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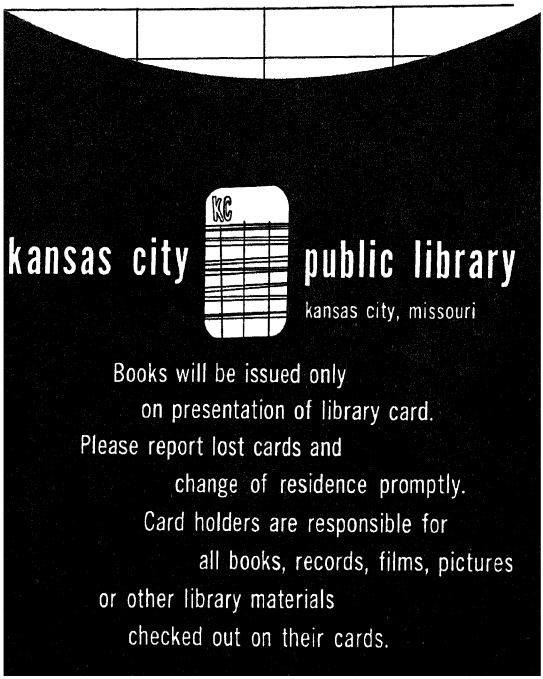

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THE GREEK POINT OF VIEW

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BY

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NEW YORK

GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

Made and Printed in Great Britain. Butler & Tanner Ltd., *Frome and London*

PREFACE

THESE chapters were begun several years ago and interrupted by sickness and other realities of life. When the sickness ended and took away part of the sunshine of life with it, I had leisure to return to the moonlight mists and mirages of literature, where values are distorted and often transposed; for —as my colleague, Professor W. J. Alexander, has said—the painful student who has laboured at the art of expression for a life-time has nothing to express; the man who has a life and a story to tell has never acquired the art of expression.

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CHAPTER I

THE GREEK CITY-STATE

IT is an idea of Plato's, in whom are anticipated all the ideas dominant or dormant in our own civilization, that a nation's character and happiness alike depend upon its form of government.

Aristocracy, according to Plato, must be the best form of political society, because in the realm of morals, aristocracy—the hierarchical organization of human qualities and instincts, the system which sets one quality and instinct above and another beneath, which gives to one a high and to another a humble place in one's life and actions, which repudiates passionately the equality of different qualities and different instincts—must be the principle of an honest man's private life (*Republic*, Book VII).

Democracy for the same reason, he thinks, must be a false political system, because, implying the equality of men, it implies also the equality of instincts and of qualities; the democrat is not merely the man who says that, for purposes of government, one man is as good as another; that is merely the superficial and political side of the mistake which he makes; he says that one instinct and one quality is as good as another; that a man's inner mind, the constitution in his heart, should be democratic, and should recognize every human quality and instinct as equally right and sound and entitled to equal expression; the political democrat, that is, passes, with Plato, into the moral democrat; and the true democrat is not the democratic politician but the democratic man; the man who resents the

tyranny of an inner law, not less than of the law outside him; who demands equality for his instincts not less than, but far more than, equality for his vote (*Republic*, VII). The French Revolution with its French and Greek logic often illustrates Plato's picture; in that great Revolution everything which suggested subordination, constraint, repression, coercion, discipline and obedience, became suspect as "royaliste"; as aristocratic; Madame Roland at a very early stage of the Revolution, before she had herself given occasion for scandal, complained that decency and modesty had become "royaliste" in the eyes of her Republican friends; and Louvet, one of the heroes of her Gironde, who ultimately faced death bravely for the Girondist cause, himself gave point and illustration to her complaints by his earlier writings. The Revolution, in short, was not against Louis only but against God: "Ni Dieu ni maître" became its cry: as in Russia to-day since the Great War.

To return to Plato: all travellers on ocean steamers probably have at some time or other heard echoes of the Platonic doctrine; have listened with sympathy or with distrust or even with disgust, according to their temperament and their politics, to the naïve and exuberant comments which the sight of the shores of the United States awakes in the simple souls who have sojourned long in European lands, and in the presence of a society where classes are still somewhat sharply distinguished, and where that most dubious of all European institutions, hereditary titles, still remains.

"There is God's land," cries the simple soul which has suffered, or imagines that it has suffered, from hereditary aristocracy, while it plied in Europe some humble trade, of digging drains, it may be, or of herding swine. "There is God's land"; because here is political equality, and with political equality happiness and self-respect, position and character.

An easy illustration of the prevalence of these ideas is furnished by the reputation of "Walt Whitman" (most characteristically so called). It might have been assumed that these ideas alone, without the aid of a literary sense, without more charm of style than is implied in the selection of the term "barbaric yawp" for his own writings, would never have raised a man to eminence in literature: yet the young "intellectuals" of the England of those days built an altar for Walt Whitman out of the matter and meaning of his work, regardless of its form: and at the same altar the young intellectuals of England even still not unfrequently offer incense: and on his own continent also there is and has been ever since a cult of the poet so called, embracing, if not the best American writers, at least some good writers and some very interesting and able men like Dr. Bucke.

And yet in spite of Plato and the French Revolution and the enthusiastic immigrant who comes to the United States or to Canada to find a true society for the first time, it probably will occur both to the student of history and to the man educated in Christian doctrine, that the connection between political systems on the one hand, and happiness or character on the other hand is slight, much slighter than Plato or Walt Whitman (I apologize to the shade of Plato for coupling his name with the most frothy and superficial of the bellmen of democracy) would have us suppose.

It is not merely the out-of-date Bull of a forgotten Pope—

> "How small of all the ills that men endure
> The part that kings or laws can cause or cure"—

that suggests the historian's doubts; it is also —as already suggested—the strong bias of that Christian education which still influences, if in a lesser degree than formerly, the thought of our

times: if Christianity has brushed aside anything as unimportant, it has brushed aside the distinctions of political societies; slowly, imperceptibly, indirectly by its spirit it has leavened all societies, until the subjection of women in the Oriental sense and the existence of slavery have become impossible, and even war itself has been rendered more humane and less frequent, in spite of the professional soldier and the professional pacifist, and in spite, too, of the new horrors of "the Great War" and the new atrocities of military science.

And yet Christianity has not directly attacked any political system; it has always implied that these things are of the surface of life, and that nothing on the surface should count for much with the Christian. St. Paul—to quote the stock example—sent back Onesimus to his master to be a good slave again, and Nathaniel Hawthorne, twenty centuries almost after St. Paul, still had enough of the spirit of St. Paul in him to look with indifference at the crusade of his Abolitionist friends; arguing that no political abolition could make the slave truly free, and no legal slavery could truly enslave him.

The argument, it is true, is unconvincing; most of us, whether we still read Homer or not, are prepared to believe that the first step towards making a man respect himself is to make others respect him:

"Half of his worth doth the Father in Heaven who speaketh in thunder
Take from a man when the day of captivity cometh upon him."
(Homer's *Odyssey*, XVII, 392, 393. Cotterill's translation.)

"Drunk as a lord" has its parallel in the Greek vernacular; but the parallel ran in Greece "Drunk as a helot"; and we are aware also that the present enforcement of the death penalty by the State for murder only—once enforced for sheep-stealing—has done more than sermons or Christian doctrine to

strengthen the conscientious scruples or the fears of the criminal class against the taking of life. But Hawthorne's argument, both in its strength and weakness, is typical of the mind which has brooded long on the spirit and the history of Christianity.

All this may serve as introduction to the thought that institutions and political systems do not, after all, affect the happiness and essential character of humanity as deeply as the Socialists, Platonic or modern, have supposed; they affect the outward forms which virtue or vice assume, rather than the actual quality or quantity of these things.

Accordingly, it will not be surprising if an examination of the city-state of classical Paganism lead to the conclusion that this state, like the modern state, in spite of its salient differences, neither offered passports into the Kingdom of Heaven and into Righteousness, nor placed bars across the path into the same; but merely confronted the conscience of honest men with scruples and temptations different in form from those which confront the same conscience to-day. The rest of this chapter will only amplify and illustrate this point of view.

In an interesting essay on the city-state included in the volume called *Hellenica*, Mr. A. C. Bradley has written, "with every step in the socialization of morals and the moralization of politics something of Greek excellence is won back" (*Hellenica*, p. 241).

This, apart from the context and the limitations and reservations there implied, becomes a hard saying; but the words may serve as a convenient peg on which to hang a short discussion of the social morals and the moral politics of the Greeks.

The city-state was a municipality only, and, so long as it really moulded men's lives, a small municipality. Aristotle has remarked that Babylon could not be a city-state (*Politics*, III, chap. 3, 1276*a*, 28): it was too large; still less then could ancient Rome or modern London or New York. Ancient Rome

changed its system to an Imperial Absolutism when it became too large for its so-called citizens to meet together and directly govern; modern London and New York, cities merely, not city-states, commercial capitals merely of large empires, have never essayed the task of governing the nations of which they form a more or less unimportant part; even Paris, the nearest modern representative of the ancient city-state, though it has often in effect claimed the right to direct the government of France against "les rurales" (Louis Blanc, *Histoire de la Révolution de* 1848, Vol. I, chap. iv, p. 83), and for a few months in 1871 asserted its claim by force of arms, has never nakedly propounded such a right in principle and theory: rather it has been content to demand a certain hegemony, due to the centre of light and leading, among the other cities and the country-side of France: it has been content to protest against the control of the back-townships and backward townships, and against the domination of the peasants.

But the Greek state really was a city-state. Athens was not merely the capital of Attica; it was Attica. The native of Attica was a citizen of Athens, known to himself and to other Greeks as an Athenian; even if he lived in the country he came to Athens to vote and otherwise had no vote; he came to Athens equally, when war broke out, for shelter; he uprooted himself and his family bodily and transported himself into the narrow limits of the city walls; and suffered all the changes, moral and material, incidental to city life; he was, for the first time perhaps, a citizen in the fullest sense of the term, the dweller in a city: but he had always been a citizen in the political sense; at least ever since the legendary days of Theseus, who centralized Attica in Athens.

And the rest of civilized Greece no less was organized as cities, smaller than Athens but equally city-states. It followed inevitably that in such small

and separate communities, recognizing no doubt a certain identity of Hellenic blood, but no identity of government, and no identity—except for a moment in the presence of the barbarian—of interest, morals were social morals; what else could they be? These little states were Ishmaelite states, Ishmaelite in their separateness, and doubly Ishmaelite in spirit, because Greek nature was always individualistic and centrifugal, passionately devoted to autonomy, passionately suspicious of coercion, inherently averse to large co-operation and compromise, innately devoid of that political instinct which turned Rome from a small city-state into a world-wide nation; these little states had no chance of survival against one another, unless their morals became social, unless patriotism should cover a multitude of sins, unless their citizens atoned by their devotion to each other for the spirit of division which prevented their city from fusing with other Greek cities. As the old tag runs: they must hang together or they will hang separately; or as Pericles puts it in the *Funeral Speech* (Thucydides, II, 42, 4), even the aggressive self-seeking soldier must be careful to compensate by his self-sacrifice on the battlefield for the mischief which he has wrought in his private life. Some Scotchman is supposed to have said that his ultimate conviction about life was that "every herring must hang by its own tail"; but the Scotchman was a philosopher and a theologian, not an ancient Athenian.

The narrow range of the ancient city-state both demanded a fervour of social and patriotic feeling in order that the city might survive in the competition with other city-states, and also made easy or comparatively easy the working out of social morals; for here was a state where the whole adult citizen body at the most amounted to some 20,000 men and voters, and might even, as in dwindling Sparta, count up to less than 1,000. Here every citizen might, in a rough sense, know every other citizen,

and direct government of the people by the people in public meetings became possible, and with it the development of social virtues to a degree impossible or very difficult in societies less narrow, and governed only indirectly, through representatives.

For the same reason moral politics, that is the direction of character by the state, the extension to the state of all that was, with our fathers, the sphere rather of the Church, the inculcation of virtue, became at once necessary and also easy. The state so narrow and so continuously menaced could not afford to confine its energies to the negative task of protecting life and property and securing liberty; and even if it could have afforded to do so, why should it so limit its range? Where every one in a sense knew every one, the interference of the state with the individual is less clumsy, less unjust, more likely to be reasonable and well-judged than in a great modern society.

If our state, until yesterday, disavowed paternal legislation, and confined itself to negative functions, it was not merely that Christianity had separated the cultivation of private virtues and the search after right living from the functions of the state. It was also because the state's legislature is now a foreign and alien body, so to speak, little likely to legislate with knowledge and success, for masses of unknown persons, in regard to the deeper things of life and to the private character of the citizen.

It is true that the materialism of the age, the triumphs of science and machinery, the other triumphs of organization in commercial life, have momentarily increased our faith in organization and machinery, so that we venture to-day, like the Greeks, to vote men once more into virtue by Act of Parliament, and to legislate, positively, for perfection and for happiness, instead of, negatively, for the protection of life and liberty; but all this is but since yesterday. Paternal government—even in the least pater-

nally governed of Greek states—even in Athens itself, was more necessary and more natural in those small and precarious societies than it can be to-day.

Greek virtues, then, were primarily social; first and foremost came patriotism: the whole-souled devotion to that state, without which and outside which, the citizen was nothing, but might be sold for a slave or put to death if captured in war, or even, in the more primitive societies, sacrificed to the local god; to one of those local gods, who, like their votaries, abhorred foreigners and desired their blood.

No wonder that Greek literature is full of appeals to patriotism; Pericles, Sophocles, Euripides, even Plato, strike the same note; the citizen stands to gain more, though he be unsuccessful in his private business, by his country's success, than he can hope to gain, by successful business, if his country be unsuccessful (Pericles, *Funeral Speech*, Thucydides, II, 60): "it is when the ship of State is sailing on an even keel that we make the friends we make" (Sophocles, *Antigone*, 189, 190).

For the sake of patriotism a man may fairly break all other ties. Timoleon kills a brother, because that brother is a tyrant, and becomes a hero with his countrymen. "Sacred be the dagger of Timoleon" is an aphorism ascribed but with doubtful authenticity to a modern patriot, Mazzini; even if Mazzini ever said it, it was only a momentary outburst, wrung from him by the pressure of abnormal circumstances and the dire needs of Italy. Landor also used to write in that vein, but Landor was only a poet and did not count, except as an echo of the classics: "a Greek born out of due time" (Traill, *Dialogues of the Dead*, p. 259).

Next to patriotism comes the tie of blood and the duty to kin: even as a man depends upon his state for prosperity, so in a secondary degree he depends upon his kin; if his quiver be full of children he shall not be ashamed when he speaks with his

enemy in the gate; his identity is not really distinct from theirs; if he becomes a traitor his wife and children will be stoned with him; the fate of the household of Achan in the Old Testament and of Cursilus in the history of Greece (Demosthenes, *De Coronâ*, sect. 204).

It is the tie of blood that binds, not the self-elected tie. There is much more than rigorous feminine logic, there is the old blind instinct of blood at work, when Intaphernes' wife in Persia and Antigone in Sophocles' play preferred a brother's life to a husband's. Logic rigorous to perversity may give the blind instinct its far-fetched and sophistical explanation (that new husbands can always be had for the seeking, new brothers seldom), but the legend of Intaphernes (Herodotus, III, 119) derives its interest, not from the sophistry with which Sophocles sought to rationalize it (Sophocles, *Antigone*, 904–912), but from the testimony which it bears to the strength of the blood-tie, as strong originally in Greece as it was even up to yesterday in the Confucian system of China. Antigone knew what she felt and thought, better than she knew why; trying to explain the why, she fell into absurdities, into rationalism and Positivism and nonsense, like the judge in the story, when he tried to add to his sound decisions the reasons thereof. Ancient dogmas survive, but only as sentiments, feelings, instincts and superstitions, no longer able to give an account of themselves and forced into far-fetched sophistry or blasphemy for self-justification; as we still touch "wood" (i.e. the cross of Christ) when we dread the jealousy of the gods and the nemesis of a hasty boast; Christianity and earlier creeds uniting for the moment.

Last comes the self-imposed, the arbitrary tie to wife or husband; last, because the unit is the state, and not the individual; or because the individual is primarily a citizen, secondly a member of a ready-made family which he did not choose; and only in

the third place a free agent, making his own life for himself and his own new family. Whenever conflict arises between tie and tie, the tie which concerns the state must come first. "Wife and child," we say to-day; "child and wife" is the order of the words in nine places out of ten in all Greek literature; because the state needs children to replenish its ranks, the children take precedence of the wife, who is only the instrument for the getting of the children, who may be childless and a worthless instrument, who may even be put away for being childless; especially if she be a king's wife (Herodotus, V, 39; VI, 61).

For the same reason, because the state needs soldiers, girls may be exposed at birth, where boys are saved and treasured up; but both sexes may be exposed if frail and sickly. It was the custom of early Greece, of militarist Sparta especially, as it has been the custom of other primitive races, and as it survived in the Highlands of Scotland down to the nineteenth century. It reappears in Plato's semi-Spartan state "Callipolis"; but whether its appearance there is a survival or an anticipation, an echo of Sparta or a prophecy of "eugenic stirpiculture" still to come, when scientific materialism shall have entered into its own, who knows? Extremes, anyhow, meet; the primitive Spartan or Highland peasant joins hand with the scientific human stock-breeder across the generations that divide them.

All this is of ancient Greece, but not peculiar to ancient Greece, nor more Greek than Chinese. In this matter, for example, of the prior claims of boy against girl, we read in the Chinese classics:

> Sons shall be his on couches lulled to rest;
> *These* little ones enrobed with sceptres play;
> *Their* infant cries are loud as stern behest;
> *Their* knees the vermeil cover shall display;
> As king hereafter one shall be addressed;
> The rest, our Princes, all the states shall sway.

And daughters also shall to him be born;
They shall be placed upon the ground to sleep;
Their playthings tiles; *their* dress the simplest worn;
Their path alike from good and ill to keep;
And ne'er their parents' heart to cause to mourn,
To cook his food and spirit malt to steep.

(*The Religions of China*, by Dr. James Legge, p. 110.)

In shorter and more Shakespearean language, the whole duty of woman is to suckle fools and chronicle small beer.

All this by way of illustration of the social side of Greek ethics; or rather of the political side; but after all, though the right word to use seems "political" the distinction between "social" and "political" is Christian only and modern; there is no word in Greek for "social," except the word "πολιτικός" that is, "political." When Aristotle is translated into saying that "man is a social being," what Aristotle *did* say was "ζῶον πολιτικόν."

Obviously in that very fact lies a defect of Greek ethics—albeit so strong on their social side—even on the social side: of social virtues or social life as distinct from life political and political virtues, they knew little.

Aristotle in the Ethics analyses the βίοι or careers of men into three kinds: there is (*a*) βίος ἀπολαυστικός, the life of the man of pleasure; (*b*) βίος πρακτικός, or βίος πολιτικός, of the average citizen; (*c*) βίος θεωρητικός, of the philosopher.

If for the moment we dismiss (*a*) and (*c*) as evidently non-social or even anti-social, and look only at (*b*), we shall see that even (*b*) is not social in the usual sense of the word. Take the life of the average man of the modern world, whose interests are in his own home and family and friends; who confines his citizenship to paying his taxes and recording a Laodicean vote now and again; who confines his βίος θεωρητικός, his speculative life, within limits equally narrow, to reading a few newspapers on

Sunday, attending an occasional sermon or lecture, and to a few minutes of independent reflection now and then, when there is no one about to talk to: this life is a "social" life in our sense; if it is not social, it is nothing; but it falls properly under none of Aristotle's three kinds of life.

By "social" virtue, then,—in spite of Mr. Bradley—the Greeks meant really virtue political, not social virtue in the broadest sense.

Or the thing may be put in another way: by social life we naturally mean the private life which is interested in family and friends rather than the life of "social service," according to the phrase of to-day, or of political service; but the Greeks hardly recognized such a life. Socrates is a crucial instance. He avoided politics: he thought they would be fatal to his character, if he were conciliatory; to his life if they were unbending; and yet his life cannot be well described as private. His relations with his wife were not more strained perhaps than those of the average philosopher, with a wife of some temper and much femininity: the tragi-comedy of the last morning when the husband and wife separated for the best hours of the day, in order that Socrates might talk philosophy with his friends, might perhaps be paralleled in the biography of other philosophers. "'O Socrates,' she said, with the cheerful phrases women are wont to use on such occasions, 'this is the last time you will see your friends and they you'; and Socrates turning to Crito said: 'Let some one take her away.'" But obviously a man who lived so little for his home and so much for the open air and the market-place and the chance youngsters belonging naturally, most of them, to the upper and leisured classes, whom he could buttonhole to talk to, and the chance poets and journalists (or sophists) he could confute for the youngsters' education and edification, evidently this Athenian Coleridge, though he shunned politics, did not lead a private life; or

even a social life in the sense in which the word is generally used. Socrates with his cross-questioning and his attendant youths and his confounded sophists (or journalists) was rather a public institution of Athens: a part of the public though not exactly of the political life of Athens; an Athenian precursor of the Master of Balliol in Oxford or on the Malvern Hills.

Or let us put the same thing in yet a third way: ethics is to Aristotle a branch of politics: πολιτική τις: of course that does not mean that the good man to Aristotle was merely what we mean by a good citizen; the man who pays his taxes and does not interfere with the life, property or liberty of his neighbour; Aristotle does not intend to lower the aims of the good man to this low level; it is partly because his politics are more moral, and not only because his morality is more merely political that he can say so; it is not because he reduces his ethics to the level of our politics but because he lifts his politics to the level of his ethics; not because he loves man less but because he loves the state more; but after all, when all has been said that can be said in explanation of the strange proposition that ethics is a branch of politics, it remains true that the aphorism limits ethics narrowly; limits it narrowly not only on the personal and private side of life but even on the social side; limits it to public life and what we call the life of "the citizen"; and what more need be said? Which of us speaks of himself naturally, readily and spontaneously as "a citizen"? A Frenchman may do so because the French are infinitely more classical, especially more Greek, not ethnically only and historically, but in spirit also and ethically, than the other nations of Europe: their Christian names (which are not Christian), their architecture, their intelligence, their vivacity, their naturalism, their science and their logic, all they have and do, suggests Greece and ancient Athens, even as

Athens itself, both ancient and modern, suggests Paris; but apart from the French, how small a part even of our social life is contained in the life of the citizen, in the life of politics. That ethics is a branch of politics looks like an aphorism of General Bernhardi, rather than of a great philosopher, and is in the vein of German militarism only: the vein characteristic of every one but German soldiers is the precisely opposite idea and ideal: that politics ought to be made as soon as possible, and as much as possible, a branch of ethics.

But, again, that ethics is a branch of politics limits ethics even more narrowly on the personal and private side of life. Ever since Christ appeared on this earth men have talked freely of an "inner life"; of personal and private virtues. A few talked in this strain before, no doubt, but Christianity here, as elsewhere, as everywhere, has popularized what before had no vogue; has made the term "inner life" a current coin of speech and a household word.

Aristotle and Plato knew of a private life, in a sense; the life of a citizen, who, his state being hopelessly misgoverned, took no part in politics: the case of Plato; the life again of a student, a researcher, who, his state being obscure and of no account, was attracted to the study of the great states outside his own, and of the politics of his race; and who, debarred from active participation in these politics, was yet free to give his life to their study: the case of Aristotle.

But the student's life, the philosopher's life, the Aristotelian life of *θεωρία* is not the "inner life" of which Christianity speaks: it is private life but not a personal life: its whole basis is impersonal: it is a laborious self-culture but wholly intellectual: not moral: the life of a Goethe, not of a Wesley or a Newman or a Keble; the characteristic note of the "inner life," some sort of personal religion, some approach to imitation of Christ, some attempt at meditation

on His life and words, some degree of self-examination and conquest of private temptations, some sort of sympathy with the idea that each of us is a servant, however unprofitable, of the same Master—all this is wanting in the student's life of discipline; the discipline may be as hard and as exacting, and may be faced as honestly and as conscientiously, but the aim of the student's life is external, the study of some branch of knowledge: it is not an inner but an outer life, though, no less than the religious life, it has its moments of ecstasy and peace, and inspires, not less than the life religious, a sort of mystical enthusiasm: which Plato styles not unnaturally ἔρως; a passion for truth and a sense of its presence (compare Aristotle, *Nicom. Ethics*, X, 7, 7 and 8), the presence, Aristotle would say, of the divine.

But the less intellectual Christian is apt to style this philosophic ἔρως as "heartless": λίαν ἄφιλον in the terminology of Aristotle (*Ethics*, I, 11, 1). Perhaps in his impatience he almost brackets the intellectuals with the sensualists, of whom Burns has said, and he knew whereof he spoke, that their lives killed all feeling: the brackets are unjust if only because "in a world which is a tragedy to those who feel and a comedy to those who think," a tragedy to the "Introverts," a comedy to the "Extraverts," in the horrible jargon of Jung and the psychoanalysts, there is a cloud of worthy witnesses to defend comedy, not less than tragedy, but only a bare handful of reputable witnesses for the life of the senses. Perhaps the modern golf enthusiast may be accounted the least unworthy of the senses' advocates; he does little harm, he keeps healthy, he enjoys himself in innocence, and he recovers for the moment the rare sense of superiority to his wife.

If even the βίος θεωρητικός be not an "inner life" in our sense, obviously still less so is the vulgar βίος ἀπολαυστικός: "Only princes and other vulgar persons," says Aristotle somewhat caustically, "practise

it; and it gains its repute only from the high position of its practitioners" (*Ethics*, I, 5, 3; X, 6, 3 and 4).

And the third life in Aristotle's list of careers was the *βίος πρακτικός* or *πολιτικός*, and in no sense an inner life, not even in the remote sense in which the student or the man of pleasure may be said to lead the inner life.

And yet the reality of this inner life has become with the advent of Christianity the theme of poet and thinker. "Je mourrai seul," said Pascal.

"Why should we faint and fear to live alone
Since all alone, so Heaven has willed, we die?
Nor even the tenderest heart and next our own
Knows half the reasons why we smile and sigh.

"Each in his hidden sphere of joy or woe
Our hermit spirits dwell and range apart;
Our eyes see all around in gloom or glow
Hues of their own fresh-borrowed from the heart"

wrote Keble in the *Christian Year* (24th Sunday after Trinity).

The new-England imagination of the Puritan Hawthorne brooded in characteristic fashion on the same familiar thought, till the brooding found expression in "The Minister's Black Veil."

Plato alone, "least Greek of all Greeks," has a phrase which may serve as a sort of translation of our "inner life": *ὁ ἐντὸς ἀνθρώπου ἄνθρωπος* (*Rep.*, IX, 589*a*), the man within the man; and the Platonic Socrates of the quaint dialogue known as the Hippias Major bewilders Hippias with the picture of a mysterious relation who shares his house and acts as the keeper of his intellectual conscience, and refuses to be put off with half-answers and inadequate explanations: the stranger, the Platonic Mrs. Harris (unless Diotima of Mantinea has a better right to the name) is the impersonation of Socrates' inner self; of the self not influenced or overawed by Hippias and by society; but even so there is a considerable gulf

between the self-examination of Socrates, convinced of ignorance, and the self-examination of the Christian convinced of sin: self-examination and conversion and other processes of the religious life have their Platonic and Socratic parallels, but the parallels run far apart; the Greek experience lies always in the world of intellect, as the experience of the religious mind lies in the world of emotion and of character.

"Ye must be born again," says Christ; and Socrates has said something of the same kind when he describes life as thought and thought as a second birth (*Theætetus*, 149*a*, *b*, *c*) or "a conversion" (*περιαγωγή*) (*Rep.*, VII, chap. iv, 518*c*, *d*, *e*); but this second birth or "conversion" is above all things intellectual and not moral.

