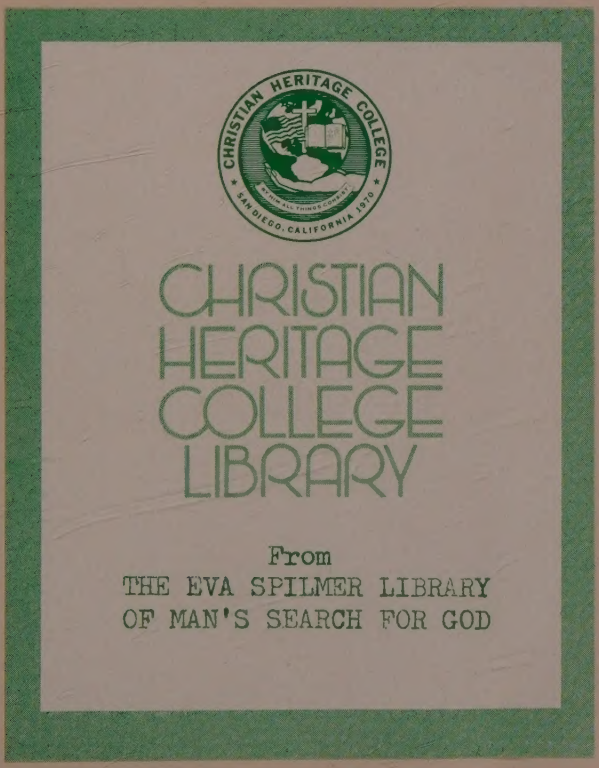
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OF MAN'S SEARCH FOR GOD

The Author

In 73 published works, in more than 7,000 public lectures, 500 broadcast talks and hundreds of magazine articles, by instruction to students in classes—over a period of 25 years of dynamic public activity, Manly Palmer Hall has steadfastly sought recognition of the belief that world civilization can only be perfected when human beings meet on a common ground of intelligence, cooperation, and worthy purpose.

He believes that adversity can not be faced by the individual who is without a philosophy of life that really justifies the reason for living. A nation too is an inert mass, if it has not an appropriate and adequate idealism. Even materialistic culture can not survive, lacking a vital principle.

It has long been the endeavor of this American philosopher to re-state for the individual the teachings of a few great human beings who in the past thousands of years have pointed the way to an adequate philosophy of life, and to apply these teachings to modern problems and modern living.

Philosophy is the working tool—setting reason to the accomplishment of normalcy and enlightenment. Manly Hall's writings are profound, but easily readable. They have especial value for those who seek a more cultural understanding of the purpose of living, and the ends toward which our individual lives can be shaped.

A clear and concise survey of constructive philosophy. The great thinkers of the classical world emerge as real persons to be loved, admired and understood. The pattern of the Philosophic Empire is revealed to inspire us to the building of the post-war world.

JOURNEY IN TRUTH is based upon a letter written more than sixteen hundred years ago by the great Neo-Platonist, Plotinus. The letter is addressed to a young man who had resolved to dedicate his life to learning. To this youth the great master addressed the following words: "I applaud your devotion to philosophy; I rejoice to hear that your soul has set sail, like the returning Ulysses, for its native land—that glorious, that only real country—the world of unseen truth. This region of truth is not to be investigated as a thing external to us, and so only imperfectly known. It is within us. Consciousness, therefore, is the sole basis of certainty."

THE OWL OF ATHENS

The small archaic drawing of an owl on the jacket of this book is taken from the reverse of an Athenian silver coin of the period of Plato. Athena was the patron goddess of the city of Athens, and the owl was her sacred bird. Since the time of the Greeks the owl has been regarded as symbolical of essential learning.

JOURNEY IN TRUTH

By MANLY PALMER HALL, 1901-

Second Edition

Portrait Illustrations
By K. Alexander

PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY
3341 Griffith Park Boulevard — Los Angeles 27, Calif.

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PORTRAIT ILLUSTRATIONS

Make Philosophy Thy Journey

Francis Quarles 1592—1644

A PREFACE ABOUT PORTRAITS

When we study the lives and teachings of celebrated scholars it is only natural that we should be interested in the appearance of these great men. We feel much closer to a person if we can conjure up their facial lineaments while we ponder their accomplishments.

Unfortunately few authentic portraits of the classical philosophers have survived to our day. Even those commonly accepted are open to reasonable doubt.

As we stand in some great museum before a sculptured head traditionally accepted as a proven likeness of Socrates, the description on a neat white card below may read something as follows, "Marble head, believed to be that of Socrates, possibly Bacchus, Silenus, or a Satyr; Greek or Roman contemporary or a copy."

This dilemma about familiar faces is beyond general remedy. Medieval reconstructions, restorations, and frank fabrications are even worse. The old engravers were usually better artisans than artists and their portraitures are lifeless masks devoid of character and expression.

The series of portraits which have been especially prepared for this book combine certain traditional elements of appearance with what old Doctor Kasper Lavater would have termed "the philosophy of physiognomy". Human

character and the disciplines imposed upon the mind affect appearance and mold the outer parts of man into the likeness of his innermost ideals.

Our portraits are an attempt to reveal the convictions of these illustrious men that from the face we may discover somewhat of the indwelling genius that governed their personalities.

We feel that K. Alexander has created a remarkable series of psychological studies and we recommend that the portraits be regarded as an integral part of the text.

These are the faces of old friends, fellow travelers on the great journey, strong faces but kindly with the love of man. This book is their story, a pledge to their memory that a new world still remembers them and will be forever grateful.

MANLY PALMER HALL

Los Angeles, California
September 5, 1945

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JOURNEY IN TRUTH

Along Pathways of Philosophy

THE problems of modern living become painfully apparent as we see nations that are rich and powerful, and educated according to the standards of their time, fall into a state of barbarism without parallel in history. Nor is there any promise of speedy recovery from the common disaster as long as civilization is regarded as merely an economic or industrial motion in the development of races. It is the tragedy of our time that the average individual learns too late that the materialistic concept of life has failed utterly in every department of living.

The savage state of man differs from the civilized, not in terms of economics or industrial expansion, but in terms of the development of ideals. The primitive man lacked social consciousness; he was an individualist, dominated by the rudimentary impulse of his own survival; and despite our boasted progress, the average man has not yet outgrown this primordial instinct. All selfishness is a kind of savagery. The whole theory of competition and competitive industry is a survival of barbarism. In order to have a civilization worthy of the name, we must achieve a condition of mental

and emotional maturity that is conscious of man's responsibilities to himself and to others. This consciousness of common responsibility *is* civilization. Without it the entire social fabric collapses.

Enduring civilizations are built upon the invisible but absolutely necessary foundations of overtones and intangibles. They are essential to the survival of the community and to the security of the individual. These great intangibles of life are the dreams, hopes, ideals, convictions, aspirations and consecrations by which man is moved by inward force to the improvement of his outward estate. Until he is so moved, and until the impulse to this motion is irresistible, the human being will remain a primitive creature dominated by primitive instincts.

The overtones of a materialistic civilization are religions, philosophies, and arts. These are extensions of the materially practical into the spheres of the spiritually, mentally, and æsthetically practical.

Every person functions from convictions, and it is the quality of these convictions that makes an individual either a useful citizen or a menace to his place and time. The end of the great evolutionary process of the ages is accomplished by moulding the physical institutions of human beings into the patterns of their spiritual convictions.

It is a mistake to assume that man's idealism will unfold naturally, without direction and discipline. The adequacy of man's spiritual life will be insured only when each individual makes himself subject to his cultural institutions and adheres to a positive program of personal improvement. Spirituality is not an accident of nature, nor is it bestowed by the grace of the gods. Education in spiritual values is the only way to attain the spiritual state. The human being is

not a philosopher by nature. The reasoning powers which order the life and secure the mind from intemperances of thinking can be acquired only through a balanced program of philosophical education. The techniques of artistic pursuits, it may be said, are well established; but the complete state of art is attained only when technique becomes the instrument of vision and ideal.

The so-called practical institutions that are collapsing about us today, originated in the medieval period of European civilization, the worst and most universally benighted period in world history. The Middle Ages, darkened with superstition, intolerance, and tyranny, cradled most of the elegant fallacies which have inspired modern sophistication. We must first set in order the whole structure of our personal and collective intangibles and overtones if we are to build a better world in which men and women can fulfill their reasonable hopes. The approach to living must be entirely different, if we would establish a permanent foundation for our impermanent world.

An ancient Chinese scholar gave us the immortal axiom, "There is nothing new under the sun." Existence is the motion of eternal values through an ever changing world. The problems of today were the problems of yesterday. And unless we solve them they will be the problems of tomorrow. Solution is the one end to problems. We will live better and progress more rapidly when we decide to devote our lives to solution, and give up our hope for absolution.

There are ageless answers to the problems of every age and we must discover these or perish by the way. It is a great pity that so many persons are afraid of the word "philosophy." Its implications overwhelm the average mind, because many philosophers have written lengthy and pro-

found books filled with strange words and recondite formulas. The reader develops an inferiority complex before he has completed the first page, and becomes convinced that he is unfitted for abstract learning. Further, college professors have developed a positive genius for obscuring the thoughts of great thinkers, and our young people, when exposed to pedagogic approach, have developed little fondness for the philosophic life. Bad translations and inadequate interpretations complete the unhappy picture. And a world sorely in need of philosophic disciplines, turns away from the very wisdom that would bring about peace and security.

In the place of the old masters of philosophic lore there has sprung up a generation of modern intellectualists who call themselves philosophers but have little in common with the life of reason. Most of these modern thinkers have been thoroughly indoctrinated with a point of view that is materialistic, or as they please to call it, realistic. This modern doctrine merely causes the confused to become more confounded and human idealism continues to languish for lack of adequate interpreters.

Philosophy is a kind and friendly word, signifying the highest effort of man to understand the truths which are the fountains of his own existence. Philosophy has its physical beginnings in common sense and homely wisdom, ascending gradually toward the contemplation of eternal reality.

The ancient Greeks bestowed the title of Sophist upon their learned men, thus honoring them with the designation 'The Wise.' Pythagoras objected; he held that no mortal was entitled to claim the honor of possessing wisdom; the term 'The Wise' should be reserved for the gods, who alone were perfect in wisdom. He therefore devised the word,

Philosophus, which meant, "a lover of wisdom." And so the literal meaning of our modern word, philosophy, is "love of learning," and a philosopher is a person who is seeking after truth.

In practice, philosophy is even more than the love of wisdom; it is the practical application of truth in one's daily life. The mind that has discovered the great laws governing life must apply these laws to the conduct of the personality. The practice of philosophy is properly called, "the life of reason."

Various nations have devised systems of philosophy appropriate to the temperaments of their people. All of these apparently diverse systems have a common substance. They were developed to subdue the excesses of irrational action, to transform the savage man into a civilized human being. The philosophers of antiquity usually combined their intellectual speculations with the spiritual doctrines common to their time. Their teachings, therefore, should be regarded as spiritual philosophies.

All great religions include philosophic elements; for religions have to justify their particular beliefs by conformity to a general pattern of knowledge. A complete religion must consist of four parts. First, theogenesis—the creation, order, and power of the God or gods. Second, cosmogenesis —the formation, unfoldment, and succession of the worlds. Third, anthropogenesis—the origin, development, and perfection of man as a human being. And fourth, psychogenesis—the substance, nature and release of the spiritual powers resident in the human soul. It is obviously impossible for a religion to fulfill these four requirements without recourse to philosophy and the development of a contemplative mental life.

Religions do not emerge as spiritual revelations; they are set up as reformations within a universal body of spiritual convictions.

Buddhism, for example, was a reform set up in the structure of Brahmanism. It was an interpretation rather than a revelation. The interpretation itself resulted from the inspired conviction of a great agnostic philosopher, Gautama Buddha.

Taoism, the mystical religion of China, was given to the world by the sage, Lao-Tze. This immortal scholar combined his own mystical attitude toward life with the stream of Hindu wisdom that flowed into China across the great mountains of the west.

Christianity was a reformation within the structure of Jewish metaphysics.

Islamism, the religion of Mohammed, was in turn Arabia's reform of Christian and Near Eastern pagan beliefs.

In each case these religions were indebted to earlier systems of religious philosophy for the eternal principles upon which they were established as separate systems of belief.

The older religions were strongly influenced by limited transportation and communication facilities. The old empires, separated by mountains, rivers, deserts and oceans, developed their ideologies without much consideration for the faiths of distant nations. Only a few outstanding scholars traveled into foreign lands. When, on their return, they reported favorably on the religions and philosophies of other races, their reports made little impression on the provincial-mindedness of their own people. The racial creeds and racial philosophies were sufficient to meet the needs of the old world but they are inadequate to the spiritual problems of modern times.

Neo-Platonic Origins

Because the Greek armies of Alexander the Great traveled as far as India, we find Greek influence in the Gandara period of Hindu philosophy. And because the returning Greeks brought much oriental mysticism to the Hellenic states, we find also a broadened perspective in Greek thought. Then the Romans, with their legions subduing the known world of their time, contributed much to a broader religious point of view and the worship of the Persian god, Mithras, became the popular faith of the Roman soldier. This great motion toward a common religious tolerance might have saved the world fifteen centuries of theological bickering. But, unfortunately, the Dark Ages brought to an abrupt end this happier course of thinking, and plunged the world into abysmal depths of prejudice and bigotry.

Neo-Platonism originated in that period which followed the eastern campaign of Alexander the Great. It flourished during the centuries of Rome's domination of Europe, the Near East, and Northern Africa. With all its political corruption, Rome held a democratic attitude on matters of religion and philosophy. It seldom interfered with the beliefs of any subject peoples unless these beliefs took on political implications dangerous to the survival of the Empire. Rome became a melting pot of creeds and cults. Brilliant intellectuals of various schools were drawn to Rome by the magnetic attraction of the Imperial City, and although the Romans were dilettantes in learning, they greatly admired superior intellects, and it was a matter of pride with them that their children were tutored by illustrious scholars without regard to their religious persuasions.

In the days of Rome, Neo-Platonism was too broad and profound a system of philosophy to gain general acceptance. Romans lacked the grand perspective toward world affairs which could only come much later with such inventions as the railroad, steamship, airplane, and radio. The far-flung colonial empire built up by Rome was one of comparatively isolated provinces, and it required the full thought and ingenuity of the Roman mind to hold together the physical structure of these dominions. Yet, Rome developed the first working system of inter-national, inter-racial, and inter-religious spiritual philosophy. Today, after the lapse of many centuries, the world has reached a degree of mental development in which the Neo-Platonic perspective can be more widely applied. Neo-Platonism can prove solutional to many of the problems of our daily living.

The world today is divided religiously among several great systems of worship. Christianity is now the dominant belief, because Christian nations control world politics, finance, and industry. It is evident that in years to come this domination will be challenged by nations holding other spiritual convictions. The growing power of Islam cannot be ignored; nor can the strength of Brahmanism, Buddhism, and the moral philosophy of Confucius be overlooked. In addition to these, the somewhat abstract but inevitable force of Russian ideology should be seriously considered. If these various beliefs are left unreconciled and no representation for the smaller religious minorities is provided in a program of world planning, nothing permanent in the way of peace or security can be expected from the political structure of the world.

Nor can this religious confusion be cleared up merely by conferences or by general agreement of leaders. It is clear

that the founders of most faiths had a profound respect for the doctrines of other peoples, but this respect has not been communicated in a lasting and practical way to the numerous followings. Unity, whether in spiritual or material concerns, must be discovered as a metaphysical experience in the life of each individual. In order for this discovery to be possible, a program of inter-religious education is indicated. The day of proselyting is over, and the fond belief still held by so many that their particular faith will one day be supreme, is dangerous to the whole progress of civilization.

Neo-Platonism offers the simplest and most rational way out of this difficult situation. Through the realization of the basic unity of all religious doctrine, it is possible for the average individual to achieve broad religious tolerance without conflict or confusion within himself. All sects and creeds are part of one ageless spiritual tradition. To know this is proof of a mature viewpoint in matters theological. It is not enough merely to assume that such a unity exists. This identity must be demonstrable and acceptable to the reasoning power of man, and Neo-Platonism supplies the mental proof of the spiritual fact. As a system of philosophy it reveals the identity of all higher religious systems with evidence acceptable to any thoughtful person.

The philosophical basis of the doctrine of religious unity originates in the most mature and convincing of Plato's conclusions. When we understand the Platonic doctrine of generals and particulars, we have available the most valuable and practical of all mental patterns in the technique of thinking. In the process of civilization there has been motion from unity toward diversity. All generalities have been broken up to create specialities. What we have lost sight of

is, that generalities are not thus actually broken up, they are only obscured by any specialization arising within them. The generalities remain as complete as always, but they are ignored by the type of mind that has become fascinated with the illusion of diversity. Unity and diversity, therefore, are matters of point of view and emphasis; they belong among the intangibles which so profoundly affect tangible things.

Religion itself is a general, or universal. Religions are particulars, or specializations. So long as we regard one religion as superior to all others, determining this superiority by comparisons, real or imaginary, we cannot approach spiritual problems with any degree of real intelligence.

The power of comparison is that energy of the mind which opposes similars to discover superiority. This faculty can as well be trained to relate similars for the discovery of identity. It sounds rather complicated, but the process is quite simple; it merely requires an adjustment of viewpoint. It is just as easy to see likeness as it is to see dissimilarity.

Our whole system of living has been based on a doctrine of dissimilars. When we accept with the Neo-Platonists that unity is a reality and diversity an illusion, the entire structure of our attitudes is immediately altered. One of the quickest ways of demonstrating unity to our own minds is to search for the unity of idea behind the diversity of forms. Applied to religion, we soon discover that all religions function from a single pattern of idealistic convictions containing a number of basic elements. First, the supreme power of good; Second, the presence in the universe of a superior being, or principle, by nature good; Third, this supreme being or power has the relationship to mankind of parent to child; Fourth, through prophets, sages, saviors and saints this superior being has revealed his will, and his revelations

have been compiled into books called scriptures; Fifth, the happiness, peace, and security of the human being results from obeying the laws of the creating power, and the performance of virtuous and charitable actions according to the will of the divine being; Sixth, the human being is immortal as a spiritual creature but mortal as a physical creature; and at death continues as a spiritual creature, passing through various experiences according to the merits and demerits of its actions while in the physical world; Seventh, at various times the supreme being, or principle, will send into the world peculiarly enlightened messengers called messiahs. Some of these have come already and others are yet to come. The purpose of these messiahs is to fulfill certain promises of faith and to establish new dispensations; Eighth, the supreme being is worthy of veneration and adoration, and, therefore, shrines have been built, priesthoods established and various forms and rituals devised to glorify and adore the one source of all life.

These are the fundamental identities. How human beings have been able to retain their sectarian limitations in the presence of this common religious purpose is difficult to understand. In the presence of these identities the minor problems of creedal differences become insignificant. To emphasize such differences is to admit complete ignorance of the great religious pattern which has always existed in the world. Religious sects have maintained the differences of their creeds only by a direct appeal to the most irrational of human impulses and emotions. The arrival of an enlightened era will be postponed so long as men are taught theological points of view that are competitive and utterly irreconcilable with the simple and obvious facts of living.

Everywhere in nature we can behold the workings of a Universal Power. It is only within the mental life of man that the sense of this universality has been broken up and obscured. It is in this particular that man is out of harmony with the truth of his own existence; and so long as he remains in this state of error he must suffer the consequences of inharmony.

Neo-Platonism does not teach religious tolerance nor the boasted liberal-mindedness of the modern intellectual. Men are tolerant of that which they secretly despise and liberal toward that about which strong reservations are held. There is no virtue in a grand gesture toward friendliness, nor is there virtue in trying to see the good in something that is inwardly regarded as inferior or irreconcilable. Not tolerance, but genuine understanding is the end desired; for understanding brings with it a complete appreciation, felt and experienced without limit or reserve.

The Neo-Platonist can worship in any shrine, share in the devotions of all men and perceive the identity of their figures of adoration, their symbols, emblems and rites. Having become completely aware of Universal principles, he has truly experienced all gods as one God, and all men as one Mankind. With this conviction in his heart, supported and justified by the noblest thoughts of his own mind, he can make a positive contribution to the enduring brotherhood of man, which is the one remedy for the disasters of our age.

Concerning Knowledge and Things Knowable

The Neo-Platonic approach to the problems of education has the same fundamental: that all particulars must be related to the generals, of which they are a part. The basic

purpose of education is enlightenment in all subjects necessary to the fulfillment of the reasonable expectancies of living. The educator seeks to accomplish this by means of a three-fold program. First, by instructing the student in the traditions of his race, nation, and community. From these traditions the experiences of other times and distant places are made available to the mind to supply an adequate perspective and to orient the individual within the pattern of collective existence. Second, the exact sciences, such as mathematics, discipline the intellect against vagary and indecision and train it to proceed in an orderly manner in the consideration of any problem or circumstance. Third, through the creative arts, the pupil is impelled to the release of internal impulse, so that he can escape from the limitations of that which is already known and extend his consciousness toward the unknown, thus insuring progress in all branches of endeavor.

Education today is largely a process of burdening the faculty of memory with accumulated opinionism. Individual thoughtfulness is penalized rather than encouraged. The tendency is to produce not a thinker, but a rememberer. Memory is important, but its true value is in the qualities of the things remembered. A memory burdened with errors and prejudices can only impoverish the mind.

Neo-Platonism has no argument with formal education but it teaches that static facts must be vitalized with dynamic implications before they can contribute to the development of the human being. Here is where the intangibles and the overtones have a required place in formal education.

Knowledge is a word which implies grasp of the substance of things knowable; to possess knowledge is to be informed. To be informed is, first, to be aware of facts;

and second, to have these facts available for use in daily living. Facts are of two kinds: absolute and relative. Absolute facts are eternal and unchangeable, and relate to Universals. Relative facts are true only under certain conditions or at certain times or in certain places, and therefore relate to particulars.

In the temper of our time it is usual to regard absolute facts as impractical, and relative facts as practical. To be informed in relative fact without being established in certain convictions regarding absolute fact, is the common but dangerous state of the mind that results in our superficial thinking.

Neo-Platonism accepts fully the significance of relative fact, but insists that secondary truth be related to primary truth. This enables the thinker to function from certain immovable foundations by which the basis of his character is clearly defined. Primary fact relates to Universal causes and principles; it is not to be comprehended through study of books or techniques of science. The attainment of primary fact is possible only through the disciplines of philosophy; the seeker of primary fact must subject himself to the philosophic life. He must both study the philosophic method and practice the philosophic virtues. He must elevate his intellect by contemplating the nature of Universals and at the same time discipline his mind against delusion and illusion. Through the contemplative life the consciousness is raised to what the Platonists called "a participation in divinity."

Through this participation man discovers, as an inner experience in consciousness, the true nature of the gods, the harmony of the world, and the structure of Universal laws

within which all creatures live and move and have their being.

Having established the mind firmly in these Universals, the philosopher can then direct his attention to the operation of secondary fact. He is no longer in danger of confusing universals with particulars. He can accept the life of his place and time and still remain a citizen of eternity. He accepts limitation without being deceived by limitation, and all his actions are motivated by a richer understanding. Only a person so informed is suited for leadership. Of him it may be said, as of Francis Bacon, that he "rings the bell which calls the other wits together."

Neo-Platonic reform in education would in no way interfere with the present growth of the arts and sciences, but would relate their growth to the general unfoldment of the world. It would bind knowledge to an adequate purpose; for men could then apply all learning to its reasonable ends —the improvement and perfection of mankind. What we require today is larger motive; devotion to some high principle. Such devotion to primary fact is called idealism, for it continually relates present endeavor to eternal purpose.

Neo-Platonism advocates a philosophy of education. It seeks to bind up the differences of schoolmen, and end forever educational isolationism. All arts and sciences are parts of one knowledge; their various disciplines are all means to a single end—the achievement of enlightenment. Men of different temperaments choose professions and trades according to their likings and abilities, but all self-improvement is motivated by a common impulse and pointed to a common end.

It is usual to regard certain professions or trades as nobler than others, but such a division has no justification. Jacob

Boehme achieved spiritual illumination while working at a cobbler's bench, and Emanuel Swedenborg gained his mystical enlightenment from the study of higher mathematics. Every art, science, trade and craft participates in a spiritual content; there is no essential difference between those things generally regarded as human and those generally regarded as divine.

In the practice of our daily tasks, in that work which is familiar to us, we can discover the Universal laws which are the movers of the world. It is this discovery, this inner experience, that transforms secondary knowledge into primary knowledge. And so, in definition, we may say: to be truly educated one must have discovered Universals through the practice of particulars.

There is no reason why modern education can not restore the ancient vision. Much could be accomplished if the schools of today would merely acknowledge the desirability and usefulness of ideals. It would be a great step forward if the universities would admit that men would be better, more useful citizens, and more likely to achieve security and success if they sought for intangibles and overtones. Until men love the beautiful and serve the good, all formal schooling will fail to produce men truly educated. Proficiency in the technique of knowledge does not produce the civilized human being—even animals can be trained to remember and perform certain actions apparently intelligent. Our world will remain in a state of barbarism until an adequate code of ideals supplies proper incentive to action. This code must come from the contemplation of truths that are superphysical or metaphysical—superior to, or above or beyond the material.

Neo-Platonism as a philosophy is an advanced system of mystical speculation concerning the relationship between human consciousness and Universal consciousness. It rests in the basic formula: human consciousness is suspended from Universal consciousness, in the relationship of a particular to a general. Universal consciousness is the self-awareness of space; human consciousness is the self-awareness of the individual. Both share the common property of awareness, and so are identical in substance, but differ according to magnitude. Neo-Platonism is the basic philosophy of Plato with special emphasis upon its mystical content.

Mysticism teaches the possibility of a direct conscious participation in Universal consciousness. Thus, truth is not discovered by the intellect; it is experienced by the soul.

The purpose of the philosophic method is to condition personal consciousness so that it is capable of the mystic experience of union with Universals. In India this is the special burden of the doctrine of Yoga, which simply means—union.

Neo-Platonism teaches that the gods are modes of Universal consciousness; that is, they are degrees of awareness in space. Humanity is basically also a degree of awareness, and so are all the other kingdoms of Nature. All living things are divided into types and species; first, according to the degree of self-awareness; and second, according to the degree of Universal-awareness. Evolution is the motion toward Universals. For mankind, all growth is measured in terms of the unfoldment of Universal awareness.

Philosophy has never taught the dignity of ignorance. Theology has warned man of the danger of knowledge. The Neo-Platonic masters of Alexandria, Athens, and Rome taught the same sciences and arts that are the basis of modern

schooling. Some of these masters were mathematicians, others were logicians and still others specialized in rhetoric. Not the subject taught, but the way in which it was taught, and the overtones that were communicated by the master to his students, was the real substance of Neo-Platonism. The philosophy itself was the intangible, yet it changed the entire appearance of the tangibles by adapting them skillfully to its own purposes.

Rhetoric, the Art of Self Expression

Rhetoric, for example, is the art of effective speech. By means of rhetorical formulas the classic ancients perfected their systems of oratory and persuasion. Yet how much more is uncovered in this subject if it be approached philosophically. Modern semantics is largely an outgrowth of the Platonic viewpoint on rhetoric. The primary instruments of rhetoric are words, and words are names which we have given to substances and activities. Words are, therefore, symbols; and like all symbols and emblems they are rich in intangibles and overtones. When a thought is put into words it is born into the physical world, and its vitality depends upon the quality of the body within which it is imprisoned. As the human body is often mistaken for the soul which inhabits it, so words are often mistaken for the ideas which they contain. Words, then, are ideas incarnate in bodies of sound; or, if written down, in bodies of letters. In the communication of ideas two hazards exist; the speaker may choose his terms unwisely, or the listener may fail to interpret correctly the words that have been used. Thus, the communication of ideas is far more difficult than might at first appear.

In the course of building up a language, words are borrowed from other dialects and take on new shades of meaning. Also, language is burdened by limitations of time and place, resulting in usage and idiom. The less informed members of society use words without due respect for their meaning, resulting in colloquialism and slang.

Dictionaries are compiled to bring order out of chaos, but the most that they accomplish is to define usage, and this changes from generation to generation. As the semantist points out, a 'hood' was once understood as a covering for the head, but today it is far more likely to be found on the front of an automobile.

When accepting words and interpreting them, the mind always follows the lines of the familiar, that is, popular usage. And so we hear not the intent of the speaker but our interpretation of his intent—qualified by expectancy, personal prejudice and local idiom. This is why it is possible to take the words of the politician and interpret them favorably or unfavorably according to our political leanings. In a similar manner, words of the Bible have been so variously interpreted that nearly two hundred and fifty sects have been able to differ vigorously as to their meaning.

It has been said that no document written in words of more than two syllables or exceeding in length sixteen printed pages will ever change the course of history. The reason is obvious. Short and familiar words, combined in brief sentences, are least susceptible of misinterpretation. If they are misinterpreted, the majority will agree as to the acceptable version.

The study of rhetoric clearly reveals to the thoughtful person that words are entirely inadequate for the communication of mystical truths. Language is built up so completely

by popular usage that we can not have a philosophical language until we have a philosophical world to establish this language by daily use. The ancients, realizing this, had their sacerdotal languages which, since they were used only in the temples, were never corrupted by contact with the materialistic considerations of trade and economics. The continued use of Latin by certain religious groups and some of the learned professions is a survival of the belief in sacred languages.

The ponderous terminology which burdens most of the writings in the exact sciences and academic philosophies is not merely an effort on the part of the authors to appear profound. It is the result of trying to combine words in a pattern which will express exactitude. It marks the failure of popular idiom to meet the requirements of precise definition.

After rhetoric has taught us the fallacy of words, we can better appreciate the mystical viewpoint in learning. The Neo-Platonists believed that the only possible way in which the abstract truths of life could be acquired was by the inner experience of consciousness. The same policy was adopted by the Zen Buddhists, and these Eastern metaphysicians have transmitted their esoteric doctrine for more than a thousand years without the use of the spoken or written word. The Zen disciple must be able to receive instruction through extra-sensory perception—he must 'gather' the thoughts from the mind of his master while in contemplation.

To the student of today who desires to read the books of ancient philosophers, matters of translation and editorship are paramount. For here another factor of error is inserted which can further complicate the already difficult situation. After a book has been filtered through the intellectual pre-

judices of an unsympathetic or uninformed translator it is of little use. The thoughtful reader will do well to avoid those translations which are prefaced, as some are, by the translator apologizing for the ignorance of the original author. One of the first English translations of the Koran was made by a Christian churchman who devoted the opening pages of his book to a violent denunciation of Mohammed and all things Mohammedan. Such an attitude makes it obvious that the translation will be of dubious merit.

In studying Plato, it is impossible to understand any part of his writing without a general comprehension of his philosophy. Some years ago we helped some young men who were preparing a treatise on Plato for their college degree. The treatise dealt only with the *Republic,* the most familiar of Plato's writings, but even so the collegians were having a difficult time with a large part of the text because of its intangibles and overtones. It was explained to them that the text could not be clarified until it was recognized as dealing with a particular suspended from a general. Plato was an Orphic by religion and a Pythagorean by inclination; he can never be interpreted correctly if his words are separated from these large patterns which form the reference frame of his writings.

The meaning of a man's words is not to be found in the words alone, but in the man, his beliefs, and his time. A quotation without the name of its author, a book without a date, and painting without a signature are endless causes of perplexity for the same reason, for lacking these, we cannot be certain of the general from which they are suspended, or the time in which they were produced.

The Neo-Platonic theory of education would meet the challenge of physical uncertainties by elevating the mind to

a broader plane of thinking where the many paths of learning converge and men can commune with causes. The realization of universals is necessary to overcome the innate narrowness and constriction of most of our thinking. When we begin to think broad thoughts we can no longer perform narrow actions. Once the mind is established in principles it can no longer be deceived by the confusion of personalities. In this way, philosophy verges toward politics, and most great spiritual leaders have also been practical idealists on the plane of social problems.

Neo-Platonism applies its rule of generals and particulars to the sphere of politics. It would bring the kingdoms of the earth into harmonic concord with the kingdom of Space. Neo-Platonists dreamed of a world democracy long before the average man knew that there was any world outside of his own community. A world government is the least that can supply the need of our time. Nations may exist within the structure of human society, but nations are particulars; and there can be no peace between them until they are brought into proper relationship with the general in which lies their source and substance. Division may exist within the substance of unity, but that substance itself cannot be divided.

This does not mean that it is necessary or desirable to destroy the identity of nations, or to attempt to impose a single form of government upon various races and tribes. It does mean, however, that an intangible must be established by which races and nations are bound together in a league of essentials. This league cannot be merely a physical institution, as attempted by the Hague conferences and the League of Nations. Both failed for lack of overtones. Unity

had not been experienced as a fact in consciousness; it was merely attempted as something politically desirable.

The present motion in international politics is again toward unity, and we are bringing to the subject a little more of wisdom than was available in the past. But the motion arises from a sense of desperation and not from a true understanding of values. We are trying to create a unity, when in reality that unity has always been present and is the natural state of man.

Through faulty religious training, a shortsighted educational theory, and a competitive economic system, we have obscured the fact of racial identity; we have emphasized secondary diversity above primary unity. Again, it has been a matter of emphasis; we have broken up the world by emphasizing points of difference. To put the world together again we must emphasize points of agreement.

In its attitude toward economics, Neo-Platonism borrows somewhat from the doctrines of Aristotle. The first step in the solution of a problem is to discover the basic principles involved. In this case we are dealing with the principles of barter and of accumulation. Barter involves both primary and secondary considerations. The primary considerations are those which have their origin in Nature; as for example, the unequal distribution of natural resources in various parts of the world. These natural resources influence the arts and crafts of various localities; they set up the condition that different nations possess a surplus of certain materials and a lack of other materials. The Romans, following the trade routes established by Phoenician navigators, bartered for tin along the western coast of Europe. The medieval merchants of Venice traded with Asia for silks, spices, and jade. The first paper to be imported to Europe was brought by camel

caravans from Samarkand. The trade routes were the first thoroughfares of the world, and the cities which sprang up at their junction became important centers of cosmopolitan culture.

Ephesus was one of the great trading centers of the Near East. Here merchants met not only to exchange their goods, but to share the knowledge of world affairs which was available only in these melting pots of commerce. Arts, crafts, sciences and cultures flowed along the highways of commerce and it is only fair to say that such cities as Ephesus cradled democracy, political liberalism, racial tolerance and religious freedom. Products of small value were seldom transported long distances, and the caravans from the east were loaded with luxuries to supply the demands of the rich. A European prince had rare fish, packed in ice, brought from China all the way across the deserts of Mongolia, over the rocky passes of Afghanistan and the arid wastes of Arabia. Most early exploration, from the travels of Ser Marco Polo to the expeditions of Vasco de Gama, Pizarro, and Cortez, were inspired by the hope of plunder, favorable barter, and the development of new trade routes. Thus, wealth, though selfishly inspired, and for the simple motive of personal profit, contributed to the progress of civilization by binding distant parts together.

The Greeks were such æstheticians that they could not ignore the luxuries of living that contributed to the appreciation of beauty. They discouraged extravagance and ostentation, but they admired the fine fabrics of the East and the jewels of Egypt, and permitted a moderate enjoyment of them. They also appreciated that the contacts which trade set up liberalized the mind that was bound by provincialism.

In its simpler form, barter was local. In every city there were market places where various produce was exchanged; later it was bought and sold. To these marts the rustics brought the products of their farms, traded gossip and found expression for the natural human instinct for sharp bargaining. Even today, in most of Asia and the smaller communities of Europe, the market place is a center of social life, and business considerations are secondary to the opportunity for the exchange of small talk and the gathering of relatives and friends. In our own American Southwest, we can also observe this custom. There is the story of an Indian woman who brought in a dozen hand-painted clay pots to sell at twenty-five cents each to passing tourists. A customer offered to buy all twelve at this price, but the Indian woman would not sell, explaining that her principal reason for coming to town was to chat with her friends and to watch the trains go by, and if she sold all her pots she would have no excuse to remain and enjoy the sights and scenery.

While at Nice in the south of France we called at the establishment of a friend who had an agency for a popular motor car, but found his place closed. A shopkeeper of the neighborhood supplied the information that our acquaintance had sold a car about a week before, and would not be around for at least a month. He had taken his family, loaded one of the display cars with food and good wine, and gone forth to enjoy life so long as his sales commission lasted. He had no interest in selling more cars while he had cash in his pocket. This was his usual practice, and his place of business was closed a large part of the time.

In the American view that is unbusinesslike, but in the economic principle, it is quite sound. To the philosopher economics cannot be regarded as a principal purpose for liv-

ing, and those who are slaves to the theory of profit have departed entirely from the natural laws governing barter and exchange. The real purpose of barter is distribution; it is a process devised so that the products of various localities and varying degrees of ingenuity can be distributed in areas where such products are otherwise unavailable.

Examining the impulse to accumulate, it reveals itself as one that has carried over to the human species from the animal. It originated with the seasonal changes in the year and their effect upon the availability of food, for in most parts of the earth foods ripen in the early fall and non-hibernating animals must set up a food supply against the poverty of winter. Some escape this need by migration, but smaller creatures cannot migrate and so have developed an instinct of accumulation. The instinct is preserved even among domestic animals which no longer require this defense against shortage, for we see the family dog still burying its bone and then promptly forgetting where it is hidden.

With the human being the instinct to accumulate has been exaggerated by the social emphasis upon wealth. Things accumulated give temporal power, elevating those who have much into a kind of aristocracy. The corrupting result of the psychology of wealth is evident throughout our social system. Possessions have become the substitute for personal accomplishment. It is here that philosophy has sought to exert a moderating influence. Neo-Platonism did not deny the desirability of possessions, but it emphasized that an immoderate possessive instinct was detrimental both to the individual and to his social order.

Some philosophers, like Diogenes and Socrates, discouraged all personal possessions. They advocated a socialized state with both necessities and luxuries possessed in common

by the community or the nation. This is an extreme attitude and contrary to Nature. For although natural resources are available to all men, human beings do not share equally the impulse to develop these resources. Some men are naturally diligent, others are by temperament indolent, and it is not in accord with natural law that these two extremes should be equally rewarded. Inequality in ability frustrates the ideal of socialized economic equality. All nations that have attempted the experiment of socializing their resources have discovered this fact.

The Universal law of Cause and Effect is expressed in terms of basic economics in the Bible's simple statement, "As ye sow, so shall ye reap." The experience of economic productivity is necessary to both the physical and spiritual security of the individual. But where the accumulative instinct results in setting up an economic state which denies the producer a fair share in the results of his labors, then the basic natural law is violated and disaster is inevitable.

Moderation, the Basis of Integrity

The Neo-Platonists taught moderation in the matter of things possessed, so that the individual might enjoy that which is useful, necessary, and beautiful in reasonable degree. Under no condition, however, was the accumulative instinct to be permitted to dominate the purposes of living, for the life would then be utterly impoverished in the midst of its wealth.

The primary objective in the life of man must be the attainment of the state of enlightenment. This requires that the energies of the mind be devoted primarily to the contemplation of universal truths. The economic factor

must be apprenticed to this principal objective for the individual must maintain himself in the physical world so that he shall not be a burden upon his family or his community. He must fulfill his obligations and preserve himself in a state of well-being appropriate to a philosopher. The mind is strengthened and balanced by problems of physical survival, but these should not assume such importance as to prevent the development of the soul powers.

The universe itself is gradually releasing the human-being from slavery to the bare necessities of living. New found leisure is coming to us gradually; we will have to adapt our living to the new freedom bestowed by scientific progress. We will be liberated from the economic burden to the degree that we can discover a fuller mental and emotional life. Nature will not give us time to waste, but she will bestow time to be used wisely for perfection of the self. Solution to the economic problem will come through the release of soul-power within man himself. When man discovers the Universal principle of living he will no longer over-emphasize those particulars which now dominate his interests.

Neo-Platonism strongly emphasized the individual attainment of the philosophic estate. The members of this sect were scattered through the Mediterranean area and had little contact with each other. Although Proclus and Plotinus, two of the greatest of the Neo-Platonists, maintained schools, it was not held that attendance in any group was essential. Once the primary point of view was accepted the student became his own teacher. He experienced the adventure of becoming wise through the application of simple rules of observation and reflection. As he proceeded, the powers of his own soul were naturally released and these guided him safely and surely to the goal he sought. For

this reason Neo-Platonism is especially practical in our time, when the classical system of teaching is no longer functioning.

The true seeker for soul power is well advised to remain aloof from involvement with questionable sects and organizations. At best these belong in the sphere of particulars. The philosopher seeks union with a Universal ideal, and the limiting influence of sectarianism is opposed to the entire concept of Universal values. Sects have their creeds and these creeds rapidly assume the proportions of dogmas. These dogmas, regardless of their idealistic content, are restrictions imposed upon the free motion of ideas in space. To belong to something not only acknowledges membership, but by this very acknowledgement denies participation in some other belief.

The Self-Taught Philosophers

Ammonius Saccus, the founder of Neo-Platonism, was self-taught; and the entire concept of the doctrine has caused Neo-Platonism to be called the Order of Self-Taught Philosophers. The self-teaching is simple and direct. The student becomes informed either by reading or by direct contacts in the basic principles of the philosophy. This is his ground work and the only parts of his system which may be derived from an outside source. From this point on, he learns by applying principles to their legitimate end; in this way, all particulars can be understood in their relationship to generals. The student thus learns of all things by understanding a few things.

It is said of Plato that his mental genius permitted him to stand in a high place and look down upon the whole

world, seeing all its parts in proper relation to each other. The high place means a state of impersonal detachment from particulars. Once the mind is free from the limitation imposed by the separate phenomena of living things, it is capable of recognizing the Universal principles of life.

