

THE COMING AGE

Nativity
Issue

Wm. T. Cross



Hail to the

PRINCESS!

9

THE COMING AGE

40, St John St., Oxford.

№ 9 • NATIVITY ISSUE • ASTRAEA 120

Issued in the month of
Astraea in the year 120
après Lourdes. Opinions
expressed do not neces-
sarily represent the
view of Lux Madriana,
but they do not con-
flict with the essential
tenets of the
Madrian faith.

Contents

The Temple of Hestia	3
Work in Progress	5
Walking With Our Lady	6
Discovering the Goddess	7
Work and the Myth of Progress	8
She Who Is Coming	11
The Coming Season	12
The Legend of Carminta	14
Nativity	17
The Three Princesses	18
The Coming Season 2	20
Symbolism: The Cave	21

MEDITATIONS:

Nativity

God became Maid, that maid might come to God. Her birth, not now, nor in the past, but in that eternal moment that is the root of all time; that glorious birth is the great pillar of the universe. If She Who purely Is had not come into becoming, then nothing could have been. Maid, the soul, intelligent creation, endowed with choice, and having used that choice wrongly to become separate from the One; maid, not only human and on earth, but in every sphere of being. The One became maid, born as Her own Daughter, to walk upon the world, that there might be a world to walk upon.

Geniad

Shining daughters of Heaven that mirror the perfection of the Absolute, you are clear pools reflecting Her beauty, pure crystals reflecting Her Truth. By your perfection, lead us again to our perfect natures, that we may mirror the splendour of our Mother.

A Nativity Carol

A Star upon the hedgerows shone,
And on the frozen ground;
The twigs were mossed with silver frost,
And snow lay all around.

She shone so bright upon the night
That it was like to day;
Maids saw the streams of her fair beams
Full many leagues away.

The shepherd took her cloak and crook,
The spindler left her skein,
And all did tread the way that led
To where the Star did shine.

The high princess made speed to dress
In all her fine array;
With maids and men and horses, then,
She trode that self-same way.

All robed in white, than snow more bright
A Genia did appear,
And great and small did faint and fall
For dread and holy fear.

But she did speak most kind and meek,
And gave a precious lore;
A maiden born upon the dawn,
That shall the world restore.

Then give you praise, all themis maids,
To She that is above;
For She did bear a Daughter dear
For all Her gentle love.

And by Her birth, this fallen earth
Is healed and render'd whole;
And at this night Her radiant light
Is born in every soul.



The Temple of Hestia

The Spiritual Significance of the Madrian Household



The matriarchal house is by no means a secular building established merely for the purpose of shelter. It is a sort of reflected image of the Temple, and its central focus, the hearth-fire, a reflection of the sacrificial altar-flame. The head of a household is a "priestess" within her own domain, and conducts all domestic Rites. As with a Temple, the foundation of the house entails certain rituals which make it "sacred territory". In recent times when Madrians often move into pre-built houses, rites of consecration perform the same function.

The matriarchal nature of the household has been remembered long into patriarchal times. An Egyptian wife was called *nebt per* "the ruler of the house"; Hindu scriptures state that a maid after marriage is the ruler of a "kingdom" - that of her household. A similar position is accepted, at least in theory and often in practice, among the Arabs. It is related that the prophet Muhammad, having on one occasion offended all his wives, had no house in which to sleep. Traditions of a similar nature may be found from the Far East to the Americas.

become a householder, and some in which a married maid may not. The Rite of marriage is essentially the Rite by which a man is invited into the household of a maid; in which he ceases to be a member of his mother's household and becomes a member of hers.

The change of status by which a maid becomes a householder has usually been marked by a change of title - a remnant of this survives in the English change from Miss to Mrs and various equivalents in other languages. In Madrian usage, a householder is called Donna, and is formally addressed either as Madrien (literally "little mother", and a diminutive of Madria, the title of a priestess) or as Domina, the Roman name for the lady of a house.

In matriarchal tradition the mistress is the most essential thing in a household - indeed, she is the *only* completely essential thing in a household. One can have a household without a hearth; one can even have a household without a house, but one can never have a household without a mistress. Every maid carries within herself a "potential" household. That potential becomes actualised usually at the time of her marriage though there are many circumstances in which an unmarried maid may

Most marriages create a "minor" household; for the new householder will usually remain within the household into which she was born. The traditional "major" household is quite large, usually practising a particular craft or group of crafts, and headed by a maid of some spiritual authority. Sometimes the "major" household is under one roof, sometimes scattered over a small area. Each major household, and many minor ones - particularly if they have a separate building - is dedicated to its own hera or Genia, who gives the home her special protection and is accorded a special devotion.

But one Genia presides over all households indiscriminately - Hestia, Genia



of the hearth-fire, and every Madrian household honours her at least once each year. She is often pictured in an attitude of prayer, for she is above all associated with domestic Rites and worship. The honey-cake of the sacrifice was, in former times, placed on the hearth-fire, or - more usually - on a brazier of burning embers taken from the fire and placed on the Altar. In many homes this is still practised today.

government of a village did not transcend the household, but was merely a federation of independent households. The only person to whom a householder owed allegiance was the priestess. Hardly any activity of any sort took place outside the context of a household. Therefore, upon the household rested the responsibility for the ritual and symbolic correctness of society as a whole - a matter of far deeper importance than those words imply to an uninitiated modern ear. If a householder acts out of themis, she becomes a "tyrant" (that is, one who rules by false human authority rather than by true Divine authority), and her household is "anathemis". The disorder affects not only the household concerned, but will have repercussions throughout the whole organism of the society - and if such disruptions become general, they will have effects on the cosmic order as a whole. To one indoctrinated from birth with the rationalist-materialist outlook of the modern world, this latter may seem "far-fetched"; but once one understands how all orders of reality are linked together by strict correspondences, nothing could be more obvious. Indeed, the transgressing of themis in households of the late-matriarchal period was both a cause and an effect in the progressive crisis which has led to the setting up of patriarchy and to the spiritual chaos of modern times. A crisis and degeneration, moreover, which extends considerably beyond the human and physical spheres.

The fire, by virtue of its sacredness, and its status as "the altar of Hestia", is the central point of the household. It is a symptom of the degeneracy of the modern profane household that not only has the blazing hearth been abolished, but that its position as "focus" has been usurped by that monstrous Trojan horse the television set. Thus the household is focussed not on the elemental symbol of purity, but on a constant stream of trivia, profanity and worldliness.



"In the temple of the household she is priestess; She is sovereign in the empire of the home"

There is no such thing as secular authority. All legitimate authority flows from God; and the head of a household is a channel of Her authority on earth. So long as the head of a household follows the Way of Hestia in obedience to divine law, and the members of her household in turn obey her, the household is "in themis" - in accordance with eternal Harmony. The seasons will be observed as they should, the crafts will continue in their true themis; human life will be normal in the sense of conforming to the divine Norm laid down for fallen maid through which she may be led back to her celestial origin.

Profane myth teaches that there is no purpose to human existence except self-preservation and "the pursuit of happiness" (a will-o-the-wisp if ever there was one!). This is a dangerous falsehood. Individually, the purpose of a human being is salvation and the perfection of her immortal soul. Collectively, the human species has a vital function within the cosmic order as

This is the true secret of the overwhelming importance of the household. In matriarchal times, it was the central unit of society - the



ESS . . . WORK IN PROGRESS . . . WORK IN

NATIVITY CARDS: Five different designs on Nativity themes. The cards have been made self-explanatory so that they can be sent to non-Madrian friends. 50p per set.

ROSARIES: After a period of delay and difficulty with supplies, Rosaries are again available at £1.50. We also have some particularly attractive Rosaries at £3.00.

AQUARIAN FESTIVAL: Lux Madriana will have a stand at this year's Aquarian Festival at Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton Hill on the 11th and 12th of Moura. It will be open from 2pm-9pm on the Friday and 10am-7pm on the Saturday. Come and meet us!

a whole. Human society, when it adheres to the Norm, is a great Temple, and each stone within it is a microcosm of the Temple - a household. Every act within human life is a ritual act, binding the soul closer to She who created her; and the context of these "minor rituals" is the "minor temple" of the household.