In fact, almost all the so-called parallels between Christianity and Paganism ring more or less false when sounded. A certain Frenchman, Fleury, for example, has found a parallel in Seneca to "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do": the parallel runs "forgive the world: they are all fools": a very Senecan, French, and Pagan version (Lightfoot, *Epistle of St. Paul to the Philippians*, p. 287).

So, then, even when the Platonic dialogues suggest the New Testament, as they continually do, there is unlikeness as well as likeness; and the virtues of the inner life, by which are meant, I presume, humility and modesty and purity of thought, have no near kin in the Greek family of virtues.

Humility or modesty Greek literature knows and exalts under the name of *σωφροσύνη* or *φρόνησις* or *εὐβουλία* in every tragedy; but what sort of humility is it? Like all Greek virtues it is wholly intellectual, and is expressed in terms of intellect; that a creature so helpless as man in a world so dominated by alien law never enacted for his happiness, that a creature doomed before birth to death and decay, and often to decay before death, that such a creature should be humble and should never boast himself, or should

at least "touch wood" after boasting, and throw salt over his shoulder, and perform religiously other antics, to propitiate the evil eye of the mighty unseen and jealous makers of the alien law, this is but common sense and prudence, just *εὐβουλία*. And so a Greek must be humble; humility with every other form of virtue is a form of intelligence, an expression of knowledge, a confession of facts, of the actual nothingness of man before Nature.

This is the dominant note of the choruses of Greek tragedy; though the other note, the sense of the amazing achievements of this puny creature in his battle to defeat and exploit Nature finds also in its turn a rare expression, as in the second chorus of Sophocles' *Antigone*; beginning

> "Marvels are many.
> Nothing than man more marvellous happeneth."
> (*Ant.*, 332–375).

But of the other humility, as Christian literature has presented it—the humility which quails not from the sense of outer tyrants, the whips and arrows of opposing fortune, but from the sense of inner weakness and unworthiness, which is fearful not of Nature but of self and sin—of this there is no anticipation in Greek; and there is therefore no word for "humility," and no appropriate word for "modesty."

Aristotle, in his fourth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, speaks of *μικροψυχία*, that is, of "a poor spirit." Is this humility? It is a vice to Aristotle, but let that pass. Is this vice "humility"? The commentators are puzzled sometimes to answer. One editor, Mr. Moore, to escape the conclusion that *μικροψυχία is* humility, ventures the suggestion that the *μικρόψυχος* thinks less highly of himself than he ought to think, whereas the humble man is he who does not think of himself more highly than he ought; this is criticism in Aristotle's own vein or in Dean Mansel's vein—Dean Mansel writing as an English

Aristotle—it starts with Aristotle's own premisses, and bases virtue, as he based it, upon an intellectual foundation; but does any man when he leaves his study and the books of Dean Mansel and Aristotle, still continue to think that the humble Christian is the person of intellectual equipoise, of intellectual perfection, the man of lucid judgment, never cheated by the fallacies of self-love? Obviously the humble Christian, if there be such a person still in spite of the scoffs which the affectation of humility provokes, and the nickname of Uriah Heep which it encounters, is much more concerned with his conscience and his will than with his intellect; much more determined to mortify self-love than to sharpen his perceptions; much more interested to kill self than to arrive at a scientific knowledge of his own precise merits. Is he then of "a poor spirit" *μικρόψυχος*? Not at all: and for the same reason again; he is willing the repression of high spirit and pride and self-righteousness; he is not deficient naturally in these mixed qualities, whereas Aristotle's *μικρόψυχος* is the coward and the fainthearted; the man who is poor spirited by nature, not by grace.

Nietzsche thought that Christianity was the religion of the cowards and the fainthearted; the religion of slaves; it is a mistake natural to a solitary thinker: especially natural to a thinker who was himself a shy and timid and deaf recluse, never shedding a drop of blood except when he shaved; warring ever against his own deficiencies, and canonizing the opposite virtues of the man of blood and iron, which he felt himself to lack; but a mistake none the less, based on the mis-reading of the curious problem of humility and its relations to *μικροψυχιά*.

St. Paul, I think, was humble; but can anyone defend his humility if humility be exact nicety of apprehension and precise intellectual balance? He tells us at first whilst he is still a novice in the faith of Christ, that he is the least of all the Apostles and

not worthy of being called an Apostle; at a later date when his knowledge of Christ has progressed, that he is the least of all "saints" or Church members; and last of all, when he is finishing his good fight and keeping the faith, that he is the chief of sinners; as he grew in grace his sense of his imperfections found ever stronger expression; clearly it was his moral aspiration and his purified will that prompted this rising scale of self-abasement, and not a nice perception of his own claims as measured by the claims of his neighbours.

St. Paul's humility was not of the intellect but of the will, the conscience and the emotions; and though we may say that he was the wiser the more he humbled himself, it is only because we use the word "wisdom" as we use the word "peace," of emotions and experiences that pass understanding; there is a wisdom of the whole nature, will, emotions, intellect, which is distinct from mere sound judgment and acute intelligence; a wisdom in which intellect plays an inconspicuous part. St. Paul's wisdom was not the intellect of the Greek: it was to the Greek a part of the Apostle's "foolishness."

And similarly with modesty: the Platonic dialogue, the *Charmides*, discusses modesty—*σωφροσύνη*—and characteristically defines it in terms of intelligence, not of will, as a form of knowledge; it is a knowledge of self; the modest man, as we since have learned to know him, the man who represses self-conceit, is lost in the philosopher who has appraised himself with philosophic impartiality at the correct figure (*Charmides*, 166*e*). It may be that under these conditions even philosophers will furnish but few specimens of modesty, while some vulgar Christian communities, entirely unphilosophic, furnish specimens not a few. Is there not more to be said for the provisional definition of modesty suggested by the boy Charmides himself, before Socrates has taken him in hand, that modesty is good taste, and aristo-

cratic pride, a horror of blathering and boosting and boasting? (*Charmides*, 159*b*).

This also, with Socrates' own definition, is very Greek; the Greek intellectual loved μείωσις and λιτότης.

So mercy again—as Dean Mansel also argued—is a virtue to the Greek not because it is an attribute of God Himself—we must not attribute our regulative and negative and human virtues to God—but because, as any intelligent man can see, we shall need it ourselves some day; it is the prompting therefore of common sense. On this good Greek ground Odysseus, the philosopher, pleads with Agamemnon, the potentate, for mercy towards the body of Ajax (Sophocles, *Ajax*, 1364). "Do you bid me let the dead man be buried?" asks Agamemnon incredulously. "I do; for thereto shall I come myself" (not as a matter-of-fact German has rendered the line, "I will attend the funeral in person").

And, again and still more in the case of purity of heart, we reach such virtues as, not being political, do not enter into the catalogue of the virtues of the city-state. "Private vices are public benefits," said de Mandeville (in other words, Ontario and Quebec are financed in part by the high prices charged for strong liquor, even medicinal, and by a high tax on betting). No candid student of history can deny to the aphorism or to its corollary, "private virtues are public nuisances," a measure of truth: humility —to return to it for a moment—has kept many an honest and useful man out of public office; conceit and vanity, or, at best, ambition—that quality which occupies the "no-man's land" of ethics (Aristotle, *Ethics*, II, 7, 8; IV, 4, 2–5)—has launched many a man, especially many an English nobleman, into a useful career.

And so in the matter of chastity, the well-known anecdote of Cato and the youthful Roman (Horace, *Satires*, I, 2, 32) and some Greek verses about Solon's

legislation for houses of ill-fame (Philemon's *Adelphi*, quoted by Athenæus, Book XIII, 569*d*, *e*) suggest how strictly political a view the typical Roman or Athenian entertained of this virtue, and how readily he compromised where it was concerned. Demosthenes' aphorism "that he did not care to pay a heavy price for—repentance," shows a more searching sense perhaps, certainly a more economic sense, of morality, as well as the characteristically Greek love of epigram (Aulus Gellius, I, 8, 3).

Citizens must be legitimate children of pure Athenian stock, else where is the guarantee that they will be wholly devoted to Athens? Hence the obligation to marry; it is a tax due to the state; tiresome it may be like other taxes, but necessary; a man must, sooner or later, "range himself," as the French say, by legitimate marriage with an Athenian woman; here his duties cease; the records even of the philosophic schools, of the Cynics and Cyrenaics in particular, suggest how brutally practical a view even philosophers could take of chastity; "one must escape that mad tyrant the body," as Sophocles said (Plato, *Rep.*, I, 329*c*), but the Cynics saw no objection to the evasion rather than the conquest of the flesh: no aspiration to dominate the body by the spirit: no feeling that the body is the temple of a holy spirit, rather than a tiresome taskmaster to be cheated and put off with the minimum of menial service, enters into their point of view (Zeller's *Socrates and the Socratic Schools*, p. 272, note 4; Diogenes Laertius' *Life of Diogenes*, 69; St. Augustine, *The City of God*, XIV, 20).

Socrates, himself the crown of his race, might have welcomed perhaps the doctrine of the temple and its haunting spirit; it is, in fact, a Platonic doctrine in essence; but even Socrates, if we may trust the *Memorabilia* of the matter-of-fact soldier Xenophon (Xen., *Mem.*, I, 3, 14; II, 2, 4; 3, 11), usually felt that scruples about these matters are not less high

flown and unnecessary than they still seem to-day to the man who is content to be merely practical and who is satisfied with "real ethik," so to speak. Greeks and Frenchmen have always belonged to the school of naturalism in these things more than Romans and Teutons; the instance of ancient Rome suggests, by the way, that these matters are things of race and character more than merely, as is often said, of climate.

The virtues of the inner life then, humility, modesty, purity, do not occur to the moralists' mind, in the city-state; and could not well occur; their virtues are social, nay even political, in their basis and in their area.

But what are they in their spirit? What is the inner core or root of this valiant patriotism which faces enemies for the state's sake, and slays tyrants, though the tyrant be a brother, for the state's sake? What is the *raison d'être* of this patriotism which Plato, Pericles, Sophocles, and Euripides, men of very different temperaments, combine to exalt?

It is pretty obvious what patriotism was—in theory at least and in consciousness—to these great Greeks; it was enlightened self-interest, calculating and calculated selfishness; a fool might think to enrich himself by defrauding his country; Plato, Pericles and the rest answer that he is a fool to think so; the country is his opportunity and his only opportunity; it is only the occasion of his glory, but it is the only occasion (Herodotus, VIII, 125; Plato, *Rep.*, I, 330*a*; Sophocles, *Œdipus the King*, lines 140–142; *ibid.*, line 600; *ibid.*, lines 611–612); his country's danger is no opportunity to him in the long run; patriotism is intelligent egotism; what else need be said in defence of it? And what more can any orator say? Shall he say that the human soul is so compact of nobility that it will sacrifice life to the state without a reason or a cause, except the nobility of self-sacrifice or the ardour of disinterested love and

patriotism? Shall he say, like Garibaldi in Rome, "Come with me for Italy's sake: I offer no pay, no booty, no glory, no rewards; I offer you pain and hunger, thirst and want and death—for Italy's sake"? Nay, but this is Christian Quixotism and modern sentimentality: this is "the foolishness of the gospel," not Greek moderation and Greek intelligence; the Greek instinctively shrank, as recruiting officers have sometimes shrunk since, from asking overtly for such sacrifice without further argument; from appealing directly and nakedly to the warm heart of youth as the source of patriotism.

Patriotism in the modern world is often, with religion, one of the romances of the poor; though cynics and intellectuals have called it, with religion and virtue, one of the luxuries of the rich; but this romantic or religious patriotism, this Garibaldian patriotism does not recommend itself to the reason of the Athenian.

The same cause which made the typical Greek a poor subject for the ministrations of Christian apostles, because he was too moderate and philosophic to relish the enthusiasm of the gospel; because he could not understand why any young man of great riches should give them up for his master's society; because he was hardened against good no less than against evil by his philosophy; because he shared in fact the proverbial dislike of all men of good taste for Evangelical religion, and of all Greeks for the foolishness of preaching; this same cause made him look askance at all appeals to patriotism not manifestly intelligible to his common sense and his prudential instincts.

Enlightened selfishness may be in the last resort a contradiction in terms; but it was nevertheless at least the conscious theory of a Greek patriot; and his orators therefore must make it clear to him that his interests coincide with his duty in the appeal which his country makes to him: that patriotism is

the best policy; otherwise the appeal will fall on deaf ears.

Plato, for example, in the Republic (*Rep.*, VII, 520*b*), requires his rulers to sacrifice themselves, and rule the state for the state's sake; but the basis of the appeal is not patriotism pure and simple; it is twofold; they must rule the state, or inferior persons will do so for them, and they will suffer; this is the reason why in ordinary states decent men take office when they *do* take it (*Rep.*, II, 347*c*). In the second place, in his own ideal state—Callipolis—the state has trained and selected these philosopher-kings for ruling, and it is only common justice and simple honesty that they should repay "the wages of training"—*τὰ τροφεῖα*—to the state which has spent its money to train them (*Rep.*, VII, 520*b*).

Man, of course, is never wholly the victim of his conscious theories, not even a theoretic Greek; Greeks died, no doubt, often like other men, from instinctive love and devotion to their country without weighing the pros and cons as carefully as their intellectualism bade them do; but in theory, at least, patriotism was policy.

The point need not be laboured: after all, plenty of philosophers, since the time of the Greeks, have seen nothing more or little more than self-interest in patriotism; it is "an amalgam of vanity and superstition" they proclaim; of egotism, that is, and a sort of stupid fetish-worship of one's own nation.

Well, every man must look into his own heart—as Sir Edward Grey said in August, 1914—and ask himself how far the obligations of patriotism (or alliance) ought to carry him; my point only is that the Greeks demanded a direct profit from patriotism before they surrendered to its appeal. "The tyranny of the state, the egotism of the individual, there is the ancient city-state," said some one once, some

lucid Frenchman; but I have forgotten his name and cannot recover it.

That this *was* the conscious basis of the patriotism of the city-states of Hellas seems to be proved by various converging lines of argument.

The Cynic and Cyrenaic philosophers, accepting egotism as the basis of life, repudiated patriotism as an unintelligent form of egotism; they rejected the ties of country and of family as unnecessary and burdensome; they were pure individualists or pure cosmopolitans, whichever name be thought best; cosmopolitanism was pure individualism to them, as sometimes since, though perhaps they were more logical than Rousseau in this, that they would not have taken the trouble to convey their tiresome children to a foundling hospital, even if there had been such an anachronism in their states; they were prepared to be, as one of them said, "everywhere a stranger and everywhere at home"; they were self-centred, self-sufficient; ties and obligations to others were obstacles to self-culture; they accepted the egotism which they found everywhere, even in patriotism, as the logical and intelligent basis of life, but pushed it a step further to the rejection of the state itself: only a philosopher, no doubt, could hope to be at home everywhere; but *he* might hope it; he brought his conversation and his paradoxes with him to pay for board and lodging; as some modern hotels have paid good talkers to "put up" with them and put up with their other guests.

And so Greece saw her first cosmopolitans, and the sinister associations of the word which began then have not departed yet; and for the sufficient reason that the selfishness in which cosmopolitanism had its origin has never really passed away; self in some sublimated form has ever underlain it; whether in the form of the ambitious imagination, which rejects any service humbler or lowlier than the service of all humanity; or in the form of the relentless French

logic, which, if it is to serve man, must serve mankind without distinction; or in the grosser self-deception of the merely ill-conditioned and quarrelsome man, who, disliking his own countrymen whom he has seen, imagines thereupon that he loves the other countrymen whom he has not; and calls himself cosmopolitan rather than patriot, being in reality neither; but rather, as an epigram truer than most epigrams suggests, the friend of every country except his own. Cosmopolitanism, to be worth anything, must obviously be love of kind, and love of kind will naturally express itself primarily and directly in love of country; not in ambitious imaginations, or in severe logic, least of all in the bad temper which loves nothing and nobody except the unknown.

Plato conversely, unlike the Cynics and Cyrenaics, being full of social feeling and the sense of social obligations, attacked the patriotism of the city-state from the opposite side but from the same assumptions. It was only egotism, he thought; it produced the endless warring Ishmaelite πόλεις; the hand of each raised against its neighbour. His Callipolis, though a πόλις and a Greek πόλις, rejects this narrow patriotism; he is a Pan-Hellenist, though without any theories or pre-vision of Pan-Hellenic union or political federation; he believes in Hellas without wanting an Imperial Federation of Hellenes, just as an average man loves the mother country and the Empire without desiring the legal and technical bonds of an Imperial Federation; his πόλις will feel itself one with other Greek πόλεις, even though no regular political bond bind them; the old patriotism is rejected for its narrow selfishness and egotism, and a new and larger patriotism of Pan-Hellenism supersedes it, the basis of which is much less consciously egotistic and individualistic and more consciously and avowedly social.

But perhaps the selfish basis of the old patriotism is best seen in the sophistries of Alcibiades; sophistries

which could not have imposed upon anyone, even their author, which could not even have been uttered, had they not been plausible, logical, and consistent with the theory and the ostensible and conscious basis of Greek patriotism.

"I claim to be as good a patriot as any man if, when I have been wrongfully deprived of my country, I seek to regain her by force; for my patriotism is not to the country which wrongs me, but to the country where I prosper with the rest of my countrymen; he is the true patriot who strains every nerve to regain the country which has ill-treated him" (Thucydides, VI, 92).

Any man who believes in the philosophy of the unconscious and the subliminal might have retorted that this naked egotism had never been the effective patriotism of any honest Athenian; but it is impossible to deny, I think, that this actually was at least the theoretic and conscious basis of Greek patriotism, the only basis to which orator and poet, as well as sophist, could venture overtly to appeal. All three appealed, like the modern Italian apologist of real politik, to *sacro egoismo*.

If, again, some one were to retort that Thucydides only reports these sophistries of Alcibiades to show how utterly demoralized and sophisticated the young men of the upper class in Athens had grown to be under the influence of a sophistic education and with the decay of religion, this may be true. I think it is true; but it only enforces the point I am trying to make; the sophists demoralized clever young men, like Alcibiades, easily, because they appealed to intellect not to character, and to self-interest not to self-sacrifice. Young men, and old men too, in Greece could hardly resist that appeal; could hardly understand any other appeal. If Thucydides was full of passionate protests against Greek intellectualism, if he is a reactionary, exalting subconscious instincts and archaic simplicity and ignorance against

self-interest and policy and education, it was because Thucydides was emerging from the narrow Greek point of view, as Aristotle, Plato and Socrates can be seen from time to time emerging.

But if all this be so, if the tyranny of the state and the egotism of the individual be a correct French summary of the life of the Greek πόλις, what becomes of the modern British Hellenist's plea, "With every step in the socialization of morals and the moralization of politics something of Greek excellence is won back"?

Where are the social morals in this state? They seem to be only an after-thought, a by-product, a secondary necessity; arising from the naked egotism of the original theory of each citizen: the citizen has discovered that he cannot get on without pruning his egotism; that there must be honour even among thieves; that he must restrain the exercise of egotism and restrict it so that it spares his fellow-citizens, and functions only with the stranger, with the Spartan or the Peloponnesian; patriotism is precisely this compromise; just as all his virtue is a compromise; intelligent selfishness has taught him that patriotism is not the last refuge of a scoundrel, but the first compromise of enlightened egotism.

Social morals have emerged after a consideration of the facts of life; have been created by such reflections; and are not an intrinsic element of human nature so much as a product of the facts of life. Human nature created Greek Ishmaels; but an intelligent Ishmaelite is a contradiction in terms; he cannot survive for an hour against his brother Ishmaelites; unless indeed he be a superman or endowed with Gyges' ring, and similar miraculous advantages. If by nature we are all in a sense "brothers," this only means (as the modern wit has put it) all "Cains and Abels," until common sense has limited our fratricidal instincts.

Such is the philosophy of human nature, as ex-

pounded by Thrasymachus of Chalcedon, the sophist of Plato's *Republic*, who, as a Chalcedonian, had good and bitter reason for arguing that might was right and Athenian justice the interest of the stronger (Plato, *Rep.*, I, 338–339), as expounded not less explicitly but more intelligently by the average cultivated Athenian aristocrat, by Glaucon and Adimantus, the brothers of Plato, in the same dialogue (*Rep.*, II, 359–361). The brothers can see, better than Thrasymachus, that might must use discretion and compromise if it is to survive long; they are content to argue that justice and all virtue is inherently and intrinsically a compromise between the instincts of human nature, only operative successfully in a superman, and the intelligent perception of the risks which these instincts, except in the case of a superman, perhaps, or a Gyges, involve.

Social morals, then, to speak properly, are not instincts but supervening second thoughts; and morals in general have no basis other than this, since, if there be no original social morals, there are *a fortiori* no morals of the inner life; no conception of the obligations to God and conscience; these have not yet been formulated or conceived even as after-thoughts and by-products.

And further, not only are there, to speak properly, no social morals *ab initio*, but such as arise secondarily and by calculation, what, after all, are they? What is this patriotism based on self-interest? What is its range and area? The walls of the πόλις; outside these walls there are no social morals. If the stranger and the enemy are not sold into slavery or butchered —not to make an Athenian holiday of course, the Athenians did not take their pleasures so brutally— but butchered as Cleon proposed to butcher the Mytilenæans (Thucydides, III, 37–40) for reasons of high policy, it is because a nation's or a man's conscious and theoretic morals are fortunately not his

whole store or best store of morals. His heart and conscience possess instincts, of which his theories have not taken account; there are more things in his heavenly, even in his earthly, instincts than have been dreamed of by his philosophy; or to parody Shakespeare instead, there are many dreams of his philosophy which have no counterpart in heaven or on earth.

Slavery itself, of course, was an after-thought not seldom of prudence and calculation and economy; an alternative suggested by intelligence, for butchery. The gladiatorial shows which became the curse of later Rome, the worse Roman version of our milder curse of gambling on games and horse-races, were at first a mingled concession to mercy and self-interest; the successful gladiator, after delighting the dear people, regained his liberty. "Civilization," says Mr. Bagehot in his *Physics and Politics*, "is strewn with creeds and customs which have been in their origin beneficent steps in advance, and have survived to become curses and stones of stumbling." There are still thinkers, in Germany at least, like General Bernhardi, who confine ethics within the circle of the state and deny obligations to foreigners almost as nakedly as an ancient Greek; and laboriously endeavour to explain away the parable of the Good Samaritan. As Socrates says of archæology, it is a piquant but rather infelicitous labour (Plato, *Phœdrus*, 229*d*).

So much for the excellence of Greek social morals. And what of the moral politics? They spring from the essential limitations of Greek civilization, the city-state; the municipality, as we call it. If the municipality be not too large, be not a Babylon, it can naturally moralize its politics, and can paternalize its government; it knows its citizens, it has them well in hand; it can afford to aim at something higher than the protection of life and property; it can assume the functions of a church

no less than of a state, and can prescribe what they are to do and what not to do; *τί δεῖ πράττειν καὶ τίνων ἀπέχεσθαι* (Aristotle, *Ethics*, I, 2, 7; Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, IV, 4, 13); *οἱ νόμοι ἀγορεύουσι περὶ πάντων* (Aristotle, *Ethics*, V, 1, 13, 1129*b*, 14); *ἃ δὲ μὴ κελεύει ὁ νόμος ἀπαγορεύει* (Aristotle, *Ethics*, 1188*a*, 7); *ὁ νόμος ἀγορεύει κείρεσθαι τὸν μύστακα καὶ προσέχειν τοῖς νόμοις* (Aristotle, *Fragments*, 496; Plutarch, 550*b*).

Greek law is as far reaching as our military ordinances; the citizen, not less than the soldier, is to shave his moustache and obey the law; law is no negative provision for the payment of taxes and avoidance of violence; it is the speech of wisdom: of wisdom without passion: *νόμος ἐστι νοῦς ἄνευ ὀρέξεως* (Aristotle, *Politics*, 1287*a*, 28), *λόγος ἀπὸ φρονήσεως καὶ νοῦ* (Aristotle, *Ethics*, 1180*a*, 21).

The essential narrowness of the Greek *πόλις* produced and required, if the state was to survive, a social spirit and a patriotism, keen, active, positive; where our patriotism is apt to be languid, *pococurante*, negative; it produced and required moral politics where our politics have been in the past and still are, though in a lesser degree, merely utilitarian and expedient and opportunist; but these social morals and moral politics, if keener than the modern variety, are infinitely less pure in their basis and motives and infinitely narrower in their area: our patriotism is Laodicean as compared with the fervour of the *πόλις*; but it is at least disinterested while theirs was (as cynics and intellectuals style all patriotism) a form of egotism.

No man was more religious, to take an illustration which is patent and striking, than a Spartan; no man's religion was more flagrantly selfish and self-regarding: "You've got to get up early if you want to take in God," says Lowell, I think: the Spartan got up early for this purpose (Plutarch); the lukewarm religion of twentieth-century Christians is at least disinterested, whence its lukewarmness; we

are disinterested but also uninterested; the Spartan was neither.

What a contrast, remark all historians, between the patriotism of Sparta as a state, and the treason, treachery, perfidy and venality of individual Spartans! paradoxical at first sight but natural enough and quite logical; selfishness is the basis (the theoretic and conscious basis at least) of Spartan patriotism; Pausanias,[1] Pleistoanax,[2] Gylippus,[3] Cleandridas his father,[4] Astyochus,[5] Lysander,[6] Cleomenes,[7] and other great names of Sparta recall histories of treasonable ambition and treacherous corruption: Brasidas alone stands out in Thucydides' history as the Spartan " sans peur et sans reproche " : similarly Aristides' honesty, became at best a bore, at worst a perpetual reproach to his critical countrymen (Plutarch, *Aristides*, Sect. 7); a nation is unhealthy when honesty makes a man so conspicuous, *a fortiori*, where it makes him a butt for ridicule.

Herodotus has ominously signalized two Greek rulers of his time as conspicuous for honesty; Scythes tyrant of Zancle and Cadmus tyrant of Cos; the moral is even more poignant than Herodotus makes it appear; for it seems from his history, though he does not himself direct attention thereto, that these two conspicuously honest men in high places were not really and exactly two but rather one; were at least, to be precise, father and son; theirs was the honesty of one family only; an hereditary honesty (Macan's *Notes on Herodotus*, VII, 163, 164, and *Herodotus*, VI, 23, 24).

Greek patriotism then and Greek religion were

[1] Thucydides; I, 128–134.
[2] (Pleistoanax) Thucydides, II, 21, 1.
[3] Plutarch, *Life of Nicias*, 28. Plutarch, *Lysander* 16, 17.
[4] Plutarch, *Pericles*, 22. Plutarch, *Nicias*, 28.
[5] Thucydides, VIII, 50, 3; VIII, 83, 3.
[6] Plutarch, *Life of Lysander* (25–26).
[7] Cleomenes, Herodotus, VI, 66.

keen in proportion to their self-interest, as the modern varieties of these emotions are languid in the ratio of their disinterestedness.

I am aware that the matter is often put differently; the late Professor T. H. Green used to argue that civilization is a progressive widening of the area of the virtues rather than a change of base; that Greek ethics recognized the fellow-citizen as a person, where modern ethics the fellow-man; the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man replaces as a compendium the fatherhood of Zeus or Apollo or some other national god, and the brotherhood, say, of Spartans; but—apart from the fact that "the brotherhood of man" seems an exaggerated and theoretic compendium of the principles and practice of to-day—the proposition appears to me to exaggerate also the real claims of Greek civilization; morality has not merely extended its area since the days of the πόλις; if there be anything in the long and tedious argument which has preceded, morality has also since then shifted its base; the old base, the conscious and theoretic base at any rate, the base for the educated, was egotism; the new base is the value of each individual soul in the eyes of God: the rights (not indeed necessarily the equal rights) of the individual in the state.

