

THE HIBBERT LECTURES, 1886.

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LECTURES

ON THE

ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF RELIGION

AS ILLUSTRATED BY

CELTIC HEATHENDOM.

BY

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LECTURE V.

THE SUN HERO.

PART II.

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KULHWCH AND GWRI OF THE GOLDEN HAIR.

UP to this point we have used the various forms of the Sun-god's name, Llew, Lleu, Lug and Lugus, as our finger-posts; but we have now to pass from the range of their guidance to consider some other versions of the solar myth. We may begin with one of those connected with the Arthurian legend, but not so closely connected with it as not to be readily treated by itself: I mean the story of Kulhwch and Olwen.<sup>1</sup> Now Kulhwch's mother's name was Goleudyd, 'Light-as-day or Day-bright,' and she was daughter to a prince called Anlawd, who was also the father of Eigr or Igrayne, Arthur's mother.<sup>2</sup> His father's name is given as Kilyd, which meant a companion, fellow, and, perhaps, a husband; and his grandfather's name is represented as being Kelydon Wledig, which might possibly be regarded as meaning

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<sup>1</sup> *R. B. Mab.* pp. 100—143; Guest's *Mab.* ij. 247—318.

<sup>2</sup> *R. B. Mab.* pp. 100, 102, 106; Guest, ij. 198, 252, 258; also *Brut Tysilio* in the *Myr. Arch.* ij. 289, where Eigr is said to have been daughter of *Amluóð Óledic*.

Pryderi, and Pryderi son of Pwyff Head of Hades is the name that suits him best.' 'Consider,' said Rhiannon, 'whether his own name be not more suitable to him.' 'What is the name?' said Pendaran. 'Gwri of the Golden Hair is the name we gave him,' said Teyrnon. 'Pryderi,' said Pendaran, 'shall be his name.' 'It is best,' said Pwyff, 'to take the boy's name from the word his mother uttered when she got joyful tidings of him.' This was agreed upon, and Teyrnon was thanked for his behaviour in the matter and offered presents of all kinds to carry away. Pryderi was given over to Pendaran Dyved to be educated. In the course of years Pwyff died; Pryderi succeeded him, and chose as his wife Kieva, daughter of Gwyn Gohoyw, son of Gloyw Wafftlydan, son of Prince Casnar of the nobility of this island. So ends this branch of the Mabinogi.

Considerable complication arises out of Pwyff and Pryderi's relations with Hades, and, so far as concerns the present story, we have to distinguish between Pwyff Prince of Dyved and Pwyff Head of Hades, and between Gwri of the Golden Hair and Pryderi son of Pwyff Head of Hades. In Gwri we have a sort of parallel to Cúchulainn and Lleu. Gwri's rapid growth recalls both Lleu and Cúchulainn, in common with whom he was also remarkable for his golden hair. We cannot compare his life with Cúchulainn's, as no action of his is described besides his taking his father's horses to drink, which reminds one of Shakspear's classic picture of Phœbus watering his steeds. The allusion also to the colt born at the time of Gwri's own birth deserves special notice, as it has its counterpart in the story of one of the obscure incarnations of Lug before he was born Setanta or Cúchu-