The great truth which is the key to Neo-Platonic thinking is that *all life is one.* The work of the student is to discover this, not merely as an intellectual experience but as an experience of consciousness. The discovery is gradual, beginning with simple and familiar objects and evolving step by step to participation in a Universal vision. The search for unity, therefore, is the Neo-Platonic life. It directs the proper motion of the intellect toward the acceptance of an absolute unity.

The second great Neo-Platonic principle is the recognition that good is co-eternal with unity.

Good may be either Universal or particular. Universal good is absolute and unchanging. Particular good is relative and subject to time and place. It is not difficult to accept the abstraction of Universal good, but it is difficult to understand the workings of particular good. This is largely because we interpret the word "good" to mean the pleasurable, or that desirable to the senses or emotions. This tendency must be corrected if the philosophical life is to be maintained.

Good is that which is according to Law; therefore, it is as good that men should die as it is that men should be born.

It is good for us to be unhappy so long as we disobey Universal Law.

It is good that we should not profit by that which we have not earned.

It is good that the unkindness which we harbor toward others should return to us in terms of unkindness.

It is good that we are sick if we have disobeyed the laws of health.

In substance: Things as they are—are good.

If we wish to change the good as it is, to a form of good more desirable to our personal happiness, then we must set in motion the necessary causes to bring about these changes. Here again is a principle which is not easy to apply; it is one that requires years (perhaps lives) of self discipline.

The Neo-Platonic doctrine of the beautiful is closely interwoven in principles of self-responsibility. Beauty is order —the relationship of parts according to the *ideas* or archetypes of relationships. It is the responsibility of the wise man to recognize true beauty by standards that differ from those set up by the uninformed. Beauty is the Universal dynamic pattern and beautiful things are suspended from this Universal as blossoms hanging from a vine. Particular forms of beauty are relative, and change according to time and place. The law is, "That which is good is beautiful."

Philosophical studies produce a marked change in the temperaments of those who devote their lives to the search for wisdom. The equation of temperament, however, can not be entirely eliminated, and so, each of the philosophers was also outstanding as an individual. It is important to realize that wisdom does not destroy human values but enriches and perfects them; the wise man is also a happier and more normal human being.

Most philosophers have developed a keen sense of humor. This is because they have learned not to be overwhelmed by the particulars of daily existence. The mind released from the burden of doubts and fears regarding Providence is

better fitted to enjoy the experience of life. Not fact, but worries about fact, and not illusion, but fears concerning illusion, are the influences that so burden the consciousness that it is no longer able to express a natural optimism about things experienced. The Neo-Platonists have taught that nothing truly disastrous can occur to the human being. Therefore, there is nothing about which the mind should be so concerned that it loses sight of the goodness and beauty of life.

The First Cycle of the Platonic Descent

For this book we have selected eight outstanding philosophers—seven Pagan and one Christian—all of whom were influenced by the Neo-Platonic tradition. Two of them, Diogenes and Socrates, did not belong to the direct descent from Plato; but Socrates was one of the masters at whose feet Plato studied, and Diogenes, as a contemporary Skeptic, had many ideas that closely paralleled the Platonic concept. Diogenes, like Plato, derived his primary inspiration from the ever-flowing fountain of the Orphic wisdom.

After Orpheus, Pythagoras was the principal exponent of Greek mystical philosophy. The Pythagorean doctrines were circulated throughout the Greek state and are to be found, at least in part, in the teachings of most of the Greek thinkers who followed him in time. Socrates received a direct inspiration from the Orphics and a secondary inspiration from the teachings of Pythagoras. In him, therefore, two streams converge and through him they flowed into the Universal capacity of Plato, the greatest philosopher of Western civilization.

Through Plato's disciple, Aristotle, a division was set up, but not in primaries; only in the secondary aspects of knowledge. The great tradition, as adapted by Aristotle, became the foundation of the sciences as they are practiced today.

The Platonic school when deprived of its leadership by the death of Plato, declined in glory and the Platonic doctrines were entrusted to the keeping of other sects and schools. The teachings of Aristotle rose in power because they required a less contemplative mind for perpetuation.

When the Neo-Platonists revived the Platonic wisdom, they established it as a religious discipline, and through them the teachings of the immortal Plato were restored and preserved. From the Neo-Platonists the tradition passed out of the Pagan world and into the rising sphere of Christian influence. The outstanding exponent of Platonic ideology in the Christian world was St. Augustine of Hippo, and with him the first cycle of Platonism may be said to end.

The personality of St. Augustine presented almost insurmountable obstacles to the absorption of philosophic principles. He was a man of violent extremes of thought, emotion, and action. Basically he was a Platonist, but his Platonism became utterly confused with the dogmas of the early Church. Through St. Augustine we gain valuable insight into the problems of indoctrination, for he was never well grounded in Universals as viewed by Plato, and depending upon his superficial grasp of particulars, he fell into the commonest error of philosophy—eclecticism. That is, he attempted to use that which was suitable to his purposes, and rejected that which differed from his primary convictions. As a result he was able to accept such contrary beliefs as the

existence of Universal good and the doctrine of infant damnation.

Through St. Augustine the whole development of the Christian Church took on a Platonic coloring. But the Church confused its dogmas by borrowing indiscriminately from several systems of Pagan philosophy and religion. The Monotheism of the Greeks was combined with the Anthropomorphism of the Jews. The rituals of the Egyptians shared acceptance with the symbols and emblems of the Mithriacs.

It might reasonably be expected that a religion derived from so many sources would have been extremely liberal in its viewpoints. But unfortunately the Church set about the systematic process of denying its indebtedness to other faiths, effacing the records and monuments which contained the accounts of its origin. A broad Platonic foundation was thus not only narrowed, but so completely disfigured that the faith became Universal in name only.

During the Dark Ages philosophy gave way to theology. The theologians accomplished the final mutilation of their own beliefs. The Platonic philosophy passed from Christendom to the Arabic peoples, and Islam was the custodian of the sacred arts of antiquity. Under the Caliphs of Bagdad, classical learning was revived. Greek writings were translated into the Arabian language, and astronomy, mathematics, and geography were especially cultivated. Europe was without Platonism until the great motion of the Renaissance moved across Europe from Byzantium. The cultural restoration which flowed from Constantinople met the stream flowing northward from the Moorish universities of Spain, and the convergence of these streams of basic culture resulted in the revival of philosophy in Europe.

After the decline of the pagan schools of philosophy, the Augustinian Patristics dominated Western thinking for nearly eight hundred years. The intellectual power of the Church attained its fullest expression in the exalted speculations of St. Thomas Aquinas, the Christian Aristotle.

The Reformation cleared the way for the restoration of classical learning and liberated philosophy from bondage to the edicts of the Holy See. Through Lord Bacon the world had a new birth in learning, and the second great cycles of Platonism and Neo-Platonism had their beginning. In Bacon the old mysteries were restored, and through his great text, *Instauratio Magna,* he liberated the intellects of his time from the discordancies of pseudo-Platonic theologians and pseudo-Aristotelian scholastics.

We have prepared a second *Journey in Truth* devoted to the post-Baconian diffusion of the Platonic theology. The mission of the present volume is to establish the universals which made this restoration possible. From universals we can descend to the consideration of particulars by a proper progression of ideas.

2

THE GREAT FOUNDATIONS

Orpheus, Pythagoras and Plato

THE Orphic tradition is the source of the great philosophical systems of the West. It is impossible to understand the teachings of Pythagoras and Plato, or the schools which descended from them, without recourse to the mystical theology attributed to the first Orpheus.

The early Greeks were not a philosophic people and their culture can be described as an aesthetic materialism. The old Gods were luxurious divinities interested primarily in the enjoyment of their Olympian pleasures. There is little of divine justice to be found in the myths and fables of the old Greeks. Rather we find a long and complicated record of elegant misdemeanors, elegantly perpetrated.

The first among the Greeks to receive the title of "The Wise" were the seven men now referred to as the Sophists. Yet only one of these was by nature or acclaim a philosopher. The principal contribution of these men was in the sphere of politics. They were law givers and reformers of the various states in which they lived. They were termed "Wise" because under their leadership and guidance the

communities prospered and the citizens enjoyed larger privileges and more of personal and collective security.

About 600 B. C. while Peisistratus was ruling in Athens, a mystical sect came into prominence, claiming descent from the bard Orpheus, a semi-legendary figure belonging to a much earlier time. This sect celebrated nocturnal rites and performed sacred dramas based upon ancient myths and legends. The members were bound with obligations and practiced esoteric disciplines to purify the body, mind, and soul.

Although it is usual to consider Orpheus a mystical character it is probable that he really lived some time prior to the 12th century B. C. In fact, several religious leaders with the same name and flourishing in different centuries have been confused into one person. This accounts for the conflicting stories which have descended to us about his life and achievements.

The Orphics appear to have been the first among the Grecians to attribute secret and sacred philosophical meaning to the Hellenic mythology. They taught that the gods and heroes were to be understood as Universal Laws and Principles. In this way they purified the religious thought of the Greeks, elevating the theology from a literal to an allegorical plane. From the time of the Orphics to the present day this practice of seeking mystical content in all forms and symbols has played an increasing part in the religious experience of the race.

The Orphic Theology

The name Orpheus is from a Greek word meaning "dark." Most authorities have assumed that the term ap-

plied to the obscurity of the Orphic tradition. Truly the rites were dark and hidden and the profane were not permitted to approach the sacred groves where the orgies of the Black God were enacted with the uncertain light of smoking torches.

It is quite possible that the word "dark" indicated that Orpheus was dark of skin. His teachings certainly were imported from Asia and there is much to suggest that the bard himself was an oriental.

There was very little formal organization in the Orphic cult. It never assumed the proportions of a world religion nor did it gain any great ascendency even among the Greeks. It was a spirit rather than a sect. The principles it taught were far too abstract to capture the popular fancy, and its devotees were derived principally from the intellectual minority. Orphism is so interwoven with the other elements of the Greek cultural pattern as to be indistinguishable from the rites of Eleusis or the rituals of Dionysios.

Both Pythagoras and Plato were Orphics but it is difficult to determine the full measure of what this implies. In some way the Orphic theology served as the foundation for these noble systems of philosophical idealism which rose in Greece between the 6th and the 3rd century B. C. The answer to the riddle may lie in the power of imagination directed by spiritual conviction.

Consider the case of the Greek poet Homer who flourished about the 9th century B. C. It would not appear that Homer was lacking in imagination. Certainly he embellished the wanderings of Odysseus with a variety of extravagant flights of fancy. Always however, he presents fable as fact. He induces us to believe that the Cyclops were actually a race of one-eyed giants, and that Circe actually

transformed men into swine. Again Hesiod, the Greek Epic poet, who lived about two centuries after Homer, describes the drama of the creation of the Gods and the world in language of magnificent proportion but always the implication is present that the events occurred exactly as Hesiod narrates them. The Titians fought in space for dominion over nature. Zeus emerged to become a tyrant over the world of form. The Olympian throne was set up, and the gods and godlings took on the attributes of human aristocrats with super-human means of attaining their purposes.

Thus while fantasy was abundant, true imagination was lacking; so long as the gods belonged to a heaven born race their activities were of historical rather than of philosophical interest. It remained for the Orphics to break down this system of spiritual materiailsm by supplying a mystic key to unlock the Hellenic theogony. Religion was no longer a worship of a divine history. It was the interpretation of a divine mystery. The Gods had to be discovered as experiences of consciousness. The mythical histories were revealed as spiritual, philosophical, and moral fables. The inquiring mind was challenged to interpret these fables. Naturally this bestowed a powerful emphasis upon abstract speculation and was responsible for the almost immediate rise of the Greek schools of speculative philosophy.

It is frequently asked how it came to pass that in three centuries the Greek states produced nearly 600 philosophers whose accomplishments were to change the intellectual life of all time. It was Orphism that made this possible. It released a group of mental faculties which had not previously been challenged by problems of abstract thinking.

Symbolism is an important branch of abstract learning. Symbols challenge. They irritate the mind into seeking an explanation. In this way they are more important than a literal statement of the fact. What we are told, we may accept even without thought. The symbols strengthen the mind by forcing the intellect to apply its inherent energies to the solving of a riddle. Once convinced that their elaborate mythology was a veil concealing an all important spiritual content, the Greek intellectuals attacked the riddle with every faculty at their disposal, and the result was a golden age of intense intellectual activity.

Fifteen centuries later Christianity revived the Orphic formula with similar results. A strong mystical movement arose in the church to oppose the literalism of early theologians. It is now regarded as quite orthodox, for example, to regard the life of Christ as more than a historical account. It has become the symbol of the Christian life, a proper subject for pious meditation and interpretation.

To summarize Orphic mysticism is to state the foundation of Greek philosophy and aesthetics. Space and spirit are identical, creation is a motion in consciousness. The gods are the faculties of the Universal mind. The physical universe is the mortal body of an immortal divinity. Humanity is a degree or level of spiritual activity within the consciousness of God. Religion is the science of approaching God by the inner experience of realization. Philosophy is the discovery of the divine plan through the intellectual contemplation of nature and man. Science is the accumulation of physical facts which bear witness to the operation of divine law in the material world. Always the end to be attained is the discovery of the nature of First Cause. The Universe itself is a symbolical representation of the substance and

power of God. The master science is the science of interpreting correctly the world symbolism to discover the substance from its own shadow.

Pythagoras of Samos

The first great exponent of the Orphics was Pythagoras of Samos. With him therefore, naturally begins our story of the descent of the divine tradition. Pythagoras lighted his torch from the altar fire of the Orphics and each generation that followed after has preserved the Pythagoric flame. From Pythagoras to Emerson there has been an unbroken line of idealistic philosophers who have sought to read from the symbolism of nature the will and way of the Creating Power.

Shepherds tending their flocks on the rocky sides of Mt. Paranassus observed the curious antics of their goats when they came to the edge of a large volcanic fissure on the southwestern spur of the mountain. The animals would jump about as though mad and many threw themselves into the chasm and perished. According to legend, it was at Mt. Parnassus that Apollo slew the god, Python, and cast the body of the enormous serpent into the Delphic chasm. The vapors that rose through the chimney-like vent came from the decaying body of the snake. A temple was built over the chasm and an order of Priestesses appointed to serve the god who dwelt in the strange fumes. It was in this way that the Oracle of Delphi came into existence.

The Priestess seated herself over the vent on a golden stool with three legs, called the Tripod. Intoxicated by the fumes she entered into a trance or ecstasy of divination and delivered the oracle in hexameter verse. The attendant priests recorded her words, and these were interpreted according to mystical formulas.

The Oracle of Delphi is one of the most difficult to explain of the wonders of antiquity. The revelations given by the god, Apollo, among the noxious vapors, were accepted as both profound and unfailingly true.

About the year 580 B. C., a man named Mnesarchus, said to be a cutter of precious stones, journeyed from Syria to transact business in the city of Delphi. His wife accompanied him, and while at Delphi they decided to consult the Oracle to see whether the Fates promised a favorable journey home.

The Pythian priestess of the Oracle ignored the question the couple had come to ask and instead, solemnly announced from the Tripod that Parthenis was then with child and that she would give birth to a son destined to excell all men in wisdom and beauty. This child, she foresaw, would devote his whole life to the benefit of mankind and would attain immortal honors that would be remembered to the end of history.

Mnesarchus, astonished and impressed by the Oracle, changed his wife's name to Pythasis in honor of the priestess; and when the child was born he was named Pythagoras to signify that his advent had been prophesied by the Pythian Apollo.

The Greeks recognized three orders of human souls, classified according to natures or qualities. The first order was that of Essential Heroes who were described as the perpetual attendants of the gods; they were the order of world sages born out of the divine nature to fulfill the will of the gods. The second order was that of the Terrestrial Heroes; these possessed a high degree of impassivity and purity and formed the Golden Chain of Homer, which binds the earth

to the Olympian state. Hercules, Thesus, Pythagoras, and Plato were terrestrial heroes. Though not actually divine, they possessed divine powers and virtues, and were born into the mortal state principally to benefit less advanced human beings. The third order was simply called corporeal; it contained those human souls who descended with intemperate passions and appetites and lacked the virtue of purity. It was to redeem these, that the terrestrial heroes were born.

Mnesarchus, returned home, took the profits of his journey and built a temple to Apollo, within which he set up an inscription bearing the words spoken by the Oracle.

Unfortunately, little is preserved for us about the childhood of Pythagoras. As an infant, one year old, he was taken to the temple of Adonai in the valley of Liban to be blessed by the high priest and consecrated to Apollo. On that occasion the hierophant spoke thus to the mother of the child: "Oh, woman of Ionia, thy son will be great by knowledge, but remember that if the Greeks possess the science of the gods, the science of God is found only in Egypt." In latter life Pythagoras declared that he remembered this solemn occasion and could repeat the words of the priest.

Mnesarchus resolved that his son should enjoy every opportunity for the improvement of his mind, and as there were no distinguished teachers in the vicinity of his home, Pythagoras was sent to other communities for his education. Some say that Hermodamas was his first teacher, but others give to Pherecides this honor. Pherecides of Syros was an Orphic, and is said to have been the first among the Greeks to teach the doctrine of reincarnation. Both Cicero and St. Augustine acknowledge that he was the earliest to publicly assert the immortality of the human soul.

The youth also spent many days with the priests of Samos who instructed him in all matters relating to the gods and religion. So great was his devotion to learning that by his eighteenth year his fame extended throughout the Greek states. It was about this time that his father died, and soon afterwards Pythagoras began his travels into distant countries in search of knowledge.

As a young man, Pythagoras excited the admiration of the learned by the majesty of his person and the quiet dignity of his mind. His body was described as without fault or blemish and his face was likened to that of Apollo. Strangers meeting him on the road fell to their knees, believing themselves to be in the presence of a superhuman being. Because of his personal habit of permiting his hair to go uncut he was nicknamed the "Long Haired Samian."

Among the first of the learned that Pythagoras visited in his travels were Thales, of Miletus, and Bias, of Priene, both men of great renown. Thales was the first upon whom the title, Sophist, was conferred. Thales was in advanced age when Pythagoras visited him. Apologizing for his years and 'the inabilities of his body,' Thales urged Pythagoras to sail into Egypt and associate with the priests of Jupiter; if the young man would do this, he would become the wisest and most divine of mortals. Thales also instructed him in the simple personal disciplines of a scholar: to live frugally, refrain from personal attachments, and serve the good.

Pythagoras then began the journeys which took him to the furthermost parts of the then known world and brought him into contact with most of the great religious and philosophical systems of his time. He went to Phoenicia and from there to Sidon where he conversed with prophets descended from Moses. Thence he journeyed to Egypt

where he presented letters to Amasis, king of the two empires, and the Pharaoh gave him credentials to the priests of Heliopolis. But these men were jealous of their sciences and would not initiate Pythagoras into their Mysteries; they dispatched him to Memphis, and there the masters sent him to the ancients of Diospolis. Because Pythagoras carried the letters from the king, the priests of the various temples could not refuse to receive him, but it is evident that they had resolved among themselves to discourage his efforts to join their orders.

It is said that he waited at the gate of the shrine at Heliopolis for seven years. Each day he asked admission and each day he was refused. The priests were finally convinced of the sincerity of his dedication to learning and he was received into all of their temples, initiated into the most sublime of their Mysteries, and accorded honors never previously given to any person of another race.

Pythagoras remained in Egypt, in all, twenty-five years. He then journeyed to Babylon and discoursed with the Magus Nazaratus. Some affirm that he studied with the last of the Zoroasters, the fire priests of Persia. From Babylon he went on to Crete and Sparta; and then made his celebrated journey to the Far East.

According to records preserved by the Brahmins, Pythagoras reached India, and there was initiated into the Brahmanic rites in the cave temples at Ellora and Elephanta; he is believed to be the only non-Hindu of ancient or modern times to be accepted into full membership.

Pythagoras also studied with the Arabs, the Chaldeans, and the Druid priests of Gaul. In every place that he visited he sought out the most learned, discoursed with them and compared their doctrines. In the end, after initiation into

fourteen systems of world religions, he solemnly asserted that all were identical in principle, serving the same God, teaching the same virtues, and practicing the same esoteric disciplines.

Pythagoras was about fifty years old when he resolved to establish his own school. He migrated to Crotona, a Dorian colony in Southwestern Italy, a place of good soil and temperate climate. The natives, once a strong and courageous people, had been ravished by wars, and a general demoralization had set in, leading to all forms of intemperance. Pythagoras resolved to restore the glory of Crotona and bring its citizens back to their hardy standard of living. He lectured first to the young men in the Gymnasium, and the substance of his opinions on a number of subjects has been preserved.

He recommended that the city build a temple to the Muses to inspire greater admiration for the cultivation of mental pursuits. He advised the women to turn from the consideration of luxury of apparel and adornment to the perfection of the virtues. So eloquent were his words that the matrons gave their valuable possessions to the temple of Juno and set up new goals in intellectual attainments. He taught veneration for the gods and insisted that the community live according to the laws of democratic equality: "Equality never begets war, and a city should exceed its neighboring states only in honesty and justice. Judges who wink at the offenses of the wicked, render themselves accomplices in their crimes."

Among his precepts were these: The names of the gods should never be abused by an oath. The husband should be faithful to his wife, and the wife loyal to her husband; failure in this will destroy a civilization. Intemperance caused the war between the Greeks and the Tojans, and so

both were wretched. Idleness corrupts morals and reduces man's respect for himself.

"Advice," said Pythagoras, "is a sacred thing, and you have reason to value it; but 'tis not so sacred as praise; for advice relates only to men, and praise is the portion of the gods, to whom alone it is peculiarly due. If you would, therefore, deserve praise, you must endeavor to resemble the gods."

The substance of a lecture given by Pythagoras on the subject of virtue is typical of his moral viewpoints: "Riches are a weak anchor, and glory yet a weaker; beauty and strength of body, posts, dignities, authority and reputation are anchors too, but most brittle and faithless. What then are the good anchors? Piety, prudence, magnanimity and courage. These are the anchors no tempest can loosen or unmoor: For such is the law of God, that there shall be no true strength in anything but virtue, and all the rest shall be weakness and misery."

To the pious ladies of the community he made the following suggestion: "Offer nothing to the gods but that which you make with your own hands and can lay on the altar without the assitance of anyone: Offerings ought neither to be rich nor noble, but the simple evidence of thoughtfulness and devotion."

Such admonitions of course had a deep effect upon the citizens of Crotona and the magistrates of the city became worried lest Pythagoras should aspire to tyranny and attempt to make himself ruler of the community. So they called him before a session of their council, demanding an account of his conduct and a statement of his motives. The master spoke to them in words so gentle and noble that their fears were changed to the greatest confidence, and they ended by

pleading with him to take part in the affairs of State and give his advice in all matters that concerned the public good.

For a time Pythagoras acted as chief justice. He delivered his verdicts with such profound knowledge of the spirit of law that hardened criminals repented of their crimes while standing before him and confessed not only their present faults but all the misdeeds of their lives. Some fell on their knees before him and begged his forgiveness as though he were a god. In this phase of his career he admitted that he depended considerably on his knowledge of physiognomy, for he was able to read the character of men from the shapes of their faces, the lines upon them, and the expression which showed through their eyes.

The Pythagorean Academy at Crotona

But after a period the master turned his full attention to the development of his own school, for disciples were coming from all parts of the Near East, and even from furthermost Asia, to study with him. Immediate disciples numbered about six hundred at the time he developed the plan for his philosophical institution; some were students, others disciples of various teachers, and still others were masters in their own right, having fulfilled all the requirements of the graduated teacher. Pythagoras appointed these masters as leaders of various groups studying the physical, religious, and metaphysical sciences, thus developing a faculty much as the modern university does.

His school was divided into two general classes, called 'Pythagoreans' and 'Pythagorists'. The Pythagoreans were the *coenobitae,* the brothers who had everything in common, and they lived together in the institute and shared all their

worldly goods. When they entered this grade they presented to the school all their money and property; but if for any reason they departed later from the institution everything was returned to them. The second order, the Pythagorists, attended the lectures but retained possession of their own property; they lived in the locality of the school, enjoying most of its benefits as they continued to practice their trades, and raise their families, but with avowed devotion to the person and teachings of Pythagoras.

There was also a third group called the Acousmatics, or auditors. These merely attended the lectures, and among them were visitors and others who were not able to remain long in the community. Nicomachus tells of more than two thousand Acousmatics present at a single lecture.

Pythagoras admitted women to his school on the same basis as men and with equal opportunity for advancement to all the grades. The Greeks encouraged the education of women, but it was unusual for them to receive complete equality in the Mysteries. So this must be regarded as an outstanding feature of the Pythagorean disciplines.

The Acousmatici may be regarded as the exoteric order. The Mathematici were the esoteric group. Members of the two grades were not permitted to reveal the secret instruction to any persons of lower degree. If for any reason one of the coenobitae decided to depart from the school or was dismissed for failure to obey its rules, a gravestone was erected for him in the cemetery of the brotherhood and he was referred to as one dead. The only exception was, if he departed with the full sanction and authority of the brothers, as for example, to teach in some distant place.

Much has been made by modern scoffers of the point that Pythagoras discoursed to his exoteric disciples from behind

a curtain, and the students were not permitted to see him until they had received initiation into the higher degrees. This part of the ritual was entirely symbolical. There is no doubt that he was known personally to all his disciples, and to all the grades of the school. The purpose of the curtain was to indicate to the uninitiated that the source of all truth is hidden, but the informed may perceive the sublime source of learning.

When Pythagoras visited Leo, king of Peloponnesus, he had a long discussion with this ruler. Deeply impressed by the wisdom and eloquence of the philosopher, the king asked: "What profession do you follow?" Pythagoras answered: "None, I am a philosopher." Leo was surprised, for he had never heard the word philosopher; but Pythagoras explained to him that he had created the term, meaning 'one who loves wisdom,' because he would not assume the title of Sophos, meaning 'The Wise,' which he regarded as arrogant.

"What then," Leo enquired, "is the difference between a philosopher and other men?" The master explained the point in the following way: "This life may be compared to the famous assembly that is held every fourth year for the celebration of the Olympic games. Some come to these games in search of glory and the crowns that are the rewards of the victors; others come in search of gain from buying, selling, or hiring out merchandise; and a third sort, more noble than the rest, come neither for applause nor profit, but for the pleasure of beholding a great and wonderful spectacle. In like manner, when we leave our own country which is the heavenly world, and journey into the material estate, we assemble as in a public meeting. Some come to seek glory, others profit, and a small number come to enjoy the spectacle,

to study nature and to learn all things than can be known. These are the ones that I call philosophers."

Much has been noted of the extraordinary personal self-control which Pythagoras exhibited on all occasions. He was never known to be angry, unkind, quick tempered, or impatient. He was humble in the presence of men whose knowledge was less than his own, and would devote many hours to solving the problems of farmers, merchants or anyone who was in difficulty. This gentleness of spirit is said to have resulted from a tragic incident which occurred in the early years of his teaching. A particularly dull-witted student returned again and again with the same question, and seemed unable to comprehend even the simplest parts of philosophy. Pythagoras was patient for a long time; but at last weary with the opacity of the young man's mind, rebuked him severely for his slowness. The youth, who adored Pythagoras, and simply lacked the capacity to understand, was heart-broken and drawing a knife from his cloak killed himself at the master's feet. From that time to the end of his life, Pythagoras never rebuked any man for any reason.

It is usual to attribute supernatural powers to great men of the ancient world. Many miraculous occurences are associated with the name of Pythagoras. That he exercised extraordinary powers over animals is instanced in his contact with the Dauninan bear, a marauder from the mountain forest, who pillaged the countryside and attacked humans. Pythagoras promised he would speak to the beast on the matter. So one day he walked over to the ferocious brute, stroked her head, gave her some fruits and food, and made her promise that she would never again touch any living creature. The bear, fully repentant, retired to the forest and

never afterward assaulted the farmers or raided their flocks.

On another occasion he called an eagle from the sky, and it lit upon his shoulder. He also persuaded an ox to give up a diet of beans.

He foretold earthquakes, shipwrecks, and described incidents occurring at a distance.

It is reported that once he discoursed to two groups of disciples at the same time, although they were several hundred miles apart. Such reports have caused Pythagoras to be regarded as an impostor and a charlatan by modern writers who have little patience with the accounts of his miracles.

The school of Pythagoras usually accepted disciples only after severe personal tests and trials to determine the courage, fortitude, and mental acuteness required of candidates. In some instances these rules were relaxed, usually in the case of persons possessing some extraordinary gift of character though lacking the other requirements. It was customary to impose five years of silence upon all novices, but even with this rule in force, one hundred and fifteen women passed the test successfully. It is reported that after this long discipline over speech, many of the disciples remained silent for the rest of their lives, having learned that it is more profitable to listen than to speak. Centuries later, Apollonious of Tyana voluntarily assumed this obligation of silence, because he desired to make himself a Pythagorean. While under the vow he was called upon to quell a riot, and he went before the frenzied mob and restored order merely with the use of his eyes.

A day in the institute at Crotona opened with the gathering of the disciples to greet the rising sun with a hymn to Apollo. Each then took his morning walk in silence and alone. Then they bathed and engaged in athletics until

breakfast, usually in groups of not more than ten. After breakfast they proceeded in silence to the auditorium, where they gathered in groups about their teachers, and took up the discourse of the day. The noonday meal was bread, honey, and olives. In the afternoon they practiced in the Gymnasium or assembled in small groups to discuss the work of the morning. At sunset a prayer was offered and they sang hymns to the twelve sovereign gods. The evening meal, which was taken before sunset, consisted of a variety or foods and included wine and some meat. They rarely ate fish. In the evening young members read aloud and their elders made appropriate comment.

During the day the disciples wore white garments, and at night slept on clean white beds. They used no wool.

Two special disciplines were in common practice among them. In the morning they meditated upon the work of the day and planned even the smallest detail of personal conduct. In the evening they practiced a retrospection, in which they reviewed all they had learned or experienced, and incorporated these incidents into the general structure of their learning.

It is believed that some of the more advanced disciples refrained entirely from flesh food and wine, but there is some doubt as to whether this was arbitrary or optional. It is not certain whether or not Pythagoras was a vegetarian. None of the members of the school were permitted to eat beans, but this discipline was probably a symbol, because beans were a means of lottery, and Pythagoras taught that nothing in the world happened by chance.

Pythagoras was about sixty years of age at the time of his marriage. His wife was Theano, daughter of Brontinos of Crotona. She was a young woman of great personal

beauty and learning, and one of the disciples of his school. After the death of the master, Theano, a great authority on mathematics and the doctrine of numbers, succeeded her husband for a time as head of the Pythagorean order.

According to Stanley, in his *History of Philosophy,* three sons and four daughters were born of the marriage. Two of the sons, Mnesarchus and Telanges, became renowned teachers, including among their disciples, Empedocles and Hippoborus. Both of these sons became head masters of the Pythagorean sect. To Damo, one of his daughters, Pythagoras entrusted the keeping of his esoteric manuscripts, with the admonition that she was not to communicate them to any who were not within the family. She was true to her trust although scholars offered large sums for the writings.

After Pythagoras died, his widow, Theano, married Aristeaus, a high initiate of the Pythagorean school. By unanimous accord it was acknowledged that he was worthy, both to succeed the founder and to educate his children. It was after the death of Aristeaus that the sons of Pythagoras became leaders of the sect.

Ancient writers especially mention two servants or slaves belonging to the master. One was with him from childhood and was regarded as a friend and member of the household rather than a servant; his name is not recorded. The other slave, Zamolxis, was a man of great strength and courage. On at least one occasion Zamolxis defended his master from physical violence at danger to his own life. Pythagoras instructed both of his slaves in the doctrines of philosophy and initiated them into the Mysteries of his school. He freed both of them during his lifetime, and they became distinguished teachers, fully justifying his belief in their mental superiority.

Historians tell us that Pythagoras continued in his school for thirty-nine years, and the length of his life is variously recorded as from eighty-five to one hundred years. He died of no ailment, was never ill, and to the end showed no indication of the infirmities usual to his years. Nearing his eightieth birthday he defeated a youth of twenty in a foot race. It was his belief that ignorance and dissipation, and not age, destroyed the body.

It was usual for the philosophers of his school to select the time and circumstances for their own deaths. When for reasons of infirmities or great age they felt that the body was no longer capable of sustaining the mind in the fullness of its faculties, they would retire to a neighboring temple and permit themselves to die of starvation.

The manner by which Pythagoras himself met his death is obscured by a number of contradictory accounts. The most common and accepted story involves a certain Cylon, an aristocrat. He sought admission to the inner sodality, but was unable to pass the examinations; he possessed no aptitude for higher learning, nor did he cultivate the moral or physical virtues. His was an evil disposition and a revengeful spirit, and when he was refused initiation into the brotherhood at Crotona his rage knew no bounds. Thereafter, he concentrated on the destruction of the master and his school. Favored by his wealth and worldly position he agitated the populace against Pythagoras and finally one day led a revolt against the philosopher and his disciples. A mob of hired vandals descending upon the school, burned its buildings to ruins. Pythagoras and about forty of his closest disciples are said to have perished in the flames.

According to another account, the school was burned and Pythagoras was pursued, to be killed a short time later.

In still another story the house in which the disciples were gathered was set afire and they plunged into the flames to make of their bodies a living bridge across which the master escaped to safety.

There are other reports that he was miraculously saved and died later in a distant country. The more probable explanation is that Pythagoras perished in the flames that destroyed his life work.

Among some old records I have come across one which states that Pythagoras was crucified, and that figures of him hanging from a cross were well known among the ancient Greeks. It is reported that these figures were destroyed by the early Church, and every method used to erase the story from historical records because it conflicted with the dramatic symbolism of the death of Christ.

After the burning of Crotona the Pythagorean sect passed through numerous persecutions and vicissitudes. The brotherhood was scattered, and though it retained a general organization under Theano, then Aristeaus, and finally the sons of Pythagoras, it never regained its original splendor. Independent schools were founded in various places by the disciples and these passed on the esoteric traditions to successors selected from among their students. As all were vowed to secrecy, the traditions were to cease if no suitable disciples could be found. And in less than three centuries the order completely vanished.

It is because of this persecution that the Pythagorean doctrines are so difficult to restore for the benefit of modern thinkers. Plato offered a large purse for one partly burned book that had been rescued from the ashes at Crotona. And the Neo-Pythagoreans of Alexandria, a sect which flourished about the 2nd Century, A. D., made every possible effort to

restore the lost learning. Their efforts, however, were for the most part ineffectual.

It is said that none of the Pythagoreans ever referred to the master by his name during his lifetime. It was the mark of their profound respect for his intellect, which was beyond name, and for his virtues which were above any mortal appellation. When speaking of him his friends would say, "The *Divine* has so instructed us." After his death his name was used occasionally, but it was more customary to refer to him as 'That Man'. While this practice reflected the honor in which he was held, it has made it exceedingly difficult to distinguish his words or doctrines among the writings of his followers and admirers. The teachings of several prominent Pythagoreans have been collected and arbitrarily attributed to the master; the celebrated *Golden Verses* is an example.

It is usual to liken the structure of Greek classical learning to the Tripod of Delphi, the golden stool with three legs. The three great minds which support the philosophic throne are those of Orpheus, Pythagoras, and Plato, representing the three essential departments of divine learning. In this philosophic triad, Orpheus was the priest, Pythagoras was the scientist, and Plato was the philosopher, with religion, philosophy, and science accepted as the three aspects through which Eternal Truth is manifested in the mortal world.

Mathematics, The Divine Science

Pythagoras is called the scientist because of his incessant emphasis upon the laws governing mathematics, astronomy, and music. In all of these departments he made important

discoveries which have contributed to the general knowledge of humankind.

In the teachings of Pythagoras, mathematics was the master science and the key to all heavenly and earthly knowledge. He divided mathematics into two parts, theoretic and practical. Theoretic arithmetic was devoted to the philosophy of numeration. Practical arithmetic was the sequences of numbers out of number. Here we have the original of the Platonic doctrine of ideas—intellectual conceptions precede all physical facts.

The simplest way to understand the Pythagorean category of number is to show the method as it applies to the numeral *one* (1). In the divine order of number, which he called numeration, *one* (1) signifies unity, that which is indivisible; the first, the whole, and the summit of number. To think philosophically about *one* (1), is to become aware of the oneness of things; and this oneness is unity; and unity is the philosophical one.

In the sphere of numbers, the one no longer signifies unity, rather, it signifies only the first, or that which is separate from all other things. Thus, the philosophy of number is lost in practical arithmetic, and it, one, becomes the opposite of its own principle.

When a man says, "I am that one," he means that he is a particular person, different from all other persons, the source and center of his own personality. Thus, unity is the divine understanding of oneness; and individuality is the human understanding of oneness.

And so with all the other numbers. As numerations, they are principles. As numerals, they are symbols of division.

Pythagoras taught an esoteric science of numbers which he had learned from the Egyptian priests, who represented their gods by mathematical formulas and symmetrical geometric solids. This profound system of philosophic symbolism was lost to the world through the destructive crime of the vindictive Cylon. Many efforts have been made to restore this Greek system of cabala. Modern numerology is based upon older speculation on this subject. Unfortunately, modern numerology, though often referred to as a Pythagorean doctrine, is Pythagorean in spirit only; the particulars of the science have not descended from the master or his immediate disciples. Pythagoras is the true author of many of the mathematical propositions attributed to Euclid, including the celebrated 47th proposition.

In astronomy, Pythagoras was one of the first to teach the heliocentric system when he declared that the planets move about the flaming altar of the sun. He anticipated Socrates when he taught that the bodies of the world gods (planets) were spherical. He also experimented in the abstract problems of the earth's curvature. He believed in the existence of a second planet in the orbit of the earth declaring that it was invisible because it remained 180 degrees from the earth in the orbit, and was therefore always concealed by the sun. These reflections were prodigious for a man of his time.

The best known of the Pythagorean astronomical theories relate to celestial harmonics, the music of the spheres. Pythagoras believed that each of the planets moving through space produced a sound, and that these sounds differed according to the rate of motion and the magnitude of the planet's bulk. A lesser known phase of this subject was his conviction that the sidereal harmonics resulted not merely

from the tones of the planets themselves, but from the intervals which separated the orbits of the planets from each other. It is said of him, he alone of mortals could listen to the harmony of the worlds.

In music, Pythagoras was the discoverer of the harmonic scale, as already mentioned.

Pythagoras stretched a number of cords, and attaching to each a different weight was able to progress these weights by mathematics. When the mathematical formula was perfect the strings were in harmonic ratio with each other, and the important intervals of the third, the fifth, and the octave became apparent. Until the time of Pythagoras all Greek music was melodic. But after his day harmonic music increased rapidly in popularity.

The medical discoveries of this great master included research in color therapy, vibratory therapy, and other treatment of disease by counter-irritants. It is said he wrote a treatise on the medicinal virtues of the sea onion, but unfortunately this is lost. The Pythagoreans disapproved of the use of surgery except in the matter of wounds received on the field of battle, and they would not permit the dissection of the dead. Like the other more learned of the Greeks, they held the human body to be a divine structure, the temple of a living spirit, which should not be desecrated by a surgeon's knife. For the relief of internal disorders they depended principally upon poultices and ointments.

The artistic canons of Leonardo da Vinci, perpetuated in modern art in the theories of dynamic symmetry, can be traced to the Pythagorean mathematical formulas concerning the proportions of the bodily structure. Pythagoras developed a chart which was used to discover the development of

the soul through measuring the proportions of the human figure.

The most sacred symbol of the sect was a pyramid of ten dots, called the tetractys. These dots were arranged in four rows in the following design.

The most binding oath of the fraternity was taken upon this symbol. Theaon of Smyrna has preserved the words of this oath: "By Him who gave to our soul the tetractys, which hath the fountain and root of ever-springing nature."

The dots in the symbol represent the order of the numbers, and the first three dots were especially sacred, as signifying the perfect order of the divine plan. The first dot represented unity; the second, diversity, and the third, equilibrium. As the number one (1) was held in peculiar veneration, the number two (2) was regarded with special abhorrence. When a Pythagorean referred to the number two, he would spit upon the ground; for to his mind this number represented all division and discord.

The Pythagoreans also venerated the tetrahedron—the symmetric solid composed of four equilateral triangles. As four is the least number of surfaces that can enclose an area, this symmetric solid was appropriately the symbol of the World Mystery.

Pythagoras, like most of the Greeks, practiced divination. He formulated a wheel of numbers and letters by which he

could predict future events and analyze character. He believed that brass possessed oracular powers, because when all else was silent a curious rumbling could be heard in brass bowls. He learned hydromancy from the Egyptians, and once addressed a prayer to the spirit of a river. When he had finished, a strange voice rose out of the water, saying, "Pythagoras, I greet thee." He also predicted from the flight of birds, and from the entrails of sacrificed animals.

Thirty-nine of the symbolic sayings attributed to Pythagoras were gathered by Iamblichus, who attempted to interpret them. There is some doubt as to the origin of these aphorisms, but certainly they were circulated among the later Pythagoreans as statements of the master. A few of these sayings will indicate the general trend of all:

Declining from the public ways, walk in unfrequented paths. This may be interpreted as an admonition to seek truth not according to traditional methods, but rather by searching according to personal conviction. There is also the implication of cultivating solitude, and the practice of solitary meditation.

Receive not a swallow into your house. By a swallow may be implied erratic thought, which must not be permitted to find lodging in the mind. Also this bird may represent a person of superficial mind, who should not be permitted to abide in the place of the learned.

Assist a man in raising a burden; but do not assist him in laying it down. Iamblichus explained the meaning of this saying thus: We should assist those who would attempt to take on greater responsibilities, either mental or physical, but we should never assist any who seek a way of indolence or easy living.