Is it necessary to labour a point so elementary? What is the real compendium of Christianity? Not "the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man," a compendium modern, ambitious, unreal and remote from the facts of life, both in the Ruhr, and in British Columbia, and in Kenya, and in many other places, but the two great commandments; my duty to God, and my duty to my neighbour; the virtues of the inner life; humility, purity, righteousness; the virtues of the outer life; love and justice.

Such a system has in it the potency and promise not merely of private lives richer than the merely public life of the Greek citizen; but of social public

and political life richer than the patriotism, however keen, of Athens and Sparta; purer in its base as well as wider in its area; based on the divine in man instead of on egotism; and no longer cabined, cribbed, confined to chosen peoples.

Ruskin, George Eliot, Nettleship the artist, hosts of writers, dwell upon the selfish side of Christianity; St. Augustine, says Ruskin, would have a man save his own soul, and not trouble about his neighbours (he was one of "the saints who from their 'neighbours' rest," as an infant friend has revised for me the well-known hymn): we call a man a good Christian, says George Eliot, though he be a lax patriot and a dishonest tradesman; though he sand his sugar and defraud his municipality, provided that he go to church and be a good father and husband; more vivaciously and in better style Sydney Smith made the same point against the eminently respectable English statesman, Mr. Spencer Percival: "When I learn that he is so good a father and so true a husband, I find in my heart a wish that he would sometimes strap the little Percivals, and give their mother occasion for jealousy, if only, at the cost of some private virtue, he could contrive to imbibe some rudiments of statesmanship;" "If I ask a Hobbist," says Locke, "why I should be good, he answers that Leviathan will punish me if I am not; if I ask a Christian, he tells me that God will send me to hell if I am not; but if I ask an ancient Pagan he says because it makes for the inner truth of human nature and the real dignity of man." "We neglect the country," says Mr. Nettleship, "for the sake of the family; we neglect the family tie, the blood tie, for the sake of the individual tie, for the sake of the wife; a young man marries without regard to the claims of his parents upon him; he considers himself dispensed from the support of the parents whom he did not choose, if he support the wife he did;" he says to his parents "Corban" after the manner

of the Pharisees, and leaves them to their fate, perhaps to a public asylum.

All these criticisms from Locke downwards are no doubt sound enough; but they concern not the ideals and the basis and the practice of Christianity, but the poor and lop-sided version of Christianity, which we have often substituted for the original.

It is obvious that a religion which has for its pattern, not merely the Saviour of the Temptation and of the wilderness, but the Saviour of the city and the marriage-feast, the man who went about doing good and healing body and soul, cannot, except by human perversity and weakness, be restricted to any Augustinian ideal of self-righteousness, to any mystical egotism and saving of some personal soul, still less to any narrow circle of preferred creditors, or to vulgar misunderstanding of the doctrine of Hell. If the first commandment deepens the personal and inner life, and introduces virtues unknown to the Greek theory of virtue, the second commandment just as clearly deepens and widens all the social virtues of the Pagan.

If the two Christian commandments and virtues are somewhat incompatible, that is inevitable; life lies in a compromise; so much may be conceded to the Greeks; but not in the compromise they formulated; not between a narrow and an enlightened selfishness; but between God and neighbours; between conscience and neighbourliness; between justice and kindness; or, in the old and profound words of the Psalmist, between truth and mercy; between righteousness and peace; he who can reconcile these incompatibilities (and the tragedy of life lies, as Sophocles describes it in the Antigone in the conflict of different rights and duties) has fulfilled the whole duty of man: "When I am in my pulpit," said the greatest of modern Cardinals, the greatest stylist and one of the subtlest of Christian thinkers, "it is not my carnal self, which is my stumbling block;

it is my spiritual self; " how could he sing the Lord's song in a foreign land, and to an alien congregation; alien not in mere creed (that is nothing much) but alien in mood, temperament and ideals?

Life is a balance and a compromise not to be solved by fanatics, as any one may see who has weighed the excesses of the Pacifists and the Prohibitionists, and the Vegetarians and the Vivisectionists, and the anti-Vivisectionists, or the Feminists, or of any other modern crusaders, who have substituted a narrow external cause, an outward Pharisaic system, for the breadth and depth and height of Christianity; it is a balance and a compromise to be solved by infinite thought and patience, if at all, and by that "animated moderation," to which Mr. Bagehot devoted his gifts of exposition; but it is not the balance and compromise imagined by the Greeks and set forth by their sophists and the pupils of their sophists.

It is nearer the balance and compromise described ironically and humorously by Plato, in the second book of the Republic (*Rep.*, II, 375, 376), where he asks himself what are the virtues of the Ideal State and regretfully discovers these to be present at present only in the common and humble watch-dog; this poor creature combines more surely than his master the secrets of life; at once the aggressiveness, courage, resolution and will, which are the first requisites for the right conduct of life, and also in the second place the other qualities well-nigh incompatible with these, the patience, loyalty, trust, love, self-sacrifice, sweet reasonableness, and philosophy, which are the second and opposite essentials; the first qualities are popular Paganism, the second are popular Christianity; both are included in a vital and real Christianity, which came not to destroy, but to fulfil the previous dispensation.

To thus decry the basis of Greek social morals and moral politics, and to trace them back to egotism,

personal and civic, is not to say, I repeat, that no Greek was a real patriot and an unselfish man; it is only to say that he was so, when he was, in obedience to deep and unconscious instincts, not to the conscious theories of his life, which led only to enlightened selfishness.

Therefore we may even gather with good reason that "with every step in the socialization of morals and the moralization of politics" a further gulf opens between the modern world, and that ancient πόλις which built its virtues on self-interest and limited their application to the area within the city walls.

"Ethics is a branch of politics," wrote Aristotle (*Nic. Ethics*, I, 2, 9). Many minds have dissented and from opposite points of view; some Germans have denied that ethics have any place in politics, at any rate in international politics; and it is only common justice to admit the difficulties of the question, and the gulf between private ethics and ethics public and national.

Can a nation, for example, be magnanimous? Ought a Minister of Foreign Affairs even to try to be so? Magnanimity is nothing, unless it pays its price in sacrifice; a nation seldom is confronted squarely with the alternatives, magnanimity and sacrifice *or* aggrandisement; a statesman never himself pays the price, and cannot therefore, be magnanimous; to give away his country's rights and call it "magnanimity" is an ancient hypocrisy and an Athenian self-deception; such a man "ἀπραγμοσύνῃ ἀνδραγαθίζεται" in the pungent words of Pericles (Thucy., II, 63, 2), "he chooses peace at any price and then calls it magnanimity": "he runs away from danger and calls himself magnanimous" (Cleon is now the speaker) (Thucy., III, 40, 8), in short, in more modern language, "he is too proud to fight."

And yet, though an honest man must see the difference between national and private ethics, and must concede something to the Germans who press

the difference, and something to the ancient Greeks who, absorbed in public ethics, ignore the difference, the characteristic movement of all states to-day is not to emphasize the difference, but quite the contrary; to agree with Aristotle to the extent that politics and ethics are akin; to disagree with him when he makes ethics a branch of politics; not because he goes too far, but because he stops so short; "Ethics is a branch of politics," he says; the idealist to-day is saying rather, as I have already noted (p. 22), that politics should be an extension of ethics; a branch of ethics; its extension from the individual to the nation, and from the nation even to international politics; and to a League of Nations.

States have risked extinction at the hands of Germany: France twice, Great Britain once, just because Great Britain and France have clung to the pacifist idealism, which assumes that the golden rule of ethics applies even to international affairs and to Foreign Politics; that the Bible is among other things a manual for the Foreign Office and the Chancelleries of Europe; the anti-militarism of France in the 'sixties of the last century and again in the 'nineties; the anti-militarism of Great Britain before 1914, what root had they but in this faith in ethics over politics? in ethics as covering and absorbing politics? It was an illusion, and a most costly illusion, but an illusion based upon the principle that Christianity is the rule of life, and the whole world the area for its application.

The French continually recall the ancient Greeks; but the generous sentiment of the French democrats and pacifists of 1848, of the 'sixties and the 'nineties, even the generous vagaries of some of the communists of 1871, were Christian and not pagan Greek; the French democrat attempted to extend to the whole world those social virtues which the Greek democrat confined to the walls of his own state, which the German junker confined to the area of Germany,

which the illogical and compromising and practical mind of Britain has neither pushed to the extremes of French logic and idealism on the one side, nor confined within the limits of his own Empire on the other. "Internationalism," like all other "isms," is suspect with us; logical compendia like "the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man," or "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," are equally suspect; because all of them call urgently for definitions and limitations and distinctions; the distinctions, for example, between elder and younger brothers, between civil liberty and political liberty, between civil and political equality, between actual and proportionate equality, between literal equality and equality of opportunity, and half a dozen other distinctions, I suppose, all of them involving real differences, and none of them covered or explained by the facile and neat but misleading compendia.

Hence the British statesman cannot define precisely either the exact depth or the area of the social obligations which Great Britain recognizes; but at least they are extended in accordance with the principles of Christianity far beyond the limits of Greek paganism; and at least the tendency is to extend them ever more widely. The Great War brought almost daily illustrations of the conflicts in this sphere between idealists and practical men. An Oxford college is reported to have contemplated the insertion of the names of German Rhodes scholars on its roll of honour; a roll of honour to the idealist is the roll of the names of those who gave up their lives unselfishly for their country and their king or their kaiser; to less Quixotic men, less logical in their idealism, and more practical and keener in their instincts and emotions, a British roll of honour is of those who died for Great Britain: and even Oxford is not yet Callipolis and a city or university in the heavens, but a part of England: a better illustration of the heights to which pacifism, inter-

nationalism, idealism will soar in the present age, even in the midst of the greatest of wars, towards the extension of the area of social virtues and obligations, would perhaps be difficult to find.

CHAPTER II

VIRTUE IS KNOWLEDGE

THE first chapter has dwelt upon the markedly intellectual aspect of such inner virtues as the Greeks could be said to possess. Such virtues as humility and modesty are alien to the Greek *πόλις* because they are not social in their aspect, and sometimes are even anti-social.

The peculiarly English word "gentleman"—a word untranslatable into either ancient Greek or any modern language—is alien to the Greek *πόλις* for other and different reasons. The nearest Greek word is *καλοκαγαθός*; but *καλοκαγαθία* involves more of culture, education, thought, and less of convention, caste and breeding. Our word "gentleman" easily passes—interpreted by mere aristocrats—into pure caste. Disraeli has drawn a picture of the Marquis of Hertford: he makes the Marquis say to his heir, "You are a gentleman, not a philosopher; you act with your class." This is a poor definition, it may be, of a gentleman, but the difference between a gentleman and a philosopher still stands. The aphorism of the often-quoted German officer, "You will always be fools and we shall never be gentlemen," expresses better what in reality is inexpressible, the vague, deep-seated, many-sided implications of the word. The modern democratic phrase "Nature's gentleman" is not in the vein of the Marquis, but it is not out of keeping with the ideas of the German officer or with the general spirit of the word.

Moreover, there was nothing to prevent a Greek

" gentleman " or καλοκαγαθός, with all his culture and education, from voting prizes to himself (Herodotus, VIII, 123). The roughest " Tommies " in Macedonia (1915–1918), nicknamed " the maids " by the natives because they respected the local women (if the women wanted respect), were better " gentlemen " and better " sports."

And even when these inner virtues appear, they are of the intellect and not of the will or of conscious instinct. They are the achievements of a clear brain and not of a disciplined will or an instinct that is active. I am reminded of that picturesque passage in Herodotus (VII, 102), where the historian reflects —speaking through the lips of Demaratus—that " Poverty," not " Virtue," is the familiar spirit of Hellas. " Poverty " is her own : " but Virtue has been an importation imported by thought (σοφία) and by stern laws." But this distinction of knowledge and will, this preponderance of intellect in the Greek system of ethics and this minimizing and ignoring of the will, is the very heart and core of all that is most characteristic of Greece both in theory and practice, and most alien to later civilizations, whether Roman or Christian.

Most alien, I mean, to the general trend and popular ideas of these civilizations, not alien to isolated thinkers, to " advanced " or " emancipated " or " progressive " men and women ; from such persons one hears again the Greek insistence on knowledge, the Greek gospel of science.

" Virtue is knowledge," said Socrates, over and over again, " and vice is ignorance." " Evil is false opinion " (Plato, *Gorgias*, 455*a*, 458*A*). Every educator is almost bound by his profession to repeat the aphorism, but its repetition is more obvious than its success, and wears the appearance often of vanity. Popular education advances by leaps and bounds, but does not close jails or asylums ; does something even to people them. For if crimes of violence

decrease, crimes of cunning increase; the increase or decrease depending upon something much deeper than education or knowledge, in any ordinary sense of those words, depending upon the will and spirit and ideals of the community at the time being. But just as Cobden imagined that commerce, which makes countless wars, which Germans imagine to have made even the Great War, would usher in universal peace, so Socrates and Plato and their modern echoes have imagined that education would banish crime.

It is an idea very Socratic, but very Greek also; it expresses the intellectualism which is the salient feature of Greek life.

"Socrates," says Diogenes Laertius somewhere, "judged other men by himself": if *he* thought a thing right, he did it, though the heavens might fall; he was conscious of no gulf between the conviction of the right, and the doing of it; he assumed other persons to be like himself: and hence he assumed thought and knowledge to be the key of right living; he ignored the instincts and the will, the instincts because they were incalculable and unintelligible, unless expressed in terms of reason and good sense; and nothing ultimately incalculable and unintelligible can pass muster with a Greek: the will, because with *him*, it presented no difficulties; if *he* saw the right he willed to do it and did it: were not other men the same? he was not born of stocks and stones; neither were they (Plato, *Apology*, 34*d*).

In all this he partly represented, partly differed from his fellow-citizens; all Greeks resented the intrusion into ethics of unanalysed and unexplained instincts; all Greeks analysed the instinct of patriotism into self-interest; because self-interest needs no further explanation; many Greeks further, no doubt, explained after Socrates the instinct against incest (Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, IV, 4, 22 and 23): the instinct which has led many primitive peoples into

"lists of forbidden degrees" of relationship for marriage, far wider and longer than civilized peoples recognize: Socrates explained the instinct against incest with a mother, or explained it away, into the obvious prudential and utilitarian arguments against mating with a person considerably older than oneself; with a mother, therefore, or a grandmother; as if Œdipus' horror of his unwitting crime against instinct could be translated into a scruple of prudence! How his spirit must have writhed by the waters of Acheron, if he heard there how a philosopher of his own race was explaining away his tragedy; and yet his anguish must have been increased twenty-four centuries later, when he learned that foreign philosophers—Messrs. Freud, Jung and Adler—had turned his innocent mistake, springing from haste and healthy instinct, into a sin against instinct, and had named this species of incest the Œdipus-complex: better to fall into the hands of Socrates than into the hands of psychoanalysts. A possible solution, and certainly the best for Socrates, is frankly to disbelieve the testimony of the stupid soldier Xenophon: and yet his testimony is not absolutely incredible. Poets and philosophers—a Shelley and a Socrates—in spite of their age-long quarrels, sometimes unite to ride rough-shod over natural instinct.

Many Greeks, again, and some moderns—pseudo-Darwinians but not Darwin himself—have followed Socrates in his analysis of the instinct for beauty into the common-sense regard for the useful and the convenient; the scoffs of sense rather less common that a scavenger's cart (*κοφινὸς κοπροφόρος*, Xen., *Mem.*, III, 8, 6) is at once eminently useful and eminently unlovely probably left him and his followers as cold and unconvinced as similar scoffs leave modern theorists and doctrinaires of the Utilitarian school; for if Darwin himself accepted beauty as an original instinct, inherent even in the lower animals, Darwinians have not always followed; many Greeks

no doubt followed Socrates into these pitfalls which await the philosopher who must explain every instinct, even though in so doing he explain it away.

But on the other hand in the matter of the will, Socrates' paradox that virtue is knowledge appears to be based on a temperament the opposite of his city's; *he* ignored the will and magnified the understanding, because with him the will obeyed the understanding without hesitation; *they* ignored the will because they were constitutionally deficient in will-power.

This may seem a rash generalization: it is worth a closer scrutiny.

All virtue, say Socrates and Plato, is knowledge, and vice is just ignorance. "Voilà l'homme qui a mal calculé," said Fontenelle in their spirit, when he saw a criminal going to execution. But how ignore the part played by the will in life and in crime? How ignore the commonplaces so familiar to-day, the most familiar commonplaces of the Gospel, "the thing which I would not that I do, and what I would do I do not"? How ignore that trenchant expression of everyday experience?

I presume the truth is that the Greek could not understand how the will enables a man to act either for good or evil in obedience to some blind, deep instinct not clearly understood or even scarcely understood at all; how the will enables a man to be better or worse than his knowledge; better when he acts from an instinct which he feels to belong to his better self, though he cannot analyse it and thereby justify it; worse, when he acts from an instinct which he consciously associates with his worse self.

A man acts—the Greek feels—from self-interest; he wants to get good for himself. How then can he act wrongly except by misinterpreting his good? He becomes a criminal, if it so happen, by misinterpretation of his own interests.

Amazing the force of language to deceive even

the elect! It is fairly clear to us—it was fairly clear, though not clear enough, to Aristotle also—that the word "good" covers a multitude of ideas and objects very different indeed; covers at one end "pleasure," which is not only not deserving to be called "good," or at least not "the good," but is constantly another name for evil; at another end, the noble, the right, the best: and covers in between these extremes all sorts of good things, better than pleasure, and smaller than nobility (*τὸ καλόν*), all varieties of self-interest, all kinds of expediency. When all these things are good, and yet different and even incompatible, how can a man choose the "good" by merely knowing it? How can he decide between the smaller but immediate "good," and the larger but remote "good," by means of mere education? "If education and argument were all that is necessary," says Aristotle dryly in his criticism of Socrates (*Ethics*, X, 10, 3; compare *Ethics*, VI, 13, 5), "to the achievement of virtue, great had been the fees of the schoolmaster": but when a man has to put aside pleasure, with its immediate appeal, for a remote glory (*καλόν*) which hardly yet appeals to him, which will only appeal convincingly, when he has resolutely put aside a thousand pleasures in obedience to this gleam, when he has fully habituated himself to this difficult knight-errantry, when he has said to himself through long years, "Nobility, be thou my good," or "Get thee behind me, Pleasure"; when, in short, a man has to put aside the present good for a larger but remote good, which he may never live to realize; when all this is so, is it not evident that virtue depends not upon knowledge, but upon the disciplining of the will to follow such instincts as are dimly felt to be best, until, in the fullness of time they come to prove themselves best, and he that has willed has learned of the doctrine (to adapt the familiar words of the New Testament), and the scales of lower passions have at last fallen from the eyes?

The Aristotelian doctrine of discipline, habit, asceticism (ἄσκησις), contains within itself the doctrine of the will, the doctrine that the only thing good in the world is a good will, not knowledge; but it was evidently a mystery to the Greeks, and even Aristotle is hazy, indefinite, and perplexed about it: just because he cannot wholly free himself from the prepossessions of an "intellectual"; of a Greek who must base his life on understanding and explaining.

Such intellectualism, understanding, and explaining drift naturally into materialism. I do not imagine that Socrates, for example, when he analysed beauty into the useful (Plato, *Rep.*, V, 457*b*) or high instincts into expediency, according to Xenophon at least, really was at heart much interested in either the useful or the expedient: these ideas were in fact against his grain; but he was interested in understanding, in explaining, in analysing; and it was easier, obviously, and more natural to explain the unknown beauty and other unknown instincts, in terms of the known, than vice versa. Hence that reiterated glorification of "utility" which reads so strangely and contrasts so pungently with the idealism of Plato's *Republic*, and yet is so deeply imbedded in the argument of that book.

If a man must be governed by understanding, it will be by the understanding of the lower things of life, for the highest things pass understanding; of peace (true peace), of righteousness, of wisdom, a man has a suspicion, a vision, a gleam, a divination (as Plato says, *Rep.*, VI, 505*e*), but not yet comprehension: "through a glass darkly" he sees, if at all. And therefore the demand that life be based upon logic, reason, and comprehension inevitably sinks into a basing of life on that common sense merely "which is intolerable without metaphysics"; on that horse-sense, which is only one degree, I apprehend, removed from jackass-sense; and on materialism: hence Greek intellectualism tends to

end in a common-place and rather sordid Positivism and Utilitarianism; even as English intellectuals like Grote and Mill fought desperately for Utilitarianism; and only succeeded, like Eudoxus in Aristotle's day, in prompting other men to say that the apostles seemed much finer than their creed (Aristotle, *Ethics*, X, 2, 1).

So in Plato's *Republic* (X, 604*c*, *d*) the wise man in the face of misfortunes preserves his composure, does not give way to emotion, arranges his conduct to cut his losses and make the best of the fragments that remain; the passage suggests the banalities of William Godwin. "Calculation"—*λογισμός*—says Plato, "is the mainspring of his action." The "wisdom," which in a Christian—if any man be a Christian—would be a synonym either of resignation or fortitude, appears to wear the poorer garb of common sense and prudence; because prudence to a Greek almost of necessity stands at the head of the virtues, being another name for intelligence and intellect; the element of the will is lost to view; this is the continual refrain of Sophocles' *Antigone* (lines 1050, 1346, 1353).

Or take an illustration much more recent from France: for some thirty years (1875–1905) the intellectuals ruled Paris largely: and the thirty years witnessed a shrinkage in political virtue, a lowering of the national pulse; a gathering indifference to the national name and fame and heritage. If France awoke again and became herself again, and proud and free again even in the midst of uncounted and incalculable calamities, it is not because intellectuals were ruling her, but because she reverted to a much older and simpler and more natural and therefore more mystical mood; to the cult of her natural and national instincts and her sense of national duty; it is because she has listened not to the intellectuals but to those who have rebelled against their doctrines, to Barrès and Brunetière

and Bergson and Bazin and Bordeaux. Renan and Taine, who belonged to the older school, could find no answer to materialism; unless it be an answer to say that the world is a poor place and the value of life very dubious. To what does it all amount? asked Renan—this succession of *pères de famille* and *mères de famille*, who spend their lives in intriguing to place their sons and marry their daughters?—sons and daughters who, when placed and married, will follow the same sordid round. But this spectacle of family life, with its cares and checks and losses, suggests to the newer France, to Barrès and Bordeaux, not sighs and scoffs at the trivial round of Nature, but the old mystical interpretation of life, as the fulfilment of instincts unexplained and inexplicable, but none the less of sovereign obligation, and constituting duty: "Frenchmen should not be afraid to live" (*La Peur de vivre*, Henri Bordeaux). No foreigner need regret, I think, the fall of the intellectuals in France, even though to-day the opposite tide is now rising so high and flowing so strong, that Germany, Great Britain, Italy and the United States are finding it hard for the moment to come to terms with French nationalism.

"Duty," I have written a few lines back: the word has no exact equivalent in Greek, even in Aristotle's *Ethics*; "good" must be something self-regarding; so "nobility" (*τὸ καλόν*) takes the place which Christianity gives to "duty" (compare p. 44 above). Aristotle is neither in the positivist nor in the theological stage; he is in the metaphysical stage which Comte placed second, whereas Plato, with all his cult of Socrates and therefore of "utility," is always passing, like Socrates himself, from the positivist stage which Comte places highest, to the theological which Comte placed lowest.

But would any people have so ignored the will, which can defy self-interest and the positivist creed and Utilitarianism—for what argument or appeal

has "utility" if it be not my utility?—would any people have so ignored the claims of patriotism until it had been based on self-interest, if they had ever possessed the strength of will to defy self-interest in obedience to mystical instinct?

When Garibaldi left Rome to seek the mountains after his defeat by the French, he called for volunteers in the strange quixotic terms already quoted (p. 33), but he got his volunteers.

It was the weakness of the ancient Greek intellectualism that an appeal like this to natural instinct, and emotions, and to the will, rather than to the intellect, was hardly made in overt terms; a Greek, even a Pericles, apparently felt that it would dismay and daunt rather than nerve his countrymen; he must descant instead upon the community of interest for Italy and the Italians in the long run. Garibaldi felt no need for such roundabout and far-fetched intellectualism and utilitarianism; he appealed to patriotism, not as enlightened selfishness, not as a form of self-interest, not as the best policy, but as a primitive instinct, as a high form of unselfishness, as a reservoir of energy and passion lying latent, as the pragmatists say, in the subliminal self. Garibaldi was a lion in mood and instinct no less than in face, complained Mazzini. Similar appeals with similar results were made to the Canadian undergraduates of the University of Toronto in the years of the Great War.

Another illustration of the intellectual point of view of the Greeks, and of Plato himself, is seen in the Platonic doctrine of punishment. If vice be ignorance and be involuntary, as Plato maintains (with Aristotle mildly dissenting), how can punishment be justified? Plato faces the difficulty squarely and logically; punishment *per se* cannot be justified, except from the necessities of safeguarding society, and striking terror into the hearts of would-be offenders; in the last resort this necessity of making

examples of great malefactors will occasionally justify even the extreme form of punishment, even everlasting punishment in hell.

This is the fate of Ardiæus, ironically called " The Great " (Plato, *Rep.*, X, 615*e*–616*a*). Some modern commentators like Mr. Archer Hind [Plato's *Phædo*, p. 171] are shocked and say that Plato is not to be understood literally; anyhow, it is possible to modify the passage by translating the words *τῶν ἀνιάτως ἐχόντων ἢ μὴ ἱκανῶς δεδωκὼς δίκην*, " of those who are incurable, *or rather* some one who has not yet been adequately punished ": but in any case Ardiæus is (1) incurable or nearly so, and (2) is punished for the sake of the example.

But punishment, broadly, must be curative and medicinal and must reform the sinner: here is the doctrine which should win for Plato's bust the best place in modern up-to-date prisons and reformatories; in Elmira and in similar places: the judge is a doctor whose business is to cure (*Gorgias*, 477*a*, 478*a*, 525*a*); literally to cure; not, as Mr. Lilly twists it (*Fortnightly Review*, Vol. 52, July to December 1889, p. 116), to inflict pain sufficient to atone for the sin; and so wipe out the sin and clean the slate; this was no doubt the Roman Catholic doctrine of the inquisitors; but right or wrong, it is not Plato's meaning. Plato founded not only the modern reformatory-prison but also the modern societies for the abolition of capital punishment, just on this ground, that capital punishment, unless the criminal be incurable (Plato, *Laws*, IX, 854*d*, *e*; 862*d*, *e*; 863*a*), prevents reformation and cure.

That is, Plato ignores and denies sin as he must do logically on his premisses; and leaves punishment, when he leaves it, as justifiable merely by the needs of society and on grounds of social expediency.

And yet the force of language and its implications seem to be too much even for Plato; human instinct and common sense reject his extreme view of sin as ignorance; a man may no doubt properly reject

human retribution, retributive punishment inflicted by man on man; for what man can measure guilt or limit the force of the aphorism more familiar than traceable "there go I save for the grace of God" (attributed to Barrow and John Newton and John Bunyan, but going back to some Dutchman well-nigh forgotten). But what of divine punishment, inflicted by a God who knows the truth beyond men's reach, and can measure the degrees of guilt and innocence, and, knowing all but not being a Frenchman, conceivably does not pardon all?

Plato does not admit explicitly any such limitation to the doctrine of curative punishment: but instinct and language seem too powerful for his theories; such phrases as *δίκην διδόναι* of Ardiæus; *δίκην λαγχάνειν*; to make atonement: to receive justice; practically imply the idea of "the satisfaction of justice," and the doctrine of retributive punishment, at least at the hands of God, or of an all-wise judge, though not at the hands of an ignorant or unthinking or hard-hearted human jury. A philosopher cannot fly in the face of instinct and common sense, without being apt to be tripped up by common language, and led into self-contradictions.

