king, not one of  
your barbarous forest Saxon lords. As to the things for writing,  
a certain scriptorium not far from here was still in use when  
our brave fellows broke in, and my son remembered that his fath-\*\*  
er wanted to write, but had not got the means, so he took them  
for me. His companions would have laughed him to shame if he had  
tried to save the books in the monks' library as well, so he \*\*  
watched them being burnt, without protest.

Yes, I was named Clogio after my grandfather, but being  
the fourth son of a third son my family made it pretty plain  
that there was no inheritance for me and I must make my own way \*\*  
in the world. It was a good time to do that very thing, with  
Gaul crumbling away just to the south of our homeland, and our  
people, in warbands large and small, simply flooding in and tak-\*\*  
ing the country piecemeal. I could have joined them, but it was  
such a scramble, leading to quarrels and fighting between our own  
warbands, or individual warriors, over some estate and its villa,  
or some Gaulish lady with her golden hair. So my mind turned to \*\*  
our Saxon cousins, now raiding and settling in Britain over the  
water. This was a better organised affair, with secure gains, and  
much more to my liking. For it needs a good leader, with sound \*\*  
backing, to build ships, fit them out and store them, then sail \*\*  
over the sea, actually out of sight of land for a while, to  
beach the ships and fight a way inland at a chosen spot. My \*\*  
Father had heard traveller's tales about Britain; the good corn  
lands of the south, well settled with towns and villas; beyond \*\*  
and up country, he said, lived people who had never been citi-\*\*  
zens of the Empire. Some of them, he had been told, were strange  
and frightening, with four legs, or faces on both sides of \*\*  
their heads; but it was the nearer parts of Britain that inter-  
ested me.

So I kept my ears open, and it was not long before I heard \*\*  
of a Saxon named Cerdic who was said to be planning and exped-  
ition to Britain. My informant was a bronzesmith, one of those  
itinerant craftsmen who belong to no particular race, but who \*\*  
\*\*\*      \*\*\*      \*\*\*      \*\*\*      \*\*\*      \*\*\*      \*\*\*      \*\*\*

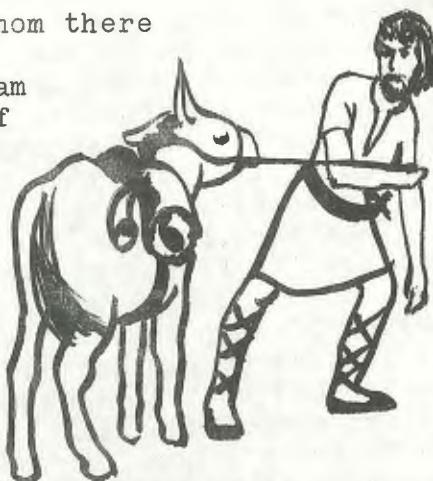
\*\* are welcome everywhere because of their skill. He said that Cerdic's hall was only five days away, and he would go that way, and take me with him, for a consideration. \*\*

\*\* That evening, when food had been cleared away, and our people were comfortably belching and picking their teeth, waiting for the bard to come in, I stood up and asked my father's permission to speak. He nodded, and I remember his eyes upon me, not unkindly, for he loved me well. I must have made quite a fine figure: a tall straight young man, brown hair with some tawny lights, breathing deeply in my eagerness. \*\*

\*\* "My dear father and mother," I said, "and you, my companions in this hall, look around and see how many we are. \*\* Outside cluster your homesteads, where your wives are bringing up sons, for whom there will be no room on bench and at board unless some of us leave. So I for one am going to seek my fortune in the land of Britain. I ask for your blessing, and may the hand of Woden guide me." \*\*