If mankind is to survive the coming crisis, a spiritual foundation must be laid from which she may return to the authentic human Norm in which alone she can continue to exist. That is why it is imperative that themis households should be set up, centred on the Goddess, ritually pure and obedient to the Way of Harmony. As the crisis deepens, the counter-movement must already be in motion, with households returning one by one to themis, just as once they left it one by one. There is no other way of tackling the crisis at the root, for its roots, like the roots of all material things, are spiritual.

The way of obedience is the way of Hestia; the way into the warm glow of the hearth-fire. The alternative we can see only too well, for it is almost upon us - the ever more garish lights of the last days of the Coca Cola society, followed inevitably by the cold and darkness of spiritual death. But it is not too late.

Sister Alethea

LONDON CENTRE: Work is under way on setting up a meeting place for Catholic Madrians in London. It will be in a central area, possibly Victoria, and will be both a chapel for the celebration of the natural Rites and a place where Madrians can meet informally at other times. Interested non-Madrians will also be welcomed. If you would like to help with the work, attend services or just meet socially, contact Lux Madriana or ring 01-542 0611.

HALF-CALENDARS: Full calendars for this year are still available at 60p post free. Half-calendars covering the seasons of Autumn, Winter and Moura are available at 45p. Both include major and minor festivals, natural rites, correspondences for each day of the sacred and secular years plus other information and are delightfully illustrated. Next year's calendar will be produced in late Moura. Orders are being taken from now.

TELEVISION: An item about Lux Madriana was broadcast in the early-evening regional news programme of a television station called ATV which apparently operates in the Oxford area. The region concerned is obviously quite wide, since the broadcast was seen as far afield as Nottingham and Gloucester. A mock Rite of Sacrifice was shown, and we are told that the effect was rather splendid in colour. The item was broadcast on Mala 22nd.

PALLAS ACADEMY: The prospectus for the foundational course in Madrian philosophy is finally available. Those who have already ordered it will be receiving copies shortly. Please send a stamp if you have not yet ordered one but wish to have one.

SILVER TEMPLE, RITUAL MAGIC: Send a stamp also for details of the Madrian Ritual Magic course and 5p plus postage for the leaflet explaining how to attune to the astral-etheric Silver Temple of the Moon.

THANK YOU for your prayers and your donations over the Autumn season.

Walking With Our Lady

When we think of the glorious Nativity of our Lady, there is a tendency to be overwhelmed by the radiant brightness of its majesty or the glittering darkness of its mystery. The soul is caught up in the sweetness and exhilaration of this most glorious of the archetypal Events. This is quite natural; the desire to "sing aloud to the glory of the Goddess" upon the revelation of this Mystery is one that mankind shares with the Genies themselves (*Mythos* II, 17). The joy and beauty of the midwinter Nativity festival is so powerful that it remains with us in patriarchal societies long after the true meaning has been forgotten.

Yet the laughter and the awe, the carolling and the silent adoration which make up the human and angelic response to the Nativity Event; these must not be allowed to overshadow a response far deeper although less obviously ecstatic: a response which should be with us throughout the year, and yet which centres in a very special way upon Nativity. This response is the response of living with our Lady.

Every one of the Primordial Events, which are enacted beyond the bounds of time and space, have profound effects at every level of existence from the cosmic whole to the most intimate recesses of the individual soul. The cosmic mystery and significance of Nativity attracts our hearts like moths about a radiant lantern; but within the inmost caverns of our soul it also has a meaning. Its meaning is both simple and breathtaking: that our Lady has come to us; that She is with us - not just in a general way, but with each individual soul - beside her, within her, all about her. Every step you take, you take in Her presence.

The more deeply we understand this the more astonishing it becomes. It is beautiful, but with a terrible and awe-inspiring beauty. I remember, when I was young,

saying to a priestess "But if I really felt that She was with me all the time - why, I wouldn't be able to do half the things I do now!"; "No, my child," she replied "you would not." I sometimes think a saint or a hermit is one who fully realises our Lady's constant presence.

Yet the terrible aspect is only one side of the reality. If it can awaken in our hearts a little of the holy awe that has been deadened by the bland, blind nonchalance of modern materialism (surely the archetypal "false sense of security") that is a healthy sign. But beyond that, there is a beauty, a sweetness and a comfort beyond the power of words to express in the knowledge that She is with us, and our only adequate response is to fully acknowledge Her presence by living consciously with Her.

To live with our Lady is to walk every step with Her, to eat and drink with Her, to sleep cradled in Her hands and to awaken into Her presence. In each act we make, we should be conscious of Her eyes upon us and seek to make it pleasing to Her. Nor should we always serve Her in silence; we may speak to Her inwardly, thanking Her for Her mercies, asking strength in our trials, praying for others and praising Her. Immediately this may seem strange, but is it not really the most natural thing in the world? If a friend, out of love, accompanied us everywhere, would we ignore her and behave as though she were not there?

I have heard of a maid who, each time she opened a door, would pause to allow our Lady to pass before her. One may feel inclined to smile at this, but as a symbolic gesture, a constant self-reminder and a mark of respect to our beloved Guest this small ritual should by no means be despised. And even if she was mistaken in conceiving our Lady's presence in rather over-material terms, how small a mistake is this in comparison with the gross and

gaping error of those who fail to recognise Her presence at all.

will seek to reassert itself with a vengeance, and it will have all the legions of Hell behind it.

Not everyone will have so complete and perpetual a consciousness of our Lady's presence. Most of us will not feel so close to Her during everyday actions as we do in prayer at our shrine. But each of us can cultivate a far deeper realisation of Her presence. We should remind ourselves from time to time that She is with us, and once we have begun to do this we will soon find that there are times when She Herself reminds us. For She is constantly trying to communicate with us, and nothing stands in Her way except the coldness of our own hearts and the hard encrustation of the ego. As we open ourselves to Her, our hearts begin to thaw, and the sparkling fountain of Her love comes pouring in.

Yet so long as we live in Her presence we cannot really fail, for the battle is in Her hands. To walk with our Lady is to walk in the way of total self-surrender; yet only through losing herself can a maid find herself, and only by casting off the mask of ego can she relax at last in the arms of our Lady and become her true self.

Sister Julia

Discovering the Goddess

My first contact with Lux Madriana was at their stall at the Aquarian Festival held in London in Moura of last year. I had a brief discussion and came away with "God the Mother" and Moira projection booklets. They seemed quite interesting, but they were put away for a couple of months and all but forgotten about. Eventually I wrote to Oxford, starting a correspondence with Chrysothemis and Angelina which still continues, until I felt it was time to come and see



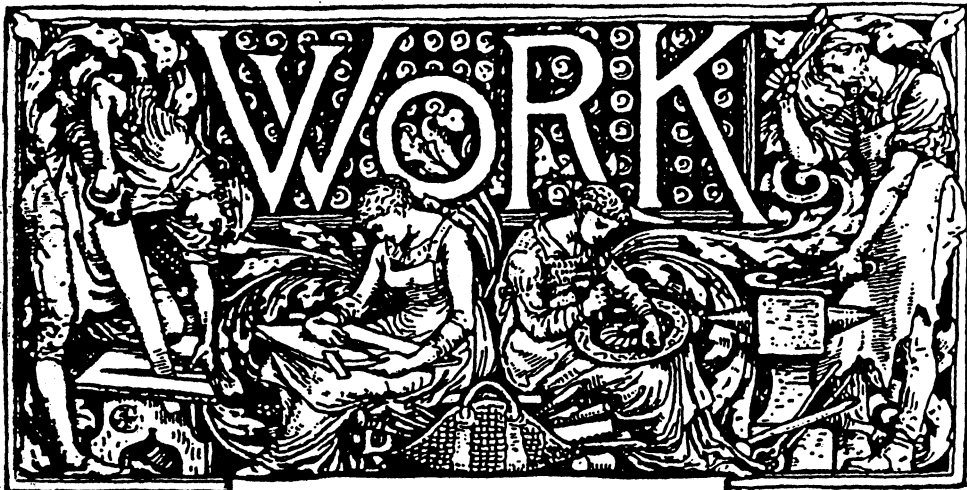
It will not happen all at once. There will be wonderful successes; there will also be failures. So long as we do not let the forces of darkness (and make no mistake - they are there) exploit our failures to dishearten us with the whole process, they need not worry us. Accept your failings meekly and learn humility from them.