If an offender is punished to "satisfy justice," he is not being punished merely for expediency and to safeguard society, as a wild beast is shot; nor in order to strike a salutary terror into similar offenders; the doctrine does not contradict the idea and ideal of a cure; but it is at least independent of it; the two bases of punishment may be coincident; but they are not identical. Plato evades the retributive basis of punishment; it is too mystical even for him, as being himself a Greek after all: though he be prepared on occasions to accept mysticism, where the questions of God's existence and His goodness are concerned (*infra*, Chap. vi) and where the Great Assize is concerned and the life of the good and bad man after death, yet he limits his conces-

sions to mysticism sharply: all these are Oriental rather than Greek thoughts; even as the stoic moralists and stoic Puritans were all of them, or nearly all, Orientals; Chrysippus, Cleanthes, Zeno, Epictetus; the true Athenians, Epicurus and Socrates, even Socrates, being Athenians and rationalists, could not see their way clearly to do more than place a note of interrogation when they came across the speculations of survival after death and the Great Assize.

Or again, the small part played by the will in Greek speculation, can be traced in Aristotle's chapters on courage (*Ethics*, III, Chapters vi–viii).

True courage is, says Aristotle, the service of the ideal of nobility, τό καλόν (page 44 above); but there are spurious forms; the courage of social solidarity, of *esprit de corps*; the courage of the desperado; of the expert again, who knows that the danger is not great, "that the blighters cannot shoot," etc.; of the sanguine man too; and of the ignorant man: and of the angry man, etc.

There is much that is striking here: first and foremost Aristotle ranks as spurious courage that courage of knowledge, of the expert, which is to Plato and Socrates true courage. Courage to them is either the retention of the right opinion about what is to be feared and what is not (*Republic*, Book IV, 429) or rather it also, like all other virtues, is just—knowledge; the knowledge of what ought and of what ought not to cause apprehension: death ought not, dishonour ought, and so on; or thirdly but not quite consistently with this intellectualism, courage is the combative instinct in us, ὁ θυμὸς τὸ θυμοειδές (*Rep.*, II, 375*b*; IV, 439–440).

What Plato really means, I presume, is that true courage, the highest form of courage, is this combative element set into motion and rendered operative and guided always by knowledge of what is and is not to be feared. Even so, he is falling again into

contradictions; virtue, he says, is διδακτόν, is a thing teachable; as indeed it must be if it is knowledge; at least so far as a man is intelligent and capable of learning. Yet now we begin to see that after all it is not διδακτόν, not teachable, except to persons possessing the combative element; it cannot be taught except to those who supplement intelligence with θυμός, with an element of nature distinct from intellect both in Plato's view and in the view of other men.

If this be Plato's meaning, Aristotle has, as often, broken away from Socrates and Plato: he has offered a definition of courage much less intellectual; much less closely expressed in terms of intellect; courage is rather the training of the will by long habituation, to follow the dim-seen vision of "the noble" and "the glorious," until this dim vision has ripened with years into knowledge, and faith has passed into sight; and the heart of the disobedient, because he has conquered his tendency to disobey, has been turned to the wisdom of the just (if one may use Biblical language to expound Aristotle's Biblical doctrine of the will that has learned of the doctrine).

But more than this, "knowledge," which is Plato's word for courage and for all other virtue, is actually a spurious form of courage to Aristotle; the desperado knows that life has no longer any value; therefore he is courageous; the fanatic knows that Heaven awaits him on the battle-field; therefore he is courageous; the expert knows that the enemy of the moment cannot shoot; therefore he is courageous: these three men have all knowledge in some form or other; and all three are nerved by their knowledge to face battle; and yet all three are displaying a poor courage because an intellectual courage, compared with that following of the gleam, that venture of faith, that speculation of hope, that gamble of love, which marks the truly courageous service of τὸ καλόν; courage is faith, says Aristotle

in effect: or—as the late William James preferred to put it—Faith is Courage.

What a contrast between this valiant faith in an obscure instinct and the Platonic "retention of an opinion"! as though courage were a matter of argument, of *pro* and *con*; and the nice calculation of probabilities.

But even more striking than the parting of company from Plato and Socrates in Aristotle's list of spurious forms of courage, is his omission of the commonest, simplest and most effective and the highest of those spurious forms; the courage of high spirits, the courage of a noble animal, the love of adventure, the fascination of danger, the ordinary courage of an ordinarily effective army; even though, on the authority of the Duke of Wellington, and, by reading between the lines of the Funeral Speech, on the authority also of Pericles (Thucydides, II, 42, 4; compare p. 15 above), we may admit that possibly the most effective and sure form of desperate courage, when it can be evolved, is, as the words imply, the courage of the desperado, "of the London blackguard," who has nothing to lose: of the Foreign Legion, of broken men who have run through life; but no one, except defending a Platonic thesis, would call it true courage, but only an effective substitute for true courage.

But, to return, Aristotle omits the courage of high spirits and adventure, of the *joie de vivre*, or, if he does not omit it, includes it under the vague word *θυμός*: *θυμός* will then cover for him the courage of high spirits; and with Plato still more clearly *θυμός* and *τὸ θυμοειδές* are the terms for natural and animal courage; but then, on the other hand, Aristotle's illustrations and quotations show that he identified this courage—without seeing any difference or inconsistency—with the courage of anger (*Ethics*, III, Chapters 6–8; *Ethics*, I, 3, 10; and *Politics*, VII, 1315*a*, 30).

Is there any explanation possible of so strange a conclusion except the suggestion that the Greeks generally tended to so confound two different qualities, high spirits and anger? and to miss in theory and practice the higher courage of high spirits, and to supply its place with the lower courage of anger? The mistake is perhaps not confined to Greeks: modern Pacifists, in their horror of war, write as if no soldier had ever fought (even before the Great War and the terrors of modern science) with the gay courage of high spirits and with the joyous love of adventure, and without the alloy of anger and "seeing red"; yet such courage was frequent before Germany and science "poisoned" war, and emptied it of some of its best ingredients; and even in the Great War itself and in spite of science, there was a measure of true chivalry and true courage on both sides, without anger: something still of the spirit, which prompted the historical invitations "messieurs des gardes Françaises tirez," "nous ne tirons, jamais les premiers; tirez vos mêmes," though not in the same degree in which they would have been found but for German "frightfulness" and modern science: "anger"—it was a familiar topic during the war—was the note of the arm-chair politicians at home: who hated the enemy much more than those soldiers at the front on both sides, who entertained not seldom a good-humoured fellow-feeling for his "comrades" on the other side.

But if the Greeks *could* confound "anger" with "courage" and use for each at random the same ambiguous word *θυμός*, is it not a sign that the will was a weaker element in their character than in the character of most peoples? and is not the conclusion in keeping with the predominant part played by the intellect in their lives? The highest ambition of any man or nation may be summed up in the profound aphorism of the Funeral Speech of Pericles (Thucydides, II, 40, 1) *φιλοσοφοῦμεν ἄνευ μαλακίας*:

high thinking and high willing; but history has not established the realization of that ambition by Athens unless it be for a moment while Pericles controlled her; rather it establishes by the mouth of Demosthenes the utter failure of later Athens to match the high thinking with high willing; and by all the works of Plato and Aristotle the insufficiency of the talking, thinking and dreaming Athenian to be a philosopher's model; both Plato and Aristotle have constructed ideal states, the citizens of which are almost as obviously not Athenians as they are also not mere Spartans; nay, in Plato's Callipolis, one might suppose for a long time, for half the work in fact, that one were in Sparta; and one needs time and familiarity with his state to discover all its divergence from Sparta's narrow militarism: Plato and Socrates were always tempted to idealize Sparta; *τὸ λακωνίζειν*—says Plato (*Protagoras*, 342*b*, *c*, *e*) *οὐκ ἐστιν ὡς οἴονταί τινες τὸ φιλογυμναστεῖν ἀλλὰ τὸ φιλοσοφεῖν*: Socrates was never tired of paying his tribute of respect to Sparta; of comparing her in details (*Apology*, 37*a*, *b*) to her advantage with Athens; to Sparta he gave his fluent praise and his academic testimonials; to Athens, his fault-finding and—his love; judged by the ultimate test of his life he was a true Athenian; he never left Athens except for the front and the trenches; to watch under the northern stars by the dying camp fires of Potidæa, and to stalk severely and at his leisure across the stricken field of Delium (*Symposium*, 220–221); he never left Athens practically even for a walk in Attica; like Dr. Johnson he stuck to the city streets; but so far as his words went he was philo-Laconian; as Aristophanes has described him and his coterie in *The Birds* (1281):

ἐλακωνομάνουν ἅπαντες ἄνθρωποι τότε.
ἐκόμων ἐπείνων ἐρρύπων ἐσωκράτουν.

Perhaps a further incidental note of the relation between courage and knowledge for all Greeks, even

in some degree for Aristotle himself, is found in his references to death at sea, death by shipwreck and drowning; one would suppose shipwreck to be a fair field for Aristotle's "true courage"; the service of nobility τὸ καλόν; but it is not so; there is no "glory" in being drowned, as there is glory in falling in battle for the state's service; it is a useless and a horrid waste of life, that is all (*Ethics*, III, 6, 7).

Even Aristotle cannot imagine true courage finding play except in some activity which is beneficial and beneficent and social and even somewhat spectacular; which has a purpose and a result; which is in short useful as well as noble. The intellect demands that it understand and approve a noble death; there is no understanding or approving of shipwreck; though a man may understand and approve of a battle; a man must secure something worth securing before he can be said to die a noble death; and exhibit true courage; the sailor drowned like a rat at sea secures nothing, saves nothing, makes nothing—except his soul it may be and his peace with God. But the exception is too mystical and dubious for the intellectual Greek. Similarly poverty—the most obvious field for courage to a modern Englishman—offers no field for it to Aristotle (*Ethics*, III, 6, 4), it is just degrading apparently and humiliating; and through its humiliation and degradation the artistic Greek sees nothing in the shape of compensation; of the poor man he will say, with the Græcised Roman nobleman of the Empire (Tacitus, *Annals*, XIV, 40):

> "Chill penury repressed his noble rage
> And froze the genial current of his soul."

And if the intellect be starved by penury, what remains? And what is greater than the intellect? Quixotic Christians, it is true, have suggested that Sir Walter Scott was a greater man when, with a worn-out intellect, he wrote *Count Robert of Paris*

and *Redgauntlet* to pay his debts, than when he composed in his prime *Old Mortality* and *The Antiquary*; because he developed in the interval greater force of will and character, greater supplies of stubborn fortitude ("Scott" in *English Men of Letters*, by R. H. Hutton). It is not a Greek reflection; in the Greeks "the native hue of resolution was sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought": they lived by thought and not by resolution; they died by reason of thought for want of resolution; it was the fate of Greece herself πολλὰ φρονέουσα μηδενὸς κρατέειν (Herodotus, IX, 16) of Greeks that a man should know too much and effect too little; that he should advertise all the disabilities of thought; that he should even "know everything and do nothing" πρὸς ἅπαν συνετὸς ἐπὶ πᾶν ἀργός (Thucydides, III, 82, 6). This was his national métier and his epitaph in history; science, poetry, logic, language, were his glory, as in the familiar lines of Virgil (*infra*, Chap. ix, p. 196) not to rule the world, or even to rule themselves strictly; to be hearers and speakers more often than doers, of the words so often in their mouths; to subject themselves to each impression in turn, and translate it into the best expression: "impressionists, connoisseurs, tasters of life and dreamers; slaves of each new novelty, contemptuous of everyday things; more like undergraduates listening to sophistry in a debating hall, or a lecture-room, than statesmen pondering a nation's welfare" (Cleon in Thucydides, III, 38, 4 and 5). What else can the world ask from "the intellectuals"?

If a Greek or a Greek-minded modern tell us that virtue is knowledge what can one more usefully retort than that the bald opposite is as true? that virtue is ignorance and that ignorance is bliss; nay, that knowledge is only disabilities or demoralization or life-long indecision, that ignorance, which the Greek describes as vice, is as often innocence,

self-control, reserve, modesty, faith, hope and charity; or again, true passion and idealized desire; a whole catalogue, in short, of virtues; and in a word the truest wisdom: for every man who has achieved a painful virtue—painful to himself and others, as the author of *Ecce Homo* has remarked (p. 94 of the 15th edition)—by hard thought, it is easy to find some one, some nation even like the early Romans, who were at once very virtuous and very ignorant; whose virtues disappeared with their ignorance; whose vices began with their Greek philosophy; their innocent virtue, no doubt, was not the truest virtue; but it was truer than the virtue of knowledge; than the virtue of tried and tired experience, and of enlightened selfishness: a man may come by thinking and experience to endorse the decalogue and to cry "vanity of vanities" over everything else; but an ignorant child may remain more interesting and edifying, at any rate to those (and they are the average men and women) who find character and instinct and imagination more interesting than thought and experience.

Finally, if virtue be knowledge all the virtues are the same and the distinction between them is a distinction without a difference; Plato did not reject this logical conclusion; "courage is knowledge," as we have seen already; though Aristotle objects that it is in this case a spurious courage; "eloquence is knowledge," as Socrates was fond of saying; yet Socrates was never so eloquent as when he was trifling and giving rein to his imagination; "modesty is knowledge" (Plato, *Charmides*, 166*e*), "knowledge of what one knows and what one does not know;" though here there is a verbal fallacy obvious and on the surface; modesty tells me what I know and do not know in the sense of how much and how little I know; what subjects and what parts of them; yet it is not by modesty after all that I know the things I know, but by intelligence; the pitfall of a

pronoun "what," has been too much for Socrates in the *Charmides*: "courage is temperance; temperance in the face of danger; and temperance is courage, courage in the face of pleasures" (Plato, *Laches*, XVIII, 191*d*). Yet no man "who has been there," has ever recognized the identity of the fears of pain and the temptations of pleasure, nor, *a fortiori*, the identity of the forces of resistance in each case; in short, Plato, as usual, with his generalizing mind—the philosopher, he says, is he who generalizes, *ὁ συνοπτικὸς διαλεκτικὸς ὁ δὲ μὴ οὐ* (*Rep.*, VII, 537*c*)—has mixed and mingled all the virtues; even as he mixed and mingled virtue and knowledge, virtue and art, life and art, judge and doctor, expert and saint, expert and statesman, man and woman, the human species and the lower animals, philosophy and religion; while Aristotle conversely, to whom philosophy meant the drawing of distinctions (*οὐκ ἔστι διορίζειν τῶν πολλῶν*, *Ethics*, X, 1, 3), was sometimes drawn into distinctions between the virtues which seem to be merely verbal as between fearlessness and foolhardiness (*Ethics*, III, 7, 7). In this direction, if anywhere, lies the root of the often quoted but never defined aphorism of Coleridge, that every man is by birth a Platonist or an Aristotelian.

Or again a modern intellectual, Mr. Bernard Shaw, scoffs amusingly at Casabianca; why did the silly boy stick to a burning deck, where no one else stuck, in misapprehension of a father's orders? What an unintelligent, almost unintelligible, fool of a child! Similarly, when the *Titanic* went down, with her passengers singing "Nearer, my God, to Thee," what grotesque misjudgment it was, and how characteristic of the stupid English, that their countrymen and their Press found nothing better to write by way of comment than to vaunt the courage of these drowning psalmists! Rather they should have sat in sackcloth, the drowning men and the survivors and the nation at large, to do penance for their gross

stupidity and blindness and foolhardiness. What right had they to risk icebergs and Nature in the crazy spirit of "sport," the typical spirit of Englishmen? What right to race across the ocean to make or break a "record"? Plato could not have put it better; true courage is knowledge and prudence; a knowledge of the icebergs to be feared, and of the innocuousness, on the other hand, of slight delays, and of "records" missed; the passengers and the officers and the owners of the *Titanic* lacked intelligence; much good their courage and character did them when intelligence failed! No Greek, Mr. Shaw might have added, was ever drowned when he could have helped it, in the beastly sea (Aristotle, *Ethics*, III, 6, 7): the prudent Odysseus, according to Homer, took ten years to make the return voyage from Troy to Ithaca: and Kinglake in *Eothen* has suggested that it was a fair average passage, according to his experience of Greek mariners. This is good fooling from Mr. Shaw and better from Mr. Kinglake.

The same intellectualism, finally, explains—apart from some unnatural excesses—the quality of Greek friendship; friendship is not to be found in marriage, Athenian women not being intellectual; the Athenian man married not for friendship—intellectual friendship he could not find there and moral friendship he did not value highly—but to fulfil a tiresome duty to the state, and pay a tiresome tax; the state needed ever new citizens of lawful Athenian birth, and marriage was the only means of achieving this political end. Lawful marriage was as necessary for political reasons as in a Christian society, for other reasons better or worse; but it was tiresome; so tiresome that an Athenian sought friendship either with the "emancipated" and easy-living women of Ionia, who had cultivated all the charms of conversation, dress and manner, which his own women did not possess (and which he did not wish them to possess), or with clever, handsome boys; the boys

at least were intellectual; and Socrates himself, Socrates, who was as beyond reproach as beyond fear, felt as strongly as any Athenian that attraction of boyhood, which became a reproach to Greek civilization when felt by Romans, Spartans and other men of coarser fibre. In reality, as *Οὔτις* has pointed out in his letter to *The Spectator* of April 29, 1922, the reproach was confined to the sophisticated class in Athens who had educated themselves out of instinct, and had its origin in Dorian rather than in Athenian manners; and out of the coarsest and most primitive form of commercialism and economic prudence; the attraction itself to boyhood—apart from its excesses—had a very different and infinitely more intellectual basis in Athens, and adds a further illustration, in the sphere of friendship, of Athenian intellectualism.

If this characteristic admiration for handsome and intellectual boyhood hardly survives to-day, it is because it has been replaced in our civilization by another worship equally characteristic; by that wistful passion for the innocence, ignorance, simplicity, and sincerity of childhood, which is one of our most distinctive and profound obligations to the founder of our system (p. 145 *infra*).

CHAPTER III

VIRTUE AND ART

BUT if virtue be knowledge, as Plato and Socrates and their later disciples assert, it is something else of necessity also; virtue is an art and a science; the art and science of living; the art and science of calculating what under any given circumstances will be for the greatest advantage of the calculator; or, if not this, which seems most logical, then, as John Stuart Mill maintained, for the greatest advantage of the greatest number of mankind.

If expediency is to be the rule—and Socrates, though he never interpreted expediency in a narrow sense, insisted on rationalizing human instincts and virtues into some sort of utility or expediency (*Republic*, V, 458*e*)—it may be the expediency which we call self-interest, or the greatest happiness of the greatest number: but in either case it seems to involve logically a careful study of circumstances, a cautious opportunism, rather than a blind and faithful obedience to some general principles, in despite of consequence.

The Baptist minister who dragged Oliver Cromwell out of a pond in his childhood is said to have regretted afterwards his courage and benevolence; on his Christian principles, however, he could not have acted otherwise; but if virtue be knowledge and the art of life, the calculation of general happiness and utility, it is perhaps to be expected that life-savers in the future will turn over the drowning wretch to see his face, like the sailor in the story, before finally bringing him ashore.

At any rate this corollary from the last chapter, this inference that virtue is an art, is continuously present as an obvious and unstated assumption in the arguments of the Platonic Socrates, and explains often what seems to the uninitiated reader meaningless quibbling and deliberate mystification.

Thus in the first book of the *Republic*, justice having been defined to be the benefiting of friends and the injuring of foes, Socrates immediately asks who it is who can do these things in the spheres of medicine and navigation; and is told that it is the doctor and the pilot: then what are the circumstances under which the practice of justice benefits friends and injures foes? Polemarchus cannot answer, but at last suggests that justice is useful to keep money safe for its owner, when he has for the moment left it in your hands: but—continues Socrates, in the same vein and with perfect logic, if his assumption be first granted—the man who can keep money best (who can make the best patent safe, for example) is also the man who can extract it most cleverly from its hiding-places (who can open another man's patent safe most speedily): just as the general, who hides his strategy from the enemy best, is the same general who ferrets out and steals the enemy's strategy; so after all the just man turns out to be a variety of thief—a thief who thieves for the benefit of friends and the injury of foes; and this in fact is only what Simonides and Homer and the poets told us long ago; they have exalted the Autolycuses (and the Joabs and the Bismarcks) who have excelled other men in stealing and lying for their country.

This amusing and vivacious persiflage is after all consistent logic, if you once grant its assumption that justice is an art parallel to medicine and piloting, to banking and soldiering; if you once grant what Socrates assumes without stating it, and his respondent accepts without protesting, that justice

is art, science and knowledge; the knowledge how to do something, rather than a condition of the will, the will to do something: a doctor rarely, a pilot almost never, is concerned in the practice of his art, to do more than exercise his brains and wits; his conscience is not tempted to do otherwise; duty and interest are coincident and the mind alone is active: but the just man, when he does the just thing, is in nine cases out of ten in exactly the opposite condition; he knows what to do perhaps, but the difficulty is to exert his will to do it; his interest and his duty are often in conflict; his conscience and his self-love draw him in opposite directions: the problem is not intellectual at all, or not chiefly intellectual; but moral; and ends in a struggle between conscience and desire, and the exercises of the will on one side or the other. The just man is not the man who makes the patent safe or exercises any other form of scientific ingenuity; but who maintains an ingenuous will; a will to be honest, with or without a knowledge of making or picking safes.

This is only one illustration, and not an extreme one, of the Socratic paradox that virtue is art: the paradox extends further; not only is virtue an art, but the whole of life becomes a mere congeries of the arts; the analogy of art and life, so fascinating to those Athenian tasters, who were for ever sipping life, and trying its savour with their tongues, and turning it to new uses and meditating new experiments in living, to those tentative experimentalists who shunned habits, and dreaded "the ruinous force of the will," to furnish belief, and to crystallize action prematurely, and to limit and starve experience, this analogy has no limits set to it in the Platonic dialogues: in the little dialogue, called *Ion*, poor Ion asserts the substantial truth, that the function of a poet is to know and express what a man, a woman, and a child, a king and a king's subject,

a slave and a free man, feel, say and do; to understand human nature beyond the limits of class, age and sex (*Ion*, 540*b*); but Socrates, with the arts as usual at his fingers' ends, with his mouth full of weavers and shoemakers and fullers, wants to know what sort of man will know best, what a general will say to his council of war, a seamstress to her circle of sewing women, a muleteer exhorting his mules up a steep pass. (I am embroidering perhaps for a moment.) Will it be the poet who can best express strategy, best understand needlework, best unloose the resources of language? Or will it not be the soldier, the seamstress and the muleteer? And so in a few minutes life and character pass out of sight and are forgotten, and Ion is confounded with the Socratic assumption that there is nothing in life but technique and art and science and knowledge, and no problems but problems of intellect; and no activity of human nature, except the activity of the brain or hands, and no key to life's questions except the key of knowledge.

Not that the key of knowledge is of small account. Aristotle and Sophocles not less than Plato and Socrates recognized the intellectual element in the moral life: but their point was that this element forms the special basis of tragedy, rather than of life in general; a man or woman means well but is headstrong (that is to say, in language less popular but more scientific, weak in the head), overbearing, impatient, arrogant, dogmatic; hence a king like Creon in the *Antigone*; compact of good will but narrow-minded: a woman confronts him as well-meaning and more unselfish and disinterested; but hardly less impatient and headstrong; and the tragedy is in train to follow.

But Aristotle and Sophocles are studying tragedy, not life; and who will say, except Socrates, that the normal problem of everyday life for everyday people is a problem of knowledge and intellect

rather than of will and conscience? We are suffering continually, it is true, from the folly, ignorance, and credulous enthusiasm of well-meaning people; we suffered in 1914 and before it from the British credulity which would not believe evil of Germany; but after all and in spite of all, this ignorance and credulity are not the sources of sin and crime in this world to as great a degree as the absence of right intentions and of a good will. Life is not all tragedy —in spite of those who feel—nor is tragedy or any other form of the drama the larger part of life; the most fruitful of tragedies—in a loose and popular sense—was not a tragedy at all according to the Aristotelian canon; the Crucifixion was *μιαρόν* rather than *τραγικόν*: horrible rather than tragic judged by the standards of Aristotle's *Poetics* (*Poetics*, XIII, 1452*b*, 35 and 36); the victim of tragedy must have literally earned his fate: or his fate ceases to be tragic and becomes shocking.

In accordance with the paradox that virtue is an art, Socrates was fond of saying that eloquence and oratory were just knowledge (p. 70, *supra*); that every man is eloquent of what he knows. If a man thinks so, let him look for a change at the opposite paradox that eloquence is never knowledge, is the antithesis almost of knowledge; that no man who knows is ever eloquent and no man who is eloquent ever knows his subject; that a man is eloquent out of half-knowledge, out of the little knowledge that is dangerous; that the great orator is eloquent because he has a mystic vision and one idea; that if he saw further and knew more his eloquence would fail him; and he would become as ineffective on a platform as an historian or a philosopher are ineffective. Is not *this* paradox just as true, no whit more exaggerated than the Socratic paradox? Is it not as worth while to harp on the disabilities of knowledge as to parrot the other half-truth, that knowledge is power?

But perhaps one of the best illustrations of the Socratic paradox that virtue is an art, is furnished by the little dialogue known as the *Hippias Minor*: quoted by Aristotle and almost certainly a genuine "Plato." In that little dialogue Socrates argues characteristically that voluntary offences are better than involuntary; that the servants who cheat you are better than the inefficient servants who break your dishes involuntarily, because their fingers are thumbs; that the liar is better than the ignoramus; that a rider who is only beaten because he has ridden for a fall, is a better rider than he who is beaten because he cannot ride to win; obviously he is a better *rider*; but the conclusion, that involuntary offences are worse than voluntary, because the former are hard to cure and may be incurable, while the latter need merely a change of will, only follows, if life be indeed a series of arts and sciences and horse-races, wherein the skill of the artist and the jockey are more essential than his honesty (*Hippias Minor*, *passim*, but especially 372–376, and also Xenophon, *Mem.*, IV, 2, 20).

And that last analogy of horse-racing, by the way, which occurs also in the first book of the *Republic* (*Rep.*, I, 333*b*), makes it difficult to take Socrates seriously. If you want to buy or sell a horse or to engage a jockey, you will no doubt need a horseman's advice and a jockey who can ride; and honesty alone in your adviser or your jockey will not take you very far towards a successful purchase or sale or race; but with equal certainty and in at least equal measure you will need honesty in your adviser, as well as knowledge of horseflesh, if you are not to be beaten in a horse-deal: of all "deals" in the world, the experience of ages has proclaimed this to be the deal where honesty in your adviser or your jockey is essential.

No one has ever been able to gauge Plato's serious-

ness or to eliminate his jesting; he is not an Englishman who, if he is serious, thinks it necessary to be dull because he knows that his countrymen profoundly distrust jesters and wits; he is a Greek who writes "at once with scholarly seriousness and with that playfulnes which is seriousness' twin sister," "ἅμα σπουδῇ μὴ ἀμούσῳ καὶ τῇ τῆς σπουδῆς ἀδελφῇ παιδιᾷ" (Platonic, sixth letter, 323*c*, quoted by the Master of Trinity in his edition of the *Gorgias*, p. 41); and if he were not so wedded to the paradox that virtue is knowledge and is art, his illustrations would often suggest that he is poking fun at his fellow-Greeks, who cannot see the gulf between knowledge and will, and cannot define the just man except by rehearsing the analogies which connect him with the doctor and the pilot, the house-builder and the house-breaker, and the horse-dealer and the horse-breaker, and others, whose professional titles denote skill and science rather than character and will; and whose professional qualities cannot be measured with the quality of the just man since they are not "in pari materia."