Speak not about Pythagoric concerns without light. This admonition was given to all disciples of the brotherhood. It is a natural weakness to assume the importance of our own knowledge, even when our thoughts are imperfect or incomplete. In the Pythagorean school, only the masters were permitted to teach; the disciples were expected to remain silent until their knowledge had been perfected.

Pythagoras was much given to solitude and he frequently departed into the desert to meditate and pray. He took along as food honey and a kind of cheese, the formula of which he had received from the gods. He encouraged his disciples to similar meditation, but warned them against assigning any virtue to solitude unless it was commanded by internal convictions. Like the Oriental masters, he reproved those who, believing imitation a virtue, attempted to copy his ways.

Although little has descended to us about the personal disposition of the master, it is known that he had a manner serene, gracious, and kindly, and on occasions a brilliant sense of humor. A man of small learning once asked Pythagoras which was the most important, the sun or the moon. The master smiled benignly and replied, "Obviously the moon; for the sun shines in the daytime when it is light, and the moon at night, when otherwise all would be in darkness."

The importance of Pythagorean teachings can best be appreciated in terms of their profound effect upon the thought of later time. Through Plato and Aristotle the teachings of the master were disseminated throughout the empire of the Greeks, and later found ready acceptance among the more learned of the Romans, especially Marcus Aurelius and Julian. The Neo-Pythagorean groups of Alexandria accomplished a brilliant revival of classical thought, which exercised an important influence on the early teach-

ings of the Christian church. Later, these doctrines dominated Roman scholasticism, and are found flowering in Christianity in the philosophies of St. Augustine, Albertus Magnus, and St. Thomas Aquinus. Still later, the same principles were restated by Francis Bacon, to become the foundations of the modern scientific point of view. But unfortunately, moderns have accepted only the scientific findings of Pythagoras, ignoring or denying his great mystical and philosophical teachings.

After the destruction of the institute at Crotona, the survivors, and later, their disciples, formed themselves into a kind of secret brotherhood and, because they scattered throughout Asia minor, these Pythagoreans developed a system of signs, passwords, and other means of mutual recognition. They should be included among the pre-Masonic groups that were later to be revived among the higher degrees of craft-masonry. Masonic manuscripts and books of the 17th Century and 18th Century mention a learned and ancient brother by the name of Peter Gower. This Peter Gower is Pythagoras. And so his order must be recognized as one of the forerunners of those fraternities which have sprung throughout the world whose members are united by a mystic tie.

A particular story supports this view; it concerns a Pythagorean of great age and infirmity who came to a little inn in one of the outer provinces of Greece. The inn keeper, a charitable man, nursed the dying philosopher through his last illness. When the aged scholar realized that his end was at hand, he said, "I have no money with which to pay for your courtesies and the expenses of my funeral. Take the door of your inn from its hinges and bring it to my bed." When this was done, the Pythagorean drew a curious symbol

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on the door, explaining, "One of these days another of our fraternity will see this figure which I have made, and will pay my bill."

Several years later a stranger knocked at the door of the hostelry and asked for the proprietor. Pointing to the faded mark on the door, he announced quietly, "A Pythagorean has died in this house; what did he owe?" The inn keeper protested that there was no bill; but the stranger insisted on settling the account to the smallest coin, and added a gift for the kindly inn keeper.

By the opening years of the 4th Century, B. C., the number of surviving Pythagoreans was exceedingly small. Only a few of the early masters had found suitable disciples, and still fewer of these had been able to pass on their knowledge to others worthy of receiving the tradition. In the larger sense, therefore, the order may be regarded as then extinct.

Plato, The Noblest Birth of Time

But its sphere of influence had by no means ceased. When Aristocles, of Athens, was born into this mortal world, he had an extraordinary capacity for the accumulation and dissemination of knowledge. Because of the breadth of his body, which was of heroic proportions, the breadth of his forehead, which was the outstanding characteristic of his facial structure, and the incredible breadth of his intellect, his name was changed to Plato. Plato signifies breadth.

Very little is known of the personal life of Plato. He is said to have been proficient in wrestling and military art, and to have fought in three important battles. In early life he had written lyric poetry, but he destroyed his verses from shame after hearing Socrates speak. Some authors have said

that the only imperfection in the person of Plato was that his voice was shrill. Others, obsessed with a complex for minutia, discovered a small mole on the back of his neck.

Plato was born 427 B. C., and lived to the perfect philosophic age represented by the number 9 multiplied by itself, 81 years. He died of no ailment, but was found peacefully in his bed, having gone to sleep with the books of Sophron under his head for a pillow.

According to Olympiodorus the Athenians gave Plato a magnificent funeral and he was buried outside of the grounds of the Academy where he had taught. An appropriate monument marked the grave. Plato's epitaph is said to have read that the Gods in their wisdom had given the world two great men, Aesculapius and Plato. Aesculapius for the healing of the body and Plato for the healing of the soul.

Plato is important to the Pythagorean doctrines because he may be rightly termed the successor to the mysteries of the Samian sage. Pythagoras was basically a scientist, and his mind was seeking always for a means of applying divine principles to the problems of human knowledge and utility. Plato was purely an idealistic philosopher. He was the first of a long line of a priori thinkers. The term, a priori, or cause to effect, is applied to the orders of philosophy which reasoned downward from universals to particulars. Most idealists belong to this school, because they assume the reality of certain great spiritual truths, and upon this foundation of abstract conviction they develop their codes of personal action. For example: To assume the existence of absolute perfection, is to assume that which cannot be experienced by the mind as actual fact. It is an infinite generality, capable of being named, but incapable of being defined. Yet assum-

ing the reality of absolute perfection, it is possible to create a program of personal effort toward that perfection, even though the means to the attainment of that end are obscure, and the end itself unknowable.

After Plato had received his groundwork in philosophy from Socrates, who was also an idealist, but not one given to abstract speculations, he directed his attention more and more toward the Orphic tradition, of which Pythagoras was the greatest exponent. Because of the wars which raged throughout Asia Minor, Plato was never able to make his great journey into Asia; but he did visit Egypt, and there he was initiated into certain of the Mysteries, and received much the same traditions that had earlier been embraced by Pythagoras. It is also possible that Plato contacted the Pythagorean teachings from disciples, several times removed, of the master himself.

Certain it is that the writings of Plato are permeated with the lofty sentiments of the Pythagorean doctrine, and without some knowledge of these principles it is exceedingly difficult to interpret correctly the Platonic dialogues. Plato, unlike his own teacher Socrates, was an initiate of the State Mysteries, and had witnessed the pageantry of the Orphic Pantheon. As Apulius wrote later, he had trodden upon the threshold of Proserpine (or Persephone). He had beheld the great assemblage of the gods, and he had beheld the sun at midnight beneath his feet, shining through the body of the earth. These obscure statements implied a development of psychic faculties as taught by the priests, by which Plato had experienced the mystery of death (the threshold of Persephone); and returned again to the world of the living as a man twice born.

The most important and least known of the writings of Plato are his *Five Books on Theology;* these have been preserved to us through the industry of Proclus of Alexandria, surnamed the Platonic Successor. These books describe the origin of the gods out of the first principle of the world; the several orders of divine beings, intelligible and intellectual; the orders of heroes and heroic souls; and lastly, the terrestrial gods under the sceptre of Zeus, demi-urge of the world.

From Plato we also learn that the physical universe is indeed the body of a blessed god, and that the earth itself is an eternal animal crawling endlessly through space, ever living, but ever changing its appearances.

These great writings also set forth the descent of human souls out of the mystery of the milky way, like seeds falling into the matrix of generation. Arriving within the seminal humidity of the sub-lunary sphere, the souls become intoxicated with the effluvium of matter and take upon themselves bodies, by which process they die out of their spiritual estate in order to be born as physical beings. Thus, birth is truly death; and each man is locked within the sarcophagus of his own body. Here he must remain until he is liberated by the philosophic disciplines. Even physical death cannot release him from the waters of Lethe, which are called forgetfulness, and which pour from the constellation of the cup.

After physical death, those who have not released their minds by application to essential learning, wander about in a shadow world of their own conceits; or sleep on in unbroken slumber until the current, sweeping through the dark corridors of Hades, picks them up and carries them back again to birth.

The progress of human consciousness, according to Plato, was achieved by two courses of procedure.

By the first, release from matter was the result of a slow evolutionary process; the human being grew by experience alone, following the difficult course of trial and error.

The second, or philosophic approach, was unfoldment through personal effort. The mind was weaned from its attachments to purely physical pursuits by discipline and the study of the sciences, especially geometry. Over the gate of Plato's academy in Athens was carved the inscription: "Let no man ignorant of geometry enter here."

Plato's idealism was dominated by two strong sets of beliefs.

By the first of these, human improvement was set up as the supreme good, toward which all learning should actively trend.

By the second, the supremacy of the mind was assumed, with the possibility of the intellect accomplishing through proper cultivation all that is necessary to the security of man.

The scope of the Platonic teachings can be estimated from the statement by Jowett, the English translator of the collected works of Plato. This learned, if somewhat mid-Victorian translator said, "The germs of all ideas, even most Christian ones, are to be found in Plato."

Voltaire observed that in pure point of doctrine, Plato should have been the first canonized saint of the Christian Church.

Ferrier, in the *Institutes of Metaphysics,* summed up a considerable learning in this terse statement: "All philosophic truth is Plato rightly defined; all philosophic error is Plato misunderstood."

The principal objection which has been raised against Plato's system of philosophy is its lack of concrete method, and it was this apparent short-coming that inspired the analytical work of Aristotle. Plato does not reveal in his writings the methods by which the great reforms in the spheres of learning and politics are to be accomplished. He tells us the ends but not the ways to achieve these ends.

This apparent deficiency is in reality the supreme evidence of Plato's genius. He recognized the ends of philosophy as universals and the means as particulars. He realized that in each generation men would seek truth by different means. To set up an arbitrary pattern would be to fall into the error of dogma. Furthermore, each individual is a way of life to himself. Each in his own way, and with the use of his own abilities, and moved by his own purposes must approach the mystery of self perfection. Means are only important as bridges from our present state to that which lies beyond in terms of accomplishment. To glorify the means is to obscure the ends, but if the end be clearly visioned within the consciousness it will find its own paths suitable to time and place and temperament. Man naturally verges toward the good.

Plato's philosophy concerning the three orders of beings is derived entirely from the teachings of Pythagoras. Plato recognized beings as unmoved but moving, as self-moving, and as moved. Such a definition does not appear to offer many practical advantages; but when developed along logical and reasonable lines, this simple formula conceals unsuspected potentials, useful to the intellect in judging a variety of matters.

The unmoved but moving is divine Permanence, which, unchanging in its own nature and being, sustains, within

itself, all motion and change. Eternity is unmoved but moving, because it produces from itself time, which is motion. Here Plato anticipates modern theories concerning the fourth dimension. Time breaks up into innumerable eras and epochs, which are sustained by eternity. Time flows from timelessness, to timelessness, and in timelessness.

The self-moved represents those natures in which motion is inherent, and from which the principle of motion cannot be separated. The self-movers, therefore, are the gods; and by reflection into matter, the planets and worlds in which a principle of motion is nearly or entirely inherent.

The moved are such beings as are impelled by an energy not inherent, and which can be separated from the object of motion. Such beings are men, animals, and other mortal creatures from whom the principle of motion can be separated by death.

The principle of motion, therefore, is spiritual; and inertia, material.

By extension, this formula can be applied to a variety of subjects, including economics, politics, and ethics.

Throughout the writings of Plato are numerous allusions to numbers, not explained in the text. These refer to Pythagorean formulas by which all powers and principles are stated in arithmetical symbolism. By these curious interpolations alone, we may gather that Plato was conversant with the Pythagorean doctrines. Most of the formulas by which these numbers can be interpreted are lost to the modern world; but it is possible that extensive research may recover them from ancient writings or uncover commentaries to illuminate them.

The Philosophic Elect

The idealism of Plato is reflected in the nobility of his doctrines as these relate to the perfection of the human state. In his political discourses, Plato foresees a perfect government established among men, which he calls the government of the philosophic elect: only the wise have the judgment and vision to lead those less informed than themselves. It is not possible in our material state for all men to be equally wise, because all do not possess the inclination or aptitude for higher learning. It is the virtue of the uninformed that they should recognize learning, even if unable to participate in it; and therefore, should sustain and support the learned in all things relating to the common good.

The philosophic elect would constitute a non-political form of government based upon merit alone, by which all could benefit by the vision of the few. Plato's government was a kind of school; some were teachers, others scholars, but as the school boy acknowledges the superior attainments of his teacher, so all men should acknowledge the superior attainments of the wise.

In all civilizations there are some individuals who are eminently fitted to direct the course of the people. These should be recognized and honored, not for their physical possessions or their family connections, but because they have proven the excellence of their minds. This natural aristocracy of the informed is the only ruling class that can be entrusted safely with the leadership of the state. There can be no end to the wranglings and bickerings of princes, and the conspiracies of politicians, until spiritual and mental attainments are recognized as proofs of superiority.

Plato summed up his political convictions in the simple statement that until kings are philosophers and philosophers are kings there can be no peace among the nations and states of the world.

Plato did not ignore the frailties of the flesh; or the intemperances common to mankind. He accepted the present state of things; but always he held that improvement was possible, and that no condition could arise for which a reasonable solution could not be found. He seldom asked questions, for he sought answers, and his assumption was that the answer was always available if the mind was conditioned to recognize it. That which is obviously necessary and desirable, is obviously true and attainable. He never asked if virtue existed; virtue is necessary; therefore, obviously exists. The problem was, to discover the fact that suited the need of the occasion. The fact might be intellectual, apparent only to the mind; or it might be discovered by experiment in the patterns arising from human behavior.

The development of Plato's mind reveals the process by which the intellect moves naturally from abstract conviction to concrete application. In his earlier life, the great philosopher was content to live in the world of his own noble thoughts, contemplating the drama of creation with the magnificence of his inner vision. Later, the human need emerged as the driving necessity. Truth was only useful when interpreted in the terms of man's experience patterns; the idealism remained, but it was directed toward solutions.

Plato discovered that man-made institutions were symbols set up in society by the internal instincts of men, and these symbols bore a definite relationship to the design and order of the divine worlds.

The kingdom of the gods was the pattern for all earthly empires. The rulers of states, by trial and error, discovered that their commonwealths must be administered by the same formula which the gods used in administering the universal order.

By extension, the analogy applied likewise to man's government of himself. Unless one central power administered the life of the individual, he came to nothing. As discordant states are impoverished by their own discords, so are discordant individuals similarly impoverished. When the councilors argued among themselves the people suffered, but when leaders were in accord, the state flourished.

There was also, to Plato, the vital factor of vision; nations without purpose fell victims to other nations dominated by some adequate purpose. National ideals, a clear vision toward that which is desired and desirable, was necessary to national progress. In the same way, the individual without purpose, vision, or dream, has no focus for his energies.

Nature is a benevolent tyranny, and Plato saw nowhere in the structure of natural law any evidence of weakness or indecision. Natural law is immutable, and can not be subject to bribe or corruption. Man-made law must be similarly impervious to ulterior motive if it is to assure the public good.

The ultimate form of discipline is self-discipline. Laws are constructed primarily for law breakers, and bear witness to the inadequacy of human self-control. In the perfect state, as visioned by Plato, each man is a law unto himself, but exercises his powers so benignly that he respects the laws of all other men, and is above any action motivated solely or principally by self-interest.

All these ideals were magnificent abstractions, difficult to apply to the imperfect state of man; but it is the purpose of philosophy to point the way which must lead to the desired end. It is then the responsibility of the sciences and the learned arts to reduce these principles to a working program of ethics.

So, Plato having perceived the real and ultimate necessity, left his work to the keeping of man's world and its learned, with the full conviction that time and experience would perfect the works.

The Pythagorean vision of a mortal world, bound to the divine world through the intellectual power of man, is the noblest concept in political philosophy. The gods, through their immutable laws, are the rulers of all things, heavenly and earthly; princes, priests, and philosophers are the servants of these great gods. They should be initiated into the sovereign mystery, be capable of discovering through inner experience the divine way of life. The king is not the absolute ruler of the people; he is the administrator of a universal plan as it applies to the needs of his people. It is not his privilege to make laws; rather he must interpret ever-existing laws, made not by man, but intrinsic in the world itself; and to that degree only is he the high priest over his people.

A ruler who fulfills the responsibility of his office merits the designation, virtuous. The moment he departs from this larger vision to set up a despotism of his own will, he loses all claim to true dignity and nobility, becoming a despot.

3

THE GOOD THE VIRTUOUS AND THE NECESSARY

Socratic Ethics

WHEN a young man of ancient Greece resolved to make philosophy his journey in life he could select his teacher from a variety of brilliant intellectuals. There was scarcely a quiet grove or secluded corner of the market place where some master had not set up his school. A merchant on his way to business might linger for a moment to listen while a mathematician described the formulas of converging nullities. If the subject lost fascination for this business man he could proceed along his way to the porch of the temple of Gaea where a bearded rhetorician was expounding the superiority of eloquence over logic.

The Eleans debated at great length the implications of the proposition, "That which is not the same is different from that with which it is not the same." The Megarians were concerned with their own particular premise, namely that good has no opposite and therefore evil does not exist. The Cyrenaics argued with courage of conviction their favorite theme, in effect, that which causes the most pleasant sensations in the mind or body obviously is the greatest good.

Three of the Greek schools the Cynics, the Skeptics and the Stoics are especially remembered because their names have become familiar words in our language. In modern usage, cynicism is contempt for the views of other persons. Skepticism is doubt or unbelief about the possibility of absolute knowledge, and Stoicism is the practice of indifference in matters of pain or pleasure. Unfortunately the deeper meanings of these terms have been lost in the maze of language and can only be restored by a careful study of the original sects.

The Cynics, founded by Antisthenes of Athens (444-365 B. C.) rejected all worldly possessions on the assumption that those whose material needs were fewest were most like the Gods. Antisthenes was a disciple of Socrates but the most famous of the Cynics was Diogenes, who lived for many years in a tub in the Athenian forum.

The Stoics founded by Zeno the Cittiean, (340-265 B. C.) were a materialistic sect who believed in voluntary resignation to natural law.

The Skeptic philosophers followed the doctrines of Pyrrho of Elis (356-275 B. C.) and they were particularly opposed to all forms of dogma.

It is usual to regard Socrates as a Skeptic but in him skepticism was the courage to recognize and admit the fallacy of that which experience itself had proven to be false. He was the most humble of men and often prefaced a learned discourse by saying, "Of course, I am unschooled and have little knowledge of these matters." When congratulated for an exceptional display of brilliance he would observe meekly, "The Muses have been kind to me this day."

In discussion Socrates usually discomfited his opponent by a process of adroit questioning which finally caused the

other person to contradict himself, thus exhibiting the errors in his reasoning and logic. Socrates spread his net by earnestly requesting information on the grounds of his own ignorance. The method which he used is properly called Socratic. The student learns by discovering his own mistakes.

Common Sense, the Divine Faculty

The basic philosophy of Socrates was a curious combination of lofty mystical speculation and homely common sense. He held that the spiritual part of man existed prior to the generation of his physical body. During material life the incorporeal soul and the corporeal body were united in a temporary partnership of purposes. After death the soul returned to its own proper abode, enriched or impoverished according to the measure and merits of the temporal existence. It appears that Socrates accepted the doctrine of metempsychosis or rebirth. So long as the soul contained worldly impulses, worldly ambitions, or worldly attachments it would be drawn back to a union with the body. It was, therefore, the particular duty of the philosophically minded to release the soul from any material impulse. When the human being perfected his detachment he ceased to be a mortal creature and ascended to the dignity of the Heroic State, becoming a demi-god.

Socrates, the son of Sophroniscus, was born at Athens about the year 470 B. C. In early life he was inclined to the trade of a statuary, and received the education usual to his time, including gymnastics and music.

In ancient Greece the Gymnasium was an institution of mental as well as physical culture. Young men assembled

there to study and discuss the liberal arts, and to debate with their masters on problems of philosophy, ethics, and morality. Time was set aside for wrestling, racing, and the throwing of the discus. It was a basic tenet of Greek education that youth should have intellectual and bodily exercise in a balanced program.

Although sculpture served Socrates as a means of livelihood, his mind gradually turned from the artistic viewpoint to consideration of education and politics. His intellectual preoccupations caused his material estate to suffer, but he gained a considerable sphere of civic influence. In his 64th year, Socrates became a member of the Athenian Senate; he served for at least two years as a member of the Governing Thirty, arousing the animosity of most of the archons, or magistrates, because he refused to compromise the laws of the state to favor the private interests of prominent citizens.

Socrates has left us no writings of his own, but his attitudes and convictions on the subject of learning are preserved in considerable detail in the books of Plato and the writings of Xenophon. Plato especially admired the intellectual greatness of his teacher, and Socrates appears as the principal person in most of the Platonic dialogues.

Socrates did not teach a positive doctrine of beliefs; he dedicated himself to breaking down the dogmatic fallacies of his contemporaries. His method of teaching has been called ironical because he was able, through clever arguments, to force his opponent to contradict and disprove his own most cherished convictions. In logic Socrates was almost irrefutable, for he possessed a great ability to think things through to their reasonable conclusions. This faculty is notably absent in present day haphazard thinking.

It was after Socrates had achieved considerable recognition that the great oracle of Delphi made a solemn pronouncement; the ghost of Apollo, appearing in the vapors, spoke through the lips of the entranced priestess, declaring, "Socrates is the wisest man of Greece." As the fountain-head of Greek spiritual belief, the words of the oracle were never disputed or questioned.

A friend came in haste and excitement to acquaint the philosopher with this signal honor the gods had bestowed upon him. Socrates made a typically ironical comment: "There is nothing in me to verify the sacred utterances except this: I am not wise, but I know that I am not wise; whereas others, equally ignorant, know not that they are ignorant."

Early training in the Gymnasium had given to Socrates extraordinary physical strength. When the Athenians were compelled to go to war to repel an invasion, Socrates immediately volunteered; he served in the army as a hoplite, a heavily armed infantry soldier, equipped with helmet, cuirass, greaves, shield, spear and sword. On two occasions in battle he saved the life of his general, Alcibiades. At one time, on guard duty he stood barefooted in deep snow for many hours, with endurance that matched his physical strength. That strength was profoundly respected by his battle opponents; one day, when Socrates stood alone on the battlefield, the ranks of the enemy divided and passed on either side of him; not one of the enemy warriors had the courage to accept his challenge to engage him in personal combat.

Returned from the war, the doughty philosopher had scarcely removed his shield and helmet when an Athenian thug knocked him down and relieved him of his slender purse. This experience caused Socrates to remark to one of

his disciples, that danger to life and limb was greater at home than at war. He had survived safely a long and difficult military campaign, only to return home to be knocked unconscious by one of the citizens he had fought to defend.

In spite of his disinclination to discuss religious matters, Socrates was, perhaps, more of a mystic than he was ready to acknowledge. The Roman philosopher, Apuleius, has left us an important tract entitled, *The Demon of Socrates;* it reveals the mystical content in the consciousness of Socrates which influenced all departments of his thought. He believed himself to be divinely ordained to reveal to the Greeks the falseness of commonly accepted beliefs. His ministry was sanctioned by oracles, dreams, visions, and supernatural signs.

Early in life a mysterious being appeared to Socrates in his sleep, instructing him in the deeper phases of philosophy and promising to protect him against the conspiracies of jealous and hateful enemies. Socrates called his strange invisible guide a familiar spirit, or demon.

The Neo-Platonists were later to teach that to each human being is assigned at birth a spiritual preceptor, which they called the natal demon.

Socrates had many adventures with his familiar spirit, which he believed belonged to the order of the Cyclops, a race of one-eyed giants inhabiting the superphysical worlds. As he matured his philosophy and extended the sphere of his intellect, he came closer and closer to his demon guide; eventually the spirit was able to communicate with him at any hour of the day. The philosopher was walking down a narrow road on the outskirts of Athens one day with several friends and disciples, and as they came to a narrow

place in the road, Socrates stopped suddenly, saying, "My spirit tells me that we should leave this road."

His companions, knowing the road to be a short-cut, laughed at the warning of the demon, and announced that they would continue on. Socrates did not argue with them, but quietly turned off to another road. Almost immediately his companions encountered a stampeding flock of sheep; they were all bruised, and several were nearly killed.

Apuleius points out that the demon of Socrates never exhorted him to the performance of any action, but on several occasions warned him against certain undertakings. This attitude is consistent with the highest phase of spiritual ethics; for it was held by the Greeks that no man should be prevented by celestial powers from the expression of his personal will and convictions.

A number of reputable historians have dealt with the marital difficulties in which Socrates involved himself. In Xanthippe the philosopher gathered unto himself the most celebrated shrew of his time. Her nagging became proverbial. The marriage remains a symbol of complete marital incompatibility.

Troubles did not come singly to Socrates; he suffered the compound misfortune of having two wives at the same time, Xanthippe, and Myrto. These women often quarreled over their eccentric spouse and ended by both together berating him unmercifully for his failure to provide for their livelihood.

Plato intimates that Socrates had children by both wives, but only one is mentioned specifically, a son by Xanthippe, who was named Lamprocles. According to Plutarch, this boy died young, having, like his father, been in constant difficulties with his scolding mother. Xanthippe's tirades

brought Lamprocles to a state of open rebellion and disobedience on one occasion, and Socrates reprimanded his son severely for the outburst, and for not having shown proper respect for his mother's wishes.

The philosopher was extremely patient with difficult Xanthippe, for he saw clearly her side of their domestic misunderstanding; Xanthippe was a practical woman who wanted a good home and the advantages of the time for their child. Hers was no easy task, living with the eccentric genius of an unpredictable husband who had a good trade but who would not give deserved attention to the profitable commissions frequently offered to him.

Sculpturing was in demand, and three statues of The Graces, executed by Socrates for the city, had been set up before the entrance of the Tower of Athens, receiving wide and generous praise. The statue of Mercury, too, which he had designed for the Acropolis was regarded worthy of the best traditions of the Periclean age. So one can sympathize with Xanthippe when, with the family cupboard bare, she found her husband frequently on some street corner arguing political reforms with a nondescript group of extreme leftists.

In further affront to her domestic sense, Socrates often brought home a group of the radically minded and continued his discussions in the parlor. Coming home suddenly one day, Xanthippe found the house filled with Athenian agitators, and Socrates in their midst discoursing on political corruption. Picking up a broom, she descended upon the group like one of the furies, and all made a hasty exit before her tirade of abuse. They immediately reassembled on the front steps to finish the discourse and Xanthippe drenched them with a bucket of water poured from a second story window. Socrates quietly rearranged his well soaked

chiton and remarked mildly, "Have I not often observed, that great thunder is usually followed by rain?"

The outbursts of Xanthippe were little short of sacrilege to the disciples of the master; but even in the most embarrassing moments Socrates sided with his wife. One day Alcibiades, to whom Xanthippe was intolerable, asked Socrates how he endured the constant nagging. The philosopher replied, "I have become used to it, like the miller who lives continually close to the creaking of the mill wheel. Besides, cannot you endure the cackling of hens?"

"But," objected Alcibiades, "hens bring the eggs."

"Ah," replied Socrates, "and my Xanthippe brings the children."

Among the cultural furnishings of the Socrates household was the skin of a large animal which usually decorated the floor. On several occasions the philosopher appeared among his students robed in this skin because Xanthippe had taken away his clothes to keep him at home.

The favorite place of discourse for Socrates was the open forum; and usually when he had reached it, he was safe from physical danger at the hands of his wife. But every so often she would follow him even to these sacrosanct premises; and on one occasion she pulled off all his clothes in the midst of the gaping populace. Disciples, wrapping a cloak about him, counselled their master then and there to prove his sovereignty by beating Xanthippe to within an inch of her life. "Yes," mused Socrates, "and what a spectacle that fight would make. We two struggling in the middle while you gather around and cry, "Well done, Socrates!" or; "At him, Xanthippe!"

Socrates frequently explained that he had married Xanthippe to test the strength of his philosophy. "I have

had three evils in my life," he would say, "grammar, poesy, and a nagging wife. Two I have mastered and the third I shall yet conquer." He believed that a philosophy sound enough to convert Xanthippe would be a universal panacea for the world's woe. There is no record as to which of the two eventually triumphed in their domestic turmoil, but Xanthippe remained with Socrates until the end of his life, and was utterly prostrated by his death.

Because he devoted so much time to teaching and so little time to earning an adequate livelihood, several disciples were moved to help the master with gifts of varying magnitude. One proffered gift was a large plot of ground in a fashionable district so that the philosopher could build a home befitting his dignity. Socrates, quite penniless and having nothing with which to build the house, turned to the donor and with a sad smile, said, "I suppose if I wanted a pair of shoes you would give me a calf."

Socrates despised the softness and effeminacy that was corrupting the spirit of the Athenians. "I do not desire to curse any man," he once said, "but if I did, I would say to him, may your sons be luxurious."

Alcibiades, appearing one day in a particularly gorgeous new velvet cloak, and adorned with many jewels, drew from Socrates the remark, "What a pity that a leaden dagger should have so fine a sheath."

Socrates despised the smug self-centered complacency of the aristocrats of Athens; he declared openly that their corruptions would ultimately destroy Hellenic civilization. And he was no more tolerant of the priestcraft; he regarded the men of holy orders as little better than sanctified brigands. When two priests from a particularly disreputable temple were one day leading away to justice a thief who had

robbed the altar, Socrates commented to one of his disciples: "Behold a miracle; the lesser thief is being borne away by the greater."

Pride did not escape his attention. When Alcibiades inherited a considerable estate and immediately took on the haughty mien of the large land owner, Socrates hung up a large map of Greece and with mock earnestness entreated the young Greek to point out his new estates on the map. "My estates," observed Alcibiades, "are not large enough to show on that map." Socrates then made the quiet suggestion that if the lands were not great enough to show on the map, it would be just as well if they did not show on their new owner. It is said that this was the incident that led to Alcibiades becoming a new and influential member of the Socratic cult.

The philosopher was determined that while he lived, the Greeks should live well. He continually berated the archons of Athens for their greed after wealth and power; he criticized the government, attacked the laws, and produced one disquietude after another by his unceasing watchfulness. It should be remembered, however, that at no time did Socrates advocate lawlessness, or the breaking of the traditional laws. It was his purpose to create better laws and to enforce such good statutes as already existed.

One day a leading citizen brought his son to Socrates to enroll the boy among his students. The master held out his hand to the young man and said, "Aristocles, you are welcome; last night I dreamed that a great white bird flew down from the sky and nested in my lap. You are that bird." This same Aristocles became the greatest of all the disciples of Socrates; in time he excelled his master in all

SOCRATES

learning and the world gave homage to his name. Aristocles was the real name of Plato.

A number of the sons of rich Athenian families were entrusted to the care of Socrates; especially in his later years, when his fame as a philosopher and the high principles of his character were acknowledged by even his bitterest opponents. Many of the parents did not agree entirely with the teachings of Socrates, but they recognized the extraordinary brilliance of his intellect. It was inevitable that one day when human relationships was the subject under discussion, a boy would ask whether he owed greater allegiance to his own father, who was ignorant of philosophy, or to Socrates, whose mind was skilled in all learning. The master is reported to have answered, "It is obvious that allegiance is properly due to the most learned." If then, the master was wiser than the father, greater respect and obedience was due the master.

Later, Alexander the Great, referring to his teacher, Aristotle, expressed the same idea when he said, "I owe more to my teacher than to my father. Philip, my father, gave me being, but Aristotle, my teacher, gave me well-being."

Socrates believed with Pythagoras that relationships of the flesh belong to the accidents of nature. But relationships of the mind, because they must be cultivated by enlightened purpose, belong to the intentions of nature. Further, that those who unite their intellects in the quest after eternal truths are bound together in a great fraternity of purpose, which is stronger than any of the ties of earth.

The Trial of Socrates

The famous trial which lead to the death of Socrates was the direct outcome of his views concerning allegiance to

family. It offered an opportunity to publicly disgrace Socrates by charging him with corrupting the minds of the young, in leading them away from the traditional veneration for their parents.

The charge against Socrates was brought by Meletus, the poet, who was urged to press his complaint by Anytus, an enemy of Socrates. The accusation was worded as follows:

> "Meletus, son of Meletus, a Pythean, accuseth Socrates, son of Sophroniscus, an Alopecian. Socrates violates the law, not believing the Deities which this city believeth, but introducing other new Gods. He violates the law likewise in corrupting youth; the punishment is death."

This document makes it evident that the corruption of youth was regarded as a secondary issue; the basic issue was religion. From Plato, Xenophon, Suidas, and others, we learn the nature of the accusations and testimony. A summary follows:

1. Socrates persuaded his followers to regard the revealed laws as inadequate and in great need of change. It was proved that on some occasions he had publicly stated that only a fool should be governed by a bean. (It was customary at that time to decide important issues by a kind of lottery in which beans were drawn from a bag.)

2. He was friendly with Critias and Alcibiades, and it was the common belief that Critias was covetous in the oligarchy, and Alcibiades ambitious for tyranny.

3. He taught disrespect for parents, inasmuch as he had declared that a wise son might know more than a foolish father. This point was considerably elaborated.

4. He taught that a man's relatives were of little good to him if he was sick or in legal difficulty.... if the first, he needed a physician, if the second, an orator, (lawyer). He was accused also of saying that the good will of helpless friends was of very little assistance in time of trouble.

In true measure, these were the accusations which demanded death for one of the world's greatest thinkers. A few extracts from Socrates' defense will throw an important light on the character of the great philosopher.

"Whom know you less a servant to corporeal pleasures? Whom more free? I accept little of either gifts or rewards.... I furnish myself from within, with things that please me better.... Yet you, Meletus, you pretend, that with these instructions I corrupt youth. Can you name one that I of religious have made impious; of modest, impudent; of frugal, prodigal; of sober, debauched; of hardy, effeminate; or the like?" The only answer of Meletus was that he knew some whom Socrates had persuaded to obey him before their own parents.

According to Xenophon, Socrates was not actually sentenced to death because of any crime. A small penalty was the only demand, a fine of a few coins, for his supposed misdemeanor. The real cause of the death sentence was that Socrates refused to pay the fine, and he refused to per-

mit Plato to pay it for him. He insisted that even this small compromise would be an acknowledgment of guilt, and he was innocent of all blame. Xenophon writes, that at last, after long wrangling, "The judges were so exasperated by his attitude and his reasoning that they condemned him to death to close the case."

While Socrates was in prison a plan was perfected for his escape. Citizens of a distant city pleaded with him to come and live among them and be the teacher of their children. He refused to leave the prison, because to do so would be to break the law. His reasoning on this point was substantially this: It may be that justice has miscarried, and by the same reasoning I might be justified in preserving my life against a false verdict; but if I do this I will set an example for lawlessness, and others less wise and less virtuous in their intentions will use my example as an excuse for escaping the punishment for their offenses. I prefer to remain and fulfill the law, that men shall never regard philosophy as a means for outwitting justice.

So, on a fatal day in the year 399 B. C., Socrates drank a cup of poison hemlock, the means employed in his time for the execution of a civil criminal. He died surrounded by his disciples, discoursing to the end on the subject of the immortality of the soul. One of the disciples had asked, "Master, when you are dead, what would you have us do with you?" The old philosopher replied, "You can do with me anything you will, provided you can catch me."

The last words of Socrates were, "I owe a cock to Aesculapius; discharge the debt." He then drew the edge of his cloak over his face and died.

There has been considerable discussion of the meaning of these last words. They appear to be a cryptic statement that

death is equivalent to initiation into the temple of the sacred Mysteries. Those who sought admission into the sanctuary brought as their offering (in a sense, a demanded fee) a cock, which was offered on the altar before they were permitted to enter the shrine. Socrates thus might well have been telling his disciples that death was in reality the portal through which men pass into the living temple of the eternal gods.

No discussion of Socrates would be complete without reference to his personal appearance. It is said, the gods will not bestow perfection upon any mortal, and when some great ability is given, another part of the nature is slighted. In the case of Socrates his physical aspects paid the full penalty imposed for intellectual greatness. A man writing from a distant province desired to know how he should recognize Socrates when he visited Athens. The philosopher replied that the stranger should be on the lookout for a man of such ugly proportions that street dogs at seeing him put their tails between their legs and ran away, howling disapproval—that man would be Socrates.

Socrates had a head too large in proportion to his body; his nose was short and broad, his eyes protruded, his cheeks were heavy, his strong body was pigeon-chested and his legs bowed. Yet those who knew him well seldom referred to any peculiarity of appearance, for his mind was so transcendentally beautiful that after a short association his disciples completely forgot what he was like physically. One commentator has said that it seemed as though Truth surrounded him with such a light of beauty that he was positively handsome. Greatness of mind and soul embraced his whole person as an ivy growth may entwine an unsightly ruin and cover it with beauty.

Aristophanes, poet and comedy dramatist, son of a wealthy land owner, looked with great disfavor upon the growth of the spirit of intellectual inquiry which caused the proletariat to question the rights of the upper class. He considered Socrates a prime offender. His play, *The Clouds,* was first published by Aristophanes in 423 B. C. and was produced in Athens with a splendid cast of readers and actors. A character in the play personified the new, and to the author, distasteful tendency toward intellectual emancipation, a role obviously intended to ridicule Socrates. In one scene the philosopher in a bucket was hoisted up by windlass above the proscenium, and there suspended, he examined through a long tube the constitution of the stars. This was regarded as elegant comedy at the expense of Socrates.

When the philosopher learned that he was to be the principal character in the new play, he arranged to attend the opening performance in the capacity of dramatic critic. In those days actors always wore masks, and the mask representing Socrates was especially grotesque. For a time he remained quietly in his seat obviously enjoying the caricature, but with something of disappointment as he studied the mask more attentively. Waiting for an appropriate interlude, Socrates rose from his seat and besought the attention of the audience. Requesting the assembled spectators to examine his features closely, he pointed out that the mask failed utterly to represent the true magnitude of his facial disproportions; he recommended that a new mask be prepared; he would be happy to sit as a model. With grave dignity he then resumed his seat; and at the end of the performance applauded the play.

Socrates explained his philosophy of art on one of the rare occasions when pressing financial need had put him

hard at work with mallet and chisel carving a statue for a wealthy client. The figure was that of a nymph, and a visitor who had dropped in marveled at the beauty of the work. The task of the craftsman, the philosopher claimed, was to release beauty from the stone through a knowledge of the immutable laws of nature governing form and proportion. "I have not created beauty," he explained, "the form of the nymph was always in the stone. I merely removed the parts that are not necessary, and if I perform this task faithfully, the nymph is released for the admiration of mankind."

His philosophy laid special emphasis on the necessity to free human consciousness from the coarse substance which imprisoned it. Just as he chiseled off the stone which hid the beauty of the nymph, so would he cut away the unnecessary aspects of thinking. To Socrates, all human beings were like rough stones within which a divine nature was hidden. He desired to reveal this nature by freeing it from the false doctrines, codes, creeds, and traditions which obscured the blessed realities.

According to the Socratic sect, the soul entering into body is obscured and stupified by the grosser substances of the physical nature. This caused Socrates to regard physical birth as the death of the soul; and physical death as the rebirth of the soul, through liberation from body.

The master likened the soul to water, and the body to earth. When these are mixed together they form an Ilus, or mud, in which both of the basic elements are obscured. The human intellect is created by the union of spiritual and material principles. In the case of the untrained mind there is constant agitation. Thought stirs up the material part, and matter itself obscures the clarity of the reasoning power.

This process was illustrated by putting water and earth in a bottle and shaking the contents until they were thoroughly riled.

The purpose of philosophy is to simplify all the processes of living and to establish within man a state of internal calm. To demonstrate this point, Socrates stood the bottle containing the muddy water in a quiet place. As the heavier particles fell slowly to the bottom of the glass and the water became clear again, he explained that in the same way the compound nature of man, when subjected to philosophic discipline, separates naturally. The grosser parts sink to their own level; and as the intellect is clarified, it becomes an appropriate medium for the manifestation of the soul. The secret of wisdom is found when an inward silence and freedom from stress permits the various parts of the nature to assume their natural levels.

Socrates is known to have objected to certain opinions of Thales and of Meletus. It might be more correct to say that he rejected various interpretations given to the doctrines of this great sophist. Thales had thought that water was the first principle of the world, and that the earth floated like a ship in a universal sea. By extending this analogy, he decided that earthquakes were caused by disturbances in this sea, this humid principle. Socrates insisted that it was man himself, and not strange currents in space, that rocked the ship of human estate. Man himself corrupted nature by his agitations, uncertainties, ambitions, and conflicts. He reasoned that, as long as the human being lived badly, disobeying the very laws which had created him, there would be plagues, pestilences, and disquieting mutations everywhere in the society of mankind.

Socratic Definitions

The master declared philosophy to be the only form of learning which could bring happiness and tranquility to human beings. The purpose of philosophy was two-fold: (1) To contemplate God, the nature of divine beings, and the great laws which abide in the superior world; and (2) To perfect a formula by which the soul could be abstracted from the hypnotic spell of the bodily impulses and sensory perceptions.

On the contemplation of Deity, Socrates had little to say. He remarked on one occasion, "What God is, I know not; what He is not, I know." Like Buddha, the master considered time devoted to arguing and dissenting about the nature of Deity to be generally unprofitable. He accepted the existence of a supreme being as necessary to any system of ordered thinking, but chose to allow the more mystically minded to explore the higher realms of Spirit.

Socrates declared that after the One, which is incomprehensible, comes the Three, variously comprehensible, not in substance but in effect.

The Three are God, Matter, and Ideas. God is the active principle, Matter the passive object of action, and Ideas arise from the chemical action of energy upon substance.

Man is the personification of the principle of Ideas, for in him spirit and matter exist together, and through their union is generated the intellectual principle.