The ego or false self is the greatest enemy of this process. For to feel the presence of our Lady is to obey Her; to serve Her in everything we do. The more we know Her the more we love Her, and the more we love Her the more we wish to lay down our own will and all that this world has taught us to call "self" and simply follow Her will in all things. As soon as we drop the ego, we realise what an ugly, clumsy burden it always was, and wonder how we can ever have clung to it so fiercely. This is in our moments of success. In times of failure the ego

them in person. I had written out two pages of questions, and we spent a whole afternoon discussing them. In the end they were all answered, and I began to feel a lot happier. I was invited to stay for supper, after which my interest in the Moira technique resulted in my being able to experience it at first hand, and I could hardly believe it had really worked for me. My involvement with the Findhorn community during the previous two years had made me very aware of nature spirits, reincarnation, and direct attunement with God - and here was a religion that was not only the way of life on this



Contd.p.8



AND THE MYTH OF PROGRESS

Craft, is one of the fundamental human activities. Through craft, the creativity of God Herself is reflected in the sphere of human action. In a normal matriarchal civilisation (and it must not be forgotten that the patriarchal regimes of the last few millennia represent nothing more than a brief aberration from the countless thousands of years of normal matriarchal humanity) the primary purpose of the crafts is not to "produce" things in the quickest and cheapest way possible, but to perform the timeless ritual of creation in such a way as to lead the craftsmaid into a deeper communion with the Creatrix of all things; and also to produce an object not merely of utility and of beauty, but one whose daily use would be a "reminiscence" of Eternity - a slender thread binding the user to her Divine origin and purpose. The life of a normal matriarchal society might be said to be a radiant tapestry made up of such threads connecting earth to heaven.

The ancient crafts (including the crafts of agriculture) had each their symbolic meaning - and, as has often been pointed out in these pages, the symbolic meaning of a thing or action is far more than a "message" tacked onto it by human minds. The world of physical things is not the "real world"; it is merely a shadow cast by Absolute Reality upon the veil of matter. Like a shadow, it is not solid, but subject

to constant change, decay and death: "All things that live must die". Its reality - indeed, its very existence - derives from the Divine Reality which lies beyond it. Once we have understood this, it becomes possible to realise that the aspect of ultimate Truth which a thing symbolises is the real nature of that thing, while its outward and material "crystallisation" is merely a temporary expression of it.

To seek the ultimate nature of material things by analysing their sub-atomic structure is like seeking the meaning of a spok-

Discovering the Goddess/ From P. 7.
planet for thousands of years, but it actually included all the aspects of the etheric that I had already accepted, and then some!

Now the Pentacle and the Rosary are old friends, I have a shrine to Our Lady in my bedroom and every day brings a new joy. I still can't quite believe that it's all really happening, and although I am not exactly sure yet just what it is I have let myself in for, my life is firmly dedicated to the Goddess and there is no turning back. As Lao Tzu says: "The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step", and I suspect that this will be the most difficult, joyous and rewarding journey of my life.

John Shinwell

en sentence by analysing each word into its component phonemes. The only way to understand the meaning of a sentence is to know the language in which it is spoken; and the only way to understand things and events in the material world is to understand the symbolic principles which reveal their connection with ultimate Reality.

The traditional crafts are based upon these principles. The tools, the methods and the accompanying rites of each craft exercise a symbolic and ritual function by virtue of which the craft as a whole may rightly be called a path of initiation. Every craft contains in embryo the creative principle upon which the manifestation of the entire universe is based. The crafts are not human "inventions (as profane mythology would have it) but spring in essence from the primordial Creator Herself. They were given to humanity (and, in different forms, but identical symbolic essence, to those higher levels of being which preceded humanity) from the dawn of time.

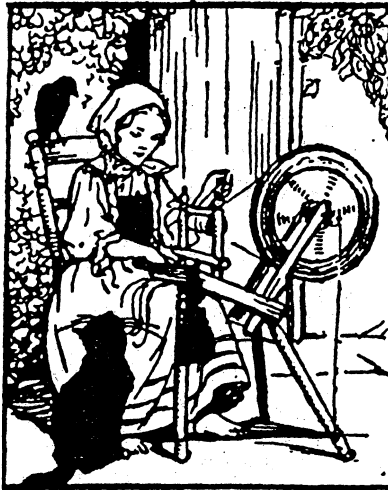
Each craft is bestowed upon humanity by or "through" one of the Geniae, who express different aspects of the Divine Whole. Thus, the craft of weaving has its primordial source in the activity of our lady Moira, Genia of personal fate; the craft of scholarship in that of our lady Athene, and so forth. Each person in her true essence is "the radiance of a unique facet of the jewel of Deity", and the Divine facet to which she corresponds, as well as the state of development which she has reached in her present life, will determine the craft of her vocation.

True vocation is literally a "calling". In a normal society, factors such as payment, status, amount of leisure, are wholly irrelevant in ascertaining one's vocation, and rarely arise in any case. The vocation is an essential

part of the person. She may be said to be "in love" with her work. It holds a fascination for her which in modern profane society has had to be replaced (with varying degrees of inadequacy) on the one hand by various "hobbies", and on the other by various artificial forms of "entertainment" consisting mainly of the continual stimulation of a small range of rather crude sentimental responses.

The idea of "leisure" as something distinct from and superior to work is wholly unknown under normal conditions where work is an integral part of life and life an integral part of the spiritual Quest. It is only when work has degenerated into mere wage-slavery - a mere utilitarian chore whose only value to the worker is to give her sufficient money to buy the soulless "products" of her fellow wage-slaves - that the word "leisure" can have any meaning.

The slavery of the production-line is not a vocation; far from being in love with it, the victim desires nothing but to be away from it and occupied in leisure pursuits. Yet these, she freely admits are "only leisure". She attaches no profound importance to them. Modern society sees no ultimate meaning either in work or in leisure. It is a society without meaning or purpose.



Now let us pause to consider that this situation is precisely what people have in mind when they talk of "progress". A situation in which the ordinary life of the ordinary person has, in return for a handful of clever gadgets, been robbed of everything that gave it meaning and purpose.

The myth of progress is based upon two assumptions: 1. That any society capable of "improving" its state of material wealth by "scientific advances" would automatically have done so. 2. That no society before the in-

tervention of modern science would have done so. 2. That no society before the in-



Industrial revolution had the knowledge to do so, and that the present state of society is the result of a "tremendous advance" in human knowledge and ability. Both of these assumptions are not only false, they are the very reverse of the truth. Maid has had the knowledge and capacity to produce an "industrial revolution" at almost any period in history. Electric batteries have been found in ancient Babylonian excavations - they were used for electro-plating metals. Electricity was also used to make "perpetual lamps" at various times during antiquity. Hero of Alexandria built a turbo-jet engine some 2,000 years ago, and one of the architects of St Sophia at Constantinople made a steam engine which he used to make the building where he lived shake as if there was an earthquake in order to get rid of an unpleasant neighbour.

All these things were known in antiquity. They were simply never exploited in a systematic way so as to destroy the traditional crafts (in any case, the major innovation of the industrial revolution was the systematic factory exploitation of water-power, which had been in common use throughout antiquity). Here the diehard progressist may argue that this was because our more "primitive" ancestors lacked the capacity for such large-scale organisation, but a glance at the Pyramids, Chartres Cathedral or the Roman army will quickly show up this piece of primary school pseudo-evolutionism for what it is.