However, these bizarre and seemingly humorous comparisons are useful as leading up to one of the most humorous and bizarre of all Platonic analogies —and it was one of Socrates' chief gifts to divine bold and far analogies—*ἑπακτικοὶ λόγοι* (p. 71, *supra*) —the analogy between the magistrate and the physician, far-fetched to the verge of grotesqueness yet profoundly suggestive as an ideal (*vide* p. 61, *supra*): inconsistent with the facts of almost all prisons of to-day, especially inconsistent with the facts of Greek prisons, modern or ancient, all of which tend to harden and degrade the prisoner, yet destined to become in an increasing degree the fact of the prison of the future.

There is a further interest and significance in this strange comparison, that it is the fruitful fountain-head of other curious Socratic arguments, and equally

curious modern echoes of Socrates and Plato. For here is the germ of Plato's politics: if the police magistrate be a professional doctor of the soul, politics obviously is itself an art and a science, and as obviously should be in the hands of experts like any other science and art.

Away, then, with democracy, which is but "the cult of incompetence," as a French Plato, Faguet, was accustomed to say; and the government of ignorance: if you were on a ship at sea in a storm, Socrates seems to say somewhere in Xenophon (Plato, *Rep.*, VI, 488*d*, 489*b*; and compare Xen., *Mem.*, I, 2, 9; Plato, *Politicus*, 298–299), you would not take a show of hands, still less a drawing of lots, to find your helmsman; you would make a wild rush and seize the expert, and install him at the helm with or without his consent; and so it should be in the stormy sea of politics, instead of the insanity of the hustings and the market-place, and the tarred rope (the ancient form of compulsory voting) and the counting of heads, without the count of what is in them. This is entertaining: not more entertaining perhaps, but more impressive than the possible Greek answer: a Greek, it seems possible, if we read Kinglake's delightful *Eothen*, would have answered: "Quite wrong in your facts, Socrates: in a storm at sea our Greek sailors do hold a show of hands: the crew becomes an ἐκκλησία, a public meeting: every one orates and the captain loudest of all; it is a scene of pure oratory; we decide by a match of eloquence what shall be done" (Kinglake's *Eothen*, Chap. vi).

Socrates' argument, I repeat, is very entertaining and certainly not mere rubbish, nor as rubbishy as many elections are, but to what shall one demur first? to the proposition that politics is a science? or to the illustration from a ship at sea? Both proposition and illustration are misleading; it was Aristotle's province to prune the luxuriance of

Platonic metaphor and of Platonic parable, with his hard common sense: politics, remarks Aristotle dryly in his discussion of Hippodamus of Miletus, but it hits Plato quite as hard (Arist. *Pol.*, II, 8, 1268*b*–1269*a*), is not a science; and (in spite of the *Gorgias*) is not a form of medicine or navigation: the arts and the sciences, medicine in particular, rest on experience and experiment, and progress by these means: politics rests on what? Only on faith, on use and wont, on custom and precedent, on the joys of old habits and the comfort of old ways (I am expanding, as usual, a little); the first necessity to political happiness is stability, is a certain sense of finality, a certain unconscious acceptance of the present as natural and necessary; this sense of finality, this acceptance of the present cannot be metaphysically justified; the present cannot be proved to be the best condition for a people; nay, it can certainly be proved to involve many drawbacks; and yet if the reformer (with the moonlight of his semi-intelligence) proceed ruthlessly to remove these drawbacks, he will probably find that he has unbuilded more than he knew or meant; that he has sapped the building and loosened the foundations in the effort to remove an excrescence; for he has undermined that sense of finality, that repose in the sense of the natural and the necessary, on which all happiness depends; if even medicine finds large room for the play of faith, if it is to cure, politics finds faith infinitely more necessary; "Error also has its merits," said Voltaire, I think: meaning, presumably, that it had the qualities of its defects: but Aristotle's meaning is simpler, that it is much easier to destroy than to construct, but more essential to construct and to conserve than to introduce free thought into politics: that way lies anarchy, for politics is not a science or an art; it is a rule of thumb groping cautiously for better things; a slow "tâtonnement" after clues, if haply one may find them; it is like religion, in short, and like

religion it requires honest purpose and good intentions rather than expert knowledge:

> "for forms of government let fools contest
> the government of honest men is best"

(to parody Pope) or "the government of men honest even to simplicity" (to quote a lesser authority): nothing can be proved in politics—there is no such thing as political science except in university curricula—but honest men, of sound sense and mature experience, must be trusted to do their best and be allowed to risk the consequences; for nothing better than their best can be devised.

Here is Aristotle's protest against that expert in politics whom Socrates and Plato and Carlyle and every believer in Dr. Francia, and in other benevolent despots, every admirer of autocracy, every German (until yesterday) loyally devoted to the German philosopher-king, combined to exalt.

But apart from this Aristotelian demurrer, and even if we grant, for argument's sake, that we need experts in our politics, what after all do our painful elections and our noisy public meetings, and all the other clumsy machinery of our governments really mean, except that we are thereby striving to find our experts? On a ship storm-tossed at sea—to resume Socrates' misleading analogy—it is conceivable that one or two men alone are conspicuous as possible helmsmen; and that it is easy—except on a Greek ship—to choose between them; a nation at sea has no such easy task; it cannot turn confidently to noblemen; they are only men and history forbids; it cannot turn to poets; ancient Athens as a city of idealists turned to Sophocles; Paris, the modern Athens, turned in 1871 to Victor Hugo, and in 1848 to Lamartine; none of the three experiments was conspicuously successful; our own people, in any case, are too matter of fact to believe in poets; there are no Mafeking nights in London as there was a

Mafeking night in Paris, to celebrate a poet's burial; we cannot even go with confidence to bankers or lawyers or doctors as such; we are dubious about our Labour-leaders and working men, though Socrates thought much better of this class than of poets and orators and professional politicians (*Apology*, Ch. 8, 32*c*, *d*, *e*). Finally, we cannot restrict our cabinets to University B.A.'s, or even to Oxford honour-men; we should by so doing have retained Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey, and Lord Milner and Lord Curzon: but we should have lost Mr. Lloyd George, and we needed "our best drummer-boy" for the Great War; in short, as a sensible people we must simply just elect everywhere the men who seem most conspicuously honest and prudent, intelligent and energetic; these men are the only experts we recognize for an art and science so inchoate and tentative and experimental as politics.

That is the answer most men make to Socratic and Platonic politics: and to the implied government of philosophers and professors and Dr. Francia; democracy is a poor thing enough, but partly because many men and most journalists treat it as an end, instead of as a means, and as the antithesis of aristocracy, instead of as a method for discovering the only true aristocracy, and the only real "Divine right" to rule, the right of the best character and the best ability.

That democracy has occasionally served as such a method for reaching true aristocracy, the history of ancient Athens for a short time at least seems to prove—if it is inadvisable to quote a more modern instance from the elections in Great Britain of 1922. Pericles was kept in power by the people of Athens in recognition of the fact that he was their best man; "the government was in name a democracy, in fact a government of the best man" (Thucyd., I, 65, 10).

The illustration counts for something, even though it be countered by the fall of the modern Pericles,

Venizelos; Venizelos appears to have been overthrown, in part at least, by the other and twin-spirit of a democratic state, which goes hand-in-hand with reverence, jealousy; but not so much after all by a genuine jealousy of the people as by a jealousy which Pericles never had to face in an equal degree, the jealousy of the professional politicians and the party leaders, who have, under our representative system, ousted the man in the street from the control of the state's policy; and besides and still more, Venizelos had against him the inevitable and natural disgust of ordinary men and women for the leader who has triumphed—even though his country shares his triumph—by foreign bayonets and as the agent of unpopular and high-handed aliens. Venizelos' eclipse does not in reality cancel the credit which belongs to Periclean democracy.

But, however this be, democracy is more promising, just because it has possibilities, than the rule of the so-called expert.

The British Association, by the way, a few years ago proposed to follow Plato and to establish a board of Platonic Professors to regulate marriage and to mate young men and young women: the United States, the hot-bed of dreamers and idealists and innovators, produce many stirpiculturists of this fashion; the Eugenists of Great Britain follow suit; even Dr. Johnson himself began in despair to lean heavily on the Lord Chancellor for this purpose; all these Platonic suggestions contain possibilities: chiefly of an alarming kind; *apparent dirœ facies.* Who trusts professors? Who does not distrust them? If only because they often distrust themselves and always distrust each other. The late Grant Allen, himself a professor, and a Professor of Biology, distrusted Plato and the British Association, when he heard their programme: he said that he found it easier to believe, albeit with qualms of unbelief, in the wisdom of Nature and of instinct.

In any case, the analogies between politics and justice on the one hand, and art and science on the other, are Greek, and rest on the intellectual basis on which the Greeks based life; they are as characteristically repudiated by people of our race, whose system rests on the ideas of will and character, and of a gospel which was to the Greeks foolishness; a gospel established only out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, and, if received by honourable women not a few, never accepted by many wise after the flesh.

Push Greek intellectualism to its logical conclusions and to its metaphysical foundations, and it implies a conception of the soul of man, of the ψυχή, as being primarily and ultimately intellect.

And this is precisely the presupposition which underlies even Aristotle's arguments and still more Plato's, though it involves each of them in continual contradictions.

The only part of the ψυχή, says Aristotle in the tenth book of his *Ethics* (Ch. 8, 3) which can be regarded as separable from the body, as κεχωρισμένον or χωριστόν, is the intellect or νοῦς; all other virtues seem closely connected with the feelings and therefore with the body; and to be inseparable from the body.

Plato drops the same remark in the seventh book of the *Republic* (Ch. IV, 518*d*, *e*), "but the virtue of intelligence," he continues, "seems to be something more divine and to unite men with the gods and with the life of the gods": and the life of the gods may be defined, adds Aristotle (*Metaphysics*, 1074*b*, 34) as "thinking upon thought."

But what is "thinking upon thought"? And apart from that obvious question, and apart from the phrase itself, which suggests that even Aristotle can take refuge in mysticism when he is driven into a corner, what is the basis of this assumption that all virtues except "the virtue of the intellect"—a term

which in itself betrays the speech of Greece and is a stumbling block to later readers—rest upon the body? Seemingly it rests, though it is not explicitly so stated, on the manifest relation between ordinary virtue and habit; and the equally manifest relation between habit and the body: all bodily excellence is developed and preserved by habit; a man runs, and a woman plays the piano, by virtue of habit; whatever therefore is habitual is of the body, like speed of foot and nimbleness of finger; but "the moral virtues"—the Greek phrase—generosity and courage (true courage, at any rate), are also developed by ἄσκησις; by habit, by the long and patient practice of them; the truly generous and courageous man is what he is on principle; on principle born of dim instinct, but followed faithfully, till his moral eyes have become "set," as the eyes of a cricketer, and he can play the game of right living almost unconsciously; and the greater the unconsciousness of the play, the more conscious he becomes of its rightness: conversely the opposite kind of man, who rejects ἄσκησις and will not force himself to follow those dim instincts, becomes colour-blind in ethics, and can no longer after a time distinguish between good and evil: sin is not ignorance, in spite of Plato, so much as ignorance is sin: the last result of wilful wrongdoing: this is the argument of Aristotle's *Ethics* (III, 1, 14–15; III, 5, 4–22).

All this seems reasonable enough and suitable for any Christian manual of ethics: but what of the assumption that the law of habit proves the corporeal and physical basis of "the moral virtues"? ("The moral virtues" as Plato and Aristotle call them, "virtue" in our language.)

Does not the assumption prove too much? If habit proves the underlying presence of the body in our "virtue," does it not prove equally the same presence of the body in our thought? Thought also has its law of habit and its associations of ideas resting on habit.

And what other basis is there for this assumption by the Greeks of the body as the basis of "virtue"? Is there any that will bear examination?

σωφροσνύνη, that is "virtue" (in the narrow mediæval or the narrow Puritan sense), temperance, self-control, implies control of the body; does it thereby suggest a physical basis? Does it not rather thereby exclude a physical basis? Because intemperance is of the flesh, is temperance equally so? Perhaps it is because Aristotle so assumes, that he defines *σωφροσύνη* logically but curiously as the right love of pleasure, not as the control of the physical appetite for pleasure; the definition is consistent with his underlying assumption; but is there anything else to be said for it?

Plato reaches, perhaps, the same conclusion, when he divides the soul into the elements of thought or reason, *τὸ λογιστικόν*, of anger or spirit or will, *τὸ θυμοειδές*, and into appetite, *τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν*: where do his "moral virtues" come in under this catalogue?

Temperance or "goodness," *σωφροσύνη*, if it be not identical with justice, as it appears to be in *Charmides*, 161*b*, comes in somewhat as with Aristotle, though less unreservedly, as the virtue proceeding, in part at least, from the element of appetite, *ἐπιθυμία* (*Rep.*, IV, 431*c*); that is, apparently "goodness" is the right appetite, the appetite for the right things, the right love of pleasure, or the moderate and rational love of it: Plato's confused and very cautious statements perhaps reflect his sense of the difficulties of his position in this matter: what have the *ἐπιθυμίαι per se* to do with reason? and how can they be moderated and rationalized except by an element external to themselves? So that the *ἐπιθυμητικός* is in fact not *ἐπιθυμητικός* only but something more. The rest of the moral virtues come in apparently under the very vague and indefinite element of *θυμός* (above, pp. 63–65), courage, will, affection, generosity, seem to be instincts of the noble brute, of the lion, for example (Plato was not up to date in his animal psychology, and

had not yet dethroned the lion from the throne of beasts); at any rate the true *ψυχή*, he says (*Rep.*, X, 612*a*), is ultimately *μονοειδής* and simple; and is intelligence; such gods, then, as Ares, the personification of soldierly courage, and all men who are merely true soldiers, loyal to their orders and brave, have developed the secondary virtues only; the virtues which usually follow in the wake of thought and obey thought (Plato, *Rep.*, IV, 439*e*, the story of Leontius; and compare *Ethics*, I, Ch. x), but which are not of the essence of the soul, and presumably will not form part of the ultimate and Divine life, which is thought.

Aristotle becomes even sophistical and superficial —and it is rarely that he becomes so—in pushing this principle of the sovereignty of thought and of its divinity. There can be no honesty or generosity or affection, he remarks, in God, for these virtues imply vulgar temptations; can God be tempted to steal? to be mean? And as for affection, he loves only the philosopher (*Ethics*, X, 8, 7–13).

The exception is doubly unfortunate; not only because the philosopher, as the author of *Ecce Homo* has put it (*vide* p. 70 above), excites pity rather than love (for he is always compounding for the morbid and unnatural offences, from which the instinct he has unlearned might have saved him, by unnatural and morbid exaltations of mind), but because it is also inadmissible that the gods should love even him; love is not "thinking upon thought" and is beneath the dignity of their rôle: presumably Aristotle would have defended the inconsistency on the same plea on which he defends the participation of the dead in the joys and sorrows of those they have left behind them on earth (*Ethics*, I, 11, 1), that any other creed is *λίαν ἄφιλον καὶ ταῖς δόξαις ἐναντίον*; too cheerless and too far out of touch with natural sentiment; the plea is Aristotelian and good enough, but even Aristotle cannot have it both ways. If the plea be good, the

philosophic conclusion that the life of Heaven is *νόησις νοήσεως* is not good.

Plato is never so nearly true to his presupposition that the soul is thought; he assumes continually that righteousness or temperance (*Charmides*, 161*b*), the balance of man's triple soul, its health and equipoise (*Rep.*, IV, 11, 434 *c*), is godlike and a part of the divine nature; but it is just as difficult to harmonize this assumption with the initial and deep-lying prepossession that the soul is reason and is also *μονοειδής*, single; and therefore is reason alone.

He does not, like Aristotle, suggest Positivism and that disappearance of all theology, or *εὐθανασία* of theology, which follows if the life of God be a thinking upon thought; but he only preserves the natural instinct which asserts the goodness of God as the first source of all theology (*Rep.*, II, 18, 379*a*) at the expense of his logic and his consistency.

The passage so often quoted, and generally misquoted, about "the lie in the soul," illustrates Platonic intellectualism vividly enough: there is, he says (*Rep.*, II, 382*a*, *b*, *c*), the lie verbal and the lie veritable; the first is the lie upon the lips, an untruth; but a man is in a more perilous condition, if he has reached the second stage, and harbours a lie in his soul; that is, if he be ignorant. The first sort of lie may be necessary often, especially in theology; it may be a concession to man's ignorance, to the hardness of his intelligence, or to the poverty of language, and to the obscurity of the subject, and to the necessary use of metaphors; or it may again be necessary and lawful for magistrates and dignitaries, "a very present help in time of trouble," in the face of men's passions: or, finally, it may be only technically and literally a lie and be true in spirit (this last defence perhaps includes and covers both the others). But the second sort of lie, the lie veritable, ignorance, seems to Plato to be the sin against the Holy Ghost, for it is a sin against true thinking.

The Greek and the Christian modes of thinking have here reached an antipodes; what we call a real lie, a lie veritable, is to Plato a lie verbal, a lie upon the lips; what we call a lie verbal, an unconscious misstatement of fact, is to him the lie veritable, the lie within the soul. It is difficult to find a more piquant example of Greek terminology and Greek intellectualism.

But if the life of the soul or of Heaven be "thinking upon thought," much more follows, implied already if not expressed.

This follows that the immortality of the soul, which Aristotle and Plato suggest, and upon which Plato at least insists, is not the immortality of the Christian churches, but is as far from it almost, as it can well be.

In the irony of history the majority of churchgoers hear the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, occasionally if not often, from the pulpits of their churches, and hear it generally in a form at least quasi-Platonic; they hear of a soul inherently and intrinsically immortal; Clement of Alexandria and Origen, each a Platonist, having introduced this doctrine to the Christian Church; and yet, as a matter of fact, not only is this Platonic doctrine by no means demonstrably the doctrine of the Gospels—students of eschatology maintain with Dr. Salmond that a conditional immortality dependent upon faith in Christ, is just as reasonably or more reasonably deduced from the language of the New Testament—but still less is it the doctrine which the majority of Christians probably would wish it to be, and which they assume it to be; when *they* talk of immortality, they imagine a renewal of personal life, where they will meet old friends and come to know them better, where they will strengthen old ties and "see those angel-faces smile which they have loved long since and lost awhile": and where in the words of the same Christian apologist "you will still be you":

they imagine the Great Assize and all that follows it, somewhat as Socrates imagines it in the *Apology*, when he speculates humorously, *more suo*, on the pleasure of meeting other victims of stupid juries and bad decisions, and of comparing notes with them; somewhat, but not entirely, as Socrates imagines it in the *Gorgias* and the *Republic*.

But the immortality which Plato conceives turns out to be—with one large reservation to be noted later—an impersonal immortality; the basis of the soul is reason and reason is immortal and indestructible, and enters body after body of new-born babe, and sojourns there for a longer or a shorter period; but this immortal part has nothing in common with the character and personality, which the babe will develop in the course of life; character and personality depend upon heredity and circumstance and to a slight, almost negligible, extent upon free will; they will last one term of life, but are no permanent possession of the soul; the character and personality of the soul in its previous incarnation will pass away before its next incarnation, with the drinking of the water of forgetfulness (*Rep.*, X, 621*a*), and leave not a wrack behind: or hardly a wrack; at best some temperate soul may drink so sparingly as to retain dim reminiscences into its next life, of its previous incarnations, "of old forgotten far off things and battles long ago;" may be able to identify even, as Pythagoras claimed to do, the shield which he had carried at the siege of Troy; such reminiscences contain materials, as Mr. Kipling says, for "the finest story in the world"; but they are the rarest of exceptions and throw no light, for the vast majority of mankind, upon the perpetuity or the self-consciousness of the spirit (ψυχή) which for the moment gives them life: "you will still be you," said the Cardinal, as a self-evident assertion of the immortality of the soul; but you will no longer be you, in Plato's system; the transmigration of the soul to

him is compatible with the laws of heredity, but only because all that we think of as soul, the personality of a man, is the product merely of circumstance and heredity with a spice of free-will added, and disappears with his life, or, to be more correct, with his term of a temporary Heaven or Hell; while that which is immortal and does not disappear, but migrates into another body is the impersonal ψυχή, or portion of reason in each of us; in this other body it will take on all that comes by way of heredity to the new-born child from its parents and ancestry and country and time and surroundings; this will be its new character and personality; for which it will drop all previous characters and personalities: neither this nor those are of its essence; it has no personal essence; it is impersonal reason; just the breath of rational life and nothing more; just the basis of existence; just the spark of electric fluid, so to speak, as Dr. Patton has put it, which kindles in turn and burns out a hundred successive brief candles, and passes on in due time to animate another.

I spoke of "one large reservation," and of a term of Heaven or Hell: because Plato's system is a curious compromise; the immortal soul is impersonal; and yet though virtue is the soul's health and well-being, and so far is its own reward, yet Plato has misgivings that it is not, in a world like the present, its own sufficient reward: rather he must, like other moralists, and like Canning in politics, import a new world to redress the balance of the old: to add to righteousness a deserved Heaven and to evil or ignorance an earned Purgatory or even Hell; there is therefore a space of one thousand years between each transmigration of the soul, and each draught of the water of Lethe, which is spent by each man above or below, in bliss or in torment (Plato has his own millenarianism, so to speak: whereof, conceivably, faint echoes have rolled on as far as into the twentieth chapter of the Book of Revelation),

and in these intervals of Heaven or Hell it is natural for the modern reader to conceive a thread of personal consciousness stringing together the different incarnations of the same soul, and taking a bird's-eye view of its previous flights; some such assumption seems to us necessary to justify the doctrine of transmigration, if only to supply some token of possible conscious and continuous progress: it is only a modern assumption, however, unauthorized by Plato; continuous progress there may be, if the personal soul choose wisely the circumstances and heredity of the child into whose body it is next to pass (and it has a fairly free choice only modified by a certain element of sheer luck which may cripple but cannot cancel its power to choose wisely) (*Rep.*, X, 617*e*, 619*b*), but conscious progress there is not, in Plato's picture, except for a Pythagoras and for him in respect of negligible minutiæ and trifles only.

Such a doctrine excludes personal immortality and a permanent Heaven: it suggests instead many Heavens or Hells strictly temporary: ending at last for the best souls, if they can always choose aright their next incarnation, in an escape at length from the wheel of being into some Nirvana, some reabsorption into the Infinite Reason, from which their souls once issued; after they have duly animated many a different little lamp of every shade and shape and make and age and nation; all of them now broken little lamps and quite forgotten; for them at last the time has come "when even the weariest river winds somewhere safe to sea" and "when that which drew from out the boundless deep turns again home."

Platonic immortality is much more Oriental than Western, and more Buddhist than Christian. And it is a curious compromise, hard to gauge and appreciate: to what does it amount, this second life in a transitory Heaven or passing purgatory (if we rationalize away by our translation the Hell which

is eternal—p. 61, *supra*), is it better or worse for a man who has no personal immortality, that he should be able to look forward to a limited second life? does the prospect alleviate the terrors of ultimate dissolution and console a man for that inevitable end, by adjourning it for one thousand years? or does it only cheat him by giving to his aspirations, a promise which is unsubstantial? Poets like Browning, who are attracted to the doctrine of metempsychosis, assume a thread of consciousness, uniting the series of incarnations; Plato assumes the series of incarnations but no thread of consciousness beneath and behind them; does the severing of the thread before the next incarnation, after a single period of Heaven or of Purgatory, add to, or take away from, the natural fear of death, that instinct for life which the theorist who explains everything explains away (with religion and love and all the virtues) as at bottom only one of the many voices of the young, of *πολύφωνος Ἥβη*, only one of the many "functions" of youth; but which nevertheless has remained into maturity and into old age with men as sober, as sane, as alert in mind and sound in judgment as Samuel Johnson? Is Plato's compromise happier or freighted with more happiness for believers in it than the expansion of a hint or suggestion or perhaps implication only conveyed by Aristotle (*Ethics*, I, 10 and 11) that the dead survive so long as they retain a keen interest in those whom they have left behind? This is the converse of the equally characteristic suggestion of modern pessimists, Mr. Maeterlinck and Mr. Hardy, that the dead only survive when we remember them; exactly the opposite is the hint which one might expand from Aristotle: it is *we* who profit when *they* remember us (and act as our ministering spirits?); *they* survive as long as they take an interest in us, as long as we are worth their interest.

A minor point and much easier to determine is

the character of Platonic saintship, and the quality of Plato's angels; Plato has the old system of the Pharisees; a man who has kept the law, even though he has only kept it by reason of the wealth which enabled him on earth to avoid vulgar temptations —and this, as old Cephalus remarks, is the best service which wealth can serve, that it is easy for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven (*Rep.*, I, 330*d*, *e*; 331*a*, *b*)—or even though he has only kept it because he was a Spartan living in a state of tutelage a sheltered and cloistered life, under a paternal government of Spartan (or Roman) virtue, such a man is entitled to his Heaven; but there is no certificate of true virtue in his admission; quite the contrary; there may be implicitly involved in his admission the likelihood of his subsequent fall from grace.

It is one of the ironies of Plato's ironical God that the saints whom He admits to His Heaven on one occasion furnish much of the material for the next Purgatory or Hell; their made-up virtue does not debar them from the covenanted reward; and their right to the bliss of Heaven; but it foreshadows their reverse of fortune and change of portion when next they become flesh and reappear (in a sense) on earth; these saints owed their Heaven to circumstances, not to themselves, and their virtue, being but of circumstance, will fail them when they come to choose their next life on earth; and so there is a constant change—though not a necessary change —from Heaven to Purgatory and vice-versa (*Rep.*, X, 619*d*, *e*); the saints of one dispensation enter life again pre-disposed often to end that life in Purgatory; while the sinners from Purgatory, chastened by their sufferings, are pre-disposed, before they enter life again, to exercise a wise choice for their new career, such as will land them, in turn, in Heaven.

There is nothing in all this, it will have been noticed, of relative morality; and therefore nothing of

absolute morality, in the true sense of the words: nothing which anticipates the absolute and inexorable justice of Christ, when He measured the lives of publicans and harlots and sinners, not by their deeds but by their opportunities or lack of opportunity; when He prophesied that some of them would sit down in His Kingdom, when "the righteous needing no repentance," as He said in his profound irony, would be turned away; there is no recognition in the Platonic-Pharisaic Heaven of the widow's mite as a better passport than the rich man's munificence; all the relativity of virtue, which is of the essence of our Saviour's thought, and in which lies, to Christian notions, virtue absolute, because virtue is of the motives and the character, not of the outward act, all this relativity is foreign to the narrowly mechanical measurement of vice and virtue, to which Plato commits himself in these imaginations; presumably because, once more, he has forborne to plumb the depths of character and personality and has preferred the much easier task of measuring external acts and that outward life, to which Greeks confined themselves. Later poets hover between the internal or spiritual measurement of virtue and the external or mechanical, according to the mood of the hour, according as the unreality of thought and intention, or the other unrealities of act and life seem to them the more unreal. Browning can write alternately:

"But all the world's coarse thumb and finger failed to plumb,
So passed, in making up the main account.
All instincts immature, all purposes unsure,
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's amount;
Thoughts hardly to be packed into a narrow act,
Fancies that broke through language and escaped;
All, I could never be, all, men ignored in me,
This I was worth to God whose wheel the pitcher shaped."

And then in the other mood, the English mood:

"But the fault I impute to each frustrate ghost,
Is the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin;
Though the deed be a sin I say."

But though the dilemma be too complex and modern for a Greek, the first passage from Browning is further from his natural reflections, though be he a Greek and a man of reflection not action, than the second; even a Greek is not likely to overlook definite actions, however external and superficial they may be: and even a Greek is not absorbed in meditations of the inner life.