This sounds abstract, but it is one of the simplest of all philosophical formulas. It establishes man in his proper relation to both spirit and matter. The German poet, Goethe, summarizes the Socratic viewpoint when he describes man as "suspended 'twixt heaven and earth, dominion wielding."

Socratically speaking, wisdom is the sum of the virtues, and, in turn, the virtues are in every case forms of obedience. If we assume the universe to be the product of a divine mind, as so many of the Greeks believed it to be, then obedience to the laws of nature is obedience to the will of God.

This simple statement of religion was acceptable to most of the classical philosophers. Evolution was a growth toward an identity with the pattern of law that sustained the world itself.

Virtue is a state of moral agreement with Truth, and a virtuous action is one that does not conflict with the moral order of the world. Therefore, all forms of good arise from conformity with universal standards.

Virtue exists on all the planes of life, and always the formula for determining virtue is the same. Virtue, in terms of human relationship, is honesty and integrity; in terms of motion, it is rhythm; in terms of sound, it is harmony; in terms of form, it is symmetry; in terms of relationship, it is pattern; and in terms of thought, it is wisdom. Each of these formulas is based upon the single principle that order is the Law, and disorder the breaking of the Law.

The Platonic triad—the One, the Beautiful, and the Good—seems to have originated in the teachings of Socrates. All life originates from unity, the One; and flows through pattern, the Beautiful, to the perfect manifestation of its own nature, the Good. The doctrine of the trinity of the Christian church appears to have originated among the pagan Greeks. The three persons of the God-head: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are analogous to the One, the Beautiful, and the Good. It might prove beneficial to modern religions if the comparatively meaningless persons of the theological trinity were restored to their ancient estates, and the

triad understood as symbolizing the three great orders of Moral Energy which emanate from the universal One.

Socrates referred to this triad as the Good, the Virtuous, and the Necessary; but the key to his meaning is that he begins his triad with the third power of the Platonic arrangement, the Good.

Socrates begins with the Good because he is applying the great formula to the mundane life of man. His triad was known to the scholars of that day as the 'inferior' triad, having its apex in the Universal Good and its lower parts in the material world. When asked what was the most necessary of all things, the philosopher replied, "That is most necessary which is the most virtuous and the greatest good." Asked the nature of the most virtuous of all things, his reply was, "That which is the most necessary and the greatest good." Thus each of the three aspects proves the others, and all action is subjected to the discipline of an ordered procedure.

Andrew Carnegie once made an interesting comment on one application of this system, when a friend asked him which was the most important in the sphere of economics, Capital, Labor, or Organization. The financier replied with a query: "Which is the most important leg of a three-legged stool?"

The Good The Virtuous and the Necessary

It may be useful to examine at greater length what Socrates meant by the terms: Good, Virtuous, and Necessary.

By Good he implied the larger unity of common good, which is the sure foundation for individual well-being. No man can experience the state of good as a material condition unless all mankind shares in the condition. The Socratic

doctrine of the Good, had it been widely applied, would have prevented the delusion of isolationism, a false concept responsible for a large part of humanity's present ills. It has taken the human race more than twenty centuries to discover its own inter-dependency upon the parts of itself. But the discovery was inevitable. For as Socrates himself taught, the universal patterns finally assert themselves in spite of man-made obstacles.

By the Virtuous, is to be understood that which contributes to the manifestation of universal order through the lives of creatures. A virtuous action is one that flows with the stream of the world's will. To be truly virtuous, an act must accomplish some necessary thing, and it must contribute to the fulfillment of the realization of unity. We may say that love is a virtuous emotion because it unites those who possess mutual affection. But hate is not a virtuous emotion, because it divides persons who might otherwise come to a mutual regard.

In the sphere of economics, cooperation is a virtuous impulse, because it unites men in the accomplishment of some necessary end. Conversely, competition is not a virtuous impulse, because it divides men, and thus diverts attention from the necessary to the accomplishment of various personal ambitions.

The Necessary is that which must be accomplished in order to further the progress of the whole and each of its parts. The Necessary is the basis of man-made law which imposes certain rules upon human conduct in order to sustain the structure of society. The Necessary is also the goal, the purpose toward which all effort is directed. Socrates believed that each man must discover, through his inward realization united with the outward testimonies of experience,

the goal toward which he is to aspire. Without goal, action is meaningless, and all effort comparatively wasted. Not only must human beings have goals, but nations, races, and civilizations must have high destinies toward which they aspire. Failure of this larger vision results inevitably in the collapse of empire.

Greek civilization was dominated by the mystical splendor of the Orphic tradition. The mystical hymns attributed to Orpheus set forth a glorious pageantry of the gods, and the splendid pattern of a three-fold world presided over by the mighty council of Olympus.

The Mysteries of Orpheus were established throughout the Attic states, and the priests of these mystical rites performed the great religious dramas which were called *orgies*. This word, in its original meaning, signified a secret ceremonial rite in honor of any of the various dieties, but later especially the rites of Dionysus. Among the Romans, the term came to be applied to the rites of Bacchus which included ecstasy and frenzy. In the modern use of the word, it represents dissolute revelry.

It was usual for philosophers and other intellectual leaders to be initiated into the Orphic rites as part of their formal education. They became spectators to the sacred drama which presented in the form of solemn pagantry the creation of the universe, the birth of the gods, the orders and powers of super-mundane beings, and finally, the creation of man and his perfection through obedience to the will of the gods.

Socrates was the outstanding exception to the rule of his time, in foregoing initiation into the State Mysteries. His probable reason for not partaking in the rites was the vow of secrecy imposed upon all participants. He has been called the 'self-initiated' philosopher because from his demon or

spirit he learned the secrets of the temples without formal initiation. On at least one occasion he was accused publicly of revealing secret information belonging to the sanctuary. The penalty for such an infraction was death, but he escaped punishment when he was able to prove that he had never assumed the obligations of secrecy, and, therefore, was innocent of all fault regarding the breaking of an oath.

Socrates stands forth as living proof that it is possible to attain the knowledge of spiritual things entirely from within the self, by the exercise of the internal faculties. It was a great surprise to his contemporaries when it was publicly known that he had not been initiated. His knowledge of the rites and ceremonies was so complete and profound that it had been the natural assumption that he had witnessed the spectacles.

Although he did not assume the obligation of the Orphic cult, the basic doctrines of Socrates are entirely Orphic. It is quite impossible to interpret his teachings correctly without a basic knowledge of Orphean metaphysics. The grand cycle of Orphic symbolism as it relates to the life and unfoldment of the human being can be briefly defined as follows: Man is a spiritual being whose natural abode is a heavenly or paradisaical state. Through the rebellion of the Titans—the primordial forces of matter—the material world came into being. The physical earth produced out of itself a profusion of primitive forms. Berossus, the Chaldean cosmogonist, designated these primitive creatures of the earth as monsters that crawled out of the original slime. He described them as *composita,* creatures combining various animals and human forms; some had many heads, others numerous arms, and still others had the bodies of men and the wings and heads of birds or reptiles. All these creatures were soulless

and crawled about in the darkness that preceded the dawn of light.

The Vision of Enoch

The vision of Enoch describes how spiritual beings (human souls) beholding the monsters in the abyss, descended from heaven and took unto themselves the bodies of these creatures, entered into them so that the mindless received minds, and the forms became the bodies of the infant human race. In Genesis, the story is told in two ways: in the first account, Adam and Eve, driven from the Garden of Eden, put on coats of skins (bodies); in the second description, the sons of God (spirits) beheld the daughters of men (bodies) and descended unto them. In the Greek tradition the account is concealed in the story of Narcissus. This vain youth, beholding his own reflection in the surface of a pool, fell in love with this shadow of himself, and finally drowned as he tried to embrace his own shadow.

Imprisoned within the mortal body, the human consciousness is in a state of exile, and Plato defined the physical body as a sepulcher of the soul. The spiritual man is imprisoned within his corporeal form as the oyster is locked within its shell. The experiences of the soul in the physical state are explained and described by Homer in the wanderings of Ulysses, with the Trojan War introduced as a clever symbolic subterfuge to represent the material condition of man. The original name of Troy was Ilium, from the word Ilus, meaning mud, or primordial slime. At the end of the wars against the Trojans, Homer describes the ships of Ulysses as unfurling their sails to carry the adventurers back to their own far distant native land. This homeland is the

heavenly world which the human soul left in its search for wisdom.

The soul is attached to the body and held prisoner by the intemperate impulses of the flesh. This is the meaning of the story of Samson, who was blinded and fastened to the mill-stone of the Philistines.

Wisdom and the temperance of living are called the intellectual and cathartic virtues by which the soul is purged from dross and released from bondage to body. This Orphic doctrine is the very substance and essence of the Socratic teaching. Through rebirth in wisdom the human soul is freed from the domination of the appetites and verges upward toward its natural estate. In this way man becomes a god, knowing good and evil. This is also the key to the parable of the prodigal son, and the Gnostic hymn of the Robe of Glory.

The greatest of the disciples of Socrates was Plato, son of Ariston, who was born B. C. 427. During his early manhood Plato was a devoted friend and admirer of Socrates, from whom he learned the great axiom that ignorance is the greatest evil and wisdom the greatest virtue.

Plato built his philosophy of ethics, logic, psychology, and politics upon the solid foundation of the Socratic point of view. In the development and perfection of these ideas he vastly excelled his master; but he never outgrew his sense of obligation to Socrates, and it is now believed that the Socrates of the Platonic dialogues is, in part at least, an invention of Plato, and that he probably ascribed to his teacher many doctrines that essentially were original with himself.

Socrates gave direct inspiration to Plato's vast learning, but Pythagoras was the indirect source of many of the Platonic formulas. The profound idealism and mystic scope of

the Pythagorean teachings, combined with the simple utility of the Socratic attitude, gave to Plato's ideas their extraordinary dignity, profundity, and scope.

The Prayer of Socrates

Unlike most men who consecrate their minds to the social and cultural needs of mankind, Socrates possessed a devout spirit. He never questioned the reality of the great gods who ruled the world from the lofty pinnacle of Olympus; he discovered the truth about the gods through inward experience and through meditation upon the sublime order of the worlds. Socrates frequently visited the many shrines and sacred groves in Athens. Coming to some sacred shrine he would retire for a few moments from his disciples to offer his prayer to the genius of the place. One of his prayers before the herm of the god Pan has been preserved: "Beloved Pan, and all ye diviner Ones about this place, grant that I may be good in the inner nature, and that what I have of external things may be accordant with those within. May I deem the wise man truly rich, and let me have only such an amount of material wealth as a provident man may possess and wisely use."

The philosophy of the school of Socrates is permeated with the doctrine of right use. It is the personal responsibility of each individual to use wisely and well both his talents and his possessions. The gods reward or punish according to use or abuse. Only those who make right use of the things which they have, are entitled to retain those things, or have greater treasures added. Right use is defined in terms of the greatest good to the greatest number.

The utilitarian phase of Socrates' teachings stressed the practical value of proper idealism in political and economic life. Ideals are intangibles that exercise a profound and tangible force in the life of the state and in all personal relationships which make up daily living. Right ideals result in right motives; and right motives in turn impel to right use of things possessed or administrated.

Throughout all the teachings of Socrates there is a deep and kindly human quality, a sympathetic understanding and patience. He condemns smugness because it interferes with the flow of human consciousness. There is no reward for a complacent attitude.

Imperfection is common to all mortal creatures. All men must realize this and strive unceasingly for their own perfection.

The case of the city of Athens against Socrates, condemning him to death, was reopened in 1926 by the supreme court of Greece, and the old evidence was re-translated and re-examined in the light of a more generous age. The modern supreme court reversed the old decision with a solemn announcement that found Socrates innocent on all charges and without fault. Although justice came 2300 years too late, it was as Socrates himself would have wished. His doctrines, his life and his work, were vindicated by the supreme arbitrator of all human factions—ageless and inevitable Time.

DIOGENES

4

DIGNITY OF INDIGENCE

Diogenes, the Dog of Athens

HAPPINESS, Socrates had insisted, is the direct result of obedience to natural law. Due to be added to this was a step of vast importance in human thinking; it was the recognition that, because a man suffers misfortune or gains happiness by his own acts, he is a moral unit in his social system; and the preservation or destruction of that social system thereby becomes his personal responsibility.

Another important realization was, that self-control is achieved through the power of the human will, and the superior man is the individual who has the courage to perform right actions without regard to reward or penalty in the material outcome.

These were doctrines basic to the school of philosophy known as the Cynics and Diogenes of Sinope was the most celebrated of the Cynics. He was born about the year 412 B. C. and lived to the age of eighty-nine, but very little of his personal life is known through the historians. He is remembered principally as the self-appointed censor of Athenian morals, and because of the general degeneracy of his

time, his crusade against corruption occupied the greater part of his thought and energy throughout his long life.

Diogenes was born of poor but dishonest parents. His father, Icesias, by profession a money-changer, was caught adulterating the coinage, and was branded by the authorities at Sinope as an undesirable citizen, and sent into exile. Diogenes was included with his father in the sentence of exile, and the family moved on to Athens. Here Diogenes came under the influence of the ascetic teachings of Antisthenes, founder of the Cynic school of philosophy.

Antisthenes was a devoted pupil of Socrates; he walked many miles each day in order to attend the Socratic lectures, and though never a brilliant intellectualist, he possessed great courage of conviction and reduced himself to poverty in his devotion to the ascetic viewpoint. He founded a school of his own in the Cynosarges, Hall of the Bastards, in Athens, and by the simplicity of his life and teachings, exerted a wide influence over the poorer clases. He customarily wore a cloak of rough cloth, carried a long stick and a wallet, and this attire was accepted as the costume peculiar to his sect.

Antisthenes had a violent temper and was not above committing acts of physical violence upon his disciples when they displeased him. Evidently Diogenes offended his master on more than one occasion and suffered considerable brutality during the years of his discipleship.

Doctrines of the Cynics

The Cynics were a reactionary group, a product peculiar to their time and place. The luxurious way of life of many Athenians and their extravagances and dissipations offended the poorer classes and Diogenes became the moving spirit

and chief spokesman for the disgruntled. His remedy for the rising tide of dissipation was simple living and personal self-discipline; he was not socialistic, as we understand that word today; his disparagement of the whole theory of wealth was from religious and philosophical convictions.

In his philosophy of poverty, Diogenes divided the poor into two general classifications. In the first group were those who, through lack of ambition, or through indolence or ineptitude were poor by the necessity of their own nature. With no desire to improve themselves or their material estates through personal effort and application, such men became rabble rousers; they attempted to justify their poverty as a virtue and they condemned the rich. And with these the great Cynic had little patience.

In the second group were men and women of proven worth who had earning power and enterprise, but who elected to live a life of poverty from ethical or religious conviction. These, discovering the insufficiency and impermanence of all worldly possessions, chose to devote their lives to wisdom, free of the incumbrance of worldly goods. They had come to the philosophic realization that only the truly great can be truly humble, that only those who have known wealth can become the enlightened poor. Diogenes particularly admired these, for their material poverty was not from necessity but of their own choosing.

With his growth in years Diogenes grew also in the intensity of his convictions. One by one he disposed of his worldly possessions until he had only his staff and wooden bowl. For some time thereafter he was content that he had reduced his physical possessions to a minimum. Then one day he realized that the staff was unnecessary and that a wise man's only physical support should be in the strength

of his own body. Some time later he had noticed a peasant drinking water from the hollow of his hands; instantly Diogenes realized that his wooden bowl was a sordid luxury and he cast the bowl away.

Diogenes explained at some length his reasons for renouncing the wooden bowl, saying: "The gods are sufficient unto themselves in all things, and sustain their own beings and the world by the internal energy of their soul-power. But men conversely are not self-sufficient, and depend upon nature and the gods for their survival. If the wise would aspire to a divine estate they must become like the gods, deriving their strength from within themselves, and ceasing to be dependent upon outside comforts and commodities. The man who is most god-like is the one whose needs are fewest, and who lives to give, rather than to receive."

Diogenes had a unique solution for the housing problem. A large empty wine tub stood in the grounds of the Temple of Cybele, and this was selected as an appropriate habitation. He moved in, and lived in the empty cask for many years. It had a splendid location allowing the old philosopher to sit quietly in its opening in closeup observation of the hustle and bustle of the Forum. On any fine day he could be found sunning himself complacently in front of the huge barrel, munching his frugal ration or discoursing with friends or disciples on his favorite theme, the follies of the Greeks.

Juvenile pranksters hit upon a scheme to discomfort Diogenes. Just before the beginning of the rains they drilled a number of holes in the top of the tub. Diogenes appeared before the council of the City Fathers and in solemn dignity demanded that the State put a new roof on the tub. It is reported that the repairs were ordered made at the expense

of the taxpayers, and Diogenes made a triumphal return to his happy home.

The Dynamic detachment practiced by the celebrated Cynic so greatly impressed Alexander the Great that he made a visit to Athens and paid a formal call at the tub. The King of Macedon was received by Diogenes with ill-concealed indifference. Soon Alexander asked, "Diogenes, is there not something that I can do for you?" The man in the tub replied, "There is one thing, my prince; you can stand to one side, for you are between me and the sun, and I am cold."

Diogenes was nicknamed the Dog of Athens because, as he himself expressed it, he barked at the heels of the rich, growled and snarled at the politicians, received with elaborately assumed gratitude the scraps of food that were tossed his way, and his living abode resembled a kennel. For some time Diogenes and Alexander the Great kept up an erratic correspondence. Once Alexander sent a basket of old bones with a note saying, "These are fit for a dog to receive." Diogenes returned the bones with another note, "These are not fit for a Prince to send."

After bestowing his attention upon the needs of the Athenians for many years, Diogenes decided to travel to distant parts. On a journey to Aegina his ship was captured by pirates, and he was sold in the slave market at Crete. While on the block awaiting sale, Diogenes was asked his trade by a number of prospective purchasers. He answered, "I have no trade except that of governing men. I would like to be bought by someone who wants not a servant, but a master."

Xeniades of Corinth was the successful bidder; he was a person of superior mentality, and appointed Diogenes tutor

for his sons. The great Cynic remained in Corinth for the rest of his life. He devoted these years to the education of the young and the exposition of his philosophical theories. It appears that he was never actually held in slavery, for he would not have recognized the state of serfdom; he taught that no man could be a slave except to his own intemperances.

Diogenes never married; he included a wife among the categories of unnecessary possessions.

The people of Corinth came to so love the cranky old man that when he died they erected in his memory a fine column topped with a figure of a crouching dog carved from Parian marble. During his last years Diogenes lived alone in a small house and frequently, for several days at a time, he received no visitors. One day a student said to him, "Master, it is not fitting for a man of your years to live entirely alone; why do you not engage a housekeeper, or allow one of your friends to present you with a slave to take care of your needs? You might die here, and there would be no one to bury you." Diogenes' reply was typical. "I prefer to live alone; and the man who wants my house when I am dead will find a way to bury me."

Diogenes was a favorite subject for the old painters and sculptors, and many likenesses of him, real or imaginary, are preserved in Greek and Roman art. He is usually represented heavily bearded, scraggly haired, and with strong aquiline features, and small and thin of body. He maintained a complete indifference to the matter of his personal appearance and loved nothing better than to shock and anger those given to fine garments and gentle habits.

While living in his tub in Athens he developed an intense scorn for Plato as a patrician, an aristocrat of wealth

and refinement, and, by Cynical standards, a man afflicted with personal pride. When the disciples of Plato presented their master with a fine velvet cloak, Diogenes was particularly annoyed. He left his tub and followed Plato and his disciples along the street, his eyes fixed maliciously on the resplendent new cape. Coming to a muddy spot in the road, Diogenes ran up behind Plato and jumping up and down on the train of the cloak, he ground it into the mud, exclaimed triumphantly, "Thus I step on Plato's pride." Without a hint of annoyance, Plato turned with a kindly smile and the quiet answer, "Yes, Diogenes, and how proud you are that you have done it."

One day Diogenes strolled over and listened attentively while Plato was discoursing with his disciples concerning an appropriate definition for man; finally Plato proposed the definition that in the order of Nature, man was a biped without feathers. Diogenes quickly found a chicken, plucked it and then tossed it, in all its unfeathered ingloriousness, into the midst of the academicians, crying out, "Behold Plato's man." Thereafter, Plato amplified the definition to include the words, "having broad nails."

It was the Roman, Epictetus, a Stoic philosopher, who defined the doctrine of the Cynics as "the athletics of righteousness." These doctrines, based upon two important philosophical dicta, were to influence profoundly the whole course of human thinking. The first was recognition of the individual as the moral unit in society. The second was the realization of the autocracy of the will in its power to control personal action. In expression of both of these principles, the rugged personality of Diogenes led him to excesses incompatible with the social motion of his time. He was an extremist; but probably his very over-emphasis was neces-

sary to the perpetuation of his ideas. Men remembered his teachings because he never allowed them the opportunity to forget them.

Patron Saint of the Simple Life

Diogenes, patron saint of the back-to-nature cults, the supreme advocate of the simple life, had in the Athenian forum hardly a fortunate place to promulgate such ideas; it was the center of an area of intense artificiality and smug traditionalism. Yet, from the time of Diogenes to the reign of the Roman Emperor Hadrian, approximately five hundred years, the school of the Cynics was represented by an unbroken line of strong intellectual leaders, and its philosophy has remained a powerful force in molding medieval and modern thought.

The doctrine of personal responsibility has been far reaching in its effect. It is the basis of the best and most honest thinking of our time. It requires each person to recognize himself as the cause of his own happiness and misfortune, and to accept himself as a participating dynamic factor in preserving or destroying the fabric of his social system.

The Socratic idea that happiness must be earned through obedience to natural law was strongly emphasized by the Cynics who had little patience with social graces, and are accused of being uncouth, and in some instances actually uncivilized. They did go to an unjustified extreme, but their motive was to prevent the acceptance of the social graces as a substitute for personal integrity. Their horrible example was the elegantly cultured and cultivated rogue, accepted for his manner but possessing no basic virtues to support his polished exterior. To the Cynics, sophistication

obscured the weaknesses in the moral and intellectual life of man, and tradition imposed unreasonable and often destructive limitations upon human perspective.

The power of the human will was the sure means of reducing the chaos of existence to an ordered pattern. Through self-control and by bridling excessive impulse, a man could be brought to a sane way of living. But this was something he must accomplish for himself, and it was the only adequate basis which justified a feeling of personal superiority. The superior man is the one who has the courage to perform such actions as he knows to be right even at the expense of his worldly estate. And so his mind must be one that has become indifferent to wealth or position, for an intellect addicted to money or honor will sacrifice principle to preserve these. The Diogenes doctrine was not so much one of emphasis on poverty as it was one of detachment from the fixation toward accumulation which dominates the average person.

Wealth, position, and ambition for temporal supremacy occupy so large a part of time and energy that those who live for them alone have little time for anything else. A man is a servant of his own possessions, and can release himself from this servitude only by the determination of his own will.

It is not required of the average person to break his bowl or throw away his staff, but to live simply, to have few wants, and to free the mind for study, self-improvement and properly balanced recreation, these are adjustments vital to the personal security. Very useful in the complicated world which men have created for themselves, are moments of clear thinking when values are put in order and the indi-

vidual sees through the fallacies which dominate the public mind.

Possibly the easiest way to understand the doctrine of the Cynics is to imagine ourselves back in ancient Athens or Corinth, mingling with the busy throngs that gathered in the markets and paraded their splendor in the public squares. It is impossible to understand a people unless you can share, at least vicariously, in the life of that people. Here and there along the busy thoroughfares rutted with chariot wheels were secluded spots, fountains, small parks, and shaded cloisters; in each of these some philosopher, orator, logician, or mathematician conducted his school. A few of the more prominent intellectuals had buildings of their own, but for the most part they preferred some public place which became exclusively their own for assembly by popular tradition and acceptance. For years, Plato favored a grove on the outskirts of the city. Another group, the Peripatetics, gained their name, the Walkers, because they preferred to discourse in the athletic environment of the cinder track where foot races were held. One old mathematician held classes on the steps of the Temple of Zeus. And the hallowed grounds of the Cynics was the area immediately surrounding the tub of Diogenes.

Here the old Cynic sat, day after day, his dour face wrinkled into symbolic lines of disapproval, voicing his objections whether men listened or not.

On a certain occasion, Diogenes, suddenly obeying the impulse of his favorite muse, arose and began a discourse of great profundity. He continued talking for some time, but he perceived that no one had stopped to listen to his words and that his intellectual fragrance was being wasted on desert air. Equal to the emergency, he ceased his scholarly

address, and began singing a popular melody off-key. He executed a few grotesque dance steps, hopping around like an ungainly bird. A great crowd quickly assembled in front of his tub. Having now assured himself of an audience, Diogenes suddenly stopped singing, and in a loud voice berated the onlookers, "Fools, for good things you have no ears, but for worthless discords you have both hearing and time." He then turned his back on the lot and returned to his cask with scholarly dignity.

In the course of a day an admirer dropped by the famous tub and presented Diogenes with a small vial of the scented oil which the aristocrats used to annoint their heads. After cogitating for some time as to the proper disposition to be made of the gift, he seated himself on the ground and forthwith annointed his feet generously with the perfume. Since the private life of Diogenes was everyone's concern, because of the public way in which he lived it, a passerby called out: "And why, Master of the Dogs, do you depart from approved custom and put the oil on your feet instead of your head?" The old Cynic chuckled. "When I put the sweet oil upon the crown of my head," he replied, "the scent goes upward into the air and is lost; and when I put it upon my feet it rises unto my nostrils and delights my soul."

Another story about feet is ascribed to Diogenes—although sometimes to Aristippus. Entering into the presence of a great noble of whom he craved a favor, Diogenes went through an elaborate procedure of getting down on his knees before the prince and addressing his supplication to the great man's feet. Disciples later reproved the philosopher for thus humiliating himself before a tyrant. Diogenes remarked with a shrug, "Can I help it if his ears are in his feet?"

Late one afternoon, a man of obvious importance approached the tub demanding that the Cynic accompany him immediately to the house of an important noble, on pain of death if he failed to obey. Diogenes was not impressed. Looking up from a book he was reading, he muttered; "Your threat is of no importance, for a spider can destroy me as easily as your master can. If he had really wished to hurt me, the great prince who has sent you would have threatened that he could have lived well without me."

Demosthenes, the orator, was another eccentric genius of that time. He seems to have been born with an impediment of speech, which he resolved to overcome by the sheer power of his will. It is reported of him, that as a young man he regularly walked by the shore of the sea and putting pebbles in his mouth, made long and difficult speeches to the ocean until his voice could be heard above the roaring of the waves. He also gave lectures while climbing a steep hill in order to gain control of his breath. And lest his mind be distracted by the enticements of the flesh, Demosthenes made his appearance ridiculous by shaving one side of his head and beard. In the end he accomplished his purpose, and became one of the greatest orators among the Greeks.

Diogenes was irritated by Demosthenes. He regarded the orator as ambitious for worldly power and glory. One day the old Cynic, whose slender purse permitted only the humblest kind of living, was eating at a small and none too respectable victualing house where the food was abundant if not refined. As he sat munching at his meal, Diogenes saw the great orator striding by followed by a group of admirers. With his mouth full of food Diogenes shouted, "Ho, Demosthenes, come and join me at my table!" The orator, embarrassed out of face, stammered his regrets and

beat a hasty retreat. Diogenes called after him as loudly as he could: "Orators are the servants of the common people, are you ashamed to eat where your masters dine?"

Anaximenes of Lampsacus was a leading rhetorician and historian of the time. He enjoyed the patronage of Alexander the Great, accompanied the King of Macedon in his Persian campaigns and wrote eulogistic histories of both Alexander and Philip. The Athenians regarded him as a man of excellent parts. Naturally Diogenes disapproved of him; he was contemptuous of him for toadying to the great.

The pride of Anaximenes was in his flawless Greek expression and his diction; on the slightest provocation, he would arise and embark on a discourse. He was in the midst of one of his impassioned addresses to the forum when Diogenes wandered by, as usual looking for trouble. He made several abortive efforts to heckle the orator, then the old Cynic hit upon an arresting stratagem. He obtained a small piece of salt fish and excitedly began waving it about. One by one the assembled crowd turned from Anaximenes and centered on the gyrating fish. The orator sensed but could not understand how he had lost his audience; he grew more and more excited until he completely lost track of his subject. In the height of the confusion, Diogenes called for silence; he desired to speak. "Behold," he cried, waving the fish in the air, "a penny's worth of salt fish hath confounded the philosopher!"

Diogenes was equally violent in his dislike for contemporary physicians; he called their drugs poison, and proclaimed the whole breed children of Hades. Consistent with his advocacy of the back to nature principle, he declared that herbs were proper medication; and he made long excursions into the forests and mountains to gather the simples

he favored; these he would spread out to dry all over the Forum, and afterward wash them in a public fountain, usually one dedicated to some prominent politician. Plato came upon him one morning while he was dousing his herbs in the public water supply and none too softly whispered in his ear: "If you had followed the rich and powerful Dionysius, you would not have need to wash herbs." Diogenes whispered back in the same stage undertone: "Aye, Plato, but if you had washed herbs, you would not have needed to follow Dionysius."

The Dionysius to whom they referred was an ambitious and successful man, who became tyrant of Syracuse through his courage and diplomacy. He aspired to honors in belles-lettres but was a bad poet. At last, his tragedy, *The Ransom of Hector,* won a prize. He was so elated that he celebrated the occasion with a debauch which proved fatal.

Considerable gossip was stirred up when Phryne, a celebrated courtesan, set up at the entrance of the Oracle of Delphi a golden statue of Venus on a fine white marble pedestal. Diogenes crept into the sanctified precincts at night and wrote across the base of the pedestal, "An offering from the intemperance of the Grecians."

From Socrates Diogenes had imbibed the use of irony as a means of forcing home his moral lessons. He realized that most men can withstand criticism but few can survive ridicule. And to this day ridicule is a powerful weapon in the political arena, but seldom is irony administered with the motive and high principle that inspired its use among the Cynics.

Diogenes regarded a sense of humor as a basic philosophic virtue. For that matter, a sense of wit and whimsy was evidenced by nearly all the great classical philosophers,

and during the golden age of Greek learning, some wit usually crept into even the most solemn occasion. The philosophers knew how very easy it is for a man to take life so seriously that in the end he comes to take himself seriously, always a mistake under any condition. A constructive and unembittered irony was considered a legitimate instrument of philosophical instruction, for if a man cannot see the ridiculous in himself, he is a long way from wisdom.

A group of archers were practicing outside the city gates one day when Diogenes nosed his way into their midst. The young men were shooting so badly that they were not even hitting the target. Diogenes watched them for a time, then ambled over and seated himself complacently on the bale of straw at which they were shooting. When asked why he did this, he replied: "This is the safest place. If I stay elsewhere, yonder bowmen may hit me." It is reported that as a result of this incident one of the young men was so annoyed at his own bad markmanship and the ironical words of Diogenes that he became the greatest archer in Greece. This is cited as an example of the constructive effect of merited ridicule.

Most famous of the pupils of Diogenes was Crates of Thebes, with whom the first cycle of the school of the Cynics may be said to have closed. Crates possessed considerable wealth, but as he became devoted to the Cynic doctrine of self-imposed poverty, it is said he left his fortune in trust of his sons, with the following remarkable admonition: "If my sons grow up to be fools give them the money; if they grow up to be philosophers distribute my wealth among the poor."

Crates is especially remembered for a diverting personal eccentricity. It was his habit while walking along a street

to enter any strange house without knocking and preach his doctrine to whomsoever might chance to be at home. Not always were the unexpected calls fully appreciated.

The philosopher Crates married Hipparcia, daughter of a noble and influential family, and at the time of his marriage he was vowed to poverty. Over the protests of her family, Hipparcia chose to share his way of living, and the marriage appears to have been wholly successful.

The doctrines of Crates were almost identical with those of Diogenes. He never departed from the rigid ascetic standards of the sect of Cynics. But it does appear that he contributed a certain aesthetic viewpoint and maintained that the love of beauty and of the arts was permissible to the Cynic philosopher.

The Burden of Ignorance

Diogenes declared that an ignorant man was the heaviest burden that the earth must bear. Yet, he strongly disapproved of formal education on the ground that it produced a kind of sophistry; men became schooled in certain external accomplishments but remained fools within themselves. One day he held up a beet asking, "What is this?" A disciple replied, "Master, a beet is a vegetable." Diogenes jumped up and down hilariously shouting, "Next you will tell me that a vegetable is a beet, and my ignorance will be complete." It seems that Diogenes fathered the modern theory of semantics when he said, "To say that a tree is a plant, is nothing more than to say that a tree is a tree." Little knowledge is gained by describing one unknown substance in terms of another unknown substance; this was his cry against education; it answered important questions with

traditional definitions that shed little if any light upon the facts.

To say that a tree had green leaves was merely to restate the obvious. To describe its size, approximate age and shape, was to waste many words in details plainly to be seen and relatively inconsequential . Diogenes went about asking men to give him an adequate definition of a tree. But he met none, even among the informed, who could tell him anything he could not see for himself.

What then is a tree? Diogenes might have defined it as an experience in the contemplation of life and growth. Through this living thing, universal laws manifest in all their splendor and dignity. To understand the tree is to understand the world. To find the life of a tree is to come close to the Life of all things. He saw education as an adventure in the discovery of life and law, and not merely a mumbling over the dead bones of other men's notions.

A rich merchant brought his son to Diogenes for instruction, saying, "My boy is a very honest, intelligent, ingenious, and an exceedingly well educated youth with a remarkable intellect, and a highly evolved soul." Diogenes answered, "If he be all these things, why doth he need me, who am none of these things?" He received into his school many young men of good family with the avowed purpose of assisting them to bear the burden of their own importance. The man foolish enough to love wealth, or unfortunate enough to be born into a rich family, deserves the pity and understanding, he said, of those more fortunate ones who have little and want less. Diogenes encouraged them in patience and taught that some day good fortune might relieve them of their worldly goods.

The Golden Age of Thought

The fourth century, B. C., was the golden age of original thought. During that century more than six hundred brilliant men and women flourished together in the Attic states. There was a wide divergence of opinion among these intellectuals, but each in his own way made his contribution to mental progress. The best of modern thinking can be traced to these classical philosophers. Upon their teachings has been built up the philosophical overtone which has since preserved human culture through innumerable vicissitudes of time and stress.

It was inevitable that a synchronizing and coordinating force should rise to bind into one vast organization the intellectual achievements of the Greek masters. Nature abhors a vacuum and eternally produces that which is necessary—in this case necessity produced Aristotle. He was the greatest of the disciples of Plato. He combined much of the lofty idealism of the Academy with the reasonable doubts of the Cynics and Skeptics. Had it not been for a natural tendency to dyspepsia, it is probable that Aristotle would have clung more closely to the Platonic theology; but a bad digestion bred cynicism in his mind and prevented him from reaching the spiritual genius of his immortal master.

We have no account of any personal meeting between Aristotle and Diogenes, but there was certainly a meeting of their minds on a number of questions. Aristotle was a doubter and a questioner, and in these details of temperament he must have been close to the heart of the old Cynic.

Diogenes, who questioned all other things, never doubted the reality of the gods. He was a staunch defender of the Olympian deities against what he regarded as the profaning

of the gods by their very worshipers. He advised evil men not to pray lest the gods should hear them and, minded of their existence, should punish them according to their sins. He was one of the first to insist that the deities were not servants of human purpose, but that men were the servants of the gods. He had little patience for those who performed elaborate ceremonies to their patron divinities and then lived badly. He imputed the evils which afflicted mankind, not to the anger of celestial beings, but to those faults within man himself. He did not approve of men giving thanks to the deities for their good fortune; rather, he felt that each person should be inspired to the realization that success and failure are of his own making. The gods should be approched only in a spirit of the deepest veneration and honor; and men should bring to the altar their own virtuous lives as proof of their religious spirit.

On one occasion a traveler returning from the Shrine of Samothrace described to Diogenes the great number of votive offerings gathered there from persons who had escaped shipwreck. It was a temple dedicated to the Gods of the Seas, and mariners on long journeys usually stopped there to pray for a safe voyage. Diogenes pondered, "It must have been a wonderful collection, but think how much greater it would have been if those who had drowned could have presented their offerings also."

Like some of the Asiatic nations, the Greeks had household spirits; they were called, Lares and Penates. These benevolent divinities, usually of the order of nymphs, had homes in various parts of the house; some were supposed to live under the hearth stone, the most ancient of all symbols of the home. It was customary on certain occasions to leave small offerings of food for the household spirit, and failure

to fulfill this obligation might be followed by a series of domestic annoyances. It was the private opinion of Diogenes that most of these offerings were eaten by rats, and he ridiculed the idea in general as being inconsistent with any rational system of religion. It wounded his spirit to believe that the gods could be so hungry or so desperately in need of food that they were reduced to the necessity of eating the bad cooking of some of the Athenian housewives. When well warmed up to this subject, Diogenes would develop at considerable length his pet belief that the gods have no need of any service that man can perform for them; and they certainly were not pleased by the crumbs left from the rich man's table.

By this simple argument the old Cynic attacked one of the most venerated of religious traditions. Even yet, after twenty-three hundred years, we have not entirely recovered from our belief that the celestials in their heavenly abode can be induced to favor our personal ambitions by a variety of petty bribes. What is the motivated difference between an old Greek putting a bowl of soup on the hearth stone to win the friendship of the family Lare, and the repentant plutocrat presenting a stained glass window to the local church? Diogenes would have insisted that it was cheaper to have a good conscience than to pay for a bad one.

Diogenes was an early exponent of George Bernard Shaw's famous motto, "I irritate." Yet, the old Cynic was at heart a kindly man, and never failed to help to the best of his ability all who came to him with their troubles. He was enough of a psychologist to realize that open confession is good for the soul. He also found listening to be a splendid way of learning. Experiences of other men lose half their value if someone else does not benefit from them.

He would devote considerable time to even the most unpromising of the troubled. He spent the greater part of one day trying to impart good counsel to an especially dull man who could understand nothing that was told him. The patience of Diogenes was untiring. He explained, and then explained what he had explained. At last a friend standing nearby spoke up. "Master, what are you trying to do?" Diogenes replied blandly, "I am attempting to accomplish the impossible."

If the gods can be patient with men, certainly human beings should be patient with each other; for the need is great. Diogenes taught that the gods possess among divine faculties a truly miraculous forbearance, and men who would be like the gods must aspire to a similar measure of patience and understanding.

Diogenes also believed that the gods possessed a highly developed sense of humor, for only humor of the highest calibre could have created man in caricature of their own nature. The divinities also bestowed upon their creation some of this humor, so that men might enjoy each other with a truly Jovial appreciation for the absurd.

Rebellion Against Tradition

It is difficult to organize the doctrines of the Cynics into any comprehensive pattern. These men functioned from an attitude; it was more a conviction than a formalized system of thought. Each of the Cynical philosophers applied certain general rules to the problems of his own life and environment. They were united principally by a common disdain for creature comforts and rebellion against all forms of tradition, intellectual or social. The logical extreme of their

viewpoint was a complete renunciation of formalized learning. Demetrius of Sunium reached this logical extreme. He lived in Rome during the reigns of Caligula, Nero, and Vespasion; and when banished by Vespasion, he completely ignored the emperor's wrath and publicly ridiculed the edict. It was men of such courage and great personal fortitude who were drawn to the doctrines of Cynical philosophy, and the entire following was distinguished by a total lack of personal fear and an intense courage of conviction.

Demetrius rejected all scientific knowledge for he claimed that learning complicated the living of the simple life. The mind involved with the dogma of the sciences and professions has its natural powers obscured and its functions distorted by preconceptions concerning the nature of facts.

A good example of the simplified mental processes of the Cynics is to be found in the statement made by Diogenes, that everything in the world belongs to the wise. He achieved this conclusion by the following logic: "All things belong to the gods; the gods are friends to wise persons; all things are common between friends; therefore all things belong to the wise."

Someone once asked Antisthenes, founder of the sect of the Cynics, what he had gained by his new philosophy of life. His reply was, he had learned how to converse with himself. When Diogenes was asked why he talked to himself on numerous occasions, he replied that there were moments when he could not resist the temptation to converse with a person of intelligence.

The Cynics believed that the study of the various arts and learned sciences caused men to become so fascinated with these intellectual pursuits that they ignored the vital problems of their own characters. Discoursing on this sub-

ject, Diogenes said: "I never cease wondering at grammarians who, inquiring after the misfortunes of Ulysses, forget their own; at musicians who, while they tune their instruments, have discordant affections in their souls; at mathematicians who, gazing upon the sun and moon, neglect what is at their feet; at orators who, proficient in the speaking of just things, neglect to act them; and at covetous persons who, publicly disparage money which in truth they love above all things."

The reference to the mathematicians who neglect that which is at their feet was an allusion to an incident in the life of Thales. This great Sophist while out one evening became so engrossed in contemplation of the moon that he fell into an open ditch filled with muddy water. Thales loved to tell this story on himself, to remind his disciples that wise men must keep one eye on the earth even while the other is focused upon matters celestial.

There is much to be said in favor of the Cynical attitude on the fallacies of education. It is true that our studies cause us to forget that the supreme problem in living is self-improvement. We can never know more than we are. Failure to develop the inner life brings formal education to nothing. We may remember all that is written in the book, and become skilled in the most complicated pursuits, but if we have not understanding in our hearts, we are indeed the sounding brass and the tinkling cymbal. The great purpose of education is not to produce technicians, but to produce nobility of living, without which all formal knowledge is in vain.

After Diogenes had moved to Corinth, and had come close to his eightieth year, his friends attempted to persuade him to modify the rigors of his living. They were worried

lest he overtax his enfeebled body with his athletic excesses. One said to him: "You are old now. Do you not think that it would be wiser to live less strenuously?" Diogenes firmly replied: "Life is a race, and would a runner cease his strivings almost at the end, or rather contest with greater courage?"