I got through this prepared speech fairly well. My father and mother embraced me, the hall rang with huzzas which were, I hope, to wish me luck, and next morning the bronzesmith and I set out. I travelled as light as possible, but even so was glad to burden the smith's mule with my bag of spare clothes, drinking horn, razor, knife and spoon. My weapons, which of course I carried, were a long straight double-bladed sword, my father's farewell present, slung at my side, and two throwing axes in a holster on my back. I must explain about these axes, as briefly as I can. My people have lived on the flat open land about the lower Rhine for as long as our folk memory can tell, with related Germanic tribes in the rolling, wooded country to the north west. We used to be spearmen, being able to see to throw a weapon, but our inland cousins were swordsmen, carrying a light sharp sword for sudden encounters in the woods. Indeed they have not forgotten how once they destroyed a whole Roman army which advanced rashly into their coverts. From this difference in armaments arose the names given us; Franks for us spearmen, Saxons for the swordsmen. Quite recently --about three generations ago -- we needed a heavy weapon against the new armoured cavalry of the Gauls, and that brought into being the throwing axe, which is called a francisca, after us Franks. Nowadays the better off Franks and Saxons carry a heavy twoedged sword developed out of a Celtic type, and our thrusting spears, which are much cheaper. You must forgive this digression about weapons, but a few simple words of explanation may save misunderstandings among future historians.

My companion was a thick-set little man, who said little but appeared well-disposed. All the same I kept him in front of me on the march, just in case. He seemed to know the way, although we nearly lost the mule overboard from the ferry over the Rhine, and some of the beds at our places of call were crawling with bugs. I was glad to travel quietly with him, asking no questions and giving no answers, after we left the parts near my home where I was known and welcomed as a guest. \*\*



\*\* Five days we plodded on, then as evening drew near I was longing to ask the smith how we were progressing. He put me out of my suspense by turning off the road along a path through the woods and saying, "Here is Cerdic's hall". I must say I was disappointed at the first sight of it, not half the size of my father's hall and the roof sagging, surrounded by small round huts, their thatch damp and mossy. However, I cheered up when the smith went ahead to explain my presence, and a man hurried out to me from the hall with smiling face, to take my hands in his and say, "I'm Cerdic. Welcome to my war band". He was a typical Saxon, blue eyes and brown hair, large moustaches and a square jaw; I took to his open manner at once, and thought myself lucky to have found such a leader.



That evening I sat to dine at the top table, opposite to Cerdic and next to Freda, his large placid wife. We made polite conversation, our languages being sufficiently alike for that, with a smattering of camp Latin to eke out. She spoke mostly about her hopes of joining Cerdic once he was settled in Britain. As soon as the tables had been cleared she got up, and all the other women followed her out of the hall. At home in Frankland they would have stayed to drink a horn or two of wine, a civilised habit I thought, but when it comes to different behaviour and customs I have always kept my opinions to myself. Cerdic then got up, pointed to me and asked the company in general if they wanted Clogio the Frank to join them. I swung my feet over the bench, and sat for inspection, trying to appear modest but confident, cheerful but not inane. I suppose I succeeded, for there was a murmur of 'aye, aye'. So I got up, saluted Cerdic as his retainer, no longer his guest, and found myself a place at one of the lower tables. My new companions plied me with horns of beer and questions suitable to the occasion. They called me Clogio, but stumbled over the word: at last a stout and elderly warrior cried, "Let's forget his twongue-twisting foreign name, and just call him Frank". So Frank I have been from that day to this.

Next morning I was taken down to the slips on the bank of the Elbe, where three longships were being fitted out for the voyage. Eighty foot in length by twelve foot beam, with thole pins for fourteen oars each side and a big steering oar over the stern, they had been designed by a Danish shipwright. His people had much experience of the open sea, on both sides of Jutland. When I asked why there was no sail, he told me that the intended route was mostly coastal, with opportunities to rest the rowers in harbour overnight; moreover the prevailing wind would be against us.

The British pilot whom Cerdic had engaged, to keep our heading across the open sea, and cape us along the coast of his own country, was delayed but eventually joined our company, and one morning in late May we cast off down river. The figures of women and children on the bank, waving their farewells, were soon lost to sight. Their husbands and sons wrenched their minds away from them, and bent their backs to the oars.

To be continued in our next...

\*\* Our member in Northumberland, Derek Brown, has discovered \*\*  
a number of Arthurian ballads which he has kindly sent to  
us from time to time. As they are nearly all very long we  
have not, until now, been able to find room for any of them \*\*  
in 'Pendragon'. However, here is another tale of a well  
poisoned by a Saxon enemy. It is called: \*\*

## THE DEATH OF UTHER THE KING

By Wilfred W. Gibson.