II

But after all in all this discussion of virtue as an art I am looking at art in only one of its senses; as the application of science.

But there is art in its other sense as fine art; as those applications of science which appeal to the eye and to the ear.

And it is still true that art plays an inordinate part in the Greek conception of life. Not the same art, no doubt, which appeals to us; the Greeks had not the same passion for the picturesque, which has obsessed the later world; their theatres, their actors, their language tended to be statuesque rather than picturesque; actors who wore high masks and walked on stilts, so to speak, must obviously resemble statues more than pictures; while as for the language of the Greek drama, it is only necessary to read the translations from the Greek by English poets, to note at once the same thing. Browning was certainly not a sensuous poet, but even Browning cannot translate Æschylus' *Agamemnon*, without introducing pictures and picturesque adjectives on every page, which have no place in the original, severe and statuesque; while as for Mr. Gilbert Murray's *Euripides* it is so modern as to be ravaged by sentiment and painting, a very small portion of which can be matched in the original, sentimental though *Euripides* was for a Greek poet; single bald words in the Greek become a whole line of beautiful imagery sometimes, as Mr. Aubrey St. John Mildmay

has pointed out in an interesting essay; all the charm and happiness of Mr. Murray's verses do not conceal their large departure from the austerity of the Greek.

But this is a small part, a minor portion, of the question: the Greeks, though they preferred sculpture to painting, and acted and spoke more like statues than pictures, were artists in the broader sense of the word; they hated especially monotony, tedium, the established, the conventional, the banal (p. 69, *supra*), although they were divided in mind about history, because their intellect prescribed a Thucydidean reserve of moderation and science appropriate to the complexity and cross-purposes of the subject, while at the same time their ears itched for eloquence and fine writing, even for all the tricks of style tediously rehearsed by Isocrates, alliteration, assonance and the rest; so that the artistic impulse —according to the caustic criticism of the Roman satirist (Juvenal, X, 174)—dominated the scientific instinct sometimes in their historians: in the case notably of the prince of artists and story-tellers, the de Maupassant of Greece, Herodotus: or, in a less interesting way, in the inferior histories of Ephorus and Theopompus.

In other cases the two impulses, artistic and scientific, co-operated to abjure the common-place, the tedious, the vulgar. They disliked Spartans and boors—the English of their time—who carried walking-sticks and walked fast and talked loud and whistled in their bath (Demosthenes (981) against Pantænetus, sect. 52, and Theophrastus, (Jebb) XIV. end).

They had the artistic temperament: with its impatience of the Philistine and the fool.

For the same reason they were soon bored to extinction by hearing for ever of the justice of Aristides (p. 42, above), by hearing Socrates expound for ever the same principles with the same illustra-

tions: singing the same songs to the same tunes: if truth did not change to "the new thing" which Athens loved, Socrates at least might change the tune of his song (Xenophon, *Mem.*, IV, 4, 6; *Gorgias*, 490*e*, 491*a*). They resented for the same reason, in spite of the scientific impulse, the book which exhausts the reader not less than the subject; *μέγα βιβλίον μέγα κακόν* (Callimachus' aphorism quoted by Athenæus, 72*a*); they wanted variety, change of subject, change of life, change of habit; as impressionists they were averse to rule, routine and regularity, to all the virtues typical of the early Roman, or of "the stunted Romans" of Sparta; or of the traditional Englishman; they had an itch to be as anarchical in their private lives, as in their Hellenic politics; after all, being Greeks, that is of course, Athenians, and not Spartans, they could not be so demoralized by the break-up of routine, as Spartans and Romans (and Englishmen) could be: a Greek was still a law, each to himself, when he broke the outer law: perhaps St. Paul (to the Romans, ii. 14) was thinking especially of Greeks: at any rate his words apply to them.

The Greek in fact, the typical Greek of Athens, was of the same mind as the late Mr. Pater when, in his young and irresponsible days, he wrote his whimsical and Greek book on the Renaissance, to deplore the formation of habits and to extol the openness of mind to new light, the fluidity and receptivity of soul, which seeks and finds something in everything (and therefore as a commentator less Greek will add "nothing in anything").

Some one has been misquoting lately from *Mark Rutherford*: "Socialism is an idea and therefore in the line of progress," and solid statesmen in England have been naturally scandalized; the Athenians would have sympathized with the spice of truth in that reckless paradox, and patent sophism (*Spectator*, July 21 and July 28, 1923).

It is easy to demur to "the ruinous force of the will"; Clough demurred as a Greek scholar who wanted the truth at all costs and felt that the will often interfered; the Greeks demurred both from the scientific and the artistic impulse; they recognized that the will stereotypes life and character to the detriment of experience and experiment and research, still more to the detriment of art.

Life is an art—the Greek mind seems to feel—the most curious, complex, delicate and diversified of arts; to be solved therefore by the most ingenious opportunism and diplomacy; and at all costs to be delivered from tedium, as far as is possible; life is not a battle—a Spartan and Roman idea—to be won by stubborn patience, by dogged endurance, by painfully organized habits and virtues, and by moral forces generally; by prayer even perhaps and fasting; life is an art whose first aim is to be spectacular, moving (in every sense), diversified, sensuous, plastic, ever-changing; whose deadly sin is to be dull, monotonous, unimpressive and unimpressed: sordid, squalid, common.

It is worth noting that St. Paul, who has contributed to our type of civilization more largely than the Greeks, though he compared life both to the art of the runner and to that of the soldier or boxer, and takes his metaphors alternately from each, appears, when he is most stirred, to turn to the soldier and the boxer more than to the runner: there is more will and less pure art involved in the arena and on the battle-field, than on the race track (for example: 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, ix. 26).

The satire of Tennyson's verses, at the expense, it is generally supposed, of another poet, "a Greek born out of due time," an Englishman with the Greek temperament, seems not unduly harsh, if applied to the sophists of ancient Greece who posed for their countrymen's admiration and for Socrates' irony: and who represented their race fairly well:

> "He spoke of beauty, that the dull
> Saw no divinity in grass,
> Life in dead stones, or spirit in air;
> Then looking as 'twere in a glass,
> He smoothed his chin and sleeked his hair
> And said the earth was beautiful."

There is yet a final illustration of the artistic side of Hellenism; "Show me," said a Chinaman (whose civilization used to be akin to the civilization of Greece in many ways) "how a nation behaves, and I will tell you the music in vogue." Music and morals are kindred topics for Chinese and also for Greeks; Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Politics* are full of illustrations of this theme; Philodemus, the Greek, whose work on music has been exhumed from the lava of Herculaneum, refers to this supposed kinship; Cicero, however, has somewhere remarked that it has no meaning for him, that it is foreign to the Roman point of view: it is equally foreign to the British; music has had more charm to soothe the refined breast of Hebrews, Greeks, Chinamen, or modern Germans, than it exercises over the barbarians of ancient Rome and modern Britain.

CHAPTER IV

HELLENISM IN CHARACTER

SOME one may object that there is no such thing as Hellenism in character, because there is no such thing as national character; character is a matter, it is sometimes said (in spite of Disraeli and those who find the secret of the world's history in race), of civilization and conditions, economic and others; all nations, Teutonic, Celtic and the rest, reproduce Hellenism or the Hellenic type under the appropriate conditions: Hellenism—as Isocrates says—is not of blood but of thought; *οὐ τοῦ γένους ἀλλὰ τῆς διανοίας* (Isocrates, *Panegyric*, 13).

I shall assume nevertheless that this is a large over statement, with but a modicum of fact beneath it, in spite of the marked changes, for example, which we see in British national character in our own times, its increased excitability and sentimentality, due to democracy, its increased divergence from the staid and reserved Norman and French-Canadian type: I shall assume that Hellenism is still a matter of race and temperament rather than of conditions and environment. What is Hellenism in character?

I presume it is broadly identical with what we call Individualism; in spite of the social spirit, forced by circumstances and against the grain upon the Greek *πόλεις*; it involves the tendency to champion the rights of the individual against the majority, and the rights of the individual community or city-state against the claims of the nation and the race.

The definition may seem inconsistent with the

emphatic "collectivism" of the city-state and the aggressive socialism of Plato, or the much milder socialism of Aristotle: but the emphatic collectivism of the city-state was only a civic individualism after all, with the city instead of the man for the unit, all other units being too small—except in the case of supermen like Alcibiades—to survive against the state, in the struggle for existence (Aristophanes, *Frogs*, 1431–1432).

As for the philosophers, philosophers illustrate their race as much by antagonizing it as by echoing its qualities; and Plato's socialism was the reaction against Pericles and against the Athenian theory and practice of individualism (*supra*, p. 36); its counterpart in the actual life of Greece was not in Athens but in second-rate Sparta; Sparta idealized by perverse philosophers like Plato and Socrates (all philosophers (except Aristotle) tending to be perverse and academic and the opposite of St. Paul, that is, "the other thing to all men") because she had not the particular faults which they saw about them in their own city, but nevertheless a negligible quantity in the history of Hellenism; nay, even in the history of the world, which has never been interested in Sparta again, until a German, Manso, took up the difficult task of writing her history.

Besides there is after all a great regard for the individual even in Plato himself, and still more in Aristotle; the state was to them only a means, though the only means, to individual perfection.

The doctrine of *laisser-faire*, of non-intervention by the state with the individual, of freedom of speech, freedom of life, of thought, of character, freedom of contract, was the doctrine of the typical Athenian sophist Lycophron, and the daily practice, within the limits enforced by circumstance, of the ordinary Athenian citizen, from the mass meeting to whom Pericles expounds this principle in the Funeral Speech (Thucydides, II, 37–40) to the extraordinary Socrates.

And even Plato, for all his Socialism, recommends young men to settle their differences individually with their fists, if necessary, rather than in the law-courts, and regarded the courts (with Aristophanes in the *Wasps*) as concessions to that superstitious legalism, which is one of the accidents of democracy, rather than a product of liberty (*Rep.*, V, 464*e*).

It follows that Hellenism often means what has been called since "little England-ism": non-interference with other states for your own sake as well as for theirs; escape for yourself from their broils and their difficulties, as well as renunciation of rights over them; a policy of "magnanimity and non-intervention" (*ἀνδραγαθία καὶ ἀπραγμοσύνη* (Thucyd., II, 63, 2), the traditional policy of Washington (the man and the city) which seeks to avoid "entangling alliances."

The Greek spirit was conspicuously individualistic in this matter for good and for evil; it championed that self-determination, which we have in our days pushed to mad extremes, and turned into a wild and chaotic nationalism of petty states; it championed the rights of the small and separate states of Greece against the Imperialism of Alexander; it fought for the picturesqueness and diversity and the artistic charm of the little-state system, against the drabness and monotonous uniformity of a Macedonian or a Roman Empire; it resisted all "coercion" as tenaciously and as fanatically as any Sinn Feiner or Irish Republican: Aristophanes uses the word *μικροπόλιτης*—the citizen of a little state (*Equites*, 817)—but casually only: the word itself is more significant and arresting than this passage would suggest and is used more significantly in Xenophon (*Hellenics*, 2, 2, 10; compare also *Republic*, II, 372*b*, *c*; IV, 423*a*; V, 460*a*; and Æschines, 44, 5). It implies a protest against even the modified Imperialism of Pericles.

Even when this individualism was beaten, it was

still the bearer of a gospel of freedom; it was not unlike Christianity itself, it was the forerunner of Christianity in its appeal to an enslaved world; Hellenism was, in its way, the poor apostle who made many rich, the slave who made many free; for it delivered men from the monotony and materialism and dullness of Roman rule, by revealing to them an individual soul and an inner world of thought and speculation, which Roman gold and power could not corrupt, where Roman thieves would neither wish nor be able to break through and steal.

It is natural that historians who see strongly the weak side of this Individualism of the petty self-determined states of Greece, the incoherence of its Ishmaelites, and the centrifugal selfishness of its life; who see strongly the strong side of Imperialism, its sense of law and order, its capacity for unselfish co-operation, for a more generous patriotism, and a broader nationalism; it is natural that historians of this temperament should take the side of Philip and Alexander, the Imperialists of Greece, against Athens, and should be unable to discuss Athenian politics, without continual and emotional cross-references to the politics of Ireland or Poland or Croatia or Montenegro. They have Thucydides and Plato and Xenophon and Isocrates at their back: possibly they may even count in Aristotle; Aristotle was the tutor of Alexander and in a position to foresee the coming change in Greek civilization, and yet it is only a German theory of Oncken's that Aristotle welcomed and stimulated Alexander's Imperialism: a theory based on a few passages of the *Politics* about "the superman" (*ὁ τῆς παμβασιλείας βασιλέυς*) (*Politics*, III, Chaps. xii–xiii, 1282*b*–1284*b*).

The Greeks were particularists and individualists, and Demosthenes was after all "the engineer hoist with his own petard" when he found himself frustrated in his patriotic crusade against Macedon by pro-Macedonian dissidence and dissent at his own

door; by individual Athenians, who supported, for better or worse reasons, the cause of the enemy; whether they did so for the sake of contradicting, from the Athenian love of dissenting, or whether they were honest pessimists, like Phocion, who had come to despair of democracy and self-determination, or whether they were bribed. Athens stood for liberty; and this meant liberty for Athens against Macedon; but also—however incompatibly—liberty for the individual Athenian to choose his own side in the politics of the hour, even against the majority of his countrymen, and to side with Philip and Æschines and Eubulus against Demosthenes.

The same individualism made the Greek colony what it was; not a military post for extending the metropolis' influence, like a Roman colony; not a band of adventurers seeking new homes and wider careers in a new land without prejudice to, without diminution of, their love and sentiment for the old home, like a British colony; but a new state yielding to the metropolis at the best a formal or informal suzerainty in the matter of religious rites and sacrifices and ceremonies, and, at the worst, ready for incessant and bitter commercial quarrels with her; in short, like other Greek children, prone to disobedience.

I presume, though I am not sure of my ground here, that the same narrowness and individualism mark Greek commerce; the Greeks have always been in a sense a commercial people; just as Athens herself, in spite of her greatest philosopher, was a state in which both statesmen and poets were in business: Solon, that typical Athenian, being statesman, poet, philosopher and merchant all in one; and yet Greek commerce, like Greek politics, was always, I think, upon a small and individual and centrifugal scale.

Vast organizations, trusts and combines were beyond the thought of the Greek merchant; and the reason was perhaps, in part at least, not mere cir-

cumstance and environment and conditions, but something deeper; the national incapacity to organize and to co-operate; and also a national lack of honesty, a "Levantine" leaning to sharp practice; it was only to be expected; if the tiresome and reiterated argument of the previous chapters is approximately sound, the essence of the Greek spirit was a narrow intelligence and shallow intellectualism, aiming at a rather crude and obvious "good," self-interest, expediency, and arguing along somewhat crude and selfish lines, that honesty is the best policy and patriotism worth while as a means to success; from such a narrow spirit, narrow end and narrow means, it seems to follow that honesty has no chance except as a good advertisement; it is a poor basis, even an impossible basis, for honesty; no man was ever honest on this basis, and if he was he wasn't; honesty at any rate had but a poor showing with the Greeks; they neither earned the name of honest, nor were they honest without the name (as some men have been): they were conspicuous for the faults of the petty trader, for the cunning of the inferior dealer; they were higglers and hucksters whose goods had never one price but were sold by the momentary chaffering of the local market, like a Highlander's cattle, or like an Australian's sheep, whose price goes up and down of necessity, though in inverse ratio, with the thermometer; a somewhat uncivilized method of doing business, inevitable sometimes, as in Australia, for climatic reasons, but suggesting in those who practise it only second-rate capacity for commerce as for politics; the political instinct which builds up alike a great business and a great state was missing.

In short the same passion for conscious logical and consistent reasoning, which has made the Greek mind and Greece immortal, whereby the Greeks laid the foundations for all scientific thought, physical, mathematical, historical, political, philosophical and

linguistic—the discovery of America, said John Adington Symonds, is fairly traceable to the rediscovery of Greek—made her also notorious and suspect in matters of commerce, ethics and politics; her salient virtues and vices had the same tap-root; a little knowledge, yes and a great deal of knowledge also, when it tempts a man and a people to supersede instinct by enlightened selfishness and conscious self-interest, leaves him and them, to borrow an epigram from George Meredith, paddling in life's muddy shallows, when they fondly imagine that they are plumbing its deepest depths.

Even Plato, because he has a rooted aversion to mysticism other than his own variety and a Greek preference for self-conscious art, is betrayed into the paradox of preferring the carpenter to the poet and painter (*Rep.*, X, 597*a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, *e*), because the former practises an art which he understands, while the latter follows a spirit, which bloweth when it listeth and no man knows whence it comes or whither it goes (*Apology*, Chap. vii, 22*c*; *Ion*, 533*d*, *e*).

From this root, I shall suppose, comes Greek commercial smartness; from this root that political smartness or slimness or finesse, which is generally tolerated, if not tolerable, in international diplomacy, but which quickly overreaches itself and becomes intolerable in the ordinary give and take of everyday life, public or private.

Themistocles is the very type and beau-ideal of the Greek ancient and modern; the very type of the Greek politicians of classical history, and of modern Athenian party leaders, whose jealousies and intrigues contributed in a considerable degree to the overthrow of the greatest and one of the least unscrupulous of the Greek statesmen of the present century —Venizelos.

Of Themistocles one may say emphatically, what Cleon said of his Athenians generally, that he was too clever by half (Thucydides, III, Chaps. xxxvii

and xxxviii, and contrast Thucydides, I, lxviii, lxix and lxx; the picture of the Spartans); he carried out to the letter the characteristic Greek maxim for friendship, ascribed to Bias of Priene and appropriately placed in the mouth of Odysseus by Sophocles in his *Ajax* (678–682), the very principle, as the great Cardinal has remarked, of modern political friendships, so to be friends as always to leave a loophole for escape from friendship's obligations; so to quarrel, as always to keep a string upon friendship; the secret of the opportunist.

Remember Themistocles' behaviour in the Persian wars; while the Greeks are at Salamis and are preparing to retreat to the Isthmus and sacrifice Athens, an intelligent friend points out to him that if once they retire, they will split, like true Greeks, into fragments, and will never unite again; he recognizes the truth and repeats it as his own to the Spartan admiral; the admiral summons a council of war; Themistocles pleads before it, keeping out of sight the dangerous insinuation against Greek good faith, which was the real reason for immediate fighting, and urging battle on less delicate and more strategic grounds; he succeeded for a moment, but when the inevitable reaction came, and retreat once more became the popular cry, he had recourse to a bolder ruse; he sent a secret message to the Persian king, in order at one and the same time to cut off a Greek retreat, and to secure a friend at court for himself, in the event of a Persian victory.

After the Greek victory this *pis-aller* was no longer necessary; but a little later, failing to persuade the united Greeks to intercept the Persian retreat to Asia, he dissuaded the Athenians from attempting this stroke single-handed, and a second time played a game calculated to make him *persona grata* in Susa, should calamity overtake him; he notified Xerxes that he had secured for him a safe return; then he proceeded at his leisure to blackmail those of the

Greek islanders who had not been conspicuous in their loyalty to Greece, and to take up the prize (the second prize), which the Greek commanders had unanimously voted to him for his conduct of the campaign (each commander, being a Greek, having voted the first prize to himself) (p. 52, above).

And so his life ran on in an amazing thread of astuteness and unscrupulousness, justified to himself and in some measure to posterity by the fundamental patriotism and good sense of the ends which he originally sought; but tarnished, as often, by the tortuous twists, by the *arrière-pensées* which regularly accompanied his quest of those ends; especially when, his first and most disinterested idea becoming impracticable, he was forced to compromise upon a second, more practicable but less honest.

Themistocles seems always to have avenged himself upon Fate for driving him to his second string, by pulling it for personal ends; he would be honest, if he could have exactly what was best; but if any sacrifice of this was asked of him, he would answer no longer for his own honesty; let Greece take the consequences of having baulked his first and best thoughts.

Even to the end of his life this finesse was conspicuous; he cheated the Spartans into standing idly by, while Athens rebuilt her walls; and when, at the last, he needed that friendship of the Persians for which he had so long pulled the wires, and was in imminent danger of falling into the hands of the affronted Athenians, he told the poor wretch of a sea-captain, on whose ship he was escaping, who he was, and threatened, if he did not help him, to confess to the Athenians that he had bribed the captain to give him a passage to the Persian shore: the threat naturally prevailed and he escaped to Persia, where he lived for a year or two, dangling hopes of subjecting Greece before the eyes of the Persian king, and hood-

winking him for a season as easily as he had hoodwinked Sparta.

Ultimately finding the king pressing for payment, he had the good luck to die; cheating even death, so far as mortal can, by accepting it at the moment most convenient for himself, possibly hastening it by his own hand. "And so," writes Thucydides, covering a tragedy with a brief and dry comment, as is his custom and his art, "so ended Pausanias the Lacedæmonian and Themistocles the Athenian, the two most brilliant men of their time" (Thucydides, I, 138, 10).

I have dwelt so long upon the career of Themistocles because, I take it, this is Hellenism in character; adroitness, finesse, readiness of speech and quickness of wit; amazing natural gifts, unbalanced by the laborious taking of pains, in which the genius of lesser minds is found, or by the sterling principles which redeem the intellectual dullness of minds less brilliant.

Our race is prejudiced against adroit men and in favour of the dull; it has a liking for "the new diplomacy," for "shirt-sleeves diplomacy," which is not diplomacy but frankness. Possibly this is our limitation; but it is often, like other limitations, eminently beneficial.

Themistocles, unprincipled as a child—I beg the child's pardon, some children are very high-principled—irresponsible, irredeemable, was the typical progenitor of the crafty Athenian politicians of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: the typical Greek who appears at his worst in the dark days of that subjection to Rome which turned him into a courtier, sycophant and domestic chaplain; facile minister to the wants of his stupid but strong-willed master; but who, at his best, was only a sort of butterfly or bird of Paradise, preening the glorious wings of his soul in the sunshine of prosperity: best in prosperity, worst in adversity as Rome was the opposite.

Possibly the aphorism of Horace Walpole already quoted (p. 24) that life is a tragedy to those who feel, a comedy to those who think, admits also of this corollary, that life had better be a comedy in its actual course for the intellectuals, a tragedy for the passionate if each is to be at his best; when the thinker's life becomes tragic beneath a frowning fate, and the life of the man of feeling a comedy by reason of prosperity's smiles, each is seen at his worst; the butterfly needs the warm sun that he may play his part in the economy of Nature as well as for his own happiness; even as the plainer animals need the cruelty of winter to develop a glossy and thick coat, to become hardy, and to serve their humdrum and useful purposes with advantage. *They* do not gain by becoming household pets, pampered lap-dogs and tame trencher cats; but the more ornamental creature, the canary in the world's cage, is only an ornament and a pleasure at the best, a parasite at the worst.

"Prosperity," wrote Bacon, "is the blessing of the old dispensation, adversity of the new:" there is a sense in which the Greeks, who shone only in prosperity, belonged in spirit and character to the earlier world of the Old Testament: while the Romans, who were at their best in a storm and while overcast, were better fitted for the new gospel, which came to the world in their time and under their rule.

CHAPTER V

HELLENISM IN LANGUAGE

I HAVE already referred (pp. 55, 71 above) to the part which language with its pitfalls plays in fashioning the characteristic thought of Greece, but the subject is worth a few separate pages; if only because Socrates spent some of his last moments on earth suggesting that the right use of language is not only the finest of fine arts and the most useful of useful arts, but the most essential of essential arts (Plato, *Phædo*, LXIV, 115*e*).

It is not only the ambiguities of the word "good" (ἀγαθόν) which illustrate the peculiarities of Platonic doctrine. "Virtue," ἀρετή, plays a similar part for reasons already evident, the disposition, I mean, to ignore the will and to recognize only the intelligence.

All of us still use the word "virtue" in a double sense; of excellence of character acquired by willing, but also of excellence resting on nature and natural gifts, with no assumption or presupposition of the use of the will; we speak of the virtue of a flower, of a drug, of a horse, meaning the essence or function of horse, drug and flower; and we find no difficulty or confusion now in the double use; we even use the adjective "good" quite naturally, in the old Greek fashion, of men and women, no less than of animals and things, without reference to the will, when we are in the Greek atmosphere; when we are members, for example, of a University; while we are there "the good man" is for us, as for the Greeks, the clever man, the able man, possibly even, if we are

pedants, merely the learned man, the good scholar and good student; in any case the word "good" or the word "excellence" recovers for the time and place its Greek sense, and implies only intelligence or knowledge; though it is also true that sometimes, because the Greek point of view jars upon us and jolts us, we insist upon the very opposite confusion of language, in order to repudiate the Greeks; and here in America and in the New England States especially, people sometimes speak of the "clever" man, when they only mean the "good" man; and similarly and more often of a "beautiful" woman, and a "lovely" woman meaning only a woman of "beautiful" character, and a woman who is "lovable"; though she be, as she is apt to be for obvious reasons—her heart being elsewhere than in æsthetics—as "homely" as they are made: "homely" itself being, by the way, an imitation of Greek idiom; a pretty Greek euphemism based on the precedents of "Euxine" and "Eumenides": and parallel to the medical use in our own days of the phrase "benign" tumours and the like.

To return to the Greek confusions of virtue; when Plato argues that the function of the soul is life, and its "virtue" is justice (*Rep.*, X, 608*e*, 609, 610) even as the function of the eyes is seeing and their "virtue" is vision, he is not only ignoring the different relations to each other of function and virtue in the two cases, but he is using the word "virtue" in its two different senses; in the case of the eyes function and virtue are synonyms; in the case of the soul the word "virtue," if it mean justice, has no relation to the soul's function; if the soul's function be life so also its "virtue," its *raison d'être* must be life also; that justice is *a* virtue of the soul, even its most excellent quality, let us suppose (*κάλλιστον τὸ δικαιότατον*), does not begin to prove that it is the essence or *raison d'être* of the soul; when therefore he proceeds to argue, as he does (*Rep.*, X,

no doubt he means " in intelligence," or " in ability " : virtue has passed into intellect with him as with Plato ; the man of first-rate gifts, however he misuse or abuse them, is the man of " virtue " ; that is, as the modern historian would prefer to say, of excellent ability : the use of *χρηστός* again as " good " not less than " useful," " effective " illustrates the same tendency.

For Athens was after all, for better and for worse, a University more than a state ; a training-school for Hellenes, as Pericles boasts (Thucydides, II, 41, 1). *Ἑλλάδος παίδευσις* (compare the spirited phrase in the Greek anthology—*Ἑλλάδος Ἑλλας Ἀθῆναι*, Anthology *Palatina*, 7, 45) more than an aggregation of practical men : the " good " man in Athens had a special right to that use of the term which is to-day University slang : the man of intellectual force, who will by his intellectual force, honour himself and his college and his University ; an admirable use as University slang ; hardly appropriate in the humdrum life of a dull world of business.

Or where again except in a University should we hear so much about youthful insolence, *ὕβρις*, as we hear in Athenian literature ? *ὕβρις* with us often wrecks a college for a term of years ; may even wreck a University ; we are not afraid of its going further and wrecking a state ; or at least we were not afraid before 1921 ; in that year, it is true, the Labour leaders in Great Britain were seriously embarrassed by the violence and *ὕβρις* of their youthful followers, who did not follow ; but Athens and other city-states of Greece lived often in terror of youthful insolence, and of the young Alcibiades and his likes : *τί καὶ βούλεσθε ὦ νεώτεροι* ; " What *do* you young fellows want ? " was the anxious outcry of a Sicilian " elder statesman " (Thucydides, VI, 38) : for " young fellows " modern histories more often read " working men " or " manufacturers " or " women " ; a class, or a sex, not an age.