Diogenes On The Purpose of Life

The old Cynic was not, however, above an occasional complaint. He developed a serious pain in his shoulder, and fussed so much about the discomfort that a stranger hearing him, and having little sympathy, suggested; "It might be a good idea for you to die and thus free yourself from the misery." Diogenes indignantly replied: "No. The purpose of existence is to put life in order, and it is not proper that I should die from any pain, but rather, that having mastered the pain, I should die as a reward."

This was an expression of the general attitude of the Cynics on the subject of death. Among enlightened pagan peoples death was regarded not as a disaster, but as something to be desired in the fullness of time. One old scholar on his death bed was observed to rise upon his elbow and cupping his hands behind one ear, listen attentively to the gossip of his relatives and friends gathered in the next room. When asked the reason for his action, he replied, "Perhaps by listening I shall learn something." "But you are dying," he was told. "That is true," agreed the old man, "but while I yet live I can still learn."

The Cynics shared with other Greek sects a common participation in the Orphic tradition—the immortality of the soul, metempsychosis, or rebirth, and the ultimate perfection

of human nature through periodic re-embodiment in the physical state. The strength of this belief overcame all fear of death which was viewed as an adventure in a new state of being.

This realization was largely responsible for the splendid idealism of classical philosophy, just as it is the lack of this sure conviction of personal immortality that is responsible for much that is ignoble in our modern living. Unless men have certain adequate convictions about themselves, the purpose for their existence, and the ultimate estate to which they will attain, they cannot live well, even during the brief years of one mortal span. This is one of many instances in which intangibles determine the course of tangible action.

A man in a vengeful mood came one day to Diogenes and asked, "What is the best way, old master, to avenge oneself upon an enemy?" The philosopher thought for a moment and then observed, "There is but one way; and that is, by so improving yourself that he shall torment himself to death in his jealousy for your virtues."

In recent times, the term cynic has come by popular usage to symbolize moroseness and contempt for the views of others. By this definition a cynic is a person who believes that human conduct is motivated, consciously or unconsciously, wholly by self-interest or self-indulgence. The cynic is always searching for ulterior motives, and comes in the end to suspect all men of seeking advantage at the expense of others. By this definition it would seem that cynicism is the basic philosophical conviction of the majority of moderns. The average man suspects the worst of his government, his competitors, his relatives, his friends, and even of himself. It is rare indeed for any person to suspect others of honesty or of right intention.

Popular usage of a term has perverted a basic idea. Cynically speaking, the word cynic should be rescued from popular misconception. Cynicism is not basically a doctrine of negative condemnation; rather, it is a teaching intended to enable the individual to weed out the wrong motivation from within himself. It is a mistake to consider a man intelligent because he is convinced that other men are corrupt. A man is intelligent when he discovers that he, himself, is inadequate. The primary purpose of the Cynic philosophy was to discover and remedy, at all cost, personal corruption within the nature of the man who suspects all other men. Even in the time of Diogenes, a man was regarded as morose if he was aware of the vanities of his day. The so-called parlor cynic of the twentieth century is not enlightened, he is merely disillusioned. There is a great difference in meaning in these two words.

The man who loses faith in the larger integrities which sustain the world is disillusioned; and with this attitude he corrupts himself.

Diogenes was always aware that the world was good; and that the gods governed their creation with wisdom and understanding. It was men who failed the gods, living in a manner unworthy of their divine origin and heroic destiny. Diogenes ridiculed the follies of the Grecians, but he did so with a constructive motive. He sought to stimulate in the people of his country a higher impulse toward the perfection of their personal natures.

The modern cynic lacks a philosophical background, and is satisfied merely to criticize or condemn. It was a rule of ancient teachers that it was only permissible to destroy when it was possible to rebuild upon a more adequate and constructive foundation. Today, those who are most dissatisfied have

the least to offer in the form of practical remedy. The vision to see the faults in our institutions is not enough; we must also devote our minds to the matter of intelligent correction. Men of themselves are not bad, but they may be conditioned out of their intrinsic integrity by the pressure of wrong environment. Classic cynicism taught to escape from error by escaping from the hypnosis of environment.

No man need perform a destructive action because others do. It is not necessary to conform with the stupidity of one's time. To dare to live our highest personal convictions in the presence of false traditions definitely demands a high degree of individual courage. Diogenes possessed this courage; it is one reason that he has survived in the memory of mankind as a great individual. He was not always right, but he dared to do that which he believed, and urged others to a similar standard of personal courage.

5

THE SEARCH FOR CERTAINTIES

Aristotle the Prince of Philosophers

ACCORDING to the English poet and metaphysician, Samuel Coleridge, all men are born by nature either Platonists or Aristotelians. Plato reasoned that all separate natures and substances are suspended from, and have their reality in, the universal forms, therefore the visible world is a partial expression of immense metaphysical principles.

By this system of reasoning life is divided into (1) universals and (2) particulars. Universals are complete, as beings, patterns, designs and archetypes. These vast principles have certain laws and motions inherent in them and these large laws and motions together make up the universal will, the final governor of all living creatures.

To Plato, God was a universal being, eternal and supernatural—of all natures, the best; of all life, the source; of all intellect, the cause; and of all good, the substance and essence. The world—that is, creation—exists within the nature of this God, and all creatures which exist in the world are dependent upon this God for their being, and their growth. Perfection is to become like the nature of Deity—the best in all things.

Platonism further assumes that the perfect forms of life are eternal, and that all growth is within an unchangeable pattern. We grow up through the pattern but never depart from it, our ultimate state being complete identity with ever-existing forms of good.

The practical consequence of accepting Plato's doctrine is to become a philosophical idealist. The mind seeks that which is most worthy to be the object of attention. Study and veneration are naturally centered upon those universal principles which are the superior natures and the causes of all secondary effects.

Aristotle, in many of his opinions, agreed with the idealism of Plato, but his mind was not so well suited to abstract speculation, and he had little patience with Plato's doctrine concerning the universal nature of the good. To Aristotle, all substances and natures were individual in themselves, and must be examined according to the laws governing their own peculiar phenomena.

For example: God is a super-natural substance and earth is a natural substance; each of these substances must be considered as complete in itself, with no effort made to establish matter as a dependency of spirit. Since it is obviously difficult to examine the substance of a super-natural or super-physical being, but comparatively easy to examine the substance of natural bodies, it was inevitable that the viewpoint of Aristotle should incline toward the materialistic.

Plato's intellect was naturally adapted to synthesis; Aristotle had a mind eminently qualified for analysis. Synthesis forever inclines the reason toward unity; analysis conversely inclines the mind toward diversity. Plato's teaching of one Nature in all natures, was opposed by Aristotle with the doctrine of many natures making up one Nature. With this

viewpoint Aristotle laid the foundation for the modern scientific approach to the subject of knowledge.

In substance, both men taught the same basic truth, but they approached the consideration of life each from a different point of view.

A tree, to Plato, was a single living structure with its roots in a Universal life, its trunk rising through the elements, and its branches spreading out into an immense diversity of twigs and leaves. He might define the tree as a living thing, manifesting through its branches and leaves, all supported by one vital essence.

Aristotle would see the tree differently. To achieve an exact description he would count each leaf separately, describe the shape of each, the variations and the sizes. He would explain the method by which they were attached to the twigs, and these he would also count. He would then describe how the twigs were affixed to the branches, and the branches to the trunk. All the parts of the tree from its smallest leaf to its deepest root would be described as to size, color and shape. He would then combine all these parts and create a definition that would include all the details he had observed. To Aristotle the sum of the parts would equal the whole.

Such ponderous and complicated procedure in search of facts made Plato impatient with Aristotle. Plato insisted that a tree was no more merely the sum of its parts than man is the sum of his arms and legs and the organs of his body. He accused Aristotle of failing to recognize the superphysical elements or patterns by which leaves and branches combine to form a tree.

It may all seem rather complicated, but this diversity in attitude as represented by these two great men has had a

profound influence on the development of human civilization.

Aristotle must be understood as a human being before the values of his philosophy can be correctly appraised. Unfortunately, existing information about Aristotle is quite incomplete, largely because early medieval pseudo-historians made bad matters worse by wrong interpretation of classical authors and by the invention of many fables which have no factual foundation.

Aristotle was born at Stagira about 384 B. C., and came to be known as the Prince of Philosophers. His family seems to have been a good one; he was the son of Nicomachus, a physician, of the family of Aesculapius. Like Hippocrates, Aristotle's kinship to the priest-physicians was by direct descent from Machaon, one of the two sons of Aesculapius.

The life of Aristotle naturally divides into four periods; in each of these his nature underwent a profound change.

He lived at the home of his parents for his first eighteen years, and seems to have devoted some of his energy to the study of medicine, chemistry, and dissection. Such early contact with the scientific approach to life would account for the analytical point of view which he developed later. The indications are that Aristotle lived in considerable luxury and never departed from a patrician style of living. In this he was totally unlike Socrates and Diogenes, who were apostles to the common people.

When Aristotle was about eighteen his father died, leaving the young man a handsome patrimony. Historians agree that Aristotle disposed of the money he had inherited in an incredibly short time, but divide sharply in their opinions, some insisting that the inheritance was devoted to worthy

purposes, and others offering evidence that the money was squandered in riotous living. In any event, the second important period in Aristotle's life begins after the family fortune was either spent or squandered. It was then that he went to Athens where he came under the direct influence of the honored and venerable Plato, then sixty-two years of age.

Aristotle remained with Plato for nearly twenty years, absorbing as much of the wisdom of the great Academician as he was capable of understanding. While attending lectures he read the principal writings of Plato and began collecting a personal library of philosophical books, becoming one of the first men recorded in history to have assembled a private library. Strabo says that in later life Aristotle assisted the King of Egypt in cataloging and arranging the great Egyptian libraries at Alexandria.

The Mind of the Academy

It would be difficult to find two men more opposite in temperament than Plato and Aristotle, but they seemed to have enjoyed a close friendship. This was largely due to Plato being one of the most tolerant and liberal of human beings; he was content to permit Aristotle to differ with him on many important premises of philosophy. Plato nicknamed Aristotle "The Mind of the Academy," after the younger man had attended the lectures for some time. On one occasion when Aristotle was absent from his usual seat, Plato looked about him and smilingly observed, "Today the Intellect is not here."

Aristotle must have been a difficult pupil, and only a teacher of great patience could have endured him. He

would constantly interrupt and object, and then proceed to sustain his objections by long and loquatious argument.

At the time Aristotle was studying in Athens, Plato had completed most of his writings and was becoming more and more devoted to mystical speculations, especially concerning the nature of the Supreme Good. Aristotle agreed heartily with everything that Plato had written earlier, and disagreed with equal heartiness with everything that Plato was teaching in his later years. Many hard words passed between pupil and teacher in the old Academy. Aristotle had a mind of his own and never hesitated to express it fully and vehemently. Plato likened Aristotle to a colt which having fed itself abundantly with its mother's milk, felt frisky enough to gambol about the pasture according to its own will and pleasure.

During the time he was studying with Plato it is believed that Aristotle supported himself as a druggist; some say that he manufactured perfumes and cosmetics. He lived in good style, and apparently accumulated some wealth.

Most of the Platonists objected to Aristotle on the ground that he did not show sufficient respect for the wisdom of his teacher and for Plato's advanced years. He took advantage of Plato's age by deliberately exhausting and confusing the older man when he was far beyond his intellectual prime. A distressing scene is recorded as having occurred when Plato was about eighty years old. Two of the Academic philosophers, Zenocrates and Speusippus, had dedicated their lives to protecting Plato's health and peace of mind through his advanced years. They have been called 'The Sword and Shield of Plato' because they were his defense against the pressure of the outside world. Taking advantage of the absence of Zenocrates, and the sickness of Speusippus, Aris-

totle attacked Plato to his face, and by his interminable arguments so confused the feeble old man that he retired from the Academy and refused to hold any further public lectures.

When Speusippus returned, he and Zenocrates had harsh words with Aristotle for his impudence, and they forbade him to attend any further discourses of the master. Then they coaxed Plato to return to his usual seat and conduct classes, which the old philosopher did for the remaining year and a half of his life.

Those who defend Aristotle as the greatest of all philosophers deny that this incident occurred. But the method was in keeping with Aristotle's temperament, and it is certain that he did take advantage of the weakening faculties and natural feebleness of Plato to press home his arguments, and therefore these were won not by the depth of his own thinking but by force.

Aristotle had the kind of temperament which permitted him to admire and dislike at the same time. There is every indication that he did profoundly admire much of the Platonic teaching; but he lacked the philosophic grace of gentleness, and was perfectly willing to attack the master from whom he had received so much of truth and wisdom.

The third period in the life of Aristotle began after the death of Plato.

Speusippus, Plato's nephew, succeeded the master as head of the Academy, and Aristotle departed, some say in a huff. He began a period of travel that extended for several years, and during this time married Pythias, a relative of his close friend Hermias, and by her had a daughter who was given her mother's name.

About 343 B. C., Philip, King of Macedon, sent for Aristotle to become the tutor of his son Alexander, then a boy

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of thirteen, but destined to become the Great. Alexander had a brilliant mind for military strategy, but little inclination to metaphysical speculation. He grew so fond of Aristotle that he is said to have slept with his master' copy of Homer's Iliad under his pillow, a book which the philosopher had given him, corrected and annotated by his own hand.

At the age of sixteen, Alexander became Regent of Macedon, and Aristotle returned to his native city of Stagira where he lived for some time as a prominent and influential citizen and wrote a number of his books, probably with some assistance of a financial kind from the Macedonian Kings.

Sages of the Cinder Track

The fourth and greatest period of Aristotle's life began with his fiftieth year, when he returned to Athens to establish his own school in the Gymnasium near the temple of Apollo Lyceus. The school became known as the Lyceum. There was a cinder track where athletes practiced foot racing; Aristotle liked to discourse with his disciples while walking around this track, and the school came to be called that of the Peripatetic Philosophers, The Walkers. During the sessions of the school Aristotle also had meals served to his followers.

Many of the early philosophers are known to us through the notes made by their disciples while attending lectures, but Aristotle seems to have prepared most of his discourses in written form. These he read, and then made various commentaries upon the texts. Students could come to his home and read the original manuscripts. These manuscripts

he periodically revised, amplifying certain passages and developing a thorough system of cross references. Aristotle permitted students to make copies for their own use, but it is doubtful that he ever expected the works to be published.

There is a curious letter still in existence by Alexander the Great while campaigning in the Near East. Word had reached Alexander that Aristotle had permitted the publication of his treatise on Metaphysics. Alexander was greatly distressed; he insisted that it was wrong to permit this manuscript to be circulated among the vulgar. There is a deep pathos in the words of Alexander: "In what shall I excel others if the more profound knowledge I gained from you be communicated to all? For my own part I had rather surpass the majority of mankind in the sublimer branches of learning than in extent of power and dominion. Farewell!"

Aristotle's career in Athens extended to approximately his sixtieth year, so he presided in the Lyceum about ten years. At the end of this time he was forced to leave the city as the result of political circumstances that threatened his life. Athens rose against Antipater, the Macedonian regent appointed by Alexander the Great. Aristotle was a close friend of Antipater and depended upon him for protection. Learning that an accusation of impiety had been lodged against him in the court of Athens, Aristotle, remembering the fate of Socrates, decided to quit the city. He retired to Chalcis in Euboea.

It appears that the charges against Aristotle were as groundless and unreasonable as those lodged against Socrates. A priest named Eurymedon charged Aristotle with having composed a hymn in honor of a mortal man, his friend Hermias, and of causing the same to be engraved as an inscription on the statue of Hermias in the Temple of Delphi.

The words of the hymn have survived and there is nothing in them that can be regarded as sacrilegious.

Also, a citizen, Demophilus, demanded public justice against Aristotle for his blasphemies. Among the charges was one to the effect that Aristotle sang the hymn in memory of Hermias every day at dinner.

The Christian Father Origen says, the indictment lodged against Aristotle included an attack upon certain of his doctrines. For instance: The Peripatetics affirmed that prayer and sacrifice had no significance to the wise who live so well according to the rules of wisdom that they require nothing from the gods, and perform no action for which it is necessary to ask forgiveness.

Aristotle was probably wise in leaving Athens, for had he remained he would almost certainly have been convicted and executed. From a safe distance the philosopher later pleaded his cause in writing, but it does not appear that his letters gained for him any victory over his enemies.

Aristotle died at Chalcis on the Island of Euboea in the year 322 B. C., at the age of sixty-three. There is some dispute as to the circumstances which brought about the end of this celebrated philosopher.

Between Euboea and the mainland lies the Strait of Euripus. The strait is about one hundred and eighty feet wide and is remarkable for the unexplained and apparently unexplainable eccentricity of its tide. The current runs about five miles an hour but continues in one direction for only a short time, so that the current reverses its course sometimes ten or twelve times in a single day. Aristotle became fascinated with this curious phenomenon, and is said to have spent days and months studying the current, trying to find a reasonable explanation. Some authors relate that the tide

of the Euripus was the direct cause of Aristotle's death. One writer declares that in the end the philosopher cast himself into the waters says, "Since I cannot comprehend the Euripus, let me be swallowed up by the Euripus."

This story is probably an exaggeration of the simple circumstance that Aristotle exhausted himself in his researches and died as the result of exposure and discouragement. It is also possible that the philosopher met with some accident while climbing about the edge of the straits. It is more usual to agree with Apollodorus, who said that Aristotle died of physical infirmities which were aggravated by study and overwork.

Although Aristotle has been honored for more than two thousand years as one of the world's greatest thinkers, surprisingly little information is available about his personal life and temperament. There can be no question but that Aristotle possessed one of the best organized minds in the history of human thinking. He was dedicated unselfishly to the search for truth, and his writings reveal nobility of character and integrity of purpose. Without Aristotle the whole progress of intellectual development would have been retarded. But, it was because of Aristotle's philosophy that it fell into a confusion which continued to be even more confounded until the middle of the 17th Century A. D.

From such descriptions and early likenesses of Aristotle that have descended to us, it appears that he was a man of small body and aquiline features. He wore no beard and his hair was dressed in short curls, as will be seen from the Herculaneum bust. His eyes were deep set and penetrating, his chin firm and aggresive, and his lips rather too thin for a pleasant disposition. The philosopher does not seem to have enjoyed good health; he suffered considerably from dys-

pepsia, which is traditionally an affliction to the viewpoint. Argumentative by nature, strongly opinionated, and rather intolerant of those who disagreed with him, Aristotle may be summarized as a thinking mechanism untouched by the overtones of mystical apperception.

Very little has survived to make us love Aristotle as a human being. He seems to have had little humor; his approach to every problem is one of deadly seriousness which becomes at times oppressive. It is quite possible that there were considerable dissipations and various intemperances in his early life, for his temperament bears the stamp of the self-reformed. It is well known that when a man repents the errors of his ways, he is likely to develop an overdose of virtue that will lead to extremes and incline him to become fanatical in his living and thinking. Aristotle had far too fine a mind to be fanatic, but his philosophical discourses have within them an undeniable overtone of bitterness and cynicism.

If Aristotle had profited from the later discourses of Plato he could have saved the world a vast amount of misunderstanding and difficulty. Plato knew philosophy as Aristotle never knew it. Philosophy occupies a neutral place between theology and science. Both theology and science thus are extensions or polarities of philosophy. Therefore, philosophy remains suspended between the unprovable and the provable. By unprovable, we mean, spiritual truths which cannot be demonstrated *per se* in a material world. These truths together constitute the proper province of theology which is that part of learning which must discover divine fact through inner personal experience, rather than by logic or reason.

The provable is made up almost entirely of the physical phenomena of life. Here secondary facts can be arranged in categories and related with each other by means of tradition, observation, and experimentation. We say secondary facts for the reason that all physical categories ascend in sequences toward the unprovable; and the source of all life, form, and substance is unknowable in terms of scientific knowledge. Science is the study of effects, the causes of which are unknown. The one question that science cannot answer is, "Why?" That man is, is scientifically demonstrable; why man is, is not scientifically demonstrable. Thus, all reasons, sources, and ultimates are beyond the comprehension of the intellect.

Philosophy is in itself the reasoning power of the mind, with no set conviction of its own beyond the desirability of reason; it is therefore either a spiritual art, or a material science, according to the use made of its principles and the sphere of circumstances toward which the intellectual energies are directed.

If philosophy becomes the instrument of an idealist then the philosophy itself is called idealistic. Plato was an idealist, because to him the universe was good, and philosophy became the instrument for proving the presence of good in all things.

When philosophy is applied solely to the justification of the physical phenomena of nature, it becomes realistic, and the philosopher himself is a realist. Aristotle was a realist; for he could find no place in space for that which did not conform with facts demonstrable in nature and susceptible of classification in categories.

It does not necessarily follow that Aristotle denied spiritual realities; rather, he built them upon physical founda-

tions, clinging throughout all his life to the visible as the sovereign certainty. His was the familiar conviction, "What I see is so; what I can not see, may be so."

Aristotle performed a great good when he opposed the vagaries of abstract thinkers; but he pressed his point too far, and in doing so, undermined the whole conception of an ideal world and an ideal state.

Aristotle is honored today as the philosopher who made possible modern learning and the modern way of living. He became the infallible guide of the medieval schoolmen; it is said of them, that they picked the bones of his beliefs until there was not enough left of the carcass to make soup.

Strangely enough, the early Christian Church, functioning almost exclusively in the sphere of the unprovable developed an almost inordinate passion for Aristotle. It is said that in some cases images of this philosopher were placed side by side with figures of Christ, and that the two received equal homage. The theologians applied Aristotle's categories to the abstractions of their faith with an astonishing result. The factualizing of Christianity became an obsession with the Scholastics, and the product was a complicated theological Universe filled with uncertain certainties.

The Tyranny of the Detail Mind

To Plato, and the other enlightened Greeks, the gods, demigods, nymphs, and spirits, were mystical symbols of the great creative powers in nature. These powers, properly called spiritual beings, had no likeness to the physical or corporeal, but were variously symbolized in the forms of images and religious figures. The spiritual beings mentioned

in the Bible were also symbolical creatures representing divine powers resident in space and ruling the world. But these abstractions were unsatisfactory to those who had developed an Aristotelian yardstick and so had to rationalize their doctrine to conform with factual thinking.

The result was a conglomeration of absurdities, and centuries were spent in the attempt to make natural the supernatural. It was truly an Aristotelian problem as to how many angels could dance on the point of a pin at one time. Also in the spirit of Aristotle was the effort to determine the exact geographical location of the Garden of Eden. We can also imagine with what joy Aristotle would have pounced on one of the feathers (light green in color) of the angel Gabriel which was discovered in a small coffer wrapped up in taffeta. With one feather to work from, an Aristotelian had a fact. And from this fact it would be almost as easy to reconstruct the person of Gabriel as it is for a modern scientist to rebuild a dinosaur from a single well placed bone. The suspicion that the Archangel Gabriel's wing feather originated in the tail of a parrot offered another fine point for theological discussion. It was finally decided that the feather had been shaken from the angel's wing at the time he appeared to the Virgin Mary to announce the immaculate conception. Presumably the Virgin herself wrapped the feather up in taffeta, so that it could become one of the seven wonders of the world of theology.

Another item for the Aristotelian approach was a short section from the finger of the Holy Ghost. This fragment was as fine, as sound, and as healthy as in life, and used to be shown in medieval times to the faithful by the patriarch of Jerusalem. Of the circumstances under which the Holy Ghost lost its finger, there is unfortunately no record.

Imagine how a fact-seeking Aristotelian would feel if he suddenly came into possession of the snout of the seraph which appeared to St. Francis. Imagine the scientific repercussions which would result from the discovery that seraphim had snouts. It furnishes an entirely new basis for visualizing the appearance of these heavenly messengers. Another important item for religious reverence turned up, one fingernail of a cherub. And then, wonder of wonders *ad nauseam,* lying in a casket of priceless workmanship, was one of the rib bones of the Word made flesh!

When it came to finding proof for the unprovable, theology exhibited a rare genius and considerable courage, if not conviction. It has always seemed to me that it would be difficult indeed to find a more convincing relic than one of the long rays from the star of Bethlehem. Such a ray seems to have been broken off and preserved by one of the three Magi who came to worship at the manger of Jesus. Almost equally convincing was a small bottle within which were several notes which had been sung by the bees in Solomon's Temple. All these relics, and numerous others, are mentioned by Henrie Stephen in his *A World of Wonders,* published in London in 1607.

Aristotle would, of course, have been the first to laugh these relics out of existence; but he was responsible indirectly for the type of mind that imagined them into reality. And not even with these imaginings did the sorry business end. Theology resolved to take all of the uncertainties out of its beliefs. An elaborate system of ecclesiastical laws and statutes was instituted, burdening religion with a kind of celestial jurisprudence. All of these laws were infallible, although their fabricators were obviously fallible, and the Church has been wrestling with them ever since. Through these pro-

cedures, religion ceased to be a sublime spiritual overtone; and it was so literalized that it truly amazed the intellect but gave very little comfort to the heart.

Let us now consider the philosophy of Aristotle in its formal and practical phases, in order to estimate its effect on modern living. Understanding of the workings of his mind will best be obtained in the contrast of his basic opinions with those of Plato where these are in conflict.

Plato taught that the world—that is, material creation—was an immortal animal, the body of a Living God. The world was in a sense eternal, but with an immortality similar to that of man. Spiritually, man is immortal; within himself he possesses the capacity to create bodies, inhabit them, depart from them at death, and pass on to other bodies according to the teaching of metempsychosis, or rebirth. Man as spirit could create physical bodies at will or necessity; but after these bodies had served their purpose they desintegrated back into the natural substances of the world.

By analogy, the world soul—the spiritual cause of the physical universe—created the world out of its own principles, laws, and essences, and inhabited the world body for an immense period of time. Later, through the phenomenon of death, the world soul separated from the world body, and the body distintegrated in Space. Whereupon the world soul fashioned a new body suitable to its needs and superior to the preceding form. The world was therefore immortal, but ever changing and growing from body to body until in the end the world became so completely spiritualized in all its parts that it became identical in quality with the world soul, to which it was united in an eternal bond and sympathy.

Aristotle said, No! He believed the material universe co-eternal with spirit, space, and soul. The material world never was created and never would end. There was no first cause and no final effect. Matter was eternal and incorruptible—it might itself be regarded as a kind of god. Thus, the heavenly hierarchies ruled forever in space; and material powers and energies ruled forever in matter. And it is unnecessary to ponder how things came into being, for the simple reason that they have always been, and always will be; and over these inevitables it is useless to wonder.

By this philosophy Aristotle sets up a kingdom of matter in the abyss below the footstool of the gods. Here material law rules as master of forms and forces, and all who are born into this mortal sphere come under the tyranny of matter, from which they can escape only by death.

By this doctrine Aristotle sets up a duality of absolutes—absolute spirit and absolute matter. These two inevitables are in constant conflict with each other—which results in a doctrine surprisingly reminiscent of theological opinions about God and Devil. When theologians hit upon this philosophical dualism, it endeared Aristotle to their hearts. Here was a Greek who supported their belief that light-spirit and darkness-matter, were struggling eternally for rulership in space. Aristotle did not teach the struggle part of the idea; but he justified the belief that such a struggle could be possible, and religious imagination did the rest.

To Plato, matter was an extension of spirit, and existed only by virtue of spiritual energies working through it. As the body was the sepulcher of the soul, so the world was the sepulcher of the universal spirit.

Again Aristotle said, No! Matter was not merely a dependency, a secondary condition of a primary being. Matter

was complete in its own right. Nor was it dead; it was full of energies and vitalities and capable of unfolding an infinite diversity of living things from its own substances. These living things could unfold and grow up from the earth as did plants and trees. They could free themselves from bondage to roots deep in the soil, and move about as animals, birds, and fishes. They could rise up to intellectual maturity and build cities, create empires, and conquer the world, as do men. All this could be accomplished by means of the powers locked within the substance of matter, and man could grow up to his full estate as an individual becoming more and more independent of his environment. As a man evolved, the energy within him became the master of his life. He could learn to do whatsoever he willed to do. He could master arts and sciences; he could become skilled in crafts and trades. He could become virtuous, or by perverse action reduce his own estate to one laden with vice and corruption. Yes, he might even aspire to the study of the gods and to the knowledge of divine things. Not because the gods demanded it, but because his own internal energies might incline him to such pursuit.

Aristotle never denied the existence of the great spiritual hierarchies that in a large way administered the order of creation. But he had little patience with the idea that these gods concerned themselves with the affairs of men. The divinities were a race apart, living in space as man lived upon earth. He did not regard man as an individual bound direcly to the gods, but as a self-moving being who might cast his lot with the gods if he so desired. Aristotle knew enough of metaphysics to realize that it was possible for man to discover spiritual truths through the extension of powers latent within himself. But he viewed the spiritual world

as a sphere apart, to which men might travel as to a foreign land.

Dissatisfied with the elaborate theology of the Greeks, and apparently unable to grasp the mystical speculations of Plato, Aristotle in his later writings was inclined to reject the entire Greek pantheon of divinities. For the gods he substituted the world mind, an intellectual energy in space, suitable to explain the orderly motions of the world. Aristotle realized that the cosmos must be the product of intelligence, or, possibly more correctly, that it must be sustained in its eternity by some intellectual integrity. The motions of nature were too perfect to be accidental. Yet he could not bring himself to accept a belief popular in his time, that a supreme council of Olympian divinities ruled the universe.

As Above So Below

Plato taught: As above, so below; and that the patterns for all things are in the heavens.

Aristotle taught: As below, so above; and that it was perfectly reasonable to suppose that the celestial expanse was an intangible spiritual kind of matter. As matter itself was abundant with intellectual potentials, so the spiritual substance might be abundant in intellectual potentials; and the so-called gods might grow downward from the heavens, as the plant grows upward from the earth.

During the time that Aristotle was under the influence of Plato he compiled several works very much in the Platonic spirit. The ancient Greeks held a materialistic attitude about the nature of the human soul. This is best revealed in the writings of Homer, who influenced all Grecian thought on this subject up to the time of Pythagoras. According to the

Homeric conceptions, the body was the real self and the soul a kind of ghost or shadow which survived the death of the body, passing into an obscure existence in a shadow world, where it continued indefinitely in a comparatively miserable state. The ghost or shade wandered about with a memory of its past existence, was capable of suffering for sins previously committed but was without hope of any ultimate condition of peace, happiness, or re-embodiment. Thus, it was said that the humblest of living men was more fortunate than the ghost of Achilles.

In the time of Pythagoras a new doctrine came to the Greeks, probably from India. The entire concept of the soul's condition was reversed. Physical life was regarded as the ghostly hopeless sphere. Birth was a kind of dying, and death was birth into an immortal and superior state. The teaching of re-birth was introduced, and those who died were described as returning to their native home, free from the prison of the flesh. This doctrine descended from Pythagoras to Plato, and in turn was transmitted to Aristotle, who accepted it with enthusiasm during the early part of his life. This Platonic teaching forms the substance of Aristotle's treatise, the *Eudemus*—on the nature of the soul.

But Aristotle's mind also swung back to the Homeric conception, and he attempted to reconcile the two viewpoints. Homer's emphasis on the reality of the body as the self, agreed with Aristotle's maturing conviction, but Aristotle was still too much of a metaphysician to be able to accept the after life as merely a ghostly and purposeless state.

As Aristotle was able to conceive both spirit and matter as eternal, it was quite possible for him to accept eternity of the human soul. His opinions on the subject are long and complicated, but in essence they may be expressed in this

way: It is factual phenomenon that man must die. It is a reasonable conclusion of the mind that some part of man may survive; certainly there is no proof to the contrary, and tradition, combined with the natural hope of man, supports this expectancy. If we assume the moral possibility that the future state of man is in some way regulated by his past actions, possibly the link of memory, then the most certain method of attaining to a future state of good is through the present practice of the virtues.

Thus, Aristotle is the source of a common viewpoint of our time: "If I do the best I can now, I can face the future with a good hope."

This doctrine of the good hope about the substance of things unknown, is both cautious and apologetic. The materialist can reason thus: I do not believe in the immortality of the human soul, but I am not certain of my belief. If by any chance I should be wrong, the best insurance against future misery is present virtue. As present virtue, both individual and collective, has also proven to be likely to produce the greatest happiness and security during my present physical life, the conclusion is inevitable: Right conduct here and now is the most satisfactory course of action; it is the only possible insurance against the remote possibility of immortality.

While Plato continued his life calmly discoursing to his disciples in the quiet groves of the Academy, Aristotle mingled with princes and rulers, and was considerably influenced by the attitudes and opinions of these worldly and ambitious men. As a result of these contacts, especially while at Macedon with King Philip and the young Alexander, Aristotle again diverged from the lofty idealism of Plato. In the *Republic,* Plato declared that it was necessary for a

king to be a philosopher. Aristotle, who mingled with kings, discovered that they were not philosophers, and by the very mode of their lives were unsuited for philosophical speculations. Furthermore, he was convinced that princes who were not philosophers could still govern their states with justice and intelligence. As the populace of a state is not composed of philosophers it is not necessary to be a philosopher in order to administer the duties of rulership. So, Aristotle modified Plato's unqualified statement by saying that a king does not need to be a philosopher, but that he does need to listen to philosophers. This recommendation may bear some relationship to the circumstance that Aristotle was at that time enjoying the ear of two of the greatest kings of his time. It was nice to be regarded as indispensible.

The Nicomachean Ethics

Probably the most practical of the writings of Aristotle is his *Nicomachean Ethics.* In this work the philosopher declares that the highest form of human happiness results from the speculative life of intellect or wisdom. In this respect philosophers are the most fortunate of mortals, for they live in a world of thought and devote their lives to the contemplation of great truths and eternal virtues. All men become more fortunate as they verge toward a mental existence. If their intellects are suited to the diviner kind of speculation, they may attempt the most abstract of metaphysical disciplines. They may ponder upon the nature of the gods, upon the substance of the divine mind, and upon the laws governing the motions of the world. Such practices ennoble and

perfect the reason and elevate the philosopher to the highest place among mortals.

But, as the world is composed not only of spirit but also of eternal matter, the material life of the individual is important. As philosophy accomplishes the happiness of the intellect, so prudence and moral virtues accomplish the happiness of the body. (Happiness is here used in a large sense as a synonym for complete well-being). Prudence is the control of action so that it shall never escape from the boundaries of the reasonable. The moral virtues are such as contribute to personal health and peace of mind and support community existence. All actions which affect other persons must be regulated to the accomplishment of a common good. All men must refrain from performing any action injurious to the life, happiness, honor, and security of each other.

It naturally follows in this sense that ethics flows toward and mingles with politics, for politics is the application of prudence and the moral virtues to the government of nations, states, and communities.

Aristotle further insisted that a certain amount of external possessions are necessary to happiness. He disagreed entirely with Diogenes, who taught the blessedness of nothing. Aristippus (433-356 B. C.), the founder of the Cyrenaic sect, had taught that pleasure was the chief purpose of life, and that man should avoid discomfort as a sovereign ill. Aristotle did not go to such an extreme, but he did believe that the good things of life simplified the practice of philosophy and the application of the moral virtues. A man should possess all that is necessary so that he may live in a manner consistent with the nobility of his intellect. Philosophers should not worry about their next meal or the rent or the daily chores. They should have leisure, a little of

luxury, and the means available to perform various generous and charitable actions.

Aristotle then advances his doctrine of the limit of goods. He reasons thus: Possessions are useful to the degree that they serve their owner, but detrimental to the degree that they possess their own possessor. Therefore, worldly goods should be limited to that which is necessary and useable. It is quite possible for wealth to so burden the life with physical responsibilities and attachments that little time remains for the contemplation of philosophic doctrines. This excess should be carefully avoided; if necessary, material possessions which are not usable should be disposed of or given to the poor.

The problem of giving is also a delicate matter; for we may burden another in the effort to unburden ourselves. The Greeks pondered this mystery and came to the conclusion that it was usually safer to present one's surplus to the gods in the form of some offering in one of the national shrines. It is dangerous to bestow upon men that which they have not earned, for by so doing we corrupt the moral law as it relates to work and compensation.

Aristotle has something to say about good fortune and those benefits which appear to arise from accident rather than merit. He denies that good fortune originates with the gods, or any other metaphysical cause. Rather, he assumes it to be accidental, the inevitable result of the chemistry of life where many dwell together in various relationships. Good fortune is of two kinds, both irrational. One is according to impulse and the other contrary to impulse, and either can complicate life by imposing the unusual upon the pattern of living.

Aristotle had a slightly whimsical doctrine concerning the qualities of a gentleman. Being himself of gentle birth and aristocratic persuasions, it is only natural that he should accept gentility among the virtues. There is a hint of Confucianism in Aristotle's conception of the perfect gentleman. But his ideas on this subject, like most of his teachings, underwent a number of changes. His first conception of a gentleman was in perfect harmony with the Greek tradition of a patrician. The gentleman was an elegant person, a patriot ready to give his life to defend his way of living. He was burdened with the small proprieties and niceties of manner appropriate to his class. He was civic minded and public spirited, always ready to help a good cause; modest in the presence of his superiors, and tolerant in the presence of his inferiors. In substance, he was a genteel snob.

The mellowing effect of years forced Aristotle more and more toward the true Confucian viewpoint—the gentleman emerges as the superior man of Chinese ethics. In final definition, gentlemanliness becomes a code of absolute justice, including control of the self, the practice of all neighborly virtues, a strict code of morals, and a devotion of the mind to the pursuit of wisdom and philosophy.

In the Aristotelian philosophy all substances are reducible to three inevitable kinds, which can be no further reduced. These are: nature, God, and man. Nature consists of bodies of varying magnitudes, and all bodies are composed of essence and matter. All bodies of a similar species or kind have one essence in common. Thus, while bodies are destructible, species and types are indestructible, and can be replenished according to essence. Essence, the source of propagation of bodies, is eternal.

God is a substance, eternal and good. He is the only substance whose nature is entirely without matter. He is not the creator of the world, but the mover of the world. Deity, however, is not merely a mechanical force, but a being whose principal occupation is intelligence.

As the God of Aristotle is a separate individual without person, different from both nature and man, it is easy to see why the early Church admired Aristotle. He gave them philosophical justification for the belief that Deity is separate from his creation, which is the principal point of difference between the Christian doctrine and the great philosophical systems of the pagans.

Man is also a kind of substance in which natural and divine natures are combined—here Aristotle falls back upon the teachings of Plato. All animals have souls, but only man is peculiarly privileged to share in the nature of intellect, which is an immortal principle without any corresponding organ in the physical body. Intellect is not born from a seed, but enters into man, thus making possible his participation in a divine nature.

The practical consequence of accepting Aristotle's opinion concerning intellect in man is this: By means of intellect the human being is capable of extending his power throughout nature and perfecting both himself and his civilization. Man is therefore the demi-god, divine by virtue of intellect, and natural by virtue of body. The conflict between intellect and body must be solved, first, by the practice of the virtues; and second, by the perfection of the mind.

The force of Aristotle's viewpoint is at once apparent. He appealed strongly to the factually minded, who saw in him a perfect exponent of their own convictions. In terms of philosophy, Pythagoras had created a universe, Plato had

described it, and it was left for Aristotle to organize it. This he did with so great an enthusiasm that he did not hesitate to correct both Pythagoras and Plato wherever he could not fit their doctrine into his finished scheme of things.

Thus, we see how Aristotle paved the way for modern science, which has continued to put the universe in order with the same adolescent fervor that seems to have motivated the great Peripatetic. Modern science has very little interest in divine intention, nor had Aristotle. The attitude is summed up in the celebrated words attributed to La Place, in his interview with Napoleon I. The Emperor remarked that in his book on sidereal dynamics, La Place had made no mention of God. Drawing himself up haughtily, La Place replied in a tone of ill-disguised disgust: "Sire, I have no need for that hypothesis."

For three hundred years, science has been busily engaged getting rid of God. This is not true of all scientists, nor would many of them admit this motive if confronted with a direct question; may of these good physicists, biologists, and astronomers would insist that they are God fearing men and regular church goers. But with the help of Aristotle, they have divided God and Nature so completely that Deity is no longer an active factor in their conclusions. The mechanists tried to dispose of Deity entirely and view the universe as a perpetual machine; but the more intelligent of these men have recently admitted their errors and are returning to the concept of Deity as impersonal Intellect.

Plato and Aristotle, A Comparison

Aristotle contributed the principal break in the line of the Platonic descent. The schism which began in the Aca-

demy has continued for nearly 2400 years, dividing men into two camps bitterly opposed to each other concerning factual statements about the unknowable. In this way, the material sciences were vastly benefited but the larger and more complete science of living was seriously impoverished.

The great power of Platonism lies in its appeal to the noblest impulses of human nature. At the same time there is no false stimulation of the emotions, as is so often the case with mystical doctrines. In his discourses and lectures Plato never descended to tricks of oratory in order to sway an audience; he considered that method unfair to the intellect—for when the mind is confused by emotion the faculty of judgment is prevented from exercising its discriminating power. To Plato, an argument which must be supported by an appeal to the passions does not merit serious consideration.

Aristotle, to the contrary, permitted an appeal to the emotions as a legitimate mode of intellectual persuasion. He taught that by stimulating the emotional content it was possible to sway the life toward the acceptance of spiritual and philosophical truths. The listener moved or impelled by the nobler of his emotions will accept realities outside of his intellectual experience and beyond his mental comprehension.

It is quite possible for a brilliantly trained mind to sustain an error and convert others to that error through skilfully directed argument and persuasion. It is all a matter of purpose: Is the desired end the statement of a truth, or is it conversion of the listener? Too often we assume that we prove a point by outwitting our intellectual opponent. Aristotle apparently used this method, even against his own master; and won some of the arguments because Plato would

not press his views with disputation and oratory. But where Aristotle emerged victor in the battle of words, Plato remained unassailable in the sphere of ideas.

The policies of the two men survive in their teachings. Aristotelians win arguments, but Platonists remain the custodians of imperishable truths. The doctrines of Aristotle have the greater appeal to the senses, emotions, and faculties, and so have achieved the greater measure of prominence; and many modern thinkers are sincerely convinced that Aristotle was a greater philosopher than Plato. The ideas of Aristotle have exercised a greater influence in the life of the average person than have those of Plato, but this does not mean that Aristotelianism is a greater system of thought. It indicates merely that Aristotle's type of thinking has a greater appeal to the average person whose mind is not trained in abstract idealism.

The Platonic school descended through Neo-Platonism into the early Christian Church, and was then re-stated in the Patristic philosophy of St. Augustine. The teachings of Aristotle also found their way into the Christian scheme of things, surviving in the scholasticism of St. Thomas Aquinas, often referred to as the Christian Aristotle. It was, of course, impossible to reconcile the divergent teachings of the two schools, and a schism developed that long continued to disrupt and divide the mental lives of men.

As Plato grew older his mind turned more toward the gods and further away from the world. He realized that the internal peace of the intellect was only to be attained through the contemplation of those divine powers which are the fountains of all life. But Aristotle departed from the philosophy begun under the influence of Plato's gentle idealism, and embraced the confusion of a realistic viewpoint.

The transcendent beauties faded from his mind, and like Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Faust*: He saw alone man's self-inflicted pains, how the little world god still his stamp retains, as wondrous now as on the primal day.

Few men are suited to live in the fragile beauty of a gentle idealism. The experiences of life incline most of us toward an acceptance of less kindly doctrines. Each man builds his philosophy of life upon his own experiences, and it is only natural that he should emphasize the discord, division and conflict with which he is constantly involved. We have inherited the delusion of separateness, and only by great personal effort can we elevate the intellect to the realization of unity. Aristotle taught the reality of division, and has won the applause of the many. Plato, taught the reality of unity, therefore is appreciated only by that smaller group who have found unity as a mystical experience within themselves. Aristotle's doctrine lacks the philosophical maturity of Platonism, and for that reason appeals to those who are not philosophically mature.

Neo-Platonism could not compete successfully with the rising tides of Christian Aristotelianism, therefore it never became a popular school of thought. For some reason, the negative emotions and attitudes come easier to men than do the more constructive impulses. It is easier to dislike than to like, and we are far more likely to distrust than to trust. We hope for the best, but we prepare always for the worst. We talk of the brotherhood of man, but develop elaborate systems to prove the inequality of nations and the perfidy of individuals. We talk of the fatherhood of God, and then preach the conversion of the gentile and the constant menace of heathenism. In business there is much mouthing of such

words as ethics, cooperation, and fair-play, but ceaseless practice of ruthless competition.

We continually talk Platonism but practice Aristotelianism. Our dream of the plan of a new world in which all nations shall be united in a cooperative commonwealth of states is pure Platonism, and the noblest political dream of all time; but even as we dream we are thinking in terms of zones of influence and spheres of dominion. When we would do good, Aristotelianism is ever nigh to break up the unities which the dictates of our hearts would establish.

The trouble is that we have experienced Aristotelian discord but we have not yet experienced Platonic concord. Injustice is a reality to us, justice something to be hoped for in the fullness of time. Intrigue is a fact easily demonstrable in daily living; but integrity is a desirable abstraction, something achievable but not yet achieved. Plato was right in his belief that man naturally desires the good. Human consciousness as a whole has a nobility about it not to be discovered in any one human being. If given an opportunity, the average man would be a kindly and friendly person, sympathetic to the needs of his neighbors, and willing to cooperate for the common good of his world. The average man is less than himself because of tradition, environment, example, and circumstances. But the love of unity and the desire for happiness and security are natural to man, and these impulses ultimately will win, bringing about a final triumph of Platonic idealism over Aristotelian realism.

Neo-Platonism is the philosophic technique by which the final union of Plato and Aristotle will be affected. Neo-Platonism points out that in the last analysis Plato and Aristotle *did teach the same thing*. The two schools approach one problem from opposite extremes, but they are recon-

cilable. All that is required is the realization that in ultimates the most real of all things is the ideal thing, and the most ideal of all things is reality. Both Plato and Aristotle were seeking truth, and in truth their paths converge and meet. Truth is the supreme fact, the most practical and reasonable of all beings and essences. Ideals are not abstractions; they are sovereign concretions. Beauty is a sublime fact, even as the brotherhood of man is the most practical, reasonable, and scientifically demonstrable of political truths. Integrity is just as real as a tree or a rock.

There are realities which are invisible to the eyes but discoverable by the intellect. And there are unrealities which are visible to the eyes but are contradicted by the evidence of the intellect. Also there are institutions which function contrary to the dictates of reason and survive for a time; but the fact that they exist does not necessarily mean that they are good or that they will continue to exist.

Plato, when he called Aristotle 'The Intellect of the Academy', defined his young disciple more accurately than the world has suspected. Aristotelianism is the mind of philosophy, but Platonism is the spirit of philosophy.

It is the duty of the mind to demonstrate that which the spirit has revealed. The intellect is the servant of consciousness, even as the body is the servant of the intellect. Aristotle is correct on the level of the sphere of mind, but Plato is correct on the level of the sphere of spirit—and spirit is lord over the mind, and master of all the creatures which have been fashioned from its nature and are sustained by its laws.

Aristotle, separated from his master, is a father of discords; but joined with Plato, he supplies the element of analysis which is indispensable to the statement of synthesis.

In his categories of the many, Aristotle really bears witness to the greatness of the One which is the source of the many, the One that binds the many together in the supreme pattern of the world.

6

THE SUBLIME THEOLOGY

Ammonius Saccus, Plotinus and Proclus

AFTER the death of Plato the Academy passed to his successors, Speusippus, Zenocrates, and Polemo; they were men of profound learning but had not grasped the internal vision of their master and, consciously or unconsciously, they depart from his disciplines. As a result Platonism was without a successor, in the deeper sense of the word. Aristotle, greatest and most promising of the master's disciples, developed his own school and perpetuated only a small part of the Platonic tradition. Gradually, Platonism died out as a living force in Greek life, and all that remained were the Platonic writings to bear witness to the divine genius of the great philosopher.

The restoration of the Platonic theology was accomplished at Alexandria in the troublous years of the 3rd century, A. D. Scholars had come to Alexandria from all parts of the world to study at the great libraries. Many of these founded schools, and in the liberal atmosphere of Egypt the intellectual glory of Greece was revived for a short time, only to vanish utterly as the result of the rising power of Christianity and later Islam.

Christian and pagan intellectuals mingled for a time in a splendid comraderie. It appeared that a great reconciliation of faiths might be effected; but this promise of a golden age for learning was blighted by the inevitable intolerance of the uninformed.

Ammonius of the Sack

Out of the midst of this splendid congregation of intellectuals one humble man emerged to make an undying contribution to the cause of human knowledge. This was Ammonius Saccas, of Greek origin, but probably born in Alexandria in the closing years of the 2nd Century A. D. Nothing of importance has been preserved concerning his personal life, and many historians have confused him with a Christian philosopher of the same name. Ammonius Saccas seems to have been a common porter, a carrier of baggage and burdens for the wealthy; Saccas was a nickname, meaning sack-bearer. There is nothing to indicate the origin of this extraordinary thinker's abilities; he was apparently untutored and unschooled and lived in a most simple manner. It is not even known how he came to found a philosophical school, yet there is convincing evidence that he possessed penetrating genius, a docile sagacity, a tenacious memory and all other ornaments of the soul that are requisites to the philosophic character. Even the more aristocratic and exclusive intellectuals recognized Ammonius as an outstanding thinker and his contempararies conferred upon him the appelation, 'divinely taught.'

It is to be regretted that we do not know the full story behind Ammonius Saccas. Nature's laws are forever being fulfilled by the emergence of genius from reasonable causes,

but we have no hint of what ancient blood was in this man, and we can only assume that perhaps he was an initiate of pagan rites, or that he had found a master to teach him in the evenings of his days of labor. Surely there is a rational explanation for a mind such as his which flashed in Alexandria like a meteor across the North African sky.

It was the first rule of Ammonius Saccas that the deeper and more mystical elements of his philosophy should never be committed to writing. His disciples were bound by oath not to discuss the concerns of the school beyond its confines. It is probable that he applied the same rule to any discussion of his person, which would explain the absence of historical data about him. Little else is known of his life but that he died between 240 and 245 A. D., and that among his disciples were Herennius, Origen, Cassius Longinus, and Plotinus.

Fortunately his doctrines did not perish, or the world would have been deprived of one of the noblest systems of mystical philosophy. Herennius, who apparently succeeded the master in authority, dissolved the oath of secrecy and permitted the disciples to speak.

The system developed by Ammonius Saccas, and perfected by Plotinus and Proclus, is Neo-Platonism, a school of thought derived from meditation upon the writings of Plato and the fragments preserved of the lost teachings of Pythagoras.

Neo-Platonism is Platonic mysticism. It is a philosophic system which holds that every physical or concrete body of doctrine is merely the shell or outer appearance of a spiritual tradition, which may be discovered through meditation and mystical exercises.

PLOTINUS

Mysticism is the belief in the possibility of direct personal participation in truth, through the extension of consciousness toward union with the gods, or Divine Being.

Ammonius Saccas, like Socrates, belonged to the order of the self-taught, inasmuch as his convictions were the direct result of internal inspiration rather than formal study and disputation. It has long been a belief of mystics that enlightenment may be derived from the contemplation of the most ordinary objects. The simplest thing, understood, reveals through itself the spiritual mystery of the world.

Plotinus the Egyptian Plato

The development of Neo-Platonism and the teachings of Plotinus are inseparable. Plotinus of Lycopolis was born in Egypt of Roman parents, about the year 204 A. D. He refused at all times to discuss his childhood or the circumstances of his personal life, and no man knew the day of his birth. His silence on these matters he declared to be due to shame; for its was proof of his spiritual unworthiness that it had been necessary for his soul to take on a physical body. His disciples were not permitted to celebrate his birthday, because this day marked the advent of the imprisonment of his spirit in a mortal form.

His disciple, Amelius, asked Plotinus to allow a portrait be made of the master, that those who loved him might be able to have his likeness with them at all times, and posterity have a record of his appearance. Plotinus refused in these words: "Is it not sufficient to bear this image with which nature has surrounded us from the first? Yet you think that a more lasting image of this image should be left as a work worthy to be inspected."

But Amelius was not easily dissuaded from his purpose, and he persuaded Carterius, the painter, to visit regularly the school of Plotinus, observing with the greatest attention the features and expressions of the master; and Carterius, in time, executed a splendid likeness of the philosopher from memory. The painting was greatly admired, but knowledge of its existence had to be kept from Plotinus. Unfortunately, the painting has not survived nor has any certain reproduction of it, and such engravings of Plotinus as are to be found in old books are entirely imaginary. The portrait of Plotinus which accompanies this chapter is an interpretation of his character, rather than a proven likeness of his features. A man's works reveal the proportions of his nature, and in this picture the strength and nobility of the great Neo-Platonist take form and invite our admiration.

For many years Plotinus attended the lectures of Ammonius Saccas, and with a mind fitted for mystical speculation he not only absorbed all that Ammonius could teach, but extended the doctrine far beyond its original proportions. Plotinus, about 242 A. D., journeyed into Persia to study the philosophies of the East, but two years later had to leave Mesopotamia following the assassination of Gordian III, Emperor of Rome, with whom Plotinus had associated himself. Plotinus decided to open his school at Rome, and there he remained for the rest of his life; for he found among the Romans a group of able and eager disciples, and the house of Plotinus at once became a center of intellectual culture. Prominent among his disciples were Amelius, Eustochius, and the immortal Porphyry—first editor of the writings of Plotinus and our principal source of knowledge of the life and teachings of the master.

In attendance at his lectures were a number of distinguished Roman ladies, and Plotinus often visited their homes. Several outstanding families, impressed with the extraordinary nobility of his person and his universal reputation for integrity, appointed Plotinus executor of their estates and guardian of their children, responsibilities he accepted as part of the penalty for being born. His home overflowed with young people in his later years, orphaned children of some of the finest families of the Roman Empire. From the master they received instruction in the virtues, and according to their capacities, he initiated them into the mysteries of his philosophy. He joined with them in their youthful sports and was regarded as a dear friend, not merely a guardian or teacher.

He also purchased the freedom of a number of young slaves of unusual abilities and talents, and these mingled with the youthful patricians on an equal footing. The liberty of noble children taken in war was similarly bought, and his menage grew until it threatened to bend outward the walls of his house. Plotinus never married, but we do not know whether his single blessedness was from philosophic conviction or philosophic preocupation.

Porphyry tells us that Plotinus possessed not only a Universal wisdom but a knowledge of magic and the ability to perform seeming miracles. He gives a personal instance. He attended one of the lectures of Plotinus with a mood of melancholy heavy upon him and with a resolve to commit suicide. The lecture over, the master approached him, read his mind in every detail, and turned his thoughts completely away from self-destruction. This was the incident that brought the two men into a close communion of understanding that lasted throughout their lives.

Among those who set up their homes within his house was a distinguished matron, a widow named Chion, together with her daughters. One day a valuable necklace was stolen from Chion who appealed to Plotinus to discover the thief. He immediately assembled his servants and domestics, and quickly studied the faces of each; he turned then to one and said, "You are the thief." The man was punished, but so stoutly did he continue to maintain his innocence that in all minds except that of Plotinus, there was doubt of his guilt. But he could not maintain his falsehood in the presence of the master, and at length he confessed his theft and restored the necklace.

Plotinus accurately predicted the death of a young man named Polemo, and the circumstances attending the event; and on several occasions revealed a wonderful ability to interpret the innermost impulses of human beings.

Among the Romans, Plotinus had only one enemy, Alexandrinus Olympius, a magician, who regarded himself as the leading intellectual of the city, and was violently jealous of the master. He attempted to destroy Plotinus by diabolic arts, necromancy, and the knowledge of the evil influences of certain stars. But the evil agencies which he sought to direct against Plotinus returned upon Olympius and he nearly perished. We have his own words: "The soul of Plotinus," said the magician, "possessed such a mighty power that it immediately repelled malignant influences directed upon his person, so that they returned to the authors of the evil."

Well aware of the magic being used against him, when the demons returned to their maker, Plotinus remarked to a friend, "Now the body of Olympius is contracted like a purse, and all his members are bruised together."

Porphyry describes the visit of a celebrated Egyptian priest, who came to Rome on a mission of state. The Egyptian, when introduced to Plotinus, possibly by Porphyry himself, recognized immediately the greatness of the master. He persuaded the philosopher to attend him in the magical rituals of invoking a familiar demon, and Plotinus at once consented.

In the doctrines of the Egyptians, as preserved in the writings of Iamblichus, it was held that each man was given at birth a demon, or spirit guide, to be his constant attendant throughout life—of this order of beings was the demon of Socrates.

This spiritual creature could be invoked only in a pure and secret place, and the Egyptian priest did not at once find such a spot in the none too chaste city of Rome. But finally the temple of Isis was chosen, and to this shrine went the Egyptian, Plotinus, and a small group of selected persons, in the darkest hours of the night. And to them, in the midst of the ceremonies the spirit presented itself, not in the form of a demon, but in the likeness of a god. The Egyptian fell on his knees, exclaiming: "This is not my demon, but a blessed spirit of one of the divinities." Then to the priest was revealed the mystery; the splendid apparition was not his own familiar, but the heavenly companion of Plotinus. "Happy Plotinus," exclaimed the Egyptian, "who hast a god for an attending spirit."

The vision had lasted but a few seconds, and the spirit visitor had not spoken. There had been an unfortunate interruption. One of those who had come to witness the invocation was fearful of magical rites and had brought with him clasped in his two hands some small birds, according to the rule of the time. In his excitement and fear at the

appearance of the spirit, this man clasped his hands so tightly that the birds suffocated. The death of the birds caused the spirit immediately to depart.

It appears that on four occasions Plotinus enjoyed the blessed privilege of illumination when he was lifted up into the spiritual consciousness of his god, and received as an inner experience participation in the mystery of being. The purity of his life, the serenity of his mind, and the extension of his spiritual conception, he believed, would free him from the humiliation of a subsequent rebirth in a corporeal body.

The writings of Plotinus consist of fifty-four books, but in his time, a complete work, regardless of its length, was termed a book; and most of his writings are of a length which we would term essays. Porphyry arranged these books into six enneads, or sections, containing nine parts. A good translation of a number of these books is available in English in Thomas Taylor's *Select Works of Plotinus,* published in London in 1817.

Porphyry, describing the writings of the master, divided them into three parts. The earlier writings reveal the development of the mind of the exalted philosopher. The middle part sets forth the perfected genius of the author. The later writings show the decline of his intellect in his closing years. These differences, Porphyry tells us, may only be detected by a careful comparison of the works, one with another; and even the least and poorest writings are not less than sublime.

The literary habits of the master are known in some particulars. He would never read a second time anything he had written; having no further interest in a book he had finished, he pressed on to a new work. It is said that he suffered from eye strain, and this may be another reason

for not reading again the works which he had written. His handwriting was bad, the letters were poorly formed; syllables were inaccurately divided, and he paid no attention to spelling or grammar, which made it difficult to discover his meaning. He wrote with great rapidity and never changed or corrected a statement. If interrupted, he resumed later without difficulty or delay. His indifference to literary forms was indicative of his whole attitude toward material things; for which he had little patience and in which he had no desire to excel.

Plotinus resided at Rome approximately twenty-six years, and was a close friend and confident of the Emperor Galienus, and his wife Salonina, both of whom held in profound reverence his person and his doctrines. It was to Galienus that Plotinus explained his secret desire to establish a philosophical city to be named Platonopolis, in honor of the immortal Plato. He asked for restoration of a destroyed city of the Campania, and that it be set aside as a habitation for philosophers, to be ruled over by the laws set forth by Plato. It seems that similar attempts were made, both in Rome and in Egypt, to establish such a city. The Emperor Galienus greatly favored the project, but was forced to abandon it when the patricians and other nobles threatened to dethrone him if he persisted with its sponsorship.

Plotinus died in the sixty-sixth year of his life, the second year of the reign of M. Aurelius Flavius Claudius. The direct cause of his death appears to have been the plague, but the indirect cause was probably the extreme austerity of his living. His vitality was lowered and undermined by abstinence from food. When writing and discoursing he would go for days without taking even bread.

The last words of Plotinus were addressed to Eustochius. There was no warning of the approaching end, and Eustochius had not hastened the time of his visit. Plotinus turned on his couch as the brilliant disciple entered. "As yet," he said, "I have expected you, and now I endeavor that my divine part may return to that divine nature which flourishes through the universe."

Proclus Restores the Esoteric Tradition

The interval of one hundred and forty-two years from the death of Plotinus, 270 A. D., to the birth of Proclus (on the sixth of the Ides of February in the year 412 A. D.) saw the rise of the Christian religion and the gradual decadence of the classical pagan world. Proclus, destined for the Platonic succession, called himself a Lycian, but he was born in Constantinople, or Byzantium, as it was then called. The older writers say that Minerva received him when he was born; took care of him as a mid-wife, and throughout his life protected him. Proclus himself records that when he was a young man Minerva appeared before him in a dream and counseled him to study philosophy. Another miraculous circumstance attested that his life was destined by the gods. When a boy he was stricken with an obscure disease which the physicians were unable to treat, and the family had assembled with the doctors to sadly await the end. Then among them appeared a radiant youth from whose head gleamed rays of light. He approached the bed, and as he pronounced the name of Proclus he touched the boy's head with his finger. Proclus was healed instantly and the divine youth faded away. It was believed by all present that the heavenly visitant was the god Apollo.

PROCLUS

The education of Proclus was one appropriate to the inclinations of his mind. As a young man he journeyed to Egypt and attached himself to the school of Leonas, a celebrated rhetorician. Soon after, he met Orion, the grammarian, whose lectures he attended regularly. Orion was descended from the priests of the Egyptian temples, and through him, Proclus was introduced to the sacerdotal caste whose learned men instructed him in the Mysteries of their religion.

It was after a journey to Byzantium undertaken with Leonas, so there would be no interruption to his studies in rhetoric, that Proclus received the vision in which the goddess Minerva encouraged him to visit Athens and devote his life to philosophy. Proclus resolved before leaving Alexandria to avail himself of the philosophers of the Greek schools resident there, and for a time he studied mathematics with Hero of Alexandria, a deeply spiritual man, versed in the mystery of numbers; and the doctrine of Aristotle with Olympiodorus, the Peripatetic. So impressed was Olympiodorus with the mental capacities of Proclus that he sought to have him remain in Alexandria and marry his daughter, who had attained distinction for her philosophic knowledge.

But impelled by the counsel of his guardian divinity, Proclus continued to prepare his mind for Platonic discipline. At about the age of twenty he journeyed to Athens. Thomas Taylor in *The Life of Proclus* writes that Proclus was "attended by the presiding deities of eloquences and philosophy, and by beneficent demons. For that he might preserve the genius and entire succession of Plato, he was brought by the gods to the guardian city of philosophy."

In Athens, Proclus had the good fortune to meet Syrianus, the most learned man of his time, and a master of the doctrines of Orpheus, Pythagoras, and Plato. Through Syrianus he met Plutarch, (not the biographer) the son of Nestor. Plutarch had at that time reached a great age and had discontinued public teaching, but he accepted the youth as his disciple and read to him his commentaries upon Aristotle's books, *On the Soul* and the *Phaedo of Plato*. Plutarch so loved Proclus that he had the young man come to live in his house as his constant companion for two years, up to the day of his death. He named Syrianus his successor in the education of Proclus.

In the short space of twenty-six months Proclus, while living in the home of Syrianus, read all the works of Aristotle on logic, ethics, politics, physics, and the theological sciences. He had thus mastered the lesser mysteries of learning, and Syrianus began his initiation into the sacred discipline of Plato. Proclus thus in time attained to his life work, having by the merit of his own mind achieved through orderly progression his full estate as the Platonic successor. By his twenty-eighth year he was an acknowledged leader among the Platonists, and had composed a large number of works, including a learned commentary on the *Timaeus* of Plato.

Proclus was a firm advocate of the austerities and rites of purification. He practiced abstinence from animal food, but recommended occasional eating of meat for the sake of bodily strength. He fasted once a month, and celebrated the new moon by abstinence and not with feasting, as was the practice of his time. He taught that the body should be preserved with all thoughtfulness for its needs, and excesses

regulated by the intellect; he recommended a light diet for all interested in philosophy.

Proclus succeeded Syrianus as the head of the Neo-Platonic school of Athens about the year 450 A. D. From this time on his life was devoted exclusively to Platonic mysticism. The rising power of the Christian sect was rapidly undermining the authority of the Greek Mysteries. The Neo-Platonists held to the doctrine of the plurality of gods, a philosophic kind of pantheism; it was a conception in violent conflict with the monotheistic, or one God teachings of the early Christian fathers. The hatred of the Christians eventually forced Proclus to take refuge in Asia Minor. The difficulties which Proclus suffered from the rising power of the Christian faith were described by Marinus, the disciple of Proclus, as an attack by vultures.

After about a year in Lycia, studying the Mysteries and the philosophies of the Near East, thus enriching his philosophic store, Proclus, guided by the vision sent by Minerva, returned to Greece and remained in Athens for the rest of his life.

Proclus was tolerant of all faiths and religions; he joined with those celebrating the rites of various gods; he believed that the philosopher should be the high priest of all religions, for the different faiths in reality honored the same gods under varying names.

The illustrious philosopher lived to the age of seventy-five years. He never married but had a large circle of friends and associates united in a Pythagorean brotherhood. In the last five years of his life Proclus suffered considerably from poor health which he bore with Platonic fortitude. His active life may therefore be regarded as ending with his seventieth year, as had been predicted in a vision. Proclus

died in Athens and was buried in the eastern part of the suburbs near the tomb of his master, Syrianus.

Before his death Proclus was asked how he wished his funeral to be conducted. He replied that it should be simple, and private to his friends; the only music to be that of flutes, and no hired mourners were to be engaged. The verses on his tomb were an epitaph which he had composed himself:

> I, Proclus, here the debt of nature paid,
> (My country Lycia) in the dust am laid;
> Great Syrianus form'd my early youth,
> And left me his successor in *the truth.*
> One common tomb, our earthly part contains,
> One place our kindred souls,—th'aetherial plains.

The death of Proclus, it is recorded, was forewarned by an eclipse of the sun and other heavenly disturbances.

The cycle of the Platonic restoration which began with Ammonius Saccas came to an end with the death of Proclus. Damascius, a disciple, was the last head of the school at Athens when, in 529 A. D., forty-four years after the death of Proclus, by the edict of the Roman Emperor Justinian, the great Pagan schools of Greece were closed forever. Justinian was motivated partly by personal ambition and partly by pressure from the Christians. After the edict, Damascius and six other Neo-Platonics left Greece to found a school in Persia, but the project failed.

The Eastern school of Platonic mysticism having ceased as a separate movement, the streams of its thought mingled with the rising current of Christian metaphysics.

Neo-Platonism and the Christian Church

In the West, Neo-Platonism perished with the death of Boetius, a Roman philosopher and statesman who was born about 480 A. D. He has been called the last of the Pagans. His career was tempestuous and tragic, and climaxed when he was falsely imprisoned for treason and conspiracy. After a long confinement he was executed, but while in prison he wrote his most famous book, *De Consolatione Philosophiae*. He found a common ground for pagan and Christian mysticism. Boetius was certainly a pagan, but because of the sincerity and integrity of his life and writings, he is frequently included among Christian martyrs.

Neo-Platonism thus took on a Christian form in the West; in the East it survived through the mysticism of the Mohammedan transcendentalists.

The Neo-Platonic concept of life was far more exalted than that of the Christian communities which finally brought about its destruction. Why then, did Neo-Platonism fall to give place to a teaching inferior both theologically and philosophically? St. Augustine, in his *Confessions,* gives three logical reasons.

First, Neo-Platonism lacked a foundation in a divine personality. It had no spiritual hero understandable to the mind of the common people, and strong enough to excite their loyalty and devotion. In a world given to hero worship, it was a faith without a founder.

Second it never developed a formal technique for the bestowal of the state of piety upon the common man. Its visions and mystical experiences were reserved for a small body of the learned and there was little opportunity for congregational participation in the formulas of faith.

And third, it had no appeal to those unsuited for academic philosophical training. The lives of its leaders were devoted to study of the arts and sciences, and scholarship was a necessity for all who desired to share in its benefits. The faith was limited to those equipped by nature with unusual mental faculties, and the gift of scholarship is an exception in nature.

St. Augustine simply is telling us that Christianity had a popular appeal because it in no way required greatness of intellect. It was a religion of the masses, and by the weight of number, it achieved control of the political machinery of its time. Against such pressure of the untutored mob none of the smaller sects could survive.

The murder of Hypatia ended Neo-Platonism in Alexandria; not even the older classical schools of Egypt could survive the fanaticism of the early Church.

Neo-Platonism is essentially a religious philosophy, with much of its tradition derived from the Universal idealism of the Stoics. It is eclectic in its scope, but as a system it is not basically eclectic. Eclecticism has been defined as the poor man's philosophy, and it survives to this day as one of the commonest forms of intellectual approach to the problems of living. An eclectic is a person who builds his philosophy of life from various systems of philosophy by accepting such elements of morality and ethics as appeal to his fancy. He may choose something from Buddhism, a fragment from Brahmanism, some part of Christianity, and a particularly attractive belief from the classical Greeks. These unrelated and often contradictory dogmas he attempts to combine into a working pattern. By ignoring inconsistencies, and progressing solely according to the dictates of his taste, he arrives at the end in a more or less hopeless

state of confusion. He thinks nothing through; but he is satisfied in having fashioned a doctrine of his own by the exercise of free will.

The polyglot culture of the Romans acquired through the spread of the Empire among nations holding various beliefs, produced several outstanding eclectics; the greatest was Marcus Aurelius, a man of broad ideals but shallow reasoning. The Neo-Platonists were eclectic in the Universality of their concept, but derived from the Stoics a solid foundation of ideals by which they deserve to be classified as basic thinkers.

Neo-Platonism parallels Buddhism in its attitudes toward the various religious and philosophical systems of its time. When Buddhism was disseminated throughout Asia by the Arhats, it did not attack the indigenous religious convictions of the people; it did not seek to convert, rather, it interpreted these other faiths in the terms of its own ideology. For example, when Buddhism reached Japan it was confronted with Shintoism, the worship of ancestors, heroes, and nature. Here Japanese Buddhism assumed a decided Shinto coloring, and Shintoism in turn took on a Buddhist meaning. Conversion rested upon interpretation, and many Shintos became Buddhist without realizing that they had departed in any way from their own beliefs.

Neo-Platonism followed the same procedure. There was no desire to destroy older cults, rather the motive was to discover Neo-Platonism in these cults. It was part of the dream of the Neo-Platonists to restore all of the great pagan institutions of learning, but in the processes of this restoration each was to become merely a form of Neo-Platonism, though retaining its own name and outward identity.

This reveals the very essence of the doctrine—the discovery of an identical mystical content in all faiths and philosophies. Apparent differences were dissolved by reducing these differences to terms of symbolism, and then interpreting the symbols in terms of Neo-Platonism. Thus, the Mithras of the Persians, and the young Horus of the Egyptians, the Dionysius of the Greeks, and the Christ of Syria, were regarded as symbolical personalities, all witnessing a single mystical tradition of which Neo-Platonism was the common denominator. Creedal differences were the result of accepting symbols instead of the spiritual truths for which they stood.

All great illuminated teachers have taught the brotherhood of man. To the Neo-Platonists this was the one spiritual content, and therefore, all faiths having the same content are identical in substance, and differ only in appearance. To discover the substance is to be enlightened. To accept the differences as real, is to be profoundly ignorant.

Differences in belief are due to the accidents of nature, or the ulterior intent of men. Religious symbolism takes on geographical coloring. Tropical climes bestow upon the faith of nations inhabiting them some of the lushness of their evironment. Dwellers in frigid zones bestow the rigors of their climate upon the patterns of their mythology. It is a fortunate philosophy that is developed in a temperate climate, for here all extremes of symbolism are moderated. These climatic factors should not be allowed to obscure the unity of basic truths, but unfortunately the human mind judges only from externals and assumes that differences in appearance represent differences in fact.

As it is with nations and races, so it is with individuals; each human being has his own climate—we call it temper-

ament. Some are naturally choleric and manifest a fiery intensity of purpose. Others are naturally phlegmatic and all their actions are marked by absence of stress. By various temperaments individuals evolve their philosophies of life through the symbolism of their own dispositions. Even the great and the learned are not entirely free from this dispositional equation and the schools which they establish are dominated by their own choler. The doctrines seem to differ, one from another, but these differences are illusional—they are of the accidents of nature and not of the intent of nature.

It is plain that this basic conception results in a broad religious tolerance. Men who seek for identity will discover identity. Those who seek for difference will find difference. Assuming the Platonic theology to be the fact and the identity, the Neo-Platonists sought it everywhere, and found it everywhere. This mystical conviction was the secret of their strength, but it was also the cause of their ultimate decline.

Aristotle opened his celebrated treatise, *The Metaphysics,* with the words, "All men naturally desire to know." It is this impulse toward self-improvement that leads naturally to the contemplative life. We all discover in the course of thinking that facts are not to be found in the phenomenal world, that they must be experienced within consciousness. The world is but the symbol of the world idea, with all that is physical bearing witness to metaphysical principles which abide in the higher vistas of the mental and spiritual universe.

As man develops, the impulse to live according to a superior standard increases within him. This impulse first asserts itself in his physical life, impelling him to improve

the comfort and elegance of his surroundings. Gradually the beautiful becomes the necessary. Poetry, music, and all the aesthetic arts emerge as essentials to civilized life. The urge to beautification continues to press the individual on toward the refinement of his inner-consciouness. Physical adornments become symbols of spiritual ornamentations. The peculiar adornments of the soul are virtue, wisdom, and integrity. These are the goals of the philosophic life.

The quest for the good assumes the existence of the good. The search for truth presupposes the eternal availability of truth. Thus, to unfolding man is revealed more and more clearly, the spiritual foundations of his world. The ultimate of the spiritual quest is union with spirit, the accomplishment in fact of the realization of identity. This ultimate achievement is reserved for those who are capable of supreme effort. It is this part of the doctrine which prevented the spread of Neo-Platonism. The supreme effort was beyond the capacity of the average man.

While Neo-Platonism held the pattern of universal truth uppermost in its conviction, the development of the individual was a purely personal matter. There was no general formula to be followed by those who desired to attain the divine union. There were no prayers, no rituals nor rites by which the believer might come closer to his God. Illumination was conferred through the merit of work, and the pleasure of the divine powers. It was assumed that the spiritual state was inevitable for those who lived the spiritual life, but no effort was made to formalize this conviction.

Here again, the entire concept was beyond the grasp of its time. Men believed in the virtue of form and ceremony, and accepted their priests as intermediaries between themselves and the gods. When the Neo-Platonists declared the

priest to be merely a symbol of the human mind itself, which linked the heavenly worlds with the material state, this concept frustrated the natural inclinations of the unlearned. So long as men desired to worship heroes, and pay homage to other men because of their titles, honors, and positions, the philosophic viewpoint was not applicable to their needs.

The Divine Mystery and the Mystical Divinity

The Neo-Platonists were among those who taught the doctrine of emanations. This is the belief that the universe emerged from First Cause, through a series of outpourings. The creational process was repeated throughout nature by superiors releasing inferiors from themselves. The Egyptians referred to this doctrine as concatenation; that is, the birth of the orders of gods from their immediate superiors.

In the Neo-Platonic system, the supreme principle was denominated Being. In the nature of Being was the summit of identity and unity. Being was unlimited and indivisible, the source of all life, the substance of all things, and the ultimate of all experience. It was properly called the Good, because it was inevitable, and there could be no recourse beyond Its will. Or, simply stated, That which is, is good. Fact is always the supreme virtue.

Being is without attributes, and so it is undefinable except by negatives. What it is, we know not. We have to define it in terms of what it is not.

Without attributes, and therefore without condition, Being is the cause of all conditioned existence. Energy moves from this center in concentric circles, like ripples on the surface of water when a pebble is tossed into a pond. Being is the eternal substance, whose center is nowhere, and whose

circumference is everywhere. No more exalted concept of the Supreme Being is anywhere to be found among religions or philosophies than that which was held by the Neo-Platonists.

By emanation, Being caused to emerge from its own profundity the Nous, which is the universal thought. In its higher parts, Nous is identical with Being, but in its lower parts, it is the world idea.

According to Plotinus, Nous is pure thought, apart from the limitation of either the thinker or the thought of. This Nous is the motionless thought from which the motion of idea originates.

By emanation, the Nous produces the soul. In its higher parts, the soul is motionless and immaterial; but in its lower parts it verges toward the phenomenal world, or more correctly, emanates the phenomenal world.

The perfect soul is the world soul, the one substance and essence from which individual souls have their emergence. The world soul, by participation in the Nous, sustains the physical creation in a natural and perfect harmony. All parts of nature are in concord, and the beauty of this material unity is to be found in the splendor of the world. So long as Idea governs the material existence, all things are in order; but if for any reason the material world gains dominion over the soul, the result is strife and discord.

Human souls descending into birth are overpowered by matter, and lose the realization of the golden chain of superior principles which binds them to eternal Being.

Human souls are suspended from the world soul like many-colored flowers hanging in clusters from a parent stem. So long as these souls realize that they are parts of the world soul, they abide in reality. But if they become ensnared in

the dark principle, matter, so that they are no longer aware of their identity and co-eternity, the result is a false existence.

The practical aspect of Neo-Platonism presents a plan for the redemption of the human soul and its restoration to the sphere of light. To the Neo-Platonists, the saving of man results in the saving of the world. All progress must be in the individual himself. Man's condition is not improved by environmental changes, for no matter where he is, the human being must always remain what he is.

The Neo-Platonist did not believe that obedience to man-made laws, statutes, or traditions accomplished virtue. But they did not teach disregard for law, and they were a law-abiding group in themselves. In order to attain spiritual merit, the individual must discipline his soul and his mind according to certain rules and laws; not those set forth by men, but those recognized as intrinsic in life itself.

Social virtues were secondary, personal virtues were primary. By practicing secondary virtues a man might become physically comfortable or physically safe, but by practicing primary virtues he became spiritually learned.

As the soul descended through a series of emanations from the substance of Being, so in its evolutionary process the soul ascends through a series of radiations toward ultimate re-identification with Being. When the consciousness of man touches the Universal consciousness, even for an instant, the result is the mystical experience.

The philosophic end of Neo-Platonism was the accomplishment of the mystical experience. The science by which this was accomplished was termed *theurgy,* and constituted the seventh branch of Platonic philosophy.

The mystical experience is an extension of the personal sense of awareness into the larger sphere of the impersonal.

Through the mystical experience the human being achieves an innate conviction of the motion of Universal principles. The most common conclusion resulting from the mystical experience is, that the universe is in itself complete, perfect, all wise, and all sufficient; that there is no accident in nature, but laws are universal, justice absolute; that the gods are sufficient unto their world, and each individual is in precisely the place which he has earned for himself through the merit or demerit of personal action. The mystical experience, therefore, is the end of doubting and the beginning of the realization that things as they are, are right.

Only a limited group of highly intelligent human beings could understand such a doctrine, and find it a sufficient faith. It was too abstract for the materialist, too austere for the emotionalist, and too idealistic for the intellectualist.

The conflict with the early Christian Church was in part due to the belief of the Neo-Platonists that the Christians had merely borrowed Greek fables to become the foundation for their own myths. The pagans publicly accused the early Fathers of borrowing anything that suited their fancy, and then hurling anathemas at what remained. The undeniable evidence is that the Christian Church developed in an atmosphere of Grecian culture and was largely overshadowed in its formative years by Neo-Platonism and other Hellenic influences.

The Church, of course, had its own dogmas also, in the doctrines of the divine incarnation, the resurrection of the flesh, and the creation of the world in six days. These first considerations were later further complicated by involved speculation concerning the triune nature of the Godhead, and decision as to whether Mary, as the mother of God, should be regarded as similarly divine. In these considera-

tions the Church was far from Neo-Platonism, but church thinkers were mostly eclectics and sensed no confusion between the cosmogony of Hesiod and the creation story in Genesis.

It was said of Synesius, that in his outer parts he was a Christian bishop, and in his inner parts a Platonic philosopher. It appears that the good bishop expressed himself to the effect that he greatly enjoyed being the bishop, but certainly had no inclination to discontinue his contemplation of the Platonic arts. It is further recorded that when Christian priests visited Alexandria they would hold meetings in the Christian church, and then convene before the Shrine of Serapus and there perform rituals.

In the process of becoming different, the early Church tried to weed out the more obvious of its pagan borrowings. The attempt was abortive, however, when it was realized that if the process was thoroughly carried out, there would not be enough left to build a faith upon. By the 4th Century A. D., Neo-Platonism was firmly established as a philosophical instrument of Christian mystical philosophy.

The most important of Western theologians to come under the spell of Neo-Platonism was the greatest of all the Fathers, St. Augustine of Hippo. Augustine spent most of his life passing from one uncertainty of doctrine to another; and when his philosophy finally matured it was Neo-Platonism, with a thin veneer of orthodox Christian theology. Augustine wrote at some length on the difference between Neo-Platonism and Christian doctrine. But, having clearly pointed out the differences, he promptly ignored his own findings and continued to use Neo-Platonic laws and principles to interpret Christian symbol and ritual.

Medieval magic, astrology, alchemy, Cabala, and other metaphysical sciences which rose to power in the Middle Ages of European history, are outgrowths of Neo-Platonism. It was the sect that gathered up the Mysteries of the past, reinterpreted their symbolism, and distributed them again into the channels of more modern life. It was Neo-Platonism also that opened the way for modern science and the great mechanistic program that has come to dominate our present world. It was astrology that gave us astronomy, alchemy that gave us chemistry, and magic that gave us medicine. Material sciences are no more than metaphysical sciences with the metaphysical parts ignored or denied. This ignoring or denying has inclined the mind away from its natural tendency to speculate upon intangibles, and has forced it into the rut of utility. Man will turn downward only when the doors upward have been closed in his face.

With the coming of the modern attitude toward all things earthly and divine, Platonism and Neo-Platonism languished to the point of extinction. Attacked by the Christian churches for heathen doctrines, and attacked by the materialistic scientists for their mystical abstractions, these great philosophies indeed came upon evil times. The Cambridge Platonists attempted to revive the old lore in 17th Century England, but it was a minor flurry; little good resulted from an approach that was enthusiastic but uncritical.

So, gradually, it has come about that the world has almost forgotten that Plato was a metaphysician, and he has lived on in our educational system largely through his scientific and political writings. Translations of Plato were made by men who had no mysticism in their souls, and therefore could discern no trace of it in the author.

Thomas Taylor the Gentile Priest of England

But through the intervention of the wisdom that rules all things, a man was born in England on the 15th of May, 1758, to become the greatest Platonist of the modern world and a worthy successor to the great line of early Neo-Platonists. He was Thomas Taylor, 'The Gentile Priest of England', a man with a peculiar genius toward all classic learning and an insatiable desire to restore the Golden Chain of Homer that binds the ages to the pinnacle of Olympus. Thomas Taylor developed symptoms of tuberculosis when about six years old and was an invalid throughout life. He wrote thousands of pages of fine penmanship over the handicap of a painful and incurable malady that destroyed the use of the fingers of his right hand. Poverty has been known as the disease of the wise, and for many years Thomas Taylor's income was less than two dollars a week; with this slight amount he managed to support himself and his devoted wife. For books that required two and one half years to translate, he received the payment of twenty pounds sterling. But in the face of all difficulties he accomplished his purpose; he lived to the age of seventy-seven years, and gave to the world its best translations of the Greek, Alexandrian, and Roman adepts of the various Platonic schools.

To Thomas Taylor, a knowledge of the Greek language was not sufficient background for translating great philosophic works; it was necessary to understand the soul of Greece; he learned to think as the Greeks thought, absorbed their every attitude on morality, virtue, ethics, art, literature, and politics. Year after year he labored in the British Museum searching out the almost lost fragments of the great

Platonists. In addition to these labors, this slender sickly man wrote several original works, adaptations of ancient wisdom to problems of the modern world.

Most of Thomas Taylor's books are rare today, but they are occasionally obtainable and are diligently sought after by those who want the best.

In his *Miscellanies*, Thomas Taylor predicted that: "The sublime theology which was first obscurely promulgated by Orpheus, Pythagoras, and Plato, and was afterwards perspicuously unfolded by other legitimate disciples, a theology which, however, though it may be involved in oblivion in *barbarous,* and derided in *impious* ages, will again flourish for very extended periods, through all the infinite revolutions of time."

ST. AUGUSTINE

7

APOSTLE OF INFALLIBLES

St. Augustine of Hippo

ONE cannot read the *Confessions* of St. Augustine without developing the conviction that the good Saint thoroughly enjoyed this literary form of vicarious flagellation. For example, observe the heart-breaking detail with which Augustine describes how he and a number of his comrades in crime went about the business of robbing a farmer's pear tree. The expedition took place in the dead of night, and not because of any need for the pears, but in sheer love and joy of wrongdoing. It later developed that the pears were not ripe, and Augustine flung his share to the pigs with the realization that he had better fruit at home.

School boys of all generations have raided farmers' orchards, or the neighborhood fruit stand. Some have repented their misdeeds, but the majority have either entirely forgotten the incidents or look back upon them as boyhood pranks. But to Augustine the raid on the pear tree was an outstanding example of that horrible corruption of character that he spent a good part of his life repenting. There is something very interesting in the character of a man who became the greatest of the Fathers of the Western Church,

whose words and doctrines changed the whole course of Christendom so that in the end he was canonized; and yet with all these honors heaped upon him, and his word regarded as little less than scriptural, Augustine was worried to the degree of sublime repentance about green pears he had filched in his youth.

In the case of Augustine it is impossible to understand his philosophy without understanding the man. To the modern psychologist he is a case in point for nearly all complexes, fixations, neuroses, inhibitions and introversions. He carried in his consciousness such a burden of unfinished business that there appears to be no period in his life in which he was not recovering from one fallacy or falling into another.

The Confessor and his Confessions

Aurelius Augustinus was a Roman born in North Arfica, at Tagaste in southern Numidia, on November 13, 354 A. D. He was the son of a pagan father and a Christian mother. Any natural conflict in his soul could have come about by this heritage, for his parental home was a theater of religious controversy.

Augustine was one of three children, but all that is known of his brother and sister is that his brother's name was Navigius, and his sister, whose name is not preserved, later became an Abbess over a community of nuns. The father, Patricius, who held a minor political office, was a man of violent temper and inordinately ambitious for Augustine's future. Monica, the mother of Augustine, appears to have been a woman of noble and gentle character, a daughter of Christian parents and one whose life was divided between the equally difficult tasks of catering to her

husband's ill humor and worrying about the immortal soul of her favorite son. Patricius went about his home arguing, scolding, nagging, and practicing a variety of intemperances which Monica endured with Christian resignation, remaining silent at the abuse heaped upon her and even under extreme provocation never losing her own temper. Augustine tells us that because of her quiet self-contained nature, Monica was never beaten by her husband, althought this was the common fate of the wives of the neighborhood.

Monica's one great desire was to convert her husband to the Christian faith. She was wise enough, however, not to preach nor try to turn his mind with arguments or entreaties, but sought to win him over by the practice of the simple virtues of meekness, faithfulness, and love. Monica's great hope was realized when in the year before his death Patricius embraced the Christian faith.

Monica was twenty-three years old when Augustine was born; she immediately had the infant signed with the cross and had the babe receive the sacrament of salt. Through Augustine's infancy, childhood and youth, Monica fought constantly to protect him from the evil example set by his father, and the boy was thus brought up in an atmosphere of confusion and contradiction. Patricius loved his son and sacrificed most of his estate to see that the boy secured an adequate education; but he failed utterly to set any kind of moral or ethical example for the boy to follow. Monica naturally taught her son to honor his father, to respect him and to obey him—giving the boy all that she possessed of Christian ethics. She was a devout woman, deeply moved by her faith but untrained in the intellectual aspect of religion. All she could bestow was the example of her faith;

this she gave fully, and this early religious training lingered with Augustine even through his most dissolute years.

Young Augustine possessed a quick mind but apparently had little natural aptitude or love for study. The more his parents pressed him on to improve his mind the more he rebelled, and his education, though comprehensive, lacked organization and depth. He was mentally too lazy to learn Greek as a young man, a circumstance which he later regretted and included among his sins. Later he attempted the mastery of Greek, but he never achieved any ease or fluency in the language and had to depend upon various translations for his knowledge of Greek philosophy and theology. Mathematics was his nemesis, and the multiplication table remained utterly detestable. But he loved Virgil, and wept copiously over the death of Dido in the *Aenead*. The sweet emptiness of Homer oppressed his spirit, probably because of his inability to cope with the Greek language. Frederick W. Farrar, in the *Lives of the Fathers,* gives this delightful summary of Augustine's educational deficiencies: "The voluminous fluency of his genius would have been more precious in quality if it had been controlled and strengthened by a training more rigid and more mathematical."

It was the custom of the time to include heathen literature in the education of Christian youth. Most of the church fathers approved of this, but young Augustine doubted the wisdom of such a course because of its corrupting effect on the Christian viewpoint. His father had set him a none too constructive example, neither had the popular Greek and Roman morals inclined him toward the straight and narrow path which Monica had hoped he would follow. He played hookey from school, lied to his teachers, lied to his parents, and stole food for himself and his companions. In games

he was perfectly willing to cheat in order to win, but was furious when others cheated. If his *Confessions* can be relied upon, he was a problem child of the first degree. He tells us, however, that he concocted heroic falsehoods in order to make himself appear wicked and thus win the envy of his schoolmates, and it is reasonably possible that this tendency extended itself to his later literary endeavors. For it is unlikely that he actually attained any great distinction in the field of his misdemeanors, but he certainly seems to have enjoyed the detailed recounting of his faults as a youth.

Augustine felt that his sixteenth year was the real beginning of his moral degeneracy. It was a year when he was not at school and time hung heavy on his hands. Bad associations contributed to his plunge into a period of impurity and shame which extended into the middle years of his life. In the custom of his time, he should have married at about sixteen, but Patricius did not wish his son's career to be limited by a wife and family, so young Augustine compromised by taking on a number of extra-marital relationships to the immediate despair of his mother and the future humiliation of himself. Augustine indulged in every vice known to his time, if we may believe his own well chosen words; and where facts failed, he resorted to fiction to preserve his reputation for iniquitious behavior. It was about at this period that he robbed the pear tree, and if this is an example of his horrible misdeeds, we may be heartened with the hope that his character was not entirely lost.

The following year, at the age of seventeen, the young man went to Carthage to complete his intellectual education. Carthage at that time was nominally Christian; that is, Christianity affected the viewpoint of the people without

interfering with their morals. The education of Augustine in that ancient city combined a good course in rhetoric with an even more adequate course in Carthaginian immorality. He admits that he was too shy and reticent to join the worst set in the city, but admired their accomplishments from afar. Soon after his arrival in Carthage, his father died, and the young man finished his course at the university aided by the generosity of a family friend, Romanianus. The intellectuals of Carthage had little use for the Christian doctrine and seldom lost an opportunity to criticize and belittle the faith. Augustine moved with this circle and conformed to their godlessness.

While in Carthage, Augustine came under two powerful influences. The first was the noble eclecticism of Cicero, which inspired the young man to resist the evil forces in his environment and to restore some of the damage done to his character. He resumed the practice of daily prayer and attempted a reading of the scriptures, but he found the biblical books lacking in rhetorical excellence. He decided that they were unsuited for the consideration of well educated men. By this time Augustine had developed considerable skill in geometry, music, poetry, and oratory. He had mastered the categories of Aristotle, and was very proud that he had accomplished this entirely by himself. As a result of his intellectual attainments Augustine now felt equipped to be a critic worthy to pass judgment upon all matters sacred and profane.

The Heresy of Manes

The second and more enduring influence which came to dominate his character resulted from his contact with the

doctrines of the Persian prophet Mani, or Manes. To the early Church, Mani was little better than the anti-Christ, and it is difficult to gather from the older writings any fair estimation of the character of this extraordinary man.

The Persian religion was the worship of Mithras; it had gained wide popularity among the Roman soldiers and had become a powerful competitor of the early Christian Church, for the Christians refused to bestow the sacraments upon soldiers, on the ground that their profession was that of shedding blood. Mithras was the savior god of the later Iranians; the story of his life closely parallels that of Jesus. The mission of Mithras was to end the struggle between good and evil, or light and darkness, which had continued for thousands of years.

The Prophet Mani combined Mithraic teachings with old Semitic, Chaldean, and Assyrian metaphysics and religious lore. Mani, born about 215, A. D., while still a boy had received mystical revelations and visions. He was about twenty-five years old when he announced his new religion in the court of Shapur I, King of Persia. There is a tradition that Mani was at one time a Christian, but this the Church emphatically denied.

Mani traveled extensively in western China and India where he made numerous converts, but returning to Persia he came into violent conflict with the Magian priests of the religion of Zoroaster. After numerous vicissitudes he was finally crucified in the Persian capitol in the year 276 A. D., and his body was subjected to various indignities.

Few of Mani's many books and collections of letters have survived. He is known as a heresiarch because his teachings included unorthodox opinions concerning the life

and teachings of Jesus, whom he included among the great prophets.

The teachings of Mani were rooted in Persian dualism. He believed that good and evil, or spirit and matter, were in eternal struggle for dominion over the soul of man. The upper sphere, that of light, was the abode of God and his angels; and the lower sphere, that of darkness, was the kingdom of Satan and his evil demons. The elements of light and darkness were combined within the natures of all living creatures. Only through the practice of the virtues and the dedication of life to spiritual pursuits could man bring about his final salvation. The metaphysics of Mani was extremely fantastic, but his morality and ethics were essentially sound. He arrived at reasonable conclusions by unreasonable means, but this is by no means unique among revealed systems of religion.

From the old Jewish cabalistic speculations, Mani developed a belief that is still occasionally met with in esoteric literature. He believed that principles of both light and darkness were contained within the body of Adam, but through the machinations of Satan, Adam relapsed into sin. Eve was largely the product of Satan, but had within her one tiny spark of the divine light. Cain and Abel were not the children of Adam, but the offspring of a union of Satan and Eve. Seth, however, was the son of Adam and Eve, and in his nature light was abundant. The descendants of these three, therefore, continue in the world following the pursuits of light and darkness according to their original dispositions.

In substance, it may be said that Manichaeism is founded in the Zend-Avesta, the sacred book of the Persians.

Like some of the Gnostic cults and the Adamites, Mani rejected the historical Jesus, whom he regarded as an impostor sent by Satan to deceive the world. But like the Gnostics, again, he believed in a metaphysical Jesus who neither suffered nor died, but dwelt within the human soul. This *Jesus Impatibalis* was the Christ within, the hope of glory. Thus, Mani rejected entirely the possibility of spiritual salvation as the result of the martyrdom of the historical Jesus; he insisted that the story is significant only when interpreted metaphysically. This attitude caused Manichaeism to be included among the major abominations by the early Church fathers. Mani condemned the Christians as worshipers of idols, declaring that they had substituted men for gods, and then images for the men.

Augustine, already hypercritical of all things Christian, found in Manichaeism a structure of beliefs which confirmed in large measure his own conclusions. The teachings of Mani flattered the young man's ego, and they offered him further opportunity to exhibit his intellectual superiority over the superstition-ridden Christians. It has also been suggested that Manichaeism comforted young Augustine in another way. If Satan and his evil spirits had established a kingdom of sin which even God could not conquer until the last day of judgment, there was every reason why he, Augustine, should be impelled to a life of personal intemperance—for, after all it was not his fault but rather the fault of Satan that his flesh was afflicted with passions and corruptions. Having worked this out to his own satisfaction, Augustine settled down as a convert to the cult of Mani. He remained absorbed in this so-called heresy for nearly nine years. These were trying times for

his mother, Monica, who forbade her son to enter the family home when he formally accepted Manichaeism.

Nor was she much happier when Augustine had a son out of wedlock. But in this instance she forgave him and permitted him to live under the family roof but prayed that her son would see the error of his ways.

It was during the period of his Manichaeism that Augustine made a considerable study of astrology. Even in later years, Augustine never entirely abandoned the belief although he seldom practiced the art and was somewhat skeptical as to its accuracy. He also was inclined to favor a belief in prophetic dreams and visions, to some of which he ascribed a divine significance.

If his morals were at a low ebb in these years, the physical estate of young Augustine flourished like the green bay tree. He became a successful teacher of rhetoric to the sons of influential citizens. An annual prize was given at Carthage for the best poem of the year and Augustine won the coveted honor. The crown of the victor was placed on his head by the Proconsul.

Augustine was twenty-nine years old when he began to develop certain doubts concerning Manichaeism. He observed that the followers of the cult did not live up to the teachings of their order, and that even the bishops wrangled among themselves and formed schismatic groups. When one of the bishops departed hastily carrying with him the funds of his church, Augustine was gravely shaken in his faith.

One of the outstanding bishops of the Manichaen cult was Faustus, who was supposed to have renounced all worldly things, even his parents and his family, for the sake of his beliefs; he had neither money nor possessions and was sup-

posed to be a man wholly devoted to God and the gospel. Augustine hoped much of Faustus, but when they met, the bishop proved to be a lover of luxury and, though a fluent speaker, possessed no depth of knowledge about the doctrine of Mani, nor for that matter, about any other subject. Although Augustine was very fond of Faustus personally, and spent much time with him, their friendship resulted in Augustine's final and complete disinterest in Manichaen mysticism. Thus closed the first part of the life of Augustine. Such were his foundations and upon these footings his later character was built.

The law of cause and effect or retribution now played a part in molding the career of Augustine. As a school boy he had been the torment of his teachers, and now as a teacher he fell heir to a group of young men who plagued him as he previously had plagued his masters. For a man of his personal pride the condition was intolerable. About 389 A. D. he decided to leave Carthage and open a school of rhetoric at Rome. There he soon found that he had not bettered his condition. While the young Romans were prevented by law from actions of disrespect, they had the curious habit of evading the payment of their fees and departing en masse about the time the money for their instruction was due. Augustine left Rome two years later to accept a professorship in the university at Milan.

It was at Milan that he came under the influence of one of the truly great leaders of the Christian faith, Bishop Ambrose. Here was a man profoundly learned and endowed by nature with a magnificent personality and a paternal kindliness of spirit. He was an eloquent speaker and a master of rhetoric, and these last attributes were especially attractive to Augustine. Ambrose was profoundly versed in the

mystical teachings of Origen, now regarded as a heretic because of his metaphysical leanings. Origen believed not in the literal text of the scriptures, but in a mystical, spiritual interpretation discovered by sincere contemplation and the inner workings of the spirit. Ambrose taught this doctrine; his great text was, "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

While Augustine was in Milan his mother came to him, bringing her younger son, and it was her influence combined with that of Bishop Ambrose that slowly but inevitably brought Augustine to the Church. About this time it was decided that Augustine should marry. A young girl was found, but as she was not yet old enough for wedlock, the marriage was postponed for two years. In view of his coming marriage Augustine dismissed the woman who was the mother of his son, although she had lived faithfully with him for several years. Augustine never found time to repent this action, which was probably one of the most heartless in his entire career.

Conversion of Augustine

Steadily Augustine became more closely associated with the Christian circle at Milan. It was among them that he began his study of Plato, which he supplemented with a careful reading of St. Paul. This Platonic foundation was to increase with the years and become the dominant keynote of his philosophy. From the Christians, Augustine heard the story of the Hermit St. Anthony, and of others who had consecrated their lives to the service of the true God. Picked up by the enthusiasm of his associates, Augustine was carried along on the current of his own increasing fears as to the

state of his own immortal soul. At last he could resist no longer, for if he denied Christ on earth, Christ would deny him in heaven. To the joy of his mother and the satisfaction of the Bishop Ambrose—and to the general astonishment of the Romans—Augustine was publicly baptized in the Christian church at Milan.

A curious little incident occurred at about this time; Augustine believed it to be an indication of divine intercession in his behalf. He had learned that the Bible could be used as a kind of oracle; if a person of devout mind and belief opened the Book at random and placed his finger on some part of the text, the words would have a special personal meaning. Augustine chose the manuscript of St. Paul, and his finger came to rest on the following words: "Not in rioting and drunkeness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." (Romans, XIII. 13,14.)

Of this occasion Augustine writes: "I wished to read no more. There was no need. For instantly, as though the light of salvation had been poured into my heart with the close of this sentence, all the darkness of my doubts had fled away."

Augustine was baptized into the Christian church on Easter of the year 387, being at the time thirty-three years of age. At the same time his son Adeodatus was also accepted into the faith. It was not long after his baptism that Augustine traveled with his mother to Ostia. One evening Monica apparently in perfect health, turned to her son and told him that in a few days she would die. Five days later she was seized with a fever and died on the ninth day of her illness, in the fifty-sixth year of her age.

Before her passing, Monica had several long talks with Augustine in which she expressed her great joy at his conversion and besought him to remember her when he stood before the altar of God.

After his baptism Augustine voluntarily assumed a monastic life. He settled the estate of his parents and distributed the money to the poor, reserving nothing for himself. It is also said that Augustine founded the first nunnery in Africa.

Augustine had reached the age of forty-five when he was consecrated Coadjutor-Bishop of Hippo. When old Bishop Valerius died in 396, Augustine succeeded him with the full rank of Bishop. In his new position he lived according to the most severe rules of the Church and demanded similar obedience from all those associated with him. He lived with the clergy under a rule of communal property that forbade personal ownership of any goods.

His attitude on food is typical of his whole viewpoint. The diet of the clergy was vegetarian, but meat was furnished to guests and those who were weak or infirm. The number of cups of wine that the priests could drink was strictly limited and even this luxury was forfeited if they lapsed into profanity. Delicate foods or those with pleasant aromas were forbidden, lest they delight the senses. No slander, gossip, or idle talk was permitted at table, and with the exception of the spoons the dinner service was of earthenware and wood.

Augustine was so fearful of stimulating sinful passion that he was inclined to condemn church music unless the pleasure derived was entirely from the words and not from the melody. In dress he did not encourage an affectation of utter poverty because shabby garments were inconsistent with

the dignity of a great religion. But he carefully avoided ostentation or display of worldly wealth. If an expensive garment was received in donation, it was sold and the money given to the poor. Augustine always insisted that it was unfitting for a man born of humble origin, as he was, to affect fine attire. He wore no jewelry or rings except the emblem of his faith, and he was quite upset at the necessity of wearing shoes. He was forced to keep his footgear because of bad health, but comforted himself when he learned from the gospels that Jesus had worn shoes.

He refused to accept legacies and donations to the Church when these were likely to impose any hardship on the family of the testator. He declined to accept the estate of a man who had disinherited his son in anger. One man who had given a large amount of property asked for its return and Augustine immediately restored the land.

These are indications that Augustine had resolved to live as nearly as he could a pure and unselfish life. Had his earlier years been less intemperate, his later life would certainly have been less severe. He was in a period of repentance and there is everything to indicate that his self condemnation was entirely sincere. Here the psychological factors are evident. Even though he had been baptized and had attained high office in the Church, Augustine never felt comfortable about the state of his own virtue. Always there was fear in his heart that he might relapse into mortal sin. He remained ever on the defensive against temptation, and so set an example that was to become a burden upon the Church which he served. For the sin-fixation of Augustine was passed on to others whose lives did not merit the severity which he practiced.

The average person is not gravely endangered by encounters with beauty, art, music, literature, and philosophy; but to Augustine each of these æsthetic and mental pursuits were laden with hazards, for in him they might stimulate the old intemperances and intellectual vanities which had corrupted his youth.

The Great Controversies

It is only natural that Augustine should attack with religious enthusiasm the systems of thinking which had contributed to his own undoing, and as a result he engaged in three great controversies. The first of these was against the Manichists, toward whom he felt a peculiar resentment. His second controversy was with the Donatists. Third and greatest was his controversy against Pelagian. In these controversies we see another interesting complication in the temperament of Augustine. He had given himself wholly to God and was attempting heroically to mould his character toward a peaceful, contemplative, and humble existence. He wished to be a good man in God, serving the poor, loving his fellow man, and setting a noble example of Christian gentleness and charity. But unfortunately, most of these desired characteristics were contrary to his nature. Had he remained a simple monk in some obscure cloister, he might have accomplished the reformation of his personality, but as Bishop, his office was laden with political implications and before he realized it, he was drawn into the celebrated controversies.

The results of these involvements have been summarized by Frederic W. Farrar, D. D., F. R. S.: "In the course of year-long discussions he became a hard dogmatist, and his

final victory was sometimes won at the cost of love and tolerance. His personality becomes less attractive as his episcopacy becomes more triumphant, until at last the man who sighed so ardently for Christian charity, and was so much opposed to sacerdotal tyranny, uses expressions and arguments which become the boasted watchwords of the most ruthless inquisitors, and are quoted to sanction deeds so un-Christian and so infamous as the brutalities of Alva and the massacre of St. Bartholomew."

Augustine attacked the Tertullianists, Priscillianists, the Abelonians, Marchonists, Origenists, and Arians. With all of these he differed, and his differences created wounds that the centuries have not been able to heal. In these arguments and debates, Christian charity was sacrificed to Christian dogma, with the result that a very curious attitude developed in the Augustinian faction. Charity gained a new definition. It became synonymous with the complete destruction of the opposition. It became an act of divine kindliness to destroy your adversary if you could not convert him.

In his attacks on the Manichaeans, Augustine established a notable reputation as a controversialist. Having lived so many years under the influence of this heresy, and having a temperament which never escaped entirely from its own past, the fighting Bishop is found opposing enthusiastically certain doctrines which he secretly admired.

With the Donatists, Augustine fought with a freer spirit. Donatus, the founder of the schism, taught that the virtues of all sacerdotal acts depended upon the personal character of the agent—that is, the sacraments were valid only if the officiating priest was himself abiding in a perfect state of Christian virtue.

The controversy fell rapidly into politics, and became extremely bitter in the North African Christian Church during the 4th Century. Augustine took the attitude that the sacraments are not dependent upon the morality of the priest who may bestow, by virtue of his ordination, certain spiritual benefits regardless of the imperfections of his own nature. It was not the Church, however, that finally destroyed the Donatists; they survived until the rise of the power of the Saracen.

Augustine reached his greatest heights as a theological controversialist when he opposed the heresies of Pelagius. Very little is known about the character and the life of Pelagius, but he was probably born in Britain or Scotland and was past middle life when he came to Rome about the year 400. He appears to have been a man of the highest personal character, a sincere lover of humanity, and a devout Christian. Why then, did Augustine so strenuously oppose this noble and blameless person? The answer is, as always with Augustine, Pelagius was a heretic, because he differed with certain opinions of the Church. For example, he did not believe that 'with Adam's fall we sinned us all.' If Adam sinned it was an entirely personal matter, affecting adversely only Adam. This point of view led naturally to the conclusion that human beings are not 'conceived in sin and born in iniquity,' and must practice delinquency of their own free will in order to endanger their immortal souls. This led to the final heretical conclusion, that small children who die before the age at which they can sin by intent, are saved without the sacrament of baptism.

It was against these and similar horrible utterances that Augustine hurled his oratory. Obviously the opinions of Pelagius endangered the whole structure of the Church,

which was founded on the sure footing of original sin and redemption through grace. If the Pelagian viewpoint had gained ascendancy the entire survival of the Church was threatened. In the words of one enraptured theologian, "Oh blessed Satan that doth merit us salvation." It required no profound knowledge of logic to realize that without sin there is no need for salvation, and without the need for salvation the function of the clergy collapses.

Pelagius also complicated matters by insisting that normal living could be a holy virtue, and that virginity, though honorable, was not to be overvalued as a means of accomplishing salvation. Both Augustine and Pelagius finally resorted to the scriptures, throwing quotations at each other to prove the validity of their positions. Augustine finally took refuge behind the letter of the Church law. He wrote at length on the necessity of the baptisement of infants and otherwise tightened the ring of dogmas which were to bind the Christian faith until the advent of Luther.

The City of God

The various controversies occupied the greater part of Augustine's time as Bishop of Hippo, but during these same years he found time to write his most important book, *The City of God*. The work was begun in 413 A. D. and required approximately thirteen years for completion. *The City of God* was partly inspired by the crumbling of the Roman Empire which was slowly but surely collapsing before the irresistible attacks of the Vandals. In the year 410, Alaric destroyed Rome, and his armies were bent upon the conquest of North Africa.

In his book, *De Civitate Dei,* Augustine writes of two cities, Jerusalem and Babylon. Christ is the king of Jeru-

salem and the Devil is the king of Babylon. Each of these cities was built by a kind of love, Babylon by the love of self, growing up into contempt of God and of all things sacred; The City of God was built by the love of God, growing up into the contempt of self and of all things which pertain to the glory of self. As one writer has noted, *The City of God* was the requiem of the Roman Empire composed in a cloister.

Alaric died before he was able to accomplish the conquest of North Africa, but in the month of May, 428, fifty thousand wild Vandals, Alans, and Goths came in ships from Spain under the able but heartless King Genseric. This army destroyed everything in its way, massacred citizens of all classes and pillaged their towns. Only three cities, Carthage, Hippo, and Cirta were able to resist and even these ultimately fell. In June, 430, Genseric besieged Hippo both by land and by sea. The Christian clergy from surrounding areas had fled to this great community and here they gathered with Augustine to pray for deliverance from the terrible tribulations of the time. "I have but one prayer to God amid these calamities," Augustine told them, "either that He will set free this city from the enemy, or if not, that he will make his servants strong to bear his will, or at least that he would take me to Himself from this world."

Augustine was never a man of robust constitution and the ardor of his temperament continually exhausted the resources of his body. He suffered for many years from a cough which interfered with his speaking. About three months after the beginning of the siege of Hippo, Augustine was stricken with his last illness, so to this degree his prayer was answered; he did not live to see the fall of the Church in North Africa. Ten days before his death he asked his

friends to visit him no more; he would spend his last days in prayer and meditation. Only his physicians and those who brought his food had admission to his cell.

The only recorded miracle accredited to Augustine in his lifetime occurred in his last days. A man very ill declared that he had been commanded by a vision to come to the bishop that he might be healed by the laying on of hands. Augustine declared his unfitness to perform such an act; but finally as the sufferer insisted, Augustine prayed, and the man recovered his health.

At the age of seventy-six Augustine died on August 28, in the thirty-fifth year of his episcopate. He retained full possession of his faculties to the end and selected the Presbyter Heraclius as his successor. The city of Hippo fell to the Vandals in 432, and the only part which was saved was the library which Augustine had consecrated. Augustine was the last Bishop of Hippo, and in the 7th Century the town ceased to exist.

It is no easy task to make an intelligent survey of the theological philosophy of St. Augustine. His mood was forever changing and he adapted his ideas and arguments to the need of the moment. He was not a consecutive thinker, and no general system emerges through his teachings and opinions. In many matters Augustine avoided direct answers to moral questions. His one dominant and reasonably consistent doctrine is to the effect that the Church and its dogmas are absolutely infallible and must be obeyed in all respects if the spiritual estate of the soul is to be assured.

According to Augustinianism, Jesus Christ is not the savior of the world but the savior of the Church only, which is His peculiar sanctified institution, set apart and unique,

infallible, unchangeable and immovable. Even within the Church itself, Christ is the savior not of all the congregation but only of the elect, and this salvation is achieved under ecclesiastical conditions. There can be no variation. Good and evil cease to be moral virtues and are determined solely by reference to invariable dogma. It is the Church, not Christ himself, who is the mediator between God and man. Thus the Church becomes the very mechanism of redemption, and there is no place in heaven for any outside of the Church.

The enlightened pagans are ignored. Those who lived and died prior to the birth of Christ have no share in any common hope. Christ, the universal redeemer, disappears. So completely is salvation restricted that only an exceedingly small number of human beings are permitted to enjoy the predestination of ultimate spiritual security.

Augustine had a very narrow conception of the Church itself. To him it was largely the sum of the clergy, a physical establishment governed by a bishop and dependent largely on the political opinions of Rome. While priests might commit sin, the priesthood was above sin. It was cut off from the ordinary life of its world by celibacy and other arbitrary rules. The duty of the Church was to enforce the acceptance of its dogmas, and if necessity arose, it was fully justified in using the military power of the State to compel obedience.

With doctrines such as these motivating his consciousness, why is Augustine regarded as one of the noblest fathers of the Christian faith? There are two reasons. The first is, that the Church reveres Augustine as the man who elevated it to the chief place among the institutions of Christendom. Upon the Augustinian doctrines the temporal

power of the Church was built. It was this temporal power that gave the Church complete dominion over the states of Europe for more than a thousand years. It is only natural that a Church which has grown rich and powerful and extended its influence throughout the world should honor the man who was responsible for its tremendous sphere of authority.

The second reason is, that while Augustine did hold a variety of extremely reactionary convictions, a great part of his writings are devoted to lofty and idealistic religious philosophy. It is probable that the later Augustinians were far more fanatical than the founder of their sect. The fanaticism which Augustine displayed is the natural result of his own interpretation of the personal experiences of his life. When he is impersonal he has flashes of supreme genius; but personality is endlessly intruding itself, bringing noble ideas down to the level of mediocrity through lack of adequate training of the reasoning powers.

Voltaire said that Plato should have been the first canonized saint of the Christian Church. It is interesting to study the effect of the Platonic writings on the mind of Augustine. With all his eccentricities of character and his utter devotion to Church dogma, Augustine was basically a Platonist, although his Platonism was strangely distorted by his personal temperament and the pessimism which pervades his viewpoints.

He aspired to the lofty idealism of the Platonic school, yet tried with all the desperation of his own nature to bind this idealism within the narrow limitations of his theology. The theological writings of Plato were available in Augustine's time, and in *The City of God* Augustine shows consid-

erable acquaintance with Plato's teachings, both political and religious.

It must be acknowledged also that Augustine was by nature a mystic and a metaphysician. His mysticism was strongly influenced by the teachings of Ambrose, who had derived his information from Origen, who had in turn, secured many of his doctrines from the Platonic tradition. In those days, Christianity was largely a system of interpretation rather than an original structure of beliefs. Most of the Christian leaders had grown up in a pagan world, and many were ardent pagans prior to their conversion. The element of pagan philosophy was therefore deeply rooted in the subconscious minds of these men, and the direction of Church philosophy was strongly influenced by the pagan background.

Synesius, Bishop of Ptolemais, is an outstanding example of the religious temper of the time. He was a Neo-Platonist and a disciple of Hypatia, the great woman mathematician and pagan martyr. With her he studied astronomy and Pythagorean numerology. In spite of his very superficial interest in Christianity, he was popularly elected Bishop of Ptolemais. It was only after much hesitation on personal and doctrinal grounds that he accepted the office. He made the conditions that he must be allowed to continue in his personal convictions concerning pagan philosophy and also retain his wife, to whom he was extremely devoted. The condition of the Church can be inferred by the fact that his stipulations were agreed to, and he preached Neo-Platonism from the pulpit. Synesius observed on one occasion that he was nominally Christian in his public office, but he would continue to the end to be a Platonist in his private life.

The early Church was confronted with the problem of converting not only the simple and unlearned, but it had

also to bring into the fold more distinguished men who would add luster and dignity to the sect. These better intellects refused to give up their pagan convictions, but were willing to cooperate in spreading the moral virtues taught by the Church. Later, other considerations influenced decision. When Justinian forbade pagan teachers to hold chairs or publicly promulgate their doctrines, and closed the Platonic Academy, many Platonists permitted themselves to be baptized, and then taught Platonic philosophy under a thin veneer of Christian terminology.

The political power of the Church increased as its doctrine took hold of the popular mind, and the intellectuals were forced to compromise with the Christian sects or else suffer persecution. Still, like Synesius, individuals retained their private convictions, with the result that the early Church was loaded with Pythagorean, Neo-Pythagorean, Platonic and Neo-Platonic lore. In addition to this mixture, the North African Church was in close contact with the Egyptian religion, and the mixture of Egyptian and Greek doctrines which arose when the Ptolemies, a Greek dynasty, became the rulers of Egypt.

The particular deity of the Ptolemies was the god Serapis, a divinity embodying many of the attributes of Christ. So similar was the cult of Serapis to that of the Nazarene that the Christian bishops visiting Alexandria frequently held two services, one in the church of the Christians and the other in the temple of Serapis. Most likenesses reported to be those of Christ are derived from the statues of Serapis.

The principal difference between the two cults lay in the fact that Serapis was not only the weeping god forever pitying the sorrows of the world, but also the patron of learning and the god who ruled in the Serapeaum, the great

library of philosophical and religious books. The Christians did not regard Jesus as a patron of learning, but rather as the savior of the unlearned—through faith alone.

Out of the mixture of Christian and Egyptian doctrines in North Africa arose the most famous of all the heretical sects, the Gnostics. Basilides, the founder of the Egyptian Gnosis, claimed to have been a disciple of the Apostle Matthias. He attempted to combine Christian mysticism and Egyptian metaphysics. For this reason he was opposed on the one hand by the Neo-Platonists, who regarded his teachings as a corruption of Greek learning, and on the other hand by the Christians, who accused him of trying to Egyptianize their faith. In the end, the Gnosis was completely destroyed by the Church, but its traditions lingered on in the subjective fabric, and traces can still be found both in Christian religious dogma and in the actual vestments of the clergy.

Augustine's conversion was an emotional experience of great intensity, but did not necessarily affect his basic intellectual convictions. Also, conversion is a temporary emotional stimulation, and gradually the mind reverts to familiar modes of thinking. The convert does not change his idea, he merely gives new names to those beliefs which have become part of his subconscious. There is ample evidence of this throughout the early centuries of the Church, for Christianity had no set dogma of its own sufficiently complete to satisfy trained thinkers, and they had to fill the gap with the principles of the pagan philosophy.

It was from Plato and his school that Augustine developed his doctrine of the Trinity. From the same source he evolved his conviction that the Church was the intermediary between God and man. He accomplished this in-

terpretation by comparing the Church with the state Mysteries of Eleusis. To the Greeks, the Mysteries were divinely appointed institutions set up among men as a means of uniting the spiritual and material worlds. They were the doorways of heaven, and those who desired to approach the gods must pass through these portals and become spectators to the sacred dramas which were performed by the priests. These dramas did not in themselves assure salvation; their function was to expose the onlookers to certain spiritual truths which had to be comprehended through study and meditation.

Furthermore, the Mysteries were supported by the state and their sanctuaries were gloriously adorned with art and enriched by gifts and offerings. The priesthood was a caste apart, accorded special honors and exercising considerable temporal power. The disciples and initiates of these Mysteries founded schools of philosophy and religion, accepting students and instructing them in physical and spiritual sciences. By this noble system the students earned the right to be initiated in the temples.

Dawn of Dogmatic Theology

To Augustine this was a pattern to which the Christian sect should aspire. The new faith was entitled to all the honors and privileges accorded to the pagan cults, its priesthoods universally revered, and its rituals regarded with the same approval and veneration as those of the Greek Mysteries. There must be a complete separation of Christian and pagan interests. So long as it was obvious that the Christian sect was indebted to the pagans, it would occupy a dependent position; this indebtedness must be wiped away; Chris-

tian doctrine must be clarified into a complete system of revelation entirely separate and unique. To accomplish this the Church *Militant* must come into being.

The Christian Church must rise as a temporal institution and become the center of a Christian civiliation. Its clergy would be set apart to an eternal priesthood which would bestow its favors only upon those entirely dedicated to Church purposes. Thus, while Christianity was to be a religion different from paganism, it must compete with and excel the pagan institutions and assume spiritual leadership.

Augustine realized that the popular appeal of the Christian doctrine was its simplicity and lack of formal philosophical system. It was peculiarly suited to the needs of those who desired comfort and religious solace and at the same time did not want to burden their minds with abstract formulas which only philosophers and mathematicians could understand.

In order to become a great religion the Church would have to stamp out the schismatic cults which had risen within itself, schisms which were due largely to streams of pagan thought flowing in through the various bishops who had been born and educated as pagans. The Church must become one structure within itself before it could hope to impress the power of this unity upon a doubting world.

This was the cause of Augustine's numerous controversies. Orthodoxy must be defined, and Augustine met this challenge by clinging to every vestige of dogma that he could discover within the Church itself. His was not an easy task, for there was very little dogma available in his time. Neither Jesus nor his disciples were dogmatists. The New Testament was an inadequate foundation for a poli-

tical structure. The burden of the gospels was one of morality and ethics, and there was nothing in the gospels of a moral or ethical nature that was not already known to and practiced by the pagan sects.

Honesty was a virtue, but it was not solely a Christian virtue. The Greeks, Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Romans had advocated honesty for ages, even though they had all practiced it imperfectly. Love of God was not a unique revelation. Good men of all times had adored the Creator in private and public ceremonies. Even the Trinity was not new; and the immaculate conception was ascribed to many of the pagan gods and heroes.

It was difficult indeed to build a new religion on principles already widely accepted. But if the gospels offered little of dogma, the apostles—especially Paul—filled in a few gaps; but even so, the supply of dogma was extremely limited. Wherein, then, lay the seed of any uniqueness, and how could it be caused to germinate and grow? This was a problem that needed a genius to solve, and Augustine brought a large measure of genius to bear upon the subject.

To meet the complete absence of cosmological and anthropological background, the Christians were forced to accept the explanation of the origins of the universe and mankind from the Old Testament of the Jews. They bound this scripture to their new dispensation according to their fancy, by interpreting such prophetic sections as Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Job as predicting the advent of Christ. The Jesus of the gospel became the Messiah long awaited by the Jews, and the two testaments were combined into one solid structure.

The Mosaic morality and ethics therefore came to the aid of the Christian Church and supplied the elements of

a formal religious philosophy. There was considerable difficulty in fitting the works together, because of contradictions; but these were ironed out over a period of centuries on the premise that where the new dispensation differed from the old it was revealed that God had resolved to better the state of man by modifications of divine policy.

Augustine's concept of the Universe was basically Platonic. God was the supreme cause, the creator of all things, and the master of the world. But the Church was God's institution in the world, the doorway to a blessed future. The Church was the gift of Christ, the only begotten son of God, who through his miraculous birth, ministry, and death had given to the world his Church and sustained it by the Apostolic Succession. Outside of the Church, none could find salvation; and the door of the Church was the entrance to all hope. In this way, uniqueness was achieved; but so closely did this uniqueness parallel earlier beliefs that it was of words rather than of facts. Therefore words became important—more important than ideas, and orthodoxy required an absolute and literal acceptance of words. Interpretation was not permissible, because it would inevitably incline the mind away from the literalness of words.

To Augustine paganism was always the besetting temptation. When men began to think, their thoughts escaped Christian boundaries, and they reverted inevitably to Platonic or Aristotelian modes. Of these two, Augustine naturally favored Platonism, which could be useful in argument. Still, it endangered the Christian viewpoint. There are many places in Augustine's writings where he reveals himself as a Platonist in his ideas, even while he is a Christian in his wording. He could not escape from this contradiction because his faith was not a philosophy, and therefore was not

capable of supplying him with a basic Christian statement of being.

After Augustine, the Church passed through a further period of adjustment in which its dogmas were more clearly defined and many Platonic elements were accepted as orthodox. But by this time, the pagan schools had virtually disappeared and only religious scholars had access to their writings. The Dark Ages followed closely after the fall of classical pagandom. In the period of the Dark Ages few men could read, and fewer still could understand what they read. Illiteracy became synonymous with gentility, and even princes and kings were too proud to learn to write their own names; such tasks were reserved for lowly and underpaid secretaries.

Completely freed from the menace of an ever present paganism, the Church was in a position to permit an infiltration of Platonic doctrine, without even the source of that doctrine becoming known. As the Church increased in temporal power and glory it borrowed generously from the old religions that had perished from the memory of the living. Thus Egyptian, Greek and Chaldean elements are to be found in the architecture, symbolism, rituals, sacraments, music, and vestments of the Christian Church.

The period of the Protestant Reformation was one of revolt against dogmatic theology. The human mind resents limitation imposed upon itself. By its very nature, the intellect is continually seeking extension through inquiry and contemplation. The purpose of the mind is to discover the reason and methods which underlie natural phenomena. Given the opportunity to train itself in rational procedure, the mind will ultimately overthrow all boundaries.

In the present century, Platonism is re-emerging through the structure of Christian theology. A larger idealism has been discovered by the human intellect, and a nominal Christian world is beginning to universalize its conception of both morality and ethics. Only the least informed of the modern sects have preserved any large measure of intolerance. The Christian thinker is again reading Plato without any qualm of conscience, and we are thinking more and more of a larger world and a larger spiritual inclusiveness. The terms *heathen* and *pagan* have lost most of their odium, and persons of varying beliefs mingle together in private concord and public cooperation.