As seas invading storm th' embattled coast  
And faltering break, and fall in flying showers,  
Wave after wave, the mighty Saxon host  
Swayed and was shattered on Pendragon's towers.

Day after day King Uther, battle-scarred  
And heavy with the sorrow of long years,  
The foremost of the famine-weary guard,  
Drove back the tempest of assailing spears.

Beneath his sword the white of tumult broke,  
And keen the spray of arrows round him sang:  
The fierce assault fell back before his stroke  
And reeled and scattered down the Mallerstrang.

Day after day, night after furious night,  
Until, awhile the Saxon host withdrawn,  
Weary of slaughter and the endless fight  
King Uther, sleepless, gazed upon the dawn.

He stood among his sleeping men-at-arms,  
The lone defender of a cause forlorn,  
Grown old and shaken midst the world's alarms  
And looked into the flashing eyes of morn.

Then one among the sleepers waked and cried,  
"Thirst hath me by the throat, his fangs bite deep.  
Ah God ! that I had in the battle died  
Or perished dreaming by the wells of sleep !"

When all his fellows stirred and called for wine  
With lean grey lips and fever-burning eyes  
That flared like candles in a ruined shrine  
Where death among the dust already lies.

But emptied with the flagons of wrought gold  
And every silver flagon dull with drouth  
And all the earthen jars wherein of old  
Glad maidens poured the purple of the South.

"I know a well that lies," King Uther spoke:  
"Darkling and cool beneath the castled steep:  
Go fill the jars our burning throats to slake  
While still the foemen lie in slumber deep."

Then twain arose all eager and were gone  
The while he spake, to do his bidding fain.  
So hot in heaven the sun ascending shone  
Their shrivelled bodies pulsed with eager pain.

\*\* \* + \* + \* + \* + \* + \* + \* + \* + \* + \* + \* +

\*\* Benevolent and merciful were the moments of joy and gloom at times and  
\*\* In chains of fire the waiting moments sped  
When one returned and stood by Uther's throne, and more  
\*\* Crying, "O King, thy servant lieth dead  
Beside the well, I come again alone!"

\*\* "Consumed by this unquenchable he sank  
Low in the grass that skirts the well to drink,  
But scarce his withering lips the water drank  
\*\* Ere without cry or murmur, by the brink

"He swooned; and even as I looked, O King! he awoke  
\*\* In dull amaze upon him, he had died:  
The foe hath shaken death above the spring  
\*\* "Then we shall drink with death," King Uther cried.

\*\* "Yes! we shall drain the glittering draught of death  
We who have drunk too deep the wine of life  
And find the lees so bitter that our breath  
Is choked within us; and the hour of strife  
\*\* "Finds us forlorn and woman-weak and frail  
And very full of weariness and age;  
The shadow darkens on our dinted mail:  
Our tower of strength is but a builded cage

\*\* "Wherein we perish hourly -- let us rise  
And take the cup death offers and drink deep  
As children tired at dusk with happy eyes  
We shall lie down and sleep the dreamless sleep.

"Yea! we shall cheat the conquering Saxon hordes  
Who strive to break us in our evil days;  
Our blood shall never brighten on their swords;  
Our names shall never swell their battle praise  
\*\* "For we to none but death shall ever yield!  
We know no lord victorious saving death  
Not in the forced surrender of the field  
But looking in his eyes we yield our breath  
\*\* "Brim up the pitchers and the earthen jars,  
Fill up the silver flagons and the gold,  
Drink to the Lord who stays the wandering stars  
And gathers worlds and empires in his fold  
\*\*

From The Northern Counties Magazine, November 1900

And from one of to-day's matchboxes:

NOT DOING MORE THAN  
THE AVERAGE IS WHAT  
KEEPS THE AVERAGE  
DOWN

STOP PRESS. The postman has just delivered to us a copy  
of Prof. Borst's book, "MEGALITHIC SOFTWARE", published by  
Twin Bridge Press, Williamsville, N.Y. Price \$8.00. This  
comes through the generosity of Prof. Borst and we shall  
review it at length in our next issue.