But Greece was the land of youth (Chap. vi, below); the Greeks were always young, even the old men, as the priest of Egypt said to Solon (Plato, *Timæus*, 22*b*), and the young men were doubly young, and doubly exacting and overbearing: like undergraduates at a convocation (Cleon in Thucydides, III, 38, 4 and 5, *vide* p. 69, above) or, as Plato—who had Socrates' young friends in mind—prefers to put it, "they were, like little dogs, ever striving to rend their neighbours'—conclusions" (*Rep.*, VII, 539*b*).

It is not difficult to find other pregnant words, besides ὕβρις, pointing in the same direction; and suggesting the life of Universities; διατριβή is etymologically a "pastime"; but a "pastime" to an intellectual and academic Greek becomes an intellectual exercise of some sort, either in philosophy, whence issues the Platonic and Aristotelian use of the word for an "essay," or in oratory, whence our own borrowed use; how far is each meaning from a "pastime" to unintellectual and unacademic people! Cicero has observed naturally that the word has no Latin equivalent; no light word meaning properly "pastime" could to a dull Roman connote philosophy or oratory; it would be more likely to connote drinking or fighting; some variety of "panem et circenses"; and so with ourselves, we cannot dignify even the less frivolous word "conversation," even the λόγοι which were the supreme delight of life to Socrates and Dr. Johnson, until we have disguised it in an Italian dress and changed our entertainment to a "conversazione." English "conversation" does not readily become scientific or literary: Walpole (the Premier) has recorded that the only "conversation" which became general at his dinner parties were such topics as had to wait the withdrawal of the women: still less can we dignify "pastime."

The same remark is often made of the word σχολή, "leisure"; σχολή is "leisure" at once and "school," because a Greek, in a primitive and busy life, found

only in his leisure hours opportunity for education; from this condition either inference might be drawn at pleasure, that education was not serious work with him, or that, on the contrary, it was so serious that he naturally expended therein all the time he could spare from business; the second inference seems the more promising explanation of the life-history of the word *σχολή*; "ludus" and "ludi-magister" in Latin suggest the first inference; one expects a different life-history for Greek and Latin words.

But in any case *σχολή* is far from any suggestion of "idling" to a Greek; *παίζειν ὅπως σπουδάζῃ τις*, quotes Aristotle (*Ethics*, X, 6, 6); one plays to be serious again; but conversely *ἀσχολούμεθα ἵνα σχολάζωμεν* (Aristotle, *Ethics*, X, 7, 6), we pursue business in order to enjoy leisure; business, then, is not the serious side of life, leisure is its serious side; leisure is synonymous with *σπουδή*, seriousness.

The same result follows an analysis of the uses of the words *πόνος*, *πρᾶξις*, *πρᾶγμα* and their correlatives: *ἀπρακτεῖν*, *ἀπράγμων*, *ἀπραγμοσύνη* are all terms more or less in daily use and generally imply praise, not blame; certainly not "do-nothings," "vauriens" and the like, but that abstention from politics and general meddling which is the salient feature of scholarly life, and of exclusive circles, and of the aristocratic minority in a democratic state; it is the characteristic epithet for the philosopher, who lives in a city of ambitious soldiers; in the midst of Spartan (or German) "Kultur" (Plato, *Rep.*, VIII, 509*c*) or in the midst of an ignorant and arrogant democracy: it is certainly not a life of idleness.

And its converse terms *πρᾶξις*, *πρᾶγμα*, *πραγμοσύνη*, *πραγματεύεσθαι* convey the converse taunts; *πρᾶξις* is politics; *πράγματα* are action, politics, business, worries, fussing, bores: the *πρακτικός* is the man *qui s'agite*, as the French say.

It may be retorted that this is all only the language

of a clique; an aristocratic clique in a democratic city; but it is more than that; more than the *clichés* of a clique; ἀπράγμων is a word used by all writers and always in a good sense; one thinks of a passage in the reminiscences of that modern Athenian, Renan; Renan writes that no one ever took him for a practical man, that the very omnibus conductors recognized him for a student withdrawn from the world, on whom they could impose (*Souvenirs de ma jeunesse*, p. 34, English translation).

πόνος, similarly, is at once labour and trouble; labour and sorrow; the "dignity of labour" is at best a term of Christian idealism and at worst part of the blague of Labour-Politics: it is not a Greek phrase.

A more striking and curious word, very suggestive and very modern, is ἀργία, quietism, indifference, pococurantism, abstention, apathy; it denotes the fatigued and Laodicean lukewarmness of the man, who has drawn only disillusionment and doubt from his education; who has nothing to say, and is silent, so to speak, in half a dozen languages: the high-minded man of Aristotle's *Ethics* (IV, 3, 27) in Athens is ἀργός: and so large is the class become, says Thucydides (III, 82), that it began to be commonly said that to know everything was to do nothing (p. 69, above). ἀργία implies blame or not, according to the point of view of the man or woman using the term; Euripides, the intellectual, the poet of the cultivated, who had a flair for all the terms fashionable in academic discussion, introduces the word on the lips of Medea (*Medea*, 294–301):

> A man of judgment should not teach his sons
> The knowledge which surpasses other men;
> They reap with other disabilities (ἀργία)
> Disgust and jealousy from commoners;
> Display your novel culture to a fool,
> He deems you useless nor can see your thought;
> Show it to those who deal in subtleties,
> You pass for supercilious and a bore.

To know more than the average man marks you for an "abstainer" [ἀργός], and an "abstainer" in the intellectual world of Athens is not one who abstains from alcohol, obviously (what "intellectual" ever bothers himself about liquor one way or the other? what if he take a glass of wine with his dinner, what if he doesn't? a tempest in a wine-glass), but who eschews the common interests of common people; who is superior and languid and exclusive: as Emerson said of Clough, "'Ah,' says my languid Oxford gentleman, 'nothing new and nothing true and no matter.'" Apathy, ἀργία, involves that ῥαθυμία (*Medea*, line 218) or indolence which Demosthenes for ever is denouncing in his countrymen: only with Euripides or Thucydides it is an indolence rooted in scepticism, rather than directly in moral slackness and weakness of will.

All these words illustrate the intellectualism of the Athenian: so possibly also—but it is much more difficult here to build upon language—may the words ποιεῖν and ποιητής; "With all your making make poetry," says a Greek: the man who makes, makes verses (compare Danton's scoffs at poor Fabre Eglantine on their way in the tumbrils to the guillotine. "I have written a poem called 'The Maltese Orange': I am afraid some one will steal it and make his fame by it," said Eglantine. "Tais toi," retorted Danton, "dans une semaine vous ferez assez de vers"). So that the very function which Plato of all men, in a Puritanic mood, denies to poetry and to the poet, "creation" (*Rep.*, X Chaps. 3–5, 598*e*–602*c*), is nevertheless the function which the Greek language assigns to it and to him: it is rather curious that Plato has not observed how the evidence of language contradicts, for what it is worth, his whimsical banishment of the poets from Callipolis.

But can one argue from words so general as ποιεῖν? Can one say, for example, that in Latin it is something more than a chance equivocation, that "facio" is to

"do" and "facio" is to "sacrifice"? Can one assume that the double use is no mere accident, but an authentic testimony to the far-reaching and omnipresent superstitions of the ancient Romans, for whom the most natural thing to "do" was to offer sacrifice?

Words so general are hard to gauge; there is the English "act" and "actor" now used continually of the stage: and there is the Greek word δρᾶμα in the same sense; yet no one will argue that to "act" is, for an Englishman (or even for a Greek), primarily to appear upon the stage; most Englishmen have acted at some time, a few, a very few, act all the time; yet they do not compare as "actors" with the French, the very French who scoff at the British "hypocrite" or "actor"; the scoff then must rest on other bases than etymology; again the cognate word "action" stands in our language for something very different from "acting"; for a "battle"; a use which seems more germane to the national spirit, yet has not found for itself so general a recognition, in our vocabulary. Again we have derived "act" or "actor" in all its senses from the Latin, yet no one can explain their Latin use as due to the histrionic tendencies of the Roman; the Roman was not histrionic as a rule; in short, some of these equivocal words and uses must be due in all languages to chance rather than to national psychology, and must derive from forgotten accidents; and be without psychological significance; but *vide* footnote below.[1]

I am on safer ground if I take another set of correlatives which illustrate, if not Greek and French intellectualism against British and Roman character, at least French and Greek art and style against Roman and British will.

[1] But I think it is not without psychological significance that the phrase for an Athenian "caught in the act" was ἐπ' αὐτοφώρῳ, corresponding but also contrasting with our "red-handed." The typical offence of an Athenian was "stealing," not "bloodshedding."

"Sinister" in Latin and English is of character; evil, malicious, left-minded; but σκαῖος and gauche in Greek and French mean "clumsy," "awkward," "left-handed"; it is the external and artistic "leftness" on which the Greek (or the Frenchman) dwells; the "leftness" of will and character which the Roman (or the Englishman) labels "left"; (so the same word spiritual or spirituel in the two modern languages has broken into two; in English denoting the religious or Roman spirit of the race, in French its wit).

Possibly it is significant that Homer himself uses constantly mental words, words which signify understanding and knowledge, for the expression of will and character; ἄϊσιμα εἰδώς and half a dozen similar phrases appear literally to imply some sort of information, education, knowledge; and yet are intended by the poet to convey what we mean by "well-intentioned," "well-meaning," "good-hearted"; even the father of Greek literature expresses in terms of knowledge and thought what we express in terms of will and feeling.

Then there are the little idioms of language, which are the straws showing which way the wind of the spirit or the river of national temperament blows and flows: which therefore have their own significance.

"Dear heart" is an old English term of endearment; but the Greek parallel is truly parallel, it never meets; φίλον κάρα, φίλη κεφαλή—"dear head," said the people of intelligence; it is the head, not the heart, which stands for the friend's personality and constitutes his dearness; "I love you with all my heart" is our similar phrase; ἐξ ἅπαντος τοῦ νοῦ φιλῶ—"I love you from the bottom of my mind"—is the Platonic version (*Gorgias*, 510*c*).

Sometimes, as already noted (pp. 70, 71), the strangeness of a Platonic argument is merely due to equivocation; "a man who is punished," says Socrates (*Gorgias*, 478*b*), "receives justice"; δίκην λαγχάνει;

that is, receives a judicial sentence, *δίκη*; but in Greek *δίκη* is also synonymous with *δικαιοσύνη*, justice in its other sense of righteousness; therefore it follows, argues Socrates, that the man who is punished receives justice and becomes more just; and so we are introduced to the pregnant, brilliant and fantastic argument, already noted (pp. 61, 80, 82), of the identity between magistrate and doctor; Socrates has been taken in by the artfulness and cunning of language: an ambiguous substantive has tripped him up in the *Gorgias* as an ambiguous pronoun in the *Charmides* (pp. 70, 71, above).

Obviously into this chapter, "Hellenism in Language," must come those idiosyncrasies of language which are common to the Greeks, with other intellectual races and, strangely enough, with some races, like the English, not intellectual; the use of irony, as Socrates used it, that is, mock deference, counterfeit compliment: a mixed tribute to the claims of politeness and of scientific accuracy: the "ironist" will not parade, is not sure of, his own knowledge: he has little faith in the respondent's knowledge, but it is more polite to assume such knowledge and give the possessor a chance to show his superiority and enlighten an ignorant friend; the constant use, again, of *μείωσις* and *λιτότης*, of under-statement; a scrupulous moderation, though an animated moderation, in all expression of opinion; a Greek is so anxious for the truth that he feels a misgiving lest he deceive himself; his wish is father to a doubt; he refuses therefore to express as much as he thinks for fear that he thinks more than the evidence justifies; he hints a thought; hesitates an inference; he says by way of consolation to the good but unlucky man, that "his prospects are tolerable, not bad" rather than "good"; *ἀγαπητὸς οὐ κακός* (*Rep.*, X, 619*b*).

Again, *οὐ πάνυ* is almost always Plato's phrase; it means strictly "not altogether," but an Englishman, and still more a Roman, translating Plato,

would often feel inclined to turn it into " not at all " ; for he sees no sufficient reason for this mealy-mouthed and academic caution ; it is just a tiresome academic cliché in his eyes ; Plato is saying *οὐ πάνυ* instead of *πάνυ οὐ* ; " not altogether " when he might just as well have said outright " altogether not " ; or " not at all " ; but Plato does not say *πάνυ οὐ* very often, he says *πάνυ οὐ*, in fact *οὐ πάνυ*, by no means freely : and *οὐ πάνυ, πάνυ*, and almost always in the sense of qualification (*vide* Thompson on *Gorgias*, 457*e*, for a few difficult exceptions).

Again, a thing with Plato is " adequate," *ἱκανόν*, rather than ample or great ; Matthew Arnold characteristically has adopted the Platonic idiom ; Plato says *οὐ χεῖρον*, " it would not be worse," that is, " it would not be a bad thing, to do so and so," when he means *βέλτιον*, " it would be better to do it " ; a Greek says *οὐχ ἧττον*, " not less," when he means, or any other man than a Greek would mean, *μᾶλλον*, " more " (see Thucyd., I, 74, 3 ; I, 76, 1 ; I, 120, 2, and I, 122, 1 for this *οὐχ ἧττον*) ; or he says, " not more," *οὐ μᾶλλον*, when he really means " not so much," *οὐ τοσοῦτον* (Thucyd., I, 73, 3) ; his motto, as before, in speech as in thought, is "Surtout point de zèle."

A less charming, less intellectual and less disinterested form of this idiom is the habit of never praising warmly, though it be also the habit of some intellectual men ; *nil admirari* is the principle of Aristotle's high-minded man (*Ethics*, IV, 3, 29), but this form of *μείωσις* becomes wholly lovable when the man who uses it is speaking of himself ; what can be better than the *μείωσις* or modesty of Socrates when he looks forward to the judgment of posterity upon himself and his accusers (Xenophon, *Mem.*, IV, 8, 10) : " I know I shall receive consideration at the hands of men, though I be put to death now, otherwise than those who are putting me to death will receive it " ?

It is apparent from this last illustration that

μείωσις takes many forms and springs from many sources: it is intellectual, and it is moral; it is niggardly and it is generous; it passes easily into modesty; the practice of it unites races rarely united, the Greek and the English, though the root be intellectual scruples in the one and in the other moral scruples, the horror of "blathering," of wearing your heart on your sleeve, of exhausting your passion—which you need for action—in cheap words, and the other motives of the same sort, whence wells up the river of English under-statement.

Again, νομίζω, "I think," is also in Greek, sometimes "I believe," as in the phrase νομίζειν θεούς, to believe in God, because a Greek does not see that a man's belief is often independent, and even opposed to his thought; there being in it an element of dumb subconscious instinct which cannot find expression in words nor in the clear and conscious thinking which Greece demands.

Perhaps before dropping this question of language and its implications, one may safely assume that the relations of language and thought, language and character, are closer, more immediate, more direct, with the Greeks than with us.

Plato, in his original and mystical fashion, assumed an absolute correspondence between thought and language, and argued that the Creator had not only created things but words for things, and that there was a right word and a wrong (Cratylus); he brushed aside the history of the origin of words with its countless accidents and its foreign words misunderstood (like the modern asbestos, a legacy from stupid Romans, who confused "inextinguishable" with "non-combustible"), and its slow development and changes of meaning, the elucidation of which makes the science of semantics the most interesting branch of etymology; he tried to find a basis more immediate and more rational in nature, after the fashion of the few words which have such a natural basis and are

called onomatopœic (or the bow-wow theory of language), or like those others, again, which show a correspondence between their meanings, and the effort of pronouncing them: the words in "st": strength, stubborn, stolid, stout, stark, stiff, stupid, stalwart, strenuous, stagnant, etc., etc.; his speculations along this line have not been fruitful, because, like his other speculations about the origin of the state, they ignore the historical method of treatment, and are based illegitimately on a priori argument; and the research for the natural basis of language remains much where he left it.

But it is curious to find things so far apart as language and thought represented in Greek by one word; λόγος is language and λόγος is reason; the antithesis of words and thoughts, the other antithesis of words and deeds, so familiar to us, so familiar, too, in the pages of Thucydides, with their perpetual and even unnecessary balancing of λόγος and ἔργον, the third and subtlest antithesis of thoughts and deeds, seem to have been a late-found speculation of the generation of Thucydides and the sophists, and therefore a doubly piquant theme to them for reflection and for oratory.

The fairly common reflection of our historians, essayists and cynics—but cynics here, as usual, state facts rather than understand them—that language was given to man in order to conceal his thoughts, or again that a man's thoughts may agree with his language, and yet the two together may be no mirror of his life, character, and actions, but may be the very opposite of these things, may be the mere expressions of moods, which once expressed and discharged in words and in fancies, are satisfied therewith and leave his life and character to follow an opposite line, dictated by heredity or environment or perhaps dating from his mother's knee (Thomas Hardy, *The Hand of Ethelberta*, pp. 51, 69, 76, Sampson Low, edition of 1892; and the present

treatment of shell-shocked men rests on the same principle); or, again, that to the idealist and man of fancy his friends are much dearer in their absence than in their presence, for it is not the actual friend he loves, but a certain ideal of the friend, which his bodily presence at once disturbs and diminishes (Hardy, *The Well-Beloved, passim*; *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Chaps. 35, 36); all such reflections, shrewd and entertaining and subtle in the pages of a novelist and moralist like Mr. Hardy, hardly occur to the simpler Greek; it has not occurred to him that a man's writings are not the reflection but the complement of his life and character, the reverse of the medal only; he has not sufficient self-knowledge and depth of nature, with all his passion for knowledge and self-examination; "The life of self-examination," said Socrates, "is the only life for a man to lead"; the words were selected as the appropriate epitaph for the tomb of the most penetrating and sympathetic of Socrates' English pupils, Benjamin Jowett, Master of Balliol; and yet any sensible doctor tells an introspective youth to collect butterflies as they were collected by Mark Rutherford, or to play golf like other academic persons; to take to anything and everything rather than to follow Amiel into introspection; and for the simple reason that introspection has become a habit far more serious, and therefore more fatal to happiness, and to character with our complex nature, than it was to the simpler Greek; and even Jowett himself, for all his introspection, or on account of his introspection, gave once—according to Oxford tradition—to a youthful philosopher who has since risen high in the academic world, a maxim for life borrowed from life and not from Socrates, "Be young, my young friend, be young"; and even Socrates himself, as he stood buried in thought through the long Thracian night (*Symposium*, 219*e*; 220*a*, *b*, *c*, *d*), in the evening dews and damps, and amid the dying camp-fires of the Athenian lines before

Potidæa (*Theætetus*), was scarcely introspective in our sense; he was engaged in pursuing lines of thought more external, less personal, than those generally implied now by introspection; γνῶθι σεαυτόν, "know thyself," was interpreted by Socrates, and probably by Delphi also, in a looser, broader, less intimate sense than that in which they have generally been interpreted among Christians; a Greek, it might almost be said, even a Greek like Socrates, had no personal self to know; he was just an impersonal thinker, and a spark of the eternal unconscious reason.

I suppose that this is the reason why most readers of the classics in Great Britain somehow prefer Cicero, with all his follies and vanities, and his politician's insincerities, and his lawyer's manifold dishonesties, to Plato and Socrates; Cicero seems a human being with a character and personality of his own, with many redeeming virtues and some redeeming vices; while the great Athenians seem to be hardened against good alike and evil; ruthless as Nature, relentless as Law, unshakable as Fate; imperturbable as Science; all the horrors of life, war, slavery, prostitution, infanticide, abortion, have passed beneath their scrutiny, and have been accepted, more or less overtly, as part of Life's programme; more overtly by Aristotle and less overtly by Plato; but accepted by both and by other Greeks, until (*supra*, p. 19) extremes have met, and the beastliness of primitive Sparta has reappeared so closely in the ideal states of the two Greek philosophers, that no one knows whither to trace its callousness; to the barbarous past, or to the materialism of the new "Scientific Republic": whether to find atavism in Plato or anticipations of a science yet to come; for these things meet in Greek civilization, as they do not meet so nakedly in a civilization of a later and humaner type, based more upon character and instinct and less upon intellect and experience, more upon religion and less upon science.

A man's theories, says some Frenchman—if I may revert for a moment longer to the theme just discussed—are not his character, but the other side of him; if he is a shy recluse (p. 28, *supra*) his theories will often be the theories of a militarist; if, conversely, he be in action and in life a rather ruthless slave-driver and an exacting master, he will compound for it in his books by being sentimental and humanitarian; he covers the two sides of human nature, but not so much by fusing them as by keeping them in separate air-tight chambers, and operating each chamber separately. Or it is equally easy to find other men, in whom their separate compartments work side by side but alternately, instead of coincidentally and contemporaneously: I mean, not in the two distinct lives of thought and action, as in the other case, but in the single life of thought and action harmonized and united; there are two selves, a duplex personality, not divided between theories of one type and action of another, but merely divided between home and office; exigeant task-masters between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m.; meek as Moses, "slopping over" with sentiment in the unbent evening: a different paradox from the Frenchman's, but not less frequently seen; the point is that these subtleties and complexities are too complex and subtle for notice and comment in the simpler literature of Greece.

For the Greeks identified language and thought; and lived to give expression to their manifold impressions; almost the last of Socrates' reflections on his last day, before he withdrew from his disciples to be alone for some hours with his wife and children (Professor Burnet's edition of the *Phædo*, pp. 60 and 115), was a reflection, touching the all-importance of the right word: a word misused may mislead and deprave the soul; only a few careful Greeks, it may be assumed, and not even they lawfully, if some of the arguments of these pages be correct, will face

with composure the judgment involved in that curious text "By your words ye shall be justified, and by your words ye shall be condemned"; a text intended for the anxious meditation of all writers, logicians, thinkers, theorists, doctrinaires, orators and stylists; if they live for words, let them be careful to use at their peril as nearly as possible the right words: but of Pitt conversely, the statesman of action, and the leader of England in the long agony of the Napoleonic wars, it was noticed that there was something about him when he spoke which seemed to say that the man was greater than anything he said; Pitt did not belong to the Greek type.

I have left to the end (with only brief notice hitherto (pp. 128–131)) perhaps the most emphatic illustrations of Hellenism in language: especially the word "language" itself or "speech"; which does double duty in the Greek point of view as "speech" and as "reason."

To the Greek "speech" is "reason": and "reason" is "speech." The inferences are twofold:

(1) The people who value speech so highly as to identify it with reason or thought, will make the most of speech; will excel in language and literature; in prose and poetry; in oratory and history; in science and philosophy; and all this the Greeks achieved.

(2) But further it is to be expected that the people who describe reason and thought as speech, will always be ready to interpret reason and thought into speech, and to explain themselves and their minds, lives and actions to themselves and to others in speech and words; will always expect to find words and speech adequate to reveal themselves to themselves and to others; but, if so, will avoid all such explanations of thought, life and action as are not readily expressed in words; will avoid therefore the loose explanations connoted by the vague words, instinct, impulse, nature, and above all subconscious-

ness; even to us to-day subconsciousness as a word is new; yet no one doubts that our actions and the actions of other tongue-tied, silent, inexpressive races like the Romans and Spartans are traceable largely to those factors in life which do not lend themselves to words; that the springs and sources of the actions of such peoples are subconscious.

A Greek, on the other hand, unless the previous argument of this little book is mistaken, resented the explanation of action by the words instinct, impulse, nature, consciousness or subconsciousness; he wanted to understand everything, especially himself; and it was easier to understand things and self, or at least it was easier to explain self and things by words which every one understands, prudence, self-interest, utility, enlightened selfishness, policy; if honesty be the best policy, and be that alone, the mystery of honesty (and the beauty of it perhaps also, but that is another question) disappears; a man is honest, it now appears, for reasons which will seem good to every man even to the simplest and most ignorant and least refined; one does not need refinement to appreciate good policy; or, at least, if the unrefined, ignorant and simple are not impressed by this explanation of honesty, yet the subtle and well-informed and over-refined—and Greeks tend to be over-subtle and over-refined—will reach gladly for an explanation which seems to suit the facts—for honesty is in the long run and for the world as a whole the best policy—and yet to banish the doubts and scruples, the misgivings and mysterious divinations, with which words like duty and honesty and virtue are hedged; the Greek does not want to be hampered by divine mysteries or by "the final inexplicabilities," which have seemed good enough to later philosophers as an "explication" of life.

Obviously, if all this be so, the Greeks did not really escape from these mysterious words and forces, from the instincts and impulses of duty and nature

and subconsciousness; they only escaped from the patient and continued attempt to understand and explain them; they felt the pressure of the facts, but seeking for an explanation, as it was their imperious instinct always to explain, they found, as a man finds when he must explain the inexplicable, false explanations only and deceived themselves and their neighbours:

> "At Kilve there is no weathercock
> And that's the reason why."

I think then that this very use of *λόγος* as equivalent to *νοῦς* is both a result and a cause of the Greek tendency to explain all actions and all virtues, patriotism, honesty, humility, and the rest as forms of knowledge, that is of intelligent self-interest, prudence, discretion and enlightened selfishness; Socrates was the last of men to be imposed upon by superficial vulgarities, but even Socrates could not resist the argument from utility, and regretfully opined that the beautiful was at bottom the useful, and that the instinct, for example, against incest (*vide* p. 54) was only a form of common sense and a prompting of convenience. He cared nothing for utility, in itself; it was surely almost as alien from his mind as from Plato's, but he cared everything for explanations and reasons; and utility is the easiest and most obvious and most universally convincing of reasons; and affords the best opening to the desired verbal interpretation of things, otherwise so recondite as beauty and duty or conscience or will.[1]

And so a Greek spoke naturally of *ὁ ἔξω λόγος*, that is, speech, and *ὁ ἐν ψυχῇ λόγος*, that is, thought (Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, I, 10, 76).

A parallel use of words, by the way, may be found in Aristotle's use of *μίμησις*: it is not with him, as

[1] He might have meditated with advantage on the suggestive distinction drawn by Aristotle: *γιγνομένη μὲν τοῦ ζῆν ἕνεκα, οὖσα δὲ τοῦ εὖ ζῆν.*

it is with Plato, the outward imitation of some visible thing or person; he is prepared to use "imitation" also as the expression in words of the inner and unseen spirit of a thing or person; which suggests that Aristotle was less disposed than Socrates or Plato to trust to words and to imagine that he had words for everything. "If only life were merely argument and reason, how much larger would be the salary of schoolmasters" (*Ethics*, X, 10, 3). Aristotle would have found less of paradox probably than Plato in such modern familiar squibs as that language has been given to man to conceal his thoughts; or in such more solid modern reflections, that a man's speech is often the complement and not the expression of his thought, the reverse of the medal of his life, not the obverse; or again, in the other reflection that thought alike and speech, λόγος in both senses, are often only the complement and not the expression of personality; beneath speech and conscious thought may lie a dominating vein of unconscious or subconscious instinct; a very real force, however much it is caricatured and burlesqued by the extravagant psychoanalysis of the hour.

When Aristotle wrote ἐν τῇ αἰσθήσει ἡ κρίσις (*Ethics*, II, 9, 8) he seems in fact to have meant, in protest against the cocksure and glib explanations of his countrymen for everything, that only the actual experience of the hour, only the immediate feeling of the moment, when a man is being tried by the tempest of conflicting emotions and duties, can show him the exit from that labyrinth; no cut-and-dried knowledge, no antecedent theories, no shibboleths nor catchwords (λόγοι) can exhaust and explain human nature, nor dictate beforehand the solutions of moral perplexities; no science of moral casuistry (such as Chrysippus afterwards vainly essayed) is possible.

But, if this be his meaning, he is recognizing the element of the unconscious. What does a man know,

he is in effect saying, until he has been there, about what he will say or do, for example, in the presence of bereavement or under the shadow of death? Reason, if it is to include all of human nature, cannot be plumbed beforehand and expressed in words; *λόγος* is after all an inadequate and misleading interpreter of thought. The Greek identification of the two after all needed revision.