All this goes to prove that the subconscious mind of the race has carried philosophical convictions over a period of nearly two thousand years and preserved them against the dogma of their time. In the last analysis no religious or philosophical system can survive which is contrary to the innermost convictions of the human being. The power of these convictions is inevitable. Though long suppressed, natural beliefs will assert themselves over artificial doctrines and the structure of personal conviction will be restored.

Augustine's place in this emergence is clearly indicated. His very consecration to the letter of Christian theology brought into being the temporal powers of his Church. Building upon his foundation, his Church preserved as dogmas much of the classical learning, and brought this down through the centuries as elements in a Christian theology. Now these elements are being restored to their proper dignity, and it becomes more and more obvious that the Platonic tradition is the philosophical key to the Christian religion. Once this is generally understood, we may look forward to a better day in our religious world.

Men turning from dogma will seek instead essential doctrine. Upon this doctrine they will build their morality, ethics, and politics. The one thing that the Church never realized was that its pagan foundations were its greatest strength. Christianity contained within its fabric the possibility of survival because it was patterned after these great classical institutions.

The strength and beauty of Christianity is not in its isolation but is due to those of pagan minds who brought with them into the Church that wealth of idealism and depth of vision which were strong enough to survive the conflict of dogmas. Christianity is, factually, a Platonic motion, distorted in its outward parts by the clash of creeds, but preserving inwardly an esoteric tradition derived from the nobility of the Greek Mysteries.

8

THE PHILOSOPHIC EMPIRE

Challenge of Self Government

ACCORDING to the teachings of Plato, the world is subject to alternating periods of fertility and sterility. Fertility is to be understood as an abundance of life, so that all growth is accelerated. Sterility infers a privation of the life principle, with the consequent deterioration throughout nature. A period of fertility is called a golden age, and during such a time arts, philosophies, sciences, and religions flourish, and men live together in a state of concord.

After a golden age the spiritual energies decline, and the world passes into the age of silver, from there into an age of bronze, falling finally into an age of iron, which is the lowest place in the cycle of fertility. In the age of iron the destructive tendencies gain domination and men devote their lives to the gratification of selfishness and ambition. Thus, the least degree of fertility produces the greatest degree of sterility and all noble institutions languish.

Plato further taught that humanity is now approaching the end of the age of iron. Revulsion mechanisms are setting in; humanity is becoming weary with the sterility of its conditions. This revolt against the limitations of material-

ism will result in the re-establishment of the golden age, that blessed time when the gods walk with men.

Supported by an increase of natural vitality, the race is moving slowly but surely toward a new birth in wisdom and truth. Great philosophers and mystics dreaming of a better time to come have visualized the world of tomorrow in terms of an enlightened commonwealth administrated by the wise, and populated with a self-governing humankind. This Utopian vision has resulted in the production of several important books dealing with the universal reformation of man. The most important of these writings are More's *Utopia,* Campanella's *City of the Sun,* Andreae's *Christianopolis* and Bacon's *New Atlantis.* More recently Edward Bellamy published his *Looking Backward* in which he attempted to project the concept of socialism into the vision of the golden age.

The Utopians

Nearly all of the Utopian books are inspired by Plato's doctrine of the philosophic elect. The basis of his reasoning is extremely simple and philosophically irrefutable. In order to be well governed, the world must be ruled over by those best fitted for leadership. Of all men, the philosopher is the most completely informed, therefore the philosopher is the natural ruler of human beings.

Plato's definition of a philosopher includes, of course, the requirements of unselfishness and the complete overcoming of all impulse toward personal ambition. Only the unselfish man is worthy to possess anything. Only the man whose personal ambitions have been neutralized by a profound love for the common good is qualified for rulership.

It has already been mentioned that Plotinus, greatest of the Neo-Platonists, aspired to establish a philosophical city in the midst of the Roman Empire. The Emperor Galienus was sympathetic to the idea, and the city of Platonopolis might have become a reality had it not been for the antagonism of the Roman Senators. While a number of philosophers have set up small religious communities, Plotinus is the only one who attempted to establish the Platonic commonwealth on a large scale. He failed because of the sterility of his time. The world was not ready to accept a Utopian dream as a practical reality.

It is difficult sometimes to understand why men resist changes that would bring about their improvement. The answer to this riddle lies in the psychological structure of the human mind. We cannot cooperate with that which we cannot comprehend. Until an individual experiences the life of reason within himself, he looks upon Utopias as the idle vagaries of visionary mystics. Man must be conditioned for wisdom, and this conditioning takes the form of war, crime, and poverty, all of which must be experienced to the fullest before the mind will reject them in favor of a simpler and more mature course of action.

In the period of classical philosophy a form of the Philosophic Empire actually existed in the State Mysteries. The members of these great religio-philosophical institutions formed a race apart, dedicated to the search for wisdom. When we realize that as many as 25,000 young Grecian men and women were initiated into the Mysteries of Eleusis at a single performance of the ritual, we gain a better idea of the scope and influence of these sacred orders. The members of these spiritual brotherhoods were united in a fraternity of special observances; they were known to each other

by various signs and symbols, and they had taken obligations of mutual helpfulness. Although these initiates conformed with the outward customs and laws of their time, they held other laws and customs among themselves, and together formed an invisible empire of the learned.

The initiates of the Greek Mysteries fraternized with those of the temples of Egypt, Chaldea, Syria, and India. Disciples journeyed to these distant parts and the religious world of that day was bound together in a large camaraderie of purpose. It was required that rulers and princes be initiated before they could hold office. Thus the Mysteries stood behind the State, they did not rule in an obvious way but they ruled the rulers.

The decline of the Pagan Mysteries and their final corruption was due to the motion of the world from a state of fertility to one of sterility. The outward indication was the increase in the political ambition of governing classes, with resultant wars and internal dissension. The temples were sacked by invading armies and their books and treasures were burned or carried away by an ignorant soldiery. The philosophical schools were scattered and the teachers killed or banished. Initiation was no longer obligatory to conquerors, tyrants and despots, for the sanctuaries would not receive them. The Emperor Nero, according to Roman law, was the high priest of the State religion, but the flamens would not allow him to enter the temple after he had murdered his mother.

The philosophical empire set up by the initiated philosophers of antiquity was not completely destroyed by the evils of the time; but retired ever deeper into secrecy and restriction. The custodians of the sacred learning concealed their lore from all except their nearest disciples, and com-

municated the arcana only to such as bound themselves with an oath. One initiate when tortured to wrest from him the forbidden knowledge, bit out his own tongue, lest in agony and delirium he might reveal some part of the mystery tradition.

During the long centuries of the medieval period the invisible empire of the wise men maintained a simple framework of organization by means of elaborate symbolical devices. The alchemists were members of this invisible empire, and the strangely illumined manuscripts which they wrote contained the complete formula for the Magnum Opus —the great work—the restoration of human society. The Knights Templars, the Knights of Malta, the Cabalists, the Illuminati, and the Rosicrucians are part of this same motion toward the restoration of the golden age.

Neo-Platonism released Plato's doctrines from the formal boundaries of a philosophical system and extended the basic teachings of the master into political and industrial spheres. The mind is the natural ruler of the physical life of the individual and philosophy is the proper ruler of the mind. For this reason it is impossible to establish a physical harmony in human affairs as long as politics and economics are divided from their mental and spiritual principles.

It is usual in democratic states to divorce religion from government for political reasons. Religion becomes a personal matter, and government a public concern. This division was brought about because various religious institutions meddled in the affairs of the State for their own profit, perverting the power which religion exercises over the thoughts and emotions of susceptible mortals. When religion departed from the great idealistic footings laid down in antiquity, it forfeited its place in the public confidence.

Because the private interests of theologians could combine with the private interests of politicians to the detriment of the public good, it seemed advisable to break up the conspiracies of these powerful groups which sought to dominate and exploit their followings.

This division was dictated by the expediency of the moment, but all division is contrary to nature and in correcting one evil we have fallen into another. Obviously, both religion and politics, when operated as closed corporations made up of selfish and selfseeking individuals, are a menace to any program of human betterment. On the other hand, when you separate politics from the structure of spiritual convictions you launch a Frankenstein monster upon human society. Also, if you destroy all of the temporal power of religion you leave it at the mercy of a materialistic age, with no means to combat the physical corruptions which are rampant in the land.

The ideal government is one in which Church and State are united in the persons of the philosophic elect, but the very type of civiliation which we have produced makes this union impossible, for ours is a civilization that denies the right of wisdom to administrate the affairs of the uninformed. Plato points out that a man may have sincerity of motive without an approprriate degree of ability to bring this motive into action. He also warns us of the danger of static good. The world is filled with persons statically good, sometimes called well-meaning. Such individuals have a natural desire to do that which is right, but they do not know what is right, how to perform right action, or the appropriate time for action. Good intentions are more commendable than useful. Until these intentions are trained and disciplined and brought to maturity in terms of conduct, they

are of small value on this stricken sphere. Most of the well-meaning lack even the courage of their well meaning; therefore, they fail to support a constructive program even when it is available to them. The wise man must struggle against this inertia among those who wish him well, even while he is defending himself against those who wish him ill.

By perpetuating only the outward form of our tradition we gain much support for error and little support for realities. Yet the social state of man can not be separated from the spiritual purposes of the race. All of the great world teachers have brought not only revelations about divine things but programs for the correction of social ills. Religion has two proper ends; the first of these is the perfection of the inner life of man; and the second is the perfection of his outward community existence. The great patterns set up for the political security of the human family have not been devised by politicians but by sages, priests, and mystics, like Confucius, Jesus, and Buddha. While these men are now most often associated with the religious and moral systems which have been named for them, they were also pioneers in practical politics. It is a far cry from the ideals of these noble and illumined men to the present state of the world for which they lived and died. The modern office holder may take his oath of office upon the sacred book of his religion, but from that time on there is seldom much indication that he makes further use of the book or its contents.

Plato Retires From Politics

It appears that Plato had originally intended to devote his life to a public and political career. In a letter written in the later years of his life the master describes the circum-

stances which led him to renounce political ambitions and devote his life to philosophical pursuits. About the year 404 B. C. there was an upheaval in the government of Athens. An oligarchy was set up. Plato, a young man at the time, was invited to acept office under the new regime, and friends and relatives urged him to further his career while opportunity favored. But Plato was a cautious man and resolved to wait until he could see the policies of the new rulers. These policies were not long in revealing themselves. Plato was horrified by the lawlessness and violence of the oligarchs, and when the new politicians caused the arrest and execution of an honest citizen so that they could confiscate his properties for their personal use, young Plato decided against a public career under the patronage of such scoundrels.

With the restoration of the democracy the Athenian government merely passed from bad to worse. Its leaders were responsible for the death of Socrates on a trumped-up charge of impiety and the mental corruption of youth. It was this final injustice that ended forever Plato's political aspirations. There was no political group in Athens with whom Plato could cooperate as one among honorable men. But these youthful inclinations to become a social and legislative reformer colored his later philosophical achievements, and all his life he remained dedicated to the improvement of both the intellectual and the political life of his world.

Having divorced his mind forever from the inducements of a political career, Plato became an observer of government. He studied the corruption of public servants and the causes which led to their malfeasances. He observed the temptations, inducements, bribes and even conspiracies by which well-meaning men were corrupted in their public duties.

He also realized that honest legislators received no support from the citizens whom they sought to represent. The result of his meditation upon these social ills is in his conclusion that good government can be expected only when—"Either true and genuine philosophers find their way to political authority or powerful politicians by the favor of Providence take to true philosophy. (*Plato*: *the Man and His Work* by A. E. Taylor).

It has been said that the founding of the Platonic Academy is one of the most memorable events in the history of Western European science. In one way it was a re-establishment on a small scale of the philosophic empire. Plato, realizing that he could not work with the political factions of his time, resolved to create a state of his own within the boundaries of the Academy where men could work together according to the dictates of intelligence and reason. If he could not change the government of Athens, he would bestow the power of self-government upon his own students and disciples, liberating their minds from bondage to the persuasive power of orators and the insidious corruption of private interest.

In the Academy, over which he presided, Plato promulgated the most noble and practical of his convictions: Good government depended upon the union of philosophy, science, and politics in the persons of public leaders: Philosophy is the greatest good, and those who aspire to it are not motivated by any ulterior design: Men do not become rich by becoming wise, for the reason that wisdom reveals the comparative unimportance of physical possessions: or does the philosopher gain general distinction in his own day; he is appreciated only by those of similar attainments. He is not

likely to rise to high office; he is feared by public leaders because he cannot be corrupted.

All these things being true, men search for truth for the sake of truth, and therefore are human beings of a superior kind, working not for visible rewards and motivated only by the noblest of impersonal aspirations. Such men, by virtue of their motivations, are the ideal leaders and rulers—and the least likely to be elected or appointed.

Up to the time of Plato, young Greeks who aspired to a higher education had to depend largely upon wandering Sophists, professional educators who toadied to the whims of the rich and the powerful, and taught nothing that conflicted with the prevailing prejudices and conceits. These Sophists taught for the sake of profit, and while many of them were proficient in certain forms of knowledge, most were deficient in their integrity.

The Philosopher King

Plato's Academy set up a new standard in the world of learning. The Sophists went out of fashion and came to a general disrepute, for even corrupted officials wanted an honest education for their children. No one appreciates honesty more than one in whom it is lacking.

The Academy also established a fixed policy in the sphere of education. The wandering Sophists often contradicted each other, and youths under their tutelage were confused by the lack of uniformity in teaching. The Academy had a constitution, rules and regulations, and an unchanging basic policy; parents knew that their sons would receive an adequate foundation in moral and ethical values along with their scientific and philosophical education.

There can be no doubt that Plato established the Academy in order to further his doctrine of the philosopher-king. He believed that public servants should be instructed in every branch of learning and should acquire a basic love of wisdom. Men who truly love wisdom will have no part in any scheme which is against the public good. But most of all, they will have an idealistic conception as to what constitutes both private and public good. Philosophy bestows vision, and vision is necessary in directing the policy of the State. Civilization can only progress when present action is related to future purpose. There must be a vision of things to be attained in order that action may be directed to its reasonable and legitimate ends. Nations which have no programs end in confusion, and the citizens of such nations have no adequate motive to inspire patriotism or cooperation.

The philosopher-king must ultimately inherit the earth. Of all men, he alone is adequately equipped to direct the course of empire. He must include within his own nature the attributes of a priest, a philosopher, a scientist and a statesman. He must understand all men according to their own natures, and he must lead them gently and wisely to a state of security appropriate to their needs and temperaments. He must inspire confidence not only by his words but by his deeds. He should live simply, depending not upon force of arms for his authority, but upon the evident superiority of his ability.

The Neo-Platonists accepted the doctrine of the philosopher-king as it was taught by Plato, but they added to it by combining the mystical teachings of the master with his political writings. The perfect ruler should be in communication with the gods, receiving into his soul the pattern

of the divine will. He must be a link between universals and particulars, he must belong to the order of the Heroes. Here we see how the Platonic viewpoint was influenced by the metaphysics of the Egyptians, the race that cradled the tradition of the divine right of kings. Unfortunately, the conception of divine right had lost caste long before the advent of Plato, and men had fallen into the delusion that divine right was bestowed by birth and family, rather than through the perfection of the nature by mystical disciplines.

In Neo-Platonism the whole emphasis was upon a mystical union of the human intellect and the divine mind. Man does not invent truth, nor is he the peculiar creator of any virtue; he is a channel through which spiritual realities flow into the mortal sphere. To the degree that he is sensitive to divine inspiration he is a truly superior person. The philosopher-king must be an ever-flowing fountain of spiritual good, and through him his people must partake in the divine will. He does not rule by the divine right of kings; rather, he is a king by divine right.

Monarchy, Oligarchy and Democracy

Although Plato was a staunch advocate of the democratic theory of life, he did not believe that the citizens of a community could be entirely self-ruling. He divided government into three kinds: monarchy, the rulership by one; oligarchy, the rulership by a class; and democracy, a rulership by majority.

The perversion of monarchy is tyranny, the perversion of oligarchy is despotism, and the perversion of democracy is chaos. The perversion of power is common to all classes of mankind except the wise. The absolute proof of wisdom

is right use, the absolute proof of ignorance is mis-use. A man may be schooled, learned, and educated according to formal standards, but if he practices mis-use in any department of his living he is ignorant.

Plato taught that the ultimate form of human government is rulership by one with the consent and support of the many. The ultimate of self-government in the individual is rulership by his own divine nature, which is the one behind the divisions of his personality. The ultimate rulership of the world is consummated in the philosopher-king. He is the one, who by virtue of being the best of all men, is the natural ruler of the rest.

The ultimate ruler of all nature is God, the one supreme principle, the sovereign good, the indivisible source of all division and the ultimate mover of every creature. Thus, as the universe is ruled by one, the pattern is established; and universal patterns are the absolute governors of all mortal institutions.

Within the all embracing power of unity, democracy can be set up in which the parts are self-governing according to capacity, and where this capacity fails there is recourse to the sovereign unity. Men may govern themselves in such particulars as are within their scope and province; but beyond particulars are universals, upon which there must be common agreement, and to the laws of which there must be common obedience.

Internationalism as a practical experience was beyond the knowledge of ancient peoples; but the same rules that apply to the communities of a single nation apply also to the governing of a world of nations. It is a fallacy to assume that small states can be governed more wisely and more easily than large states. It is a similar fallacy to preach that

primitive peoples, because of the simplicity of their social structure, can be happier than civilized peoples. Such problems are relative and not comparable.

If a small state is apparently more unified because of the limited area of its territory, it is correspondingly limited in wealth and natural resources; it is also more subject to the menace of aggression from more powerful neighboring countries. Large states are capable of larger aspirations, and their contribution to world good is in measure to their wealth and size. Greatness gives opportunity, and should be an ever present inducement to large and adequate endeavors.

As the result of thousands of years of internecine strife the nations of the world have impoverished themselves and each other, and have retarded the progress of the entire human family. Plato accepted the challenge of the problem of territorial rights by applying his general rule to this particular issue. Following the adage of an older philosopher, "All things belong to those who use them well," Plato advocated that the territorial needs of a people be referred to an international court of appeals, with supporting proof that these territorial needs have resulted from a legitimate and honorable development within the structure of a state.

Nations have distinct personalities and policies by which their growths are hastened or retarded. Some peoples are more progressive than others, some more industrious. In some localities the birth rate is higher and infant mortality lower. Some peoples are naturally suited to a provincial existence, others are naturally cosmopolitan. The wisdom of rulers and the quality of the laws are also important in determining the territorial requirements of a people. Under

benevolent rulers nations prosper and expand, while the reverse is true if the dynasty is corrupt.

Because of these natural and artificial inequalities it follows that some nations outgrow their territorial restrictions and must expand in order to survive. It is also true that other nations neglect their territories and fail to take advantage of their natural resources. Such problems should be brought before a proper tribunal which shall allot to the worthy that which they deserve, and punish indolence, indifference and lack of national integrity, by depriving each nation of territories which they have neglected or failed to use. These problems do not require war for their solution if a unified world policy is honestly administrated and directs the growth of the state.

Opposed to the natural necessities of growing peoples are the artificial causes for internal strife. These include the personal ambitions of tyrants, the impulse to plunder, and various artificial incentives resulting from a misapplication of the will to power. When nations are guilty of aggressions against other nations, the aggressor nations should be regarded as common criminals and be punished with the same severity as are individuals guilty of similar crime. Here again, the administration of justice depends upon the existence of the over state, the collective nation.

In recent years the increasing complexity of world politics has made it ever more apparent that the over state must come into existence. Unless the world-nation is set up, the destructive and competitive impulses natural to powerful nations can not be curbed. Nearly twenty-three centuries ago Plato, observing the corruption of the Athenians, derived from this particular circumstance the pattern of a general reform. The soundness of his vision has been proven by the

motion of time. Today we stand on the threshold of an era of internationalism, and in this larger sphere nationalistic conceits must be relegated to the class of outgrown superstitions.

Plato endeavored to prepare human beings for the philosophic empire which was to come. He realized that a long period of conditioning would be necessary before men could unite themselves in the solution of their common problems. From the broad gate of the Academy there passed out into the world the noblest tradition of our race, the dream of a universal brotherhood of individuals and nations.

The philosophic commonwealth can exist as a reality only in a world of thoughtful and informed human beings. The artificial barriers set up by ignorance, superstition, and fear are impassable until the causes have been corrected. The human family can never be legislated into a state of security. All leagues, conferences, pacts, and treaties are ineffectual as long as the individual himself lives without an adequate realization of the reason for his own existence. Universal education is the only remedy for the universal disease of ignorance. Much has already been accomplished, but education itself has not preserved within its own structure a vision of universals. It has accepted the academic pattern set down by Plato, but has rejected the Platonic ideology, the supremely important element in the Platonic formula.

The quality of a man's idealism is measured in terms of the motives which impel to action. Why does a young man choose to inform himself in some specialized branch of learning? In most cases, the answer is that he desires to equip himself to make a living. This motive, while not wrong, should be secondary. The true purpose is to equip an individual to live well as a person. A man should study law in

order that through his endeavors justice may be clarified. He should study medicine so that he may bring comfort or health to the sick. He should study art in order to give beauty to the world. These are primary motives and he has the reasonable right to expect that skill and ability will confer certain secondary benefits of security and reasonable success.

When Pythagoras established his school at Crotona he decreed that the members of his philosophical community should possess their worldly goods in common. When the master accepted a disciple the new member turned over all of his money and property to the school, retaining nothing for himself. If, at a later time, the disciple desired for any reason to sever his connections with the institution, all that he had bestowed was returned to him. Pythagoras had no wish to enrich himself when he forbade his disciples personal possession; he realized that within a small group, pride of ownership and economic inequality would set up an aristocracy of wealth, destructive to philosophic ideals.

Aristotle was much more lenient in his attitudes toward wealth than either Pythagoras or Plato. Aristotle was an apostle of private ownership. Plotinus, in his constitution of the philosopher's city, followed the example of Pythagoras and visualized the pattern of collective ownership, for wise men did not need the physical incentives of competition and profit to spur them to action. Rather, they desired to be free from such burdens in order to devote their entire time and mental energy to the advancement of learning.

In terms of practical living, the Platonic commonwealth presented certain problems not easy to solve. How could a community which had renounced entirely all allegiance to commercial practices support itself in a commercial world?

Few philosophers are men of means; they could not support themselves by their private fortunes, nor could they bestow upon the community sufficient of this world's goods to insure its perpetuation. It was therefore necessary to approach this difficult situation in one of two ways. Either the community must be made self-supporting or it must be subsidized by a non-philosophic world.

One approach to the problem of non-competitive economics had been made by the Essenes, a Pythagorean brotherhood in ancient Palestine. They lived in separate communities and were ruled over by elders who enforced obligation of piety and chastity. The Essenes would not engage in barter or exchange, and supported themselves by engaging in such arts and crafts as they regarded to be meritorious. They were agriculturalists, carpenters, physicians, and teachers of the young.

The Neo-Platonists in their philosophical city would probably have adopted a modified form of the Essenean program. Philosophy is not merely an intellectual process, hence wise men would live a balanced and practical life. Their city would have had its trades, crafts, arts, and professions. Under a philosophic system all useful industries would flourish together for the common good. Wise men are not afraid of work, and each would contribubte his part to the maintenance of the community. Mathematicians would teach their classes at certain hours and then adjourn to the fields and put their hands to the plow. Masters of rhetoric would build houses and fashion utensils which they needed. Artists would adorn the city, and astronomers would work in their own gardens growing food for the common store. In this way they would maintain their economic integrity

and at the same time preserve the balance of their own personal living.

Too many intellectuals have lost contact with the earth; it is a failing of the learned that they lose the ability to perform those simple actions and tasks which are the foundations of our physical existence. A man is not less wise because he supports himself with the labor of his hands. In truth, he is more likely to be wise if he enjoys these simple and necessary pursuits.

There was some difference of opinion among the sects on this issue. Some maintained that each nation should support a community of the learned as part of the expense of the state. To this community men could go who desired to devote their lives to religion, science, or philosophy. The discoveries which they made would become the property of the whole state and the project would prove profitable to all. One Greek declared that no nation was poor which possessed a wise man, and no nation was rich which did not harbor philosophy. Not only does learning adorn civilization, but it enriches its own generation and all time to come.

During the medieval period in European history, learning was furthered by the patronage of princes. Most of the rich and intemperate families supported scholars and artists. Cellini, the great sculptor and silversmith, enjoyed the protection and support of the Medici family. He was one of the greatest crafsmen of his time, but he had a wild and uncertain temper and more than once he was saved from prison or the rack by the Duke Allesandro, because, in the words of his patron, he was too great to be punished for his own misdeeds.

This patronage system did result in a golden era of the arts, but its administration was left to the whims of royal

favor. The artists enjoyed a kind of dole and had to reward their patrons by painting innumerable portraits of the dissipated gentry. Rembrandt was one who grew weary of having his life ordered by the dictates of the rich and ignorant burghers. He rebelled, and died in poverty.

Genius must be protected if human progress is to be maintained. Up to the present time the story of genius is one of suffering, privation, and persecution. The world builds its monuments to the memory of men and women centuries after these great persons have died of want and neglect. Again, to quote a Greek: "Seven cities vied for Homer dead, through which the living Homer begged his bread."

A philosophical city set aside from the confusion of its time and dedicated to the nurturing of greatness would supply a sovereign need. Admission to this city could be limited to those of proven worth, and in the protection of a congenial atmosphere, arts and sciences could be developed and perfected to the enrichment of all peoples and all time. The significance of genius has been proved beyond question. We know that men like Gallileo, Copernicus, Leonardo da Vinci, Milton, Dante, and the immortal Aesop, have won the eternal love and gratitude of the race. Is it unreasonable that we should protect such persons, preserving them from the common cares of their days and allowing them a fuller opportunity to beautify and enrich human culture? Franz Schubert died too young, Chopin was taken from this world long before his genius was exhausted, and much of the music of Wagner would have been lost to us had it not been for the patronage of a half-mad Bavarian king. The past cannot be undone; but is it not possible to learn from the experience of the past, and protect present and future genius?

The wise man's city is the first step toward the wise man's world. Once humanity has experienced this nobler conception of life it will never return to the old way. The human being properly conditioned by an appropriate environment can be far nobler than would now appear. It is just as possible for men to be constructive as destructive, but only right example and right opportunity can hasten the maturity of their virtues.

When the Chinese sage, Confucius, was made overseer of the province of Lu he applied philosophy to the administration of the state. The province flourished; in a few years he had ended poverty and crime, the people were happy and the treasury was full, and the land of Lu aroused the envy and cupidity of neighboring mandarins. In every practical respect philosophy had proved itself to be capable of handling political, sociological, and economic problems. Why, then, was Confucius driven from office to become a wandering scholar and die of a broken heart? It was because he succeeded. He proved that wisdom alone was fitted to rule, and he proved it to a world governed by stupidity. It was easier for jealous mandarins to destroy Confucius and obliterate the proofs of his success, than it was for these mandarins to become scholars themselves and emulate his virtues at the expense of their ambitions an intemperances.

We must recover from the delusion that philosophy is impractical. We must appreciate wisdom as the greatest good that can come to man. Only by such a course can we bring nations and races to peace and prosperity.

Brilliant social reformers have set in motion various formulas for the perfection of man's material estate. In most instances, however, these reformers have been content to work with the cycle of cause and effect merely in its physical

application. They have not discerned the relationship between the physical world and the great philosophical universe in which we live. The planet Earth is merely a fragment cast off in some remote time from its parent star. Here in the limited environment supplied by the planet itself, innumerable orders of life have unfolded their potentials restricted by these particular surroundings.

Constantly flowing into the earth from space are the energies of cosmos. These energies carry with them the inevitable laws of their kind, and must be used in harmony with their own nature and purpose. To apply these energies to purposes that are contrary to their own essential natures is to set in motion forces of inevitable destruction. We cannot alter the facts of universals. To a degree, we can modify certain expressions of energy, and we can apply power to ends we have devised. But we are not lords of creation; we are minute creatures crawling about like ants in the planetary ant-hill. Our audacity is far in excess of our ability.

Merely to set up new ways of doing business, or to enact legislation to curb the disasters of consequence, is not enough. No more is it sufficient to attempt the communizing or socializing of our economic theory. Nietszche's philosophy of the superman is one of the causes of two world wars, and the eternal proletariat of Karl Marx can offer no better solution. Reform is a dangerous business; it is a task suited only to the wisest of men. Before we can reform an existing evil we must detach ourself from that evil as a particular, and seek the universal cause. We must discover in what way we ourselves have failed, and in what way we have misused our natural opportunities.

A reform which originates in desperation, or reflects the experiences of an individual deeply absorbed in his own

misfortune, is not grounded in well considered study of universals. Therefore, such are themselves in constant need of remedy. One kind of confusion is merely substituted for another, and confusion as fact continues.

It has already been pointed out that Aristotle is largely to blame for the compounding of confusion. He attempted to bring particulars into ordered patterns without adequate recourse to generals. Not knowing the universal pattern, he usurped the divine prerogative and attempted to decide for himself what constituted appropriate pattern. He established a precedent which others who came after him have followed with fanatical zeal. "I believe it: therefore, it is so," is the solemn pronouncement of the uninformed.

"It is so; therefore, I believe it," says the wise man. In this simple difference in wording is the key to the confusion of the world. Those who know least are the most certain of their own convictions; and when this false certainty is elevated to high office the whole structure of civilization is threatened.

How can a man become certain about that which is necessary and that which is good? This is the supreme problem in learning.

The philosopher recommends a broad learning and a thoughtful contemplation of the course of history. The mystic recommends the stimulation of those inner perceptions of the soul by which man may partake in universal consciousness. The Neo-Platonists combined both of these requirements, declaring that such a blend of intellectual and spiritual elements was necessary to the perception of fact. But even this results only in the establishment of fact as it relates to man himself, and to such phenomena as is know-

able by man. In practical terms, therefore, fact must be defined as the least possible degree of error.

Philosophy does not aspire to immediate perfection, but to ultimate perfection, through immediate and continued improvement. It would bind human activity to one supreme purpose, the ultimate establishment of an enduring State founded in universal law and dedicated to the perfection of its people.

At the time when Plotinus desired to establish the city of Platonopolis, the old pagan philosophies were still represented in the world by a number of brilliant scholars. These could have been gathered into a nucleus, and each would have brought with him a number of disciples dedicated to essential learning.

In our time the situation is somewhat different. There are very few philosophers in the world today, and most of these are in some measure dominated by the materialistic convictions which are the present fashion in learning. The followers of the modern sects of philosophy are as creed-bound and dogmatic as were the medieval theologians. An instance close at hand is one in which a valiant exponent of the doctrines of Schopenhauer refused to hold his classes in a certain building because another professor was teaching the system of Immanuel Kant under the same roof. The two professors not only held their doctrines as contrary, they descended to a most undignified level of personal pettiness. One remarked gleefully that he had gone down to the basement and turned off the furnace so that his rival would have to teach in a chilly classroom.

Man is not materialistic by nature, but by circumstance. In a world which rewards small thinking, broadmindedness is not likely to flourish. Deep spiritual convictions lie be-

neath the surface of our world's materialistic attitudes and these could be released without much difficulty if the temper of the times permitted. Reward learning, and learned men will emerge from the obscurity which has been forced upon them. Create an environment appropriate to greatness, and greatness will come and take up its abode among us. We must cause that which we desire, and that which we cause will come to pass.

Even if we have fewer philosophers today, we have a better world from which to derive material to build philosophers. The great philosophies of the past have turned the ground and prepared it for the planting. Plato is a greater force in the world today than he was in his own time; and he is but one of hundreds of noble thinkers who have enriched our civilization. The general state of the human family, is far better than in the days of Proclus and Plotinus. The average man and woman enjoys privileges and opportunities beyond the dreams of the kings and princes of ancient times. The invention of printing ended the aristocracy of the literate and gave all men the right to read the words of the wise. Standards of health and hygiene, the invention of innumerable helpful devices to improve and enrich living, all such changes have brought about an astonishing degree of material culture. We are fortunate in many ways, but unfortunate in one all-important particular. The growth of our idealism has not kept pace with the development of our physical resources. We have become materially comfortable at the expense of our spiritual estate.

It is no part of philosophy to recommend that men go back to old ways in search of truth; rather, let us build our life of reason upon the foundation of our physical progress.

All that we need is a unifying power to bind our accomplishments to the cosmic plan. Our achievements are like a magnificent bouquet of flowers of great rarity and beauty, with philosophy as the string that holds these flowers together.

John Heydon, the Rosicrucian writer of the 17th Century, characterizes philosophers as men of a race apart, inhabiting the suburbs of heaven. The masters of the Platonic school certainly dwelt in a world beyond the ordinary human sphere. They mingled in the daily life of their generation and yet lived apart in a world of noble thoughts and lofty ideals. Those Olympian spirits were indeed close to the gods and shared something of that benevolent wisdom which flows from the *father fountains.*

The Master of the Mysteries

The hierophants of the ancient Mysteries were godlike men dwelling in the adyta of the temples. Here, robed in blue and gold and bearing the sacred symbols of their office, they ruled over the initiates of their schools. These masters of the secret house were kings over kings, twice born, abundant in power, lords over the quick and the dead. These high priests took no direct part in the temporal life of the world, but through their disciples exercised a wide sphere of influence.

It is said that the high priest of the Egyptian mysteries at Memphis was never seen outside of the temple and even Pharaoh had to visit him in the sanctuary. Before he could enter into the presence of the hierophant, the king had to remove all of his insignia of power. Passing between the great plumed pillars of the shrine he came at last to the veil

of the holy place, and here at the feet of the stone images of the gods stood the Master of the Mysteries, bearing in his hand the key of eternal life. Master of the House of the Hidden Places, he was the prototype of Plato's philosopher-king.

Plato himself had stood in the presence of the hierophant of the Mysteries of Eleusis. He had also been privileged to meet the Old Lord of white walled Memphis. He had seen the ancient of the ancients who walked among the candlesticks bearing the scepter of stars. He acknowledged that in the presence of these divine men he was as a little child, knowing nothing.

It is not surprising that a man of Plato's lofty idealism should be deeply moved by the majesty of the priestly king. In the quiet, dim temples he found a peace beyond human understanding. Here wisdom ruled its empire with gentle power. How fortunate it would be if all mankind could be governed in like manner.

The more Plato contemplated the idea the more feasible it appeared. Why could not the whole world become a temple? Was not creation the living sanctuary of the ever-living Good? Is not life itself a ritual of initiation, preparing human beings for that greater life that lies beyond the veil? Is it not nobler to live for wisdom than to live for gain? Why should men struggle forever to store up treasures of gold and silver, and then depart leaving their wealth to burden their descendants? Why not gather treasures of friendship, love, and understanding, for it is these alone that we can take with us into the secret places of the divine world.

Plato conceived the great work of education to be the preparation of man for his eternal estate. The physical life

leads the human being to the pronaos of the temple. As one philosopher said, the physical world is the anti-chamber to eternity. Aristippus, aboard a ship, was once asked by a sailor, "Master, how far is it from this world to the next?" Aristippus inquired, "How thick are the sides of this ship?" The seaman answered, "Three inches, master," Aristippus replied with a smile, "My friend, we are three inches from the other world."

In the ancient mysteries those who aspired to initiation were received first in the outer court of the temple. Here they were instructed over a period of time until they were deemed worthy to attempt the difficult rites of initiation. To Plato, our mortal life is analogous to this period of probation. The physical world is a place of preparation where men gain the strength and wisdom to meet the greater challenge of their spiritual destiny. Cicero has told us that the purpose of the mysteries was to cause men to live well and face transition with a good hope.

The dream of the philosophic empire was therefore based upon the conviction that the real purpose for living was to learn, and to extend the mind from corporeal to incorporeal concerns. The Egyptians believed that the after-death state of the human soul was the continuation of the fixations of the physical life. Their classic example is the money lender who set up his scales in the Elysian Fields to lend money to the blessed dead. This money lender had been honest in his weights and measures while alive, therefore he was entiled to a place in the fortunate world beyond; but his mind had become so absorbed in his debits and credits that he had no life beyond his banking table, therefore he took it with him in his mind and continued to serve it in the green fields of Amenti. After many ages, the money

lender went to sleep and was born again into physical life where he grew up to become once more a money changer. Such is the cycle of those who bind their minds to physical concerns. Living or dead, they are in bondage to the substance of their own beliefs.

The Adventure of Learning

The adventure of learning is the noblest occupation of man. Once the mind has experienced the search for Truth the entire viewpoint is changed. Each day becomes significant, and there is no longer time to be wasted in vain hopes and inconsolable regrets. One of the Greek masters gathered his disciples about him as he lay upon his death bed and gave them final instructions on mathematics and astronomy. Noting the sadness on the faces of his students, the old man smiled and reassured them: "My sons, be not unhappy over my transition, for it is a blessed experience. All my life I have taught about universal things from the narrow limits of my mortal state. Now, I shall go forth into universals, and I carry with me a number of questions to which I greatly desire the answer. Soon I shall know much more of nature and the gods, and I am impatient to be on my journey."

How different is this attitude from that of our time, in which men fear death as the sovereign ill and go forth in doubt and trembling. In philosophy, the art of the wise man, there are no doubts concerning Providence, but rather an eagerness to be part of the great motion of life and death which the ancient Greeks called the tides of being.

Is it any wonder then, that great and good men have longed to build an empire ruled over by wisdom? They have seen so much of suffering, and how tenaciously 'the little

world-god still his stamp retains.' Of all mankind, only the wise realize the comforts of learning. Wisdom ends fear; and fear is the tyrant that enslaves the uninformed. Freed of fear, devoted to knowledge and dedicated to service, human beings could be happy. Such was their state in the golden age long ago, and such can be their state again in the golden age to come, when the philosophic empire is a reality and the philosopher-king is ruler of the world.

This book tells the story of the Platonic foundation. Its aim is to try to restore a small part of the world's noblest tradition. Men of varied temperaments then will be bound together by one supreme ideal, the preservation of the human being from the encroachments of his own materialistic delusions. We know these beginnings of the great dream of a better world, for they are recorded in history and in the writings of the philosophers. The end of the dream we do not know, for it must be fulfilled in the far vistas of time. But it will be fulfilled, because it is the most necessary thing in the world. Between the beginning and the end lie centuries of struggle, an Armageddon, a war made up of thousands of wars, a ceaseless struggle between light and darkness. Slowly but surely the power of the light represented in Biblical symbolism by the Archangel Michael and his flaming sword is vanquishing the legions of the fallen spirits.

Certain of the cabalists called Michael the hidden God, and worshipped him in secret as the symbol of the world's redemption. Initiates bound themselves to the service of Michael in the same way that ancient Egyptian initates took their oath to the younger Horus, the avenger of his father. And the sons of Michael, the Archangel, have continued to fight the great war against the legions of Satan who-was-stoned. As scientists, philosophers, religious leaders, states-

men, and social reformers, the Sons of Michael have labored to bring about the redemption of their fellow man.

From the deep strength of this hidden purpose has come the courage to face martyrdom and privation, and strength to bear the ridicule of an unbelieving world. After the collapse of classical paganism the dream was passed on to an order of Christian thinkers. These men, like old Bishop Synesius, never accepted orthodox Christianity, but as nominal Christians interpreted the new religion in terms of their old convictions. Christ became the second Michael, the priest of old mysteries, after the order of Melchizedek. He became a type of the philosopher-king, thus perpetuating the Platonic ideology under a thin concealment of Christian dogma.

From the death of St. Augustine to the birth of Francis Bacon there was a lapse of over a thousand years. This long dark period was bridged by philosophers working in secret to keep the old tradition bright. It was Bacon who re-stated the plan of the philosophic empire for the modern world. In him, Platonism had a new birth in time. In Bacon also the mystics found their champion, and throughout Europe he was honored as the patron of an essential learning. The most enlightened man of his day and the outstanding thinker of the last thousand years, Francis Bacon was peculiarly equipped by nature and by art to lead humanity a little closer to the promised land.

In his *Life of Lord Bacon,* Dr. Rawley, his lordship's chaplain, wrote: "If ever the light of God descended upon any man in this age it was upon his Lordship, for while he was a great reader of books his knowledge came not from books but from some deep source within himself." Thus we learn that Bacon, the Platonist, by the scope of his in-

tellect was also Bacon the Neo-Platonist, by the strength of his internal consciousness. From Bacon the old fountains flowed forth again. He was truly an heroic soul, born of woman but born again of the secret doctrine.

The second cycle of Platonism, originating with Bacon and extending to our present time and toward our future hope, is to be discussed at length in a companion book to the present writing.

In conclusion, then let us give freely of honor and veneration to those who have properly earned our common respect. Let us also keep faith with their dream by devoting our own lives to the cycle of the Quest. We all long for a better world so that those who come after us will know less of pain and more of gladness.

The vicissitudes of time are bringing many changes to our nation and all the nations that make up our planetary family. More and more we realize the great need for brotherhood and understanding. More and more we are convinced that no man can live his own life according to the dictates of his own conscience until all men partake of a common good.

The wise man's city lies like a mirage on the distant horizon. Faintly we see the domes of its temples and the broad porches of its universities. We know that some day it will come. Some day men will decree it out of their own experience, because it is the better way of life. Until that time each must do his part in his own way, great or small, to further this spiritual aspiration.

Beyond the desert of waiting lies the wise man's world. Here the philosopher-king rules by the right of Truth over an empire that will not end until the planet itself is dissolved.

Perhaps when the time comes to build this city it will be called Platonopolis, named for the immortal mortal who conceived it in love and wisdom and bestowed his conviction upon a world in pain.

Ferrier = Institutes of Metaphysics

Cousin's Plato.

Voltaire

Aristotle Endemus

Homer

St Augustine's Confessions

City of God

Plotinus.

Porphyry - De Consolatione Philosophiae

Proclus

Taylor, Thomas

Miscellanies

Hypatia

Mackaem