The real reason was that even in patriarchal times, the absolute necessity of the crafts to human life and spiritual well-being was understood. On several occasions the systematic application of "inventions" to production was banned on the specific grounds of protecting the crafts. Patriarchal society has been degenerating for a long time, but it was only relatively recently that it forgot *why* the crafts must be preserved intact. That could only happen when its spiritual blindness became almost total; when it could only see the gross and outward aspect of things and was quite impervious to the inward and spiritual essence. Once "technology" in the form of the factory system and

the destruction of the crafts had begun, it is obvious that one invention would lead to another, and that "science" in the purely physical and outward sense would become more and more sophisticated. Any society could have set that process in motion at almost any point throughout human history - only providing it was stupid enough.

Modern techno-bureaucratic society is a monument not to an advance in knowledge, but to a loss of knowledge; not to increased intelligence, but to monumental unintelligence. The society which proudly boasts that it has solved some of life's technical problems at the price of destroying the very spiritual purpose for which we became incarnate in the first place is like the maid who boasts that she has cured grandmother's cough by strangling grandmother.

The modern error always focusses on "doing" rather than "being". Of course, cheap, soulless and imperfect "products" will "do" almost as well as genuine artefacts. But the human heart was made to strive for perfection; and in perfecting her work, a maid perfects her soul. In a profane society, nothing is sacred; in a sacred society, nothing is profane. To make is to make holy, to serve is to serve God. She who is perfected in her craft - the ranya or magistra - is, on her own level, a kind of priestess: a hierophant of the Mysteries of the craft. Free from the errors of profanity, normal life is unbroken. Work and life are one; life and faith are one; and that one is a golden pathway, leading beyond the boundaries of the world, into the arms of She Who created it.

Sister Angelina

HESTIAD BLESSING

Mother Hestia, bless my home that it may become a place of peace and a resting place of the Spirit; a place of understanding where Truth abides; and a place of love, which will awaken every heart to the love of the Mother of All.

SHE WHO IS COMING



Old Madrian traditions tell that a time shall come when the patriarchal regime shall fall into decay.

All its institutions shall be eaten away from within by the

violence and unrighteousness that is inherent in the very nature of patriarchy. First, it is said, the idolaters shall apostatise even from their own idolatry. The image of the male god shall be pulled down and men shall worship only themselves. The last remnants of legitimate authority shall vanish and non-

ny shall be king. Great tyrannical states will control the lives of their victims with innumerable laws and regulations, until the whole earth is under the dominion of one monstrous tyrant, "the son of Irkalla". The people will no longer farm their own land, but will be forced to work as slaves in great cities and the rulers will tell so many lies that nobody will know what the truth is. They will confuse the people about right and wrong; adultery, theft and violence will be rife; and "not one in a hundred shall know how to pray".

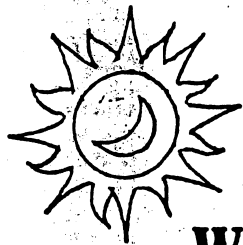
Hearing these ancient prophecies, one can only be startled at how closely they describe the present time, and how those parts that have not yet come to pass seem only too likely to do so in the near future. Nor do the prospects look bright. There shall be famine and pestilence, fire shall fall from the sky and rivers will dry up. From what we know of nuclear weapons, chemical and bacteriological warfare, as well as the resources and energy crises threatening the earth, these too seem more than possible.

Yet in all this, there is hope, for it is said that among the chaos shall come a new generation of believers, small at first, but swelling to a multitude. The

Spirit of the Goddess shall descend upon the community, and "little souls shall be made great by the Spirit"; heras shall walk among them, and "wondrous things be accomplished on earth and in the heaven". Many will suffer and die as martyrs, but they shall be taken up into the glory of the Goddess, and "a hundred shall come where one is fallen". And at the height of the crisis, or just past it, "shall appear a hera beyond all heras, who is the very messenger of God". Her voice shall be a light in the darkness, and those who look on her shall know the Truth. She shall not be proud, but gentle and humble, yet "none shall see her without trembling unless her heart be made of ice"; her beauty will be overwhelming, yet it is not beauty of the body, but radiance of soul. She will be "simple as a woodland creature, yet her wisdom shall be deeper than the sea".

This maid it is who will lead the weary world back into the light of our Mother's love. The Age of Irkalla (Kali Yuga, or the Iron Age), which has held us in its ever-thickening darkness for over six millennia, shall pass away like a nightmare from which the world awakens. We are approaching the darkest hour, but by the same token, we are also approaching the dawn. Already the "new generation of believers" is beginning to appear. Already one great soul has walked among us in the person of Mother Alethea, who brought the Madrian faith back to its ancient purity a little over half a century ago. And even now there are the tremors of a new movement upon the spiritual horizon. Can it be that there are children alive today who will live to see the maid of maids, our Lady's messenger on earth?

Sister Alethea



THE COMIN festival meanin

Winter

Correspondence of the sacred and secular calendars for the seasons of Winter and Moura

Astraea: Nov 28th - Dec 25th

Hestia: Dec 26th - Jan 22nd

Brighde: Jan 23rd - Feb 19th

Moura: Feb 20th - March 19th

Major Festivals

NATIVITY (The Nativity of Our Lady):
4th Hestia (Dec 29th)

FEAST OF LIGHTS: 10th Brighde (Feb 1st)

EVE OF MOURA: 28th Brighde (Feb 19th)

PASSION: 28th Moura (March 19th)

Minor Festivals

GENIAD: 28th Astraea (Dec 25th)

HESTIAD: 6th Hestia (Dec 31st)

DUODECIMA: 15th Hestia (Jan 9th)

PURPLE MONDAY: 7th Brighde (Jan 29th)

MOURA DAY: 1st Moura (Feb 20th)

MED-MOURA: 14th Moura (March 5th)

Nativity Season

ADVENT

Advent, this year 29 days long, is a period of spiritual and practical preparation for the coming of our Lady at Nativity. We prepare ourselves spiritually to experience the birth of the Daughter in our hearts, which is part of the deeper meaning of Nativity - without good preparation, much will be lacking in the experience. It is in this connection that the element of "fast", of purification, mingles with the festive spirit of Advent. It is the freeing of our hearts from the encrustations of the material world so that we may see Nativity again with simplicity and wonder, as at the dawn of time.

Practical preparation includes the

decoration of our homes and shrines. The five-pointed star is preeminent among decorations, together with candles symbolising the birth of the Divine Light upon earth, and evergreens representing life among barrenness - ivy, holly, bay, mistletoe and fir. The silver fir is the symbolic Birth Tree, although the pointed spruce is more often seen. Scenes from the *Mythos* are also represented, although images of the Mother and Child usually appear only after the Geniad. The Advent colour is green.

GENIAD

On this day we honour our sisters the Geniae, the children of Heaven. These are perfect and shining souls, such as we once were before we turned away from our Mother. Each is a perfect reflection of some different aspect of the Divine, and the Light of the Divine shines through her and all her actions. Some of them we know by specific names - e.g. Athene Genia of wisdom, Hestia, Genia of the home, Alethea, Genia of Truth - but most are unnamed, including the countless personal Geniae who guide and lead each one of us on the path back to Perfection. An essential part of the challenge of the festival is to recognise and cultivate our own potential Geniahood, to develop our personal gifts in Her service and allow Her light to shine through us. The festival is a joyous one and may include the giving of presents especially those reflecting our own creative gifts. Its colour is blue.

NATIVITY

NATIVITY EVE: A white candle is lit at sunset to be extinguished at dawn on Nativity morning, burning through the night. The first of the three Nativity Rites is celebrated at midnight. Altar cloths should be white,



WINTER SEASON Games & celebration

and the incense preferably sandalwood.

On this day we celebrate the home and its deep significance.

NATIVITY: One of the great feasts of the year, giving its name to the whole season, Nativity celebrates the birth of the Daughter, the third Person of the Divine Trinity, from the Mother, the second Person. Her name, given in the *Mythos* is Inanna, meaning "Queen of Heaven" but She is also Princess of the World and Priestess of the World, come among us to lead, guide and help us on our journey back to our true Home. The season is also known as Yule, originally from *'ioelos*, a carol in honour of the Mother and Daughter in the Greek Demeter/Persephone tradition. The three Rites of Nativity are held at midnight, dawn and dusk.

Nativity is a season of high festivity, with games, story-telling, presents and feasting. One of the traditions of Nativity is the legend of the Star-Fairy, the princess of the sylphs or air-spirits. As air is the element and the Star the central symbol of winter and Nativity, she is seen as presiding over the celebrations. She and her sylphs are described as flying from home to home before Nativity Dawn, creating presents out of the air.

HESTIAD

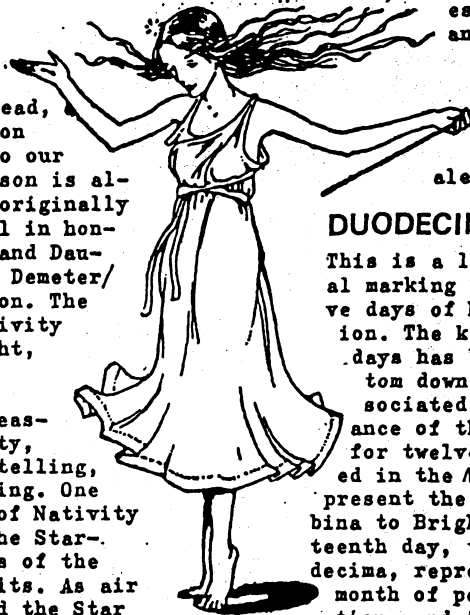
On the Day of Hestia we honour the Genia of the hearth and the home. Nativity is preeminently a household festival, so it is fitting that the Hestiad be in the season.

The home is blessed by making the Pentacle in the four corners of each room (usually with a stick of incense) while praying that the love of our Lady should fill the home, leading all who come into contact with it to Her. Madriars visit each other bearing blessings and wishes for good fortune, and are traditionally entertained with home baked bread and home made or mulled ale or wine.

DUODECIMA

This is a light-hearted festival marking the end of the twelve days of Nativity celebration. The keeping of the twelve days has been a popular custom down the ages and is associated with the reappearance of the Star each night for twelve nights as described in the *Mythos*. The days represent the months from Columina to Brighde, and the thirteenth day, the day after Duodecima, represents Moura, the month of penance and purification, and is kept as a fast. All representations of the Star should be taken down before midnight on Duodecima, together with all artificial decorations, although greenery may remain until Purple Monday Eve.

Duodecima is celebrated with all manner of games and jokes, and it is usual to have a party, the centrepiece of which is the "bean cake" - the maid who finds the bean baked into the cake is mistress of the revels until midnight, and her word is law.



The Legend of Carminta

Carminta, she whose story has been sung in the high places and whispered on the plain since the earliest years of that fierce tyranny which has since come to enslave all the holy lands of earth, was born under clear stars on a cold night among the black pines of Damitaras. And the only singing that attended her birth was the howling of wolves.

Why her mother was travelling in those mountains at that time of year has never been known, for it is said she never confided her story to any living creature, not even her daughter. Whether she was driven by terror or desire or need, no one will ever know. But it is certain she had been journeying for many days when, missing her path in the snow, she found herself lost and alone in a strange country as the night came. And in this very hour she gave birth to her daughter and named her Carminta. She had barely strength to bless the child, murmuring the words familiar to her from her childhood: "May you use the gift of life wisely, and may our Blessed Lady be with you every step." Adding the fervent prayer "And with mine", she struggled to her feet and attempted to go on. But weariness overcame her, and sinking down with the child in her arms, she slept as the snow fell.

As the sun rose over the mountains the next day, a goatherd, bringing some cheeses to market, saw a sight which stopped her in her tracks.

"Wolves!" she cried, "but what brings them so close?" For two of the dreaded creatures were lying still as statues in a crevice in the rock face, not more than a stone's throw from the village gates. As the goatherd approached cautiously, one of the wolves sprang up, roused its companion and fled. Then she saw the most astonishing sight of all, for Carminta and her mother lay there, alive and warm in the snow.

"Truly", the goatherd said, as she lifted the sleeping mother and child in her arms, "even wolves grow kind if the Blessed Lady wishes it. Would that all maids were as willing."

Hastening into the village, she left the two in the home of the priestess, who was wise in the healing of the body as she was in the healing of the soul; and after that, did not delay in relating the marvelous deliverance to all she met in the market place.

Thus it was that Carminta grew up in the village in the shadow of the peak. She was a merry-hearted and loving child, and was raised by her mother in the way of obedience and devotion to the Mother of All Things. From her earliest childhood she had a compassion and understanding for all creatures which was remarkable even in that more gentle age. The spirits of the snows and the pine trees loved her for her tenderness and never hid themselves from her as they did from children that had not the spirit of quietness; and it was one of her greatest pleasures to watch them and play with them.

One sharp winter, when Carminta had barely reached the full stature of maidenhood, her mother and the old priestess of the village died, leaving her with a feeling of emptiness, bereft of spiritual counsel. Conscious of Carminta's need and believing that she would benefit from a deeper spiritual training than her own simple piety could provide, the new priestess urged her to seek out a ranya at the great Temple of Sketaras.

On this advice, the maiden set out in early spring for the city in the valley of which she had barely heard in all her life; for the village was isolated and passing travellers very rare. She took with her a young wolf whose life she had saved - for sympathy had made her fearless - and who,

for love of her had become gentle as a dog.

The journey was a joyous one, though hard, and the maiden and the beast delighted in each other's company. But toward its end, as they began to enter the valley, the path itself seemed to throw up stones to trip her, and the light reflected from wayside puddles dazzled even her snow-accustomed eyes. Finally the falling of a mighty tree at her feet persuaded Carminta to travel through the forest. Led by the eager wolf, she came out at last on a cliff overlooking the city and made her way down a slender track that none but a mountain-born child could have discovered. In this way she came to the city, entering through a neglected and rusty gate at the foot of the track.

Seeing a sad-faced maid of her mother's years, Carminta asked her the way to the Temple, adding that she was seeking a ranya on the advice of her priestess. To her astonishment the maid answered, after looking all about her: "It is unwise to speak so here. Come with me, and I will explain why you must leave at once, by whichever strange route you came."

Thus Carminta heard of the changes that had overcome the city in the past years. Ozolae and his band of raiders had entered the city to rule by the sword, and one of their first acts had been to destroy the interior of the sacred Temple. They had set up within it a roughly made image of Ozolae himself to which they offered worship and forced all in the city to give obeisance, slaughtering those who would not. This was their practice also with all who approached the gates. They had, moreover, encouraged the menfolk of the city to regard the gentle ways of obedience in which they had been raised as enslavement, and by this device had succeeded in causing disruption

and gaining control in almost every household. It was fortunate, concluded the maid, that Carminta had escaped notice, for she would be able to leave easily.

But this was far from Carminta's intention. She learned that the maids of the city were still faithful to the Blessed Lady. The menfolk waxed not contented in their false rulership of the households, for no creature can be happy that runs against its nature, and seeking contentment in worldly power and ownership, rather than in the love of our Lady, they became ever more unsatisfied in the endless pursuit of that which is not to be found. The best of them wished wholeheartedly for the old ways, and prayed to the Mother in secret that they might return, while even the worst felt that they had been happier under the rule of wise and just priestesses than that of a self-seeking tyrant.

Making her way to the house of Ozolae, Carminta found the central chamber and awaited him there, offering prayers that her intent would be successful.

The tyrant entered the room alone, and was disconcerted to find Carminta there. He was a man past middle years whose eyes were reddened and body softened by many self-indulgent years after a hard youth, and his most distinctive feature was his tight and cruel mouth. But he smiled pleasantly and asked the maiden's business.

"I am a messenger of the Truth," she answered quietly. "You above all, Ozolae, know that the image in the Temple is a lie, for you know what you are. Let us talk together about the Truth."

"There are those that seek the Truth" he said, "and there are those that do not seek because they



have already found. I am one of those, for I have found Truth in the sword. Nothing is greater on earth than the sword, for it strikes down all its adversaries. And it is for this reason that the image in the Temple is not a lie; for in this place I am the mightiest of them that wield the sword."

"You are speaking of the here and now, which cannot hold the Truth, for the Truth is eternal. The power of the sword is an illusion, which may hold sway a little time within a vale of illusion such as this world is, but has not the final victory. For what is the sword in the world beyond, where is no pain and no death?"

"You are repeating the words of the priestesses and ranyas, while I speak from my experience of life," answered Ozolae.

"No, the Blessed Lady speaks in my heart and so I know the Truth. Let Your heart receive Her also."

Carminta and the tyrant continued to speak together until the lamps were lit in the evening shadows. Then Ozolae, thanking Carminta for a diverting discourse, called in the guards from the doorway and bade them keep her captive.

"You speak well and persuasively," he said to her, "but the victory is mine, for you die in the flames tomorrow." And making a mocking reverence, he left the room.

So Carminta spent the night in prayer and in quiet conversation with the guards, who marvelled at her quiet courage. In the morning she was taken and bound to a pillar while branches were piled around her. All the city were watching, for Ozolae loved to display his

power, and many wept as Carminta clasped her hands in prayer.

But immediately she heard whisperings in the air and saw all about her the spirits beloved by her since childhood. And as often as the fire was lit, they dashed it out with a gust of wind or a shower of rain or a scurry of snow. Finally Ozolae in fury drew his sword to kill her with a blow, but from the midst of the crowd rushed out the young wolf, who, knocking the tyrant down, stood snarling on his chest.



At this stood forward one of the guards of the vigil, crying "By heaven, the elements themselves and the wild beasts of the mountains will not stand by and watch this good maid die. Will I then do so?" Drawing his sword, he cut Carminta's bonds and turned to the crowd, saying "For ten years I have chosen a ruler who is crueller than the wolves and is the spawn of Hell. Now I choose one who is gentler than the doves and is beloved of Heaven." He broke his sword across his knee and knelt before Carminta

"Fealty to you, princess, is no dishonour."

His words were as a clarion call to the whole city. With one accord, they acclaimed Carminta as their princess. Those of Ozolae's followers who did not join them were quickly overwhelmed and taken captive, while their leader lay dead on the ground, his heart turned to stone by fear.

Carminta ruled wisely and well for many years, in the name of She who is Ruler of all. Under her hand, the Temple returned to its former glory and the city to the old ways of peace and devotion. Serving Themis, Moira smiled on them; and all things were well.

NATIVITY

What is the joy and excitement that fills the air as the winter solstice approaches? From whence comes the warmth and goodwill and the sense of tingling anticipation at this coldest and darkest season of the year? There is a conventional answer connected with the Christian religion, but this is patently

false for two reasons: firstly because it goes back long before that religion was invented. The midwinter celebration in Northern Europe was merely "taken over" by the new Christian establishment and adopted into their religion. In Rome, the feasting and celebration of the *Saturnalia* was an ancient custom 2,000 years ago. Secondly, because the phenomenon continues without the least diminution at a time when only a very small proportion of the population seriously believes in Christianity.

The roots of the experience lie far deeper, and take us back beyond the dawn of patriarchy; beyond the birth of this world itself, to the ultimate Truth which lies behind the creation of the universe.

In the beginning, all souls were at one with God, and existed in a state of perfection. At the dawn of what we call time, a portion of intelligent creation broke away from Her. Now, since She is pure existence, the logic of this choice is that they should cease to exist. But God, in Her compassion, wanted souls to continue in existence, that they might have the chance to return to Her. How could She do this? If a child runs into the road, her mother can pick her up and carry her back; but this is only to pick up her body. She cannot pick up the child's soul and stop her wanting to cross the road. If she could, the child would no longer be an intelligent creature, but a mere puppet. In the first perfection, we had no bodies, but were all soul; to will and to act were the same

thing. Our Mother could not stop us being in that-place-where-She-is-not, except by destroying our will. Therefore She must separate Herself from Herself in order that She may be where She is not.

This is a Mystery and a paradox too great for our human understanding, but it is shown to us in the image of the Mother giving birth to the Daughter Who is Herself.



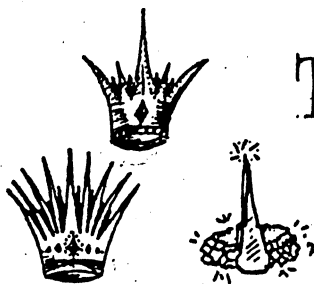
Thus Nativity lies at the very roots of the manifest universe. Without the Nativity Event, nothing could exist. And it is this Truth which the mysterious rhythm of the year draws up like a shining star within our soul each winter; and even when the Truth has been lost, its reflection survives in myths and legends, such as those of the Christians.

God became Maid (or soul) that maid might return to God. And Nativity shows forth the birth of the soul Who was God, not on earth, nor in space, nor even in time, but in the Eternal moment that lies at the root of all time.

At the eternal Easter, She descends to the lowest depths, that creatures at every level may be saved. At the Feast of Lights, we see Her stripped of the last vestige of Her Divinity that she may be truly maid. This is the true mid-point between Nativity and Easter - the great watershed at which joy turns to sorrow. But if at Nativity there is a wild joy in living, a pleasure

Contd. over

THE THREE PRINCESSES



In the *Mythos of the Divine Maid*, the three great princesses of the earth come forward to offer their crowns as gifts to the newborn Inanna. The first is a rich and powerful ruler, the second a maid of great wisdom and understanding, the third a devout and dedicated priestess. The light from the Star shines on each crown as it is offered, raising it to a more-than-earth-

ly beauty. The second princess's crown of silver becomes more beautiful than the first princess's crown of gold, and the third princess's crystal crown becomes the loveliest of the three.

The events of the *Mythos* are not historical events, but happen entirely outside the limited realm of time and space. They happen in the Pleroma, the realm of pure Being. Our own true selves, which are the fulfilment of the potential perfection within each one of us, exist in this realm, and we can therefore say truly that each of us has a personal knowledge and experience of the Mysteries which is beyond the power of words to express. But we are so wrapped round and blinded by the veil of matter that we have no direct access to our own experience except in the rarest of moments. The words of the *Mythos* are designed to cut through the veil and evoke a direct vision of the sacred Events. Thus it is that contemplation of these words can create a true understanding of the Realities of which the things of this world are but shadows. For the source of these words lies far beyond the human order.

The story of the three princesses, then, is no mere historical account, nor a pretty fable, but a story containing a fifth dimension, an inward depth to which our souls, given the chance, will respond through a direct recognition of the Truth. This can only be a personal experience and cannot be reduced to words. This article is intended only as a partial commentary which may aid that response.

Nativity/ from previous page

in very existence, that is because God first of all became Maid in order that maid might exist, that life might exist, that anything might exist at all.

In the most immediate interpretation, and that which is suggested by the words of the Genia, the princesses are reflections of the activity of Inanna Herself: Her sovereignty as Princess of the World, Her teaching of divine Truths as Daughter of Wisdom, and Her revealing of Mysteries as Priestess of the World. Her embracing of the world through Her birth means that the whole activity of the world takes place within the context of Her presence and finds its highest expression in Her.

The offering of the crowns is the acceptance and acknowledgement of Inanna by the world, whereby it is transformed, just as the crowns are transformed by the light of the Star. As they are suffused with Divine beauty, so is the world and all its activity made beautiful by Her coming.

In the individual this acknowledgement is the opening of the heart to Her as ruler, teacher and guide. It is the overthrowing of the usurper ego and the yielding of sovereignty in the soul to She Who made it. It is the beginning of perfection of the will, leading to perfect happiness.

The three princesses also represent different ways of living in the world. As ruler, philosopher and priestess, they embody the life of action, the pursuit of wisdom and the pure service of the Goddess. They are "princesses" because they are "perfect maids"; which is to say that each follows her path perfectly in the light of the Spirit and in accord with the Divine harmony. And each path is a way to the Truth.

The second of the paths, however, is more perfect than the first, and the third is more perfect than the second. The first

princess who rules most land and possesses most treasure is the most tied to the material realm, while the third, who "possessed but few of the world's things" is closest to the spiritual. While the first princess's crown is made of the most "valuable" material - gold, it is the third princess's crown of crystal - a substance of little material value - which becomes the most beautiful in the light of the Star. And this is because it most perfectly reflects the Divine light; for just as each one of us was first created as a perfect reflection of the Goddess, so our souls are most whole and most beautiful when they most fully reflect Her. In the Rite of Initiation the Temple is likened to a crystalline vessel, "pure and clean and wholly transparent, showing not herself but that which lies in her." and thus should our souls be, that the light of the Goddess may shine forth from us.

In the life of the individual maid, the three princesses may be said to represent the three parts of her being, namely body, soul and spirit. While each part may be purified by the presence of Inanna, the body is the part in which we are joined to the earth and spirit the part in which we are at one with Heaven, while the soul stands between them, endowed with the power of choice.

The three parts of maid are each again divided into three. The spirit, as the pure reflection of God, mirrors Her Nature as Mother, Daughter and Absolute Deity, and also the three Divine Principles expounded in the *Crystal Tablet*: Life, Light and Love. The body is composed of three vehicles, each operating on one of the three levels of matter which we encounter in our present state of existence: the physical body of dense matter, the mental body of thought-matter and the astral body of emotion-matter. These three bodies are vehicles for the "activities" of the soul: living, understanding and loving - activities which parallel the

paths of the three princesses and again mirror the great Principles of Life, Light and Love. The activities encompass the whole of existence; to perform them perfectly, in harmony with the three Principles, is to be perfect.

The soul has not her permanent home in the bodies which serve her in this life. Each will pass away in its season. By far the most short-lived is the physical body, which grows old and dies in the space of a few short decades. Yet during its life it provides the basis for everything we do. Like the golden crown, its superficial value is great, but in the eyes of Eternity it is of relatively small worth. Its true value becomes actualised only when its activities are directly attached to the Divine, in ritual, in the practice of a traditional craft, or in any activity directed by the principles of eternal Harmony.

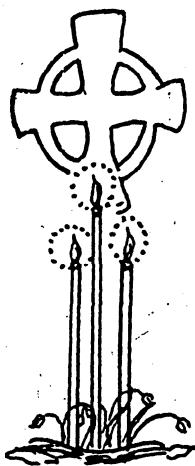


But each of the three crowns is accepted by the Genia at the cave's mouth in the Name of Inanna. Each of the three bodies, the physical, the mental and the emotional, has its part to play in the raising of the maid to her former perfection and unity with the Goddess. Hands, head and heart have their place in the pattern and are essential to the whole.

The greater beauty of the third crown, which in this symbolism is associated with the emotional body, the heart, and also symbolises the soul's activity of loving in accordance with the great principle of Love is especially appropriate to the Nativity season. For this is the season when the heart awakens to the presence of Inanna and Love is born into the world.

Chrysothemis

THE COMING SEASON 2



Purification

With the taking down of the last decorations on the Sunday before Purple Monday, the Nativity season ends and the great Easter cycle begins, which will stretch across a quarter of the year to end at the Exaltation in mid-Spring. The period from Duodecima to Purple Monday is semi-festive; the period from the Feast

of Lights to Moura Eve is semi-penitential.

PURPLE MONDAY

The first Monday in Brighde opens a brief period of penance in preparation for the Feast of Lights - its name is taken from the colour of the Altar and shrine cloths used during the period. Violets and pansies, especially the purple and blue, are associated with this month.

FEAST OF LIGHTS

This feast celebrates our Lady's vow to carry the Divine Light into every corner of the world, even into the realm of death - Her acceptance of Her Sacrifice. It is a white festival, with white Altar cloth and candles, snowdrops on the Altar and all maids present wearing white. It is the day for blessing candles for use in the coming year; after the lection the celebrant makes the Pentacle over the candles, saying: "May our Lady's blessing rest upon these waxen creatures." The "lights" of the festival are the many candles burned during the Rite.

The snowdrop is the flower of the festival, from the legend that with every step our Lady took away from Her Mother, a snowdrop blossomed in Her track. Box is also a traditional decoration for the season, and may adorn the house until the Passion.

MOURA

MOURA EVE: The last feast before the fasts and purifications of Moura, this is a time for good food - pancakes have been tradit-

ional at least since the Celtic period - and energetic pursuits, especially footraces and skipping. On this day the particular acts of self-denial for Moura are chosen. These will vary with each household and individual, although all Madrians keep fast on the Mondays of Moura.

MOURA DAY: The first day of the month of preparation for Easter, which is a season in itself. If there is a priestess in the area confession should be made and purification received either on this day or on Moura Eve.

MED-MOURA: This day marks a brief respite from the fasts and purifications of Moura. It is traditional to have for tea a fruitcake covered with almond paste and decorated with marzipan balls and crystallised violets; and to give small gifts to mothers, natural and spiritual, and to heads of households.

PASSION: The last day of the year, the Passion of our Lady, is a solemn day of prayer and fasting in mourning for the death of Inanna. It is the last day of Moura and the first day of Easter, and will be dealt with fully in our Easter issue.

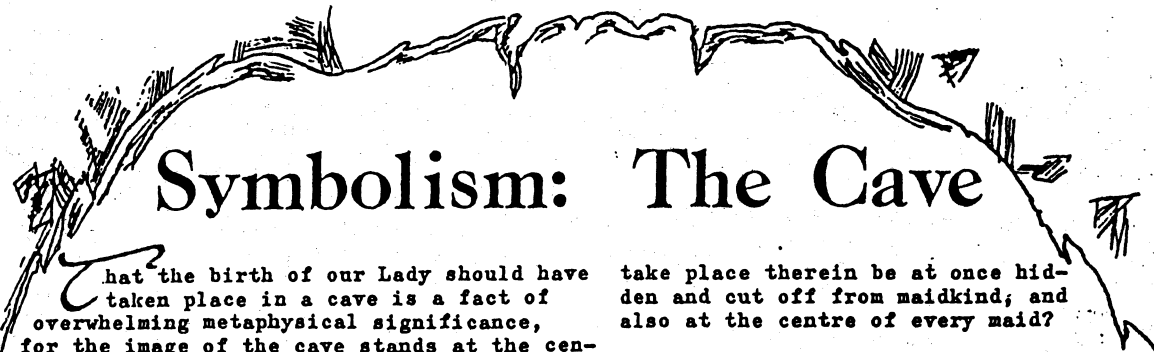
Meditations

Feast of Lights

Dearest Mistress, that have prayed beside the running streams and beneath the shining moon, how dreadful is the vow that You have taken. You that are the One Spirit have become a soul, chaste as the flower that blossoms from the snow. Like to the spotless garment of the sacrifice; pure maid You are, without a trace of sin. Yet You have vowed to tread the darkest regions, to suffer things more cruel than I can know. Most noble soul, how simple in Your courage; how steadfast and unswerving in Your love. Open my soul, I pray You, that she may be transfused by Your clear light.

Moura

Purify my heart, Inanna, for I would make myself a shrine for your Presence. Give me strength to perform all I have promised.



Symbolism: The Cave

That the birth of our Lady should have taken place in a cave is a fact of overwhelming metaphysical significance, for the image of the cave stands at the centre of a symbolism which leads into the very depths of the cosmic Mystery.

The cave is intimately connected with two other symbols: the heart and the Temple. The Sanscrit word for cave, *guhā*, is also applied to the inner cavity of the heart, and, by extension, to the heart as a whole. The word derives from the root *guh*, meaning "hiding" or "covering"; from a related root comes *gupta* which is applied to all things secret and hidden.