Before closing the chapter I may revert to an ambiguous and characteristic word already noted in Chapter I, and to be noted again in a discussion of Stoicism (Chap. ix).

Aristotle speaks of a *βίος πολιτικός* and of man as *ζῶον πολιτικόν*; strictly and etymologically he should mean a political life and a political creature; but it is clear that he is using the words often in a looser sense to cover "social life" and "a social creature"; the emphasis which the Greek city-state laid on politics being responsible for the use of these terms, somewhat narrow in their strict meaning, in the larger sense of "social."

The word *πρακτικός* which he often uses might often have served his purpose better. However, the traditional use of *βίος πολιτικός* and *ζῶον πολιτικόν* having been established by Aristotle, the Stoics continued it, even though it was now more inaccurate than ever, and even though "political life" in the true sense no longer existed for them; neither for the founders of Stoicism under Alexander and his successors, nor for the Roman Stoics under the Cæsars.

Yet the phrase survived; *πολιτεύεται ὁ σοφός*, said the Stoics (*vide* Chap. ix on Stoicism), that is, the wise man is not merely a student and a speculative thinker but is "a social worker" according to the familiar phrase of to-day: and is an active citizen of the world; a man recognizing the claims of all men upon him, recognizing, in theory at least, something like the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

And so the words *πολιτικός* and *πολιτεύεσθαι*, originally used in a sense wider than the etymological, because the narrow etymological sense expressed so well the salient feature of the city-state, survived in its wider sense from the force of habit and tradition, even when that wider sense had become its only sense, when the etymological sense had practically disappeared.

The conditions of Aristotle's day and of earlier days made the use of the narrow word in a broader sense than its own as well as in its own sense seem to be but natural; established usage then maintained that broader sense, even when only the broad and loose sense remained to it, and the etymological sense had come to seem a mockery; *πολιτικός* and *πολιτεύεσθαι* took on a new lease of life in the sense of social activities, and this too, although, as a matter of fact, there was more social spirit and humanity and kindliness in that rival sect of the Epicureans, who frankly and totally abjured "politics" (*vide* Chap. ix on Stoicism).

CHAPTER VI

NATURALISM

"THE Greeks," said Heine, "were only handsome boys: the Jews were men"; a classical scholar, who prefers Greeks to Jews, may prefer to say, "The Greeks were intellectual boys, the Romans were men." The first appeal to him by picturesque Bohemianism, the second by silent and orderly action; but he understands what the great German-Jew meant. "Hippoclides doesn't care" (Herodotus, VI, 129) expresses equally well the mood and the language of Athenians and of children.

The priest of Egypt also said to Solon, as we have heard already (p. 119), that the Greeks were children; which might, by a fair stretch of language, be expanded into the proposition that they readily became, in days of adversity, the shoe-blacks who blacked the boots, spiritually at least, of Roman masters; just as to-day in all the cities of America they are literally blacking the boots of the other and later barbarians, who, under the name of Englishmen, Canadians or Americans, have succeeded to the spiritual qualities and to the place in the world once occupied by ancient Rome.

The metaphor of "children" suggests the "naturalism" of the Greek mind, however vague the phrase may be and elusive. It suggests that the Greek in his frankness was the *enfant terrible* of the ancient world. I presume that, among other things, the priest meant and Heine meant, that the Greeks were never quite in earnest, too gay and frivolous

to take themselves or life or even education seriously. Their greatest philosopher, though the priest did not live to see him, introduced the kindergarten principle into education, as his contribution thereto; the principle that children should be taught without being conscious of it, and while imagining that they were at play (*Rep.*, VII, 536*d*, *e*; 537*a*). Such lessons will not be forgotten, for they come in the guise of pleasures and not by coercion; *παιδεία* has become *παιδιά* at least in childhood (*παιδία*). No one presumably disputes the usefulness of the recipe and its author; educators in all lands laud and magnify his name. But it probably occurred to some dour Romans, as it occurs to like-minded men to-day, that only a Greek would have identified education with learning and information or even with thought and intelligence. Throughout Plato's *Republic* *τὸ φιλόσοφον* and *τὸ φιλομαθές* are identified: and yet the Greek proverb itself contradicts Plato—*φιλομαθίη νόον οὐ διδάσκει*. After all, there is also the education of the will, habits and character of the child, for which character, habits and will something beside amusement may be necessary; some exercises in obedience, for example; some discipline of the will; some lessons in self-control; even some application of coercion. If a man never knows these things in his school or home he will look back with very mixed feelings and far from unmixed gratitude to the entertaining teachers and indulgent parents who made all things into play for him; and while never forgetting to develop his intelligence forgot his discipline. I have met men so perverse as to look back afterwards with great gratitude to those teachers of their youth, who were slave-drivers and beasts, so long as they were "*just* beasts."

Our priest, again, if he knew as much of Greece as Solon knew, may have reflected that Greeks were never so desperately in earnest as to relinquish even life itself, after it had lost its savour, rather than

live on and vegetate. If his old age could have been sufficiently prolonged, he would have added that rumours came to him of "a Roman death"; and of a nation which perpetually illustrated this Roman death, when a cause was lost, or even when a leader was defeated; but that he had never heard of suicide in Athens; Athenians were too happy and too indifferent; certainly not too scrupulous and too religious; it is only Plato, the most imaginative of Greek philosophers, who can conceive of the religious scruple against self-destruction; and all that even he can say of the religious argument that a sentry must keep his post till relieved by his commander (*Phædo*, 62*b*) is that it is "a large argument hard to appraise" (*μέγας τις λόγος καὶ οὐ ῥάδιος διιδεῖν*), while Aristotle, who has not even Plato's wistful sympathy with Christian sentiment, can find no better objection to suicide than the argument, that it is "cowardly" (*Ethics*, III, 7, 11) which is transparently a pious fraud; suicide has belonged on the contrary to the most determined and masterful of peoples, the Romans and the Japanese; it is in fact one of those feats of men, which generally take their moral colour and are right or wrong on religious grounds and on no grounds smaller than these; but the problem was not a vital one for Plato and Aristotle, whose countrymen were never inclined to die a day sooner than was necessary; but in Rome men took their lives out of sympathy with even so damaged an archangel as the Emperor Otho (Tacitus, *Histories*, I, 49).

This question of suicide, since it has come up, may illustrate further the characteristic differences of Greek and Roman. If a Greek *did* take his life, nay, even when he took another's life, the life of a man condemned on a capital charge, he took it in a refined, a delicate, I had almost written a lady-like fashion, with a cultured cup of hemlock. When a Roman or an Englishman takes *his* life, it is usually

done in a more masculine and masterful manner, with a dagger, with a pistol, nay, even more drastically still, with a blunt razor. The method of the act, no less than the act itself, has nothing of art or sensibility about it; it is compact of Roman or British direct and impatient energy, and unshrinking resolution. These men are men in spite of the brutal manner of their taking off, nay by reason of its brutality.

> "When all the joys of life and youth are gone,
> The coward slinks out of life, the brave lives on,"

says some spirited modern poet echoing Aristotle or interpreting Christian scruples; but, apart from the Christian scruple, his verse also is a pious fraud; which is indeed an exact description of it; it is a fraudulent description of many suicides Roman and British, but a fraud dictated by piety, by an instinct, sound or unsound, that the doctrine of a man's Christian liberty does not include the right of a brave and deliberate death, when his usefulness is over and his mandate, so to speak, discharged; "a large argument, difficult to appraise."

Naturalism has other sides besides childish gaiety and *joie de vivre*. There is the frank shamelessness of the young child, the absence of adult prudery; and this attitude of mind is doubly natural to a Greek, not merely because it is the mind of a child, but also because the Greek, as a thinker, wants a reason for his every act and is not satisfied with the obscure instincts which underlie adult prudery. He has the same impatience with the reticences and concealments of the Roman as the Frenchman feels for these aspects of British "hypocrisy," as he is pleased to term it, with his French naturalism, his French faith in reason and logic, and his French distrust of instinct.

And so the dialogues of Plato (*Charmides*, 155*d*; *Symposium*, 219*b*, *c*, *d*), like the frank pages of Hero-

dotus, are occasionally suggestive of some decadent French novelist in their macabre realism. And not in their realism only but in their morbid perversions of natural instinct; for it is one of the paradoxes of "naturalism" that it so easily exceeds the measure and becomes unnatural. Conversely the victims of unnatural and morbid perversions of instinct turn for their defence to the precedent of ancient Greece.

The "hypocrisy," in other words the "aspiration," of a Roman (for "hypocrisy" is only the ugly and the French name for "aspiration") took the form of aiming at impossible heights of virtue. The wise man, proclaimed the Roman Stoic, could be happy in a dentist's chair (*mutatis mutandis*). The wise man was a king by reason of his wisdom and so on; with all the other rhetorical flamboyance which appealed to the eastern Stoics—for the Stoics were Orientals and not Greeks (p. 63, *supra*)—and from them to the western Stoics of Rome; echoes whereof reverberate in the epistles of Paul of Tarsus; the Roman's aspiration or hypocrisy sinned, at its best, against the facts and limitations of human nature, at its worst (when it was really only hypocrisy) against the literal facts of his own life; the Latin language illustrates better than our own or the Greek the affinity or identity which I am seeking to establish; "affectatio" in Latin is both "affectation" and "aspiration."

But Greek hypocrisy or affectation or aspiration climbed no such perilous heights, nor dreamed of dominating pain. It sought rather to exploit Nature —sometimes very shamelessly—for the profit of pleasure and enjoyment; and then the Greek, at his best, when he was merely a "hypocrite" and a *poseur*, sinned against the sober restraint of his own life, and, at his worst, when he was not posing, against the decent laws of nature.

A Greek who distrusted dumb instincts and had argued himself, sophisticated himself, out of them,

had nothing left to save his naturalism from slipping into unnatural and morbid extremes; he was the proverbial philosopher (pp. 70, 89, *supra*) who, if he is often better, is also continually worse than men of commoner clay and stronger natural instincts; that is, indeed, the defence made by French realists that their realism does not debauch an intellectual and sophisticated people like their own, whatever harm it may work on simpler peoples, with stronger passions.

I suppose even Socrates himself, the crown and flower of his race, may be said to lack reticence and deference to natural instinct, not merely in his occasional frankness when he interviews young women like Theodote, but in a certain *brusquerie* of his last day with Xanthippe. But Professor Burnet has laboured successfully to minimize this scandal: he has pointed out that the *Phædo*, which is the authority for the scandal, carefully explains to us, though most of us miss its meaning, that Socrates spent much unrecorded time, not less than several hours, after the discussion of immortality with his disciples, in private leave-taking in another room with Zanthippe and the children; he was not the inhuman philosopher "born of a stock or a stone" (*Apology*, 34*d*) whom the casual reader imagines from the casual reading of the dialogue (Burnet's *Phædo*, pp. 60 and 115, and see esp. *Phædo*, 116*b*); there is in reality nothing jarring in the records, unless it be the absence of a reticence and of a reverence for marriage whose presence would have seemed anachronisms for the year 401 B.C. "Socrates," said Emerson, "is terribly at ease in Zion;" it is a tasteless phrase showing Emerson as a phrase maker, and his phrases are rarely good, at his worst, worse than "hitch your wagon to a star," but the thought beneath it is accurate; Socrates *was* terribly at ease in the presence of the reserves, and mysteries, and depths of human instinct—even if we exclude Xenophon's incredible

testimonies (p. 54, *supra*)—and seems to have thought that some cheap catchword like "utility" could settle their business and explain them once for all: whereas it only explains them away.

Plato was more mystical when he went to the imagination of the East for the theory of an immortal soul; but the immortal soul shrank ultimately, even in his hands, into impersonal intelligence and unconscious reason, into that *νοῦς* upon reaching which the Greek thinker ceased thinking, and the Greek Gods were consigned to Euthanasia; "to thinking upon thought" (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1074*b*, 34).

Herein, as the author of *Ecce Homo* has pointed out (15th edition, Macmillan, pp. 86–96), lies the difference between the gospel of Socrates and Christianity.

There is much at a first reading of the Socratic gospel by a Christian reader to associate "St. Socrates" with his Master; Socrates, like the Master, spoke in parables; in parables homely to grotesqueness but in parables; in parables about eels and mosquitoes, midwives and magnets; Socrates, like the Master, spoke of a second birth of a kind, an intellectual re-birth or "conversion" (*Rep.*, VII, 518*d*, *e*; *Theætetus*, 149*a*, *b*, *c*) necessary for his disciples and over which he presided; Socrates, like the Master, was at home in humble houses and spent much of his time, like St. Peter, "in the house of one Simon, a tanner" (or a shoemaker), the reputed author of the Platonic dialogue called *Hipparchus*, and if he spent yet more time with youthful aristocracy (p. 21, above) it was from no preference for the well-born and wealthy, but partly because no one else had the leisure to talk to him (*vide* p. 21, *supra*, and p. 159, *infra*) and partly because youth attracted *him*, as childhood attracted our Saviour; the opening intellect had the same fascination for *him*, which innocence and simplicity of character possessed for

the first Christian, and in memory of Him have possessed for Christians ever since (p. 73, *supra*).

There are passages again from the *Apology* and other dialogues which have obvious parallels in the New Testament; there are Socratic versions of "I was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (*Apol.*, 30*a*), "it is not meet to take the children's bread and give it to dogs" (*Apol.*, 30*a*), "seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you" (*Apol.*, 30*b*), "if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee: it is better," etc. (*Clitophon*, 407*e*).

Here is another parallel not less close: "but when they shall deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak": so Socrates, also with the same distrust of artificial rhetoric and of the elaborate preparation of a defence, says simply (Xenophon, *Mem.*, IV, 8, 5) that his δαιμόνιον forbade him to prepare a defence for the Athenian jury to whom he was to be delivered up. Socrates anticipated the spirit which is recorded by the Evangelist and which later pietists have followed; Dr. Thring, for example, we are told, on principle never prepared his Bible-lesson for the boys of Uppingham; it was too serious and vital a lesson to be artificially prepared (Skrine's *Thring*, pp. 249 and 250).

And apart from all phrases and all apophthegms there is the other and deeper resemblance involved in the common possession by Christ and by Socrates of the arresting and significant trait—perfect humility with absolute authority: however incompatible be these qualities with one another in other men: Socrates is nothing if not humble—intellectually humble of course—(*Phædo*, 91*c*) but it does not prevent him from asserting his mission and the all-importance of his mission (*Apology*, 30*a*, *e*).

It was not for nothing, then, or simply on the strength of Jowett's love for Biblical phraseology, that the old lady, who had read his translation of the *Apology*, commented that she had had before no idea how often Plato quoted from the New Testament; there was a method in her madness.

But behind all such parallelisms runs the deeper difference: Socrates cared only for the intellect and intelligence of his disciples; and the first necessity for the intellect is free thought and independence of mind; Socrates therefore eschewed the very principle of authority upon which Christ built (*Ecce Homo*, pp. 87–96, Macmillan, 15th edition). His disciples were to believe nothing because he said it, do nothing because he did it; it was not a society, a church, a way of life, which he wished to found; it was not a conversion of character which he desired; he wished only to develop and popularize free and careful thinking.

Necessarily with his breadth of view he became the founder, more or less, of various schools of very different qualities: of Cynics and Cyrenaics, Epicureans and Stoics, Academics and Peripatetics; even as Christianity has taken many shapes and opposite shapes in the course of history, and is taking a new shape to-day: but it is to his intellectual keenness, or to some cherished apophthegm of his, or to some favourite intellectual method, that these schools affiliated themselves; whereas the varieties of Christians derive rather from one or other of the Beatitudes, from one or other of the practical virtues which the Saviour went about preaching and practising.

It is repeating the same thing in another way, if, after calling Greek civilization "intellectualism" or "naturalism" we call it also "feminism"; and this is an old remark or an old jest—but it is serious and Platonic jesting (p. 80)—directed at the French or the Irish; above all at Paris the soul of France, as Athens was the soul of Hellas (p. 118, *supra*).

"Paris," say the wits always, "is the feminine element in Europe: the eternal feminine; who is ever saying to herself 'how am I looking to-day? is this style of Government becoming to me?'" Paris rests for her superiority on feminine qualities; on her artistic susceptibility; on her happy phrase-making; on the gifts and graces of her mistresses of salons; on the superiority of her actresses; even on the world-wide rule of her dressmakers.

Well Athens also, so far as she ever ruled the world, ruled it as a woman rules the world; by tact and indirect influence, by her greater intelligence, by her larger measure of natural gifts and graces; how, indeed, otherwise would the world have once universally believed in witches? unless evidence for the belief had sprung from watching the humblest shepherdess on a farm, the simplest and least sophisticated milkmaid; even these poor Audreys had arts and crafts which no philosopher could measure or comprehend or attain, and which it was more convenient for him to explain as direct emanations from the supernatural, and immediate diabolical inspiration.

The Greek chaplains and secretaries and scribes and slaves of the Roman masters of the world exercised, at the best, the same influence as high-minded women; at the worst, the influence of women with Nature's cleverness and without scruples, religious, educational or instinctive.

And finally Naturalism—paradoxical though it may seem at first sight to be—is not only another word for "Childishness" or "Feminism"; it is also a synonym for "Pessimism."

The Greeks are doubly pessimistic: on the one side as pessimistic as other philosophers and intellectuals ("not to be born were best; next, being born to die"—Sophocles, *Œdipus at Colonus*, line 1225) as Eastern Buddhists, for example; on the other side as pessimistic as "naturalists" (in the literary sense) and other realists who live too close to Nature, and

have found no escape from her in their instincts and aspirations; as pessimistic as the novelist Zola, or as any hard-driven farmer in any country (that is, in every country) where farming is a very precarious livelihood and brings more sickness, rheumatism and fatigue than satisfaction: one has only to listen to *Country Conversations*[1] to hear this pessimism from these realists: or, again, as pessimistic as the victims of old age in any class and any vocation: what escape, indeed, is there or can there be from such pessimism for such pessimists, unless escape be found in such a creed as Christ's, which strikes the happy mean; which has never deprecated, depreciated and disparaged life, with the Buddhists, nor yet on the other hand, has attempted, with the Bolshevists, the fantastic task of picturing this life as an Earthly Paradise; which has rather looked frankly for Paradise elsewhere and hereafter, and has been content to bless and gild with hopes and consolations of another world, the prospect and the fact of a dull and hard life faithfully performed here?

[1] *Country Conversations*, with an Introduction by the Right Hon. W. C. Bridgeman, M.P. John Murray, 1923.

CHAPTER VII

SOCRATES AND PLATO AS THEISTS

THIS little book is about "the Greek point of view"; and it has necessarily been full of Socrates and Plato; and yet it would be an exaggerated and one-sided picture of Plato and Socrates if it left out of sight a certain passionate Theism which can hardly be reconciled with the prevailing intellectualism that is one of their characteristics, as it characterized also their countrymen.

I mean that Socrates, agnostic and sceptic, as it may seem, to the core—Socrates, who kept an open mind to the end about that Great Assize and that Last Judgment, which fascinated his imagination, and the imagination of his disciple Plato—Socrates, who never shut his eyes, even in his last discussion of immortality, to the possibility that he would never open them again when the sun had set for him that day upon the hills of Attica (*Phædo*, 116*c*) and the hemlock had done its work; Socrates nevertheless assumed three things to be true beyond discussion, no one of which can be demonstrated to the intellect. He assumed that God was, and that God was good (*Rep.*, II, 379*b*); further that, whether he lived again for a season, as he hopefully imagined that he might, or whether he died once for all at the hands of the Eleven, in either case he was forbidden by God to lengthen his term on earth by any breach of the natural laws of the State, by any flattery or corruption of the jury, by any attempt to escape from prison.

He argued that failing a special revelation from God (*Phædo*, 85*d*)—a journey to Damascus as one may say—he would still cling to "the raft" on which he was tossing through the stormy sea of life, and not leave it for any such lifebelt or buoy, as might be furnished by cajolery of the jury or bribery of the gaoler (*Phædo*, *ibid.*, 85*d*).

And this "raft" (*Phædo*, XXXV, 85*d*) was his conviction that his duty was to risk everything, annihilation included, rather than swim to a low shore by illicit life-lines; by perjuring himself or asking the jury to perjure themselves; this "raft" was his conviction that he believed in God, though he was doubtful of a hereafter, more, and more passionately, than any of his accusers (*Apology*, XXIV, 35*d*), and that he would establish their charge of atheism against him if he were to be untrue to his conscience even in the smallest details; that every man is an atheist as soon as, and as often as, he is so untrue; that no man is an atheist, whatever he may say (and men will say strange things), so long as he listens to the inner voice, the still small voice of conscience (*Apol.*, Chap. XVII, 29*a*, and Chap. XXIV, 35*d*). The argument is the very heart of the *Apology*, and therefore is repeated in the last words of the defence, though it has appeared before, and it comes to this, that life is essentially for the good man a venture of faith, a speculation of hope, a gamble of love (*Phædo*, LXIII, 114*d*). I have expanded the austere doctrine of the *Phædo*; possibly I have "developed" it; I have not departed from its spirit.

Here is no intellectualism, and none of the self-interest, the enlightened selfishness, the mere Greek "prudence," *εὐβουλία*, *σωφροσύνη*, which naturally wait upon intellectualism: no confusion of honesty and good policy, no "*real ethik*," no consecration of egoism.

Socrates and Plato are speaking with the tongues

and in the tones of Hebrew prophets rather than of Greek philosophers; it is not their dominant tone perhaps; it is an interlude in the drama of their philosophy, an episode in the Platonic dialogues; a by-product of their system; but the *Apology* and *Phædo* present this side of the picture beyond question, though it may easily be passed over in a very brief and rough summary of "the Greek point of view"; to expand the words of another parable contained in the *Phædo* (91*c*) Socrates left his sting in his disciples of all ages, like any other dying bee; and the sting was belief in God, the passion for theology, the instinct of religious faith, hope and love; the determination to ask always what was the final cause, the good and the God, behind all the vanity of life; without which the vanity seems wholly vain and hardly worth while, and the value of its perpetuation an open question.

Even so characteristically Christian a paradox as the turning of the other cheek is not absolutely foreign to Socrates and Plato in this mood. Plato's dialogue of the *Gorgias*, if it never reaches the other cheek, proposes the turning of the one cheek at least to the blow of shame (*Gorgias*, Chap. LXXXIII, 527*d*).

Even neo-Christian asceticism, far exceeding the asceticism of Christ Himself, is occasionally recorded of Socrates, and shows the paternity of the Cynics; he refused a cloak on one occasion, we are told, from an admirer (Diogenes Laertius, II, 5, 36). It was from Apollodorus, the disciple who broke down most completely at the last scene, and this which he did then "he did against his burial": but there the parallel ceases: Socrates, presumably, would have refused the alabaster box of precious ointment for his travel-stained and weary feet, which rarely went clad, had any woman ever offered him such a thank-offering; even Socrates seems sometimes to have thought more of himself and of the pride which peeped through his pain and poverty, and more of his self-

sufficiency, *αὐτάρκεια*, than of his disciples' love and gratitude.

So then the voice of Greece, the Greek point of view (as *Οὖτις* puts it in his letter to the *Spectator* of April 29th, 1922), though it be broadly the voice of logic and reason and intellect, is not wholly or solely so, but tends to lose itself, when it comes from the lips of Socrates and Plato, in the voice of Evangelists and Apostles, and to anticipate what Plato perhaps would have called in his inverted irony, the best form of irony, better than the ordinary irony of Socrates, the noblest of "noble lies," the "noble lie" of Christianity.

Here is the irony which uses not terms of compliment ironically, but terms of disparagement ironically; it was Plato who said that life requires "noble lies" to make honesty, decency and virtue possible; requires "noble lies" especially if a decent state is to be possible.

He meant apparently what Wesley meant in an arresting passage of his *Diary* (Vol. II, p. 399, Everyman's Library), where he describes his visit to the then new Unitarian chapel in Norwich, the octagon chapel. He says, in effect, with irony direct and indirect, that he listened to those high-flown ministrations in those luxurious surroundings, but concluded that there was more for him "in the old coarse gospel"; "the old coarse gospel" is Wesley's echo of the Platonic "noble lie."

The highest truth will be called "a noble lie" by superior persons, as Christianity is "a coarse gospel" to the same superior point of view; Wesley and Plato adopt ironically the superior and intellectual point of view, the Greek point of view, of noble lies and coarse gospels; "to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness."

But if Plato and Wesley be right, they are accepting a sort of religious rationalism or rational religion on a priori grounds resting on instinct ultimately,

on the inherited and cumulative experience of the race, and on aspirations so deep-seated as to be beyond the reach of logic, too deeply rooted in human nature, too subconscious to be dragged into the daylight of the dissecting room, or resolved into enlightened self-interest, and intelligent selfishness, and politic honesty and the conscious pursuit of happiness.

They imply, also, these same instincts, as even Plato thinks, as even Socrates would like to think, though he is not sure, a Great Assize and a Last Judgment, and a term of Heaven or Hell (or rather of Roman Catholic Purgatory); there must be a Heaven (and a Purgatory), thinks Plato, because there has to be; Socrates has earned something better than annihilation; Ardiæus something worse: worse perhaps even than Purgatory (pp. 61, 62, above).

But they do not imply, by the way, the doctrine of God's omnipotence. Plato never held that doctrine, nor yet perhaps did he reject it on precisely the same ground on which it has been rejected by modern philosophers; John Stuart Mill, for example, argued that the world as it is, the horrors and cruelties and beastlinesses of life forbid the doctrine of a God at once and equally good and omnipotent; man must take his choice; if he accept (with Plato and Socrates) the doctrine that God is good, he must reject the omnipotence; the sight of life as it is, and always has been (and not merely as man has now made it), makes the doctrine of a perfectly good and also an omnipotent God inconceivable; "Nature red in tooth and claw with ravine, shrieks against his creed"; St. Paul himself conveys the same thought in other words, "the whole creation travaileth and groaneth in pain."

Plato, on the other hand, seems on his principle of dualism, the principle which gave him body and soul as separate and distinct, to assume the dualism of

God and matter; matter, further, is not purely negative; it is possessed of an element of freedom, whereby it resists and defies law, and never perfectly responds to it; the planets, for example, move in ellipses, but in imperfect ellipses (to borrow a modern illustration); the perturbations of the satellites of Uranus, as Mr. Adam pointed out in his edition of the *Republic* (to take another modern illustration) would never have led Plato to the discovery of Neptune, as they led Adams and Leverrier, for he would have dismissed the perturbations as casual consequences of the freedom of matter, limited but real within limits; no visible and material star, says Plato (*Rep.*, VII, 529*d*, *e*; 530*a*, *b*), though it be better than terrestrial matter, will obey law precisely, but only in a general way; God's Omnipotence then is limited by the freedom of matter; and the freedom of matter again is a necessary doctrine perhaps, if there is to be any good in matter and in man; Plato limits human free-will sharply, first by the doctrine of luck and the number of the lot which gives him his chance of choosing a new life (*Rep.*, X, 618*a*, 619*a*); second, by the doctrine of heredity (*Rep.*, III, 415*a*, *b*; X, 618*b*, *c*, *d*, *e*; 619*a*, *b*); but he allows a remnant of free-will (*Rep.*, X, 619*b*), *καὶ τελευταίῳ ἐπιόντι, σὺν νῷ ἑλομένῳ, συντόνως ζῶντι κεῖται βίος ἀγαπητὸς οὐ κακός*; presumably, because otherwise the good man is not truly good; is not in any degree a free agent; is merely a potter's vessel for honour or for dishonour; merely a breath of the Divine or a creation of matter, without liberty to be other than what the opposing forces between them make him. Plato seems to deