

Pythagorean doctrine of numbers is not well understood ; many have attempted to explain the same, but there being no original explanations extant, that doctrine will no doubt forever remain an enigma.

The second preparatory step, in the pursuit of wisdom, was *Music*. As it raised the mind above the dominion of passion, it was considered as the most proper exercise to fit the mind for contemplation. Pythagoras considered music not only as an art, to be judged of by the ear, but as a science to be reduced to mathematical maxims and relations, and allied to astronomy. To the initiate of the Pythagorean Mysteries, the universe overflowed with melody and song ! The whole system of the world swam in a celestial harmony ; in the centre of which sat the Supreme Being veiled from the mortal eyes by the golden drapery of innumerable suns and stars.

*Astronomy.* The astronomical idea of the Pythagorean Mysteries was, that heaven denotes either the spheres of the fixed stars, or the whole space between the fixed stars and the moon, or the whole world, including both the heavenly spheres and the earth. Agreeable to the arithmetical hypothesis, there are ten heavenly spheres, of which nine are visible to us, viz. : the spheres of the fixed stars ; the seven spheres of the seven planets, including the sun and the moon ; and the sphere of the earth. The tenth earth, called by Pythagoras *antiethon*—anti-earth, is invisible, but necessary to the perfection and harmony of nature, since the decad is the perfection of the numerical harmony. By this anti-earth, he explains the eclipses of the moon. In the middle of the universe is the central fire, the principle of warmth and life. The earth is one of the planets moving around the sphere of fire. The atmosphere of the earth is a gross immovable mass, but the ether is pure, clear, always in motion, and the region of all Divine and immortal natures. His moon and stars are Divine intelligences or inhabited by such.

Of *Philosophy*. The Pythagorean mysteries taught that true knowledge embraced those subjects which are in their nature immutable, eternal and indistructible, and of which alone it can be properly predicted that they exist. The object of philosophy is, by contemplation to render the human mind similar to the Divine, and make it fit to enter the assembly of superior and purer intelligences.

Of *God*. Pythagoras taught that God was a universal spirit, diffused in all directions from the centre, the source of all animal life, the actual and inward cause of all motion, in substance similar to light—the first principle of the universe, incapable of suffering, invisible, indistructible and to be comprehended by the mind alone. To the Deity, there were three kinds of subordinate intelligences—gods, demons, and heroes—emanating from the supreme God, varying in dignity and perfection, in proportion as they were more or less removed from their source. The heroes, he believed, to be clothed with bodies of subtle matter.

*Man*, consisted of an elementary nature, of a divine and rational principle. His soul was a self-moving power, and consisted of two parts—the *rational*, which was a portion of the universal soul, an emanation of the central fire, and had its seat in the brain ; and *irrational*, which comprised the passions and lived in the heart. The sensitive soul (*thumos*) was supposed to perish ; but the rational mind (*phrenes, nous*) was believed to be immortal, because it had its origin in an immortal source. When the latter was freed from the fetters of