This secretness is evident in the *Mythos*, for the narrative does not take us beyond the mouth of the cave, and the birth of our Lady takes place in secret. The children of earth see only an image of the Mother and Child above the cave.

A Temple is divided into two parts. The main part is called the Grove, and represents the grove of trees which surrounds the cave in the *Mythos*. The extreme eastern chamber in which the Great Altar stands is called the Caverna, and represents the cave itself. Only a priestess may enter the Caverna alone, and only a small number of her most immediate servants in the Temple hierarchy may be invited in by her. A lay Madrian will usually enter it only once in her life, at her initiation.

Yet despite the deep secrecy of the cave, its symbolic status as a "guarded place" (in the *Mythos* the cave-mouth is protected by an awesome Genia) to which access is barred, it is also connected with the most intimate of all places - the heart. This is also related to the doctrine that our Lady's birth takes place not only in the Pleroma, but also in every human heart.

take place therein be at once hidden and cut off from mankind; and also at the centre of every maid?

The answer is that maid, with her symbolic centre, the heart, is a microcosm of the entire universe, and that, from a certain point of view (indeed, from the ultimate point of view), the microcosm is not other than the macrocosm. In *The Teachings of the Daughter* we read: "Within the innermost temple of your heart shall you find the seas and the heavens and all the illimitable cosmos. For the space within this temple is as vast as all the manifest universe." *

The Temple of the Heart is the central point of the universe which encompasses the whole - the goal of the spiritual quest - as it may be approached through the human microcosm. Yet although it lies within us, it does not cease to be a "guarded place". As the same *Teaching* tells us: "about the Temple and encompassing it round grows a garden rank with thorns... know well your own heart and the thorns that grow therein, for without that knowledge shall you rarely pass through into the Temple."

We may note a striking resemblance to the *motif* of the thorn-girt castle preserved in the folk-tradition of the Sleeping Beauty. The beautiful maiden within the guarded place represents on one level the Divine Spirit Herself, the goal of the quest, and on another the human soul, or her symbolic centre, the heart, which lies dormant and must be "awakened" from the dream of matter into eternal Reality. Her name is Briar Rose, symbolising at once the Goddess as "mystic Rose" and the human microcosm as *rosa simpla*, as well as their mystical union which is the preeminent theme of the summer solstice festival of

--- ADVERTISEMENTS ---

THE MOIRA HANDBOOK: A series of reincarnation experiences in Madrian-matriarchal times, with simple do-it-yourself instructions for the waking-dream technique of recovering your past lives. 75p from Silver Chalice, 40 St John St, Oxford.

COVEN: The controversial magazine covering all aspects of the Occult. Sample copy 25p from Occult World, 303 Cauldwell Hall Rd., Ipswich, Suffolk, IP4 5AJ.

THE DOWN TO EARTH ADVERTISER for penpals, cooking, beauty, ads, news, problem page etc. Send for a sample copy today! 25p & stamp. If airmail \$1. Duckworth, 119 Redwald Road, London E5 0JQ.

REVELATION: Quarterly magazine for the occult and spiritual seeker. Single copies 25p. Yearly subscription £1 including postage. From the Editor, 8 Victoria Ct., Victoria Rd., New Brighton, Merseyside.

THE HERMETIC JOURNAL, dedicated to the Hermetic Tradition. Articles on Alchemy, Kabbalism, the broad spectrum of the Western Occult Tradition. Subscriptions: 1 year (4 issues) £3.60. Single copy £1.00. 12, Antigua St., Edinburgh 1.

ACTION FOR PSYCHIC ECOLOGY: A small magazine devoted to psychic and occult matters particularly relating to nature and animals, and the pollution of the psychic environment by cruelties in modern society. Sample copy 20p with large SAE or 30p inc. postage. From A.P.E., 160, Glen Albyn Rd., Wimbledon, London SW19 6HG.

SANGREAL: a magazine of the Mysteries, crafts and folk traditions of Britain. 65p from BM Sangreal, London WC1V 6XX.

THE CAULDRON: a pagan newsletter. 20p from M. A. Howard, BCM Box 1633, London WC1V 6XX. Blank POs only.

WOMANSPEAK: A feminist magazine on current affairs and the arts, including book, film and music reviews, fiction and letters. To subscribe send (Aust) \$4.00 (for 5 issues). PO Box 103, Spit Junction, NSW 2088, Aust.

GNOSTICA is America's one magazine of authentic occultism, with how-to articles and columns, news, contact and referral services. Each issue has 75,000 words or more on Tantra, Magick, Witchcraft, Parapsychology, Astrology, Symbols and more. Bimonthly for \$12 a year, \$17.50 airmail. Write also for our free book catalogue. GHOSTICA, Box 43383-LM, St Paul, MN 55164, U.S.A.

RAGNAROK: Controversial magazine for occultists of all paths. 25p c/o 17, Culvert St., Blackburn, Lancs., BB1 1BY.

FORESIGHT: bimonthly magazine concerned with the spiritual evolution of humanity in the New Age, also mysticism, psychic phenomena, UFOs etc. 15p plus postage; annual subscription 90p plus 42p postage. 29 Beaufort Ave., Hodge Hill, Birmingham.

THE PAGAN WAY: the magazine for those who wish to have a medium through which to express their love for the old gods. Articles on all subjects of interest to pagans plus the opportunity for contact with others. The magazine where your comments are as important as your subscription. One year sub (6 issues) £1.50 from 51 Loates Lane, Watford, Herts.

AQUARIAN ARROW: a broad-spectrum, future-orientated occult magazine. Published quarterly. Price 75p. Subscription (4 issues) £2.50. Post free from Aquarians, BCM Opal, London WC1V 6XX.

STONEHENGE VIEWPOINT: quarterly magazine covering astro-archaeology, megalithic zodiacs, geomancy, ley lines, Druids, analysis of symbols, and British-American expeditions to explore sites in England, Wales, Scotland and elsewhere. 4 issues £1. 8 issues £2. Stonehenge Viewpoint, Kay Thompson, c/o Ley Hunter Magazine, P.O. Box 152, London N.10.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF ISIS for followers of the Goddess of all traditions. The Temple of Isis, Huntington Castle, Enniscorthy, Eire.

QUADRIGA: Gareth Knight produces a quarterly review called Quadriga. First issue contains long articles on "Active Imagination and the Archetypes", "The Mysteries of Melchisedek" and "The Worship of Isis". Send 50p for specimen copy to: G.K. Secretariat, Wistaria, Runcton Lane, Runcton, Chichester, Sussex.

An Introduction to the Faith

This set of booklets has been selected to provide an understanding of the Madrian faith, and also to provide a basis for personal and group worship. It is an indispensable introduction for those who wish to learn more about Madrianism. The first two give an outline of Madrian belief and practice, and the second two provide a selection from Madrian Scripture.

The Rite of Sacrifice

A simple and ancient Rite of devotion which can be celebrated in homes and groups, with an outline of the Madrian calendar, monthly and yearly festivals, etc. (the sacrifice is a small honey-cake).

The Catechism of the Children of the Goddess

All the essential beliefs of Catholic Madrianism in question-and-answer form, with appendices on personal devotion, etc.

The Creation and the Crystal Tablet

The story of the creation of the world by the Goddess, together with the Divine teaching on the spiritual/moral principles of existence; with an introduction on the meaning of mythic Truth.

The Mythos of the Divine Maid

The story of the nativity, life, death and resurrection of the Daughter of the Goddess. The pure essence behind all religion.

The booklets are 30p each post free, or £1 for the full set.

The Coming Age 8 contained: Death, the Great Adventure; The Mirror of Wisdom (an introduction to the science of symbolism); The Meaning of a Life; A Leap Through Time; The Perfect Devotion; Symbolism - The Apple and the Mountain; Story - Singing Heart; book reviews, etc.

This or any back issue (except nos. 1 and 2) can be obtained at 25p post free, or set of five (issues 4-8) for £1.

Issue 10 will appear in the month of Moura at 35p post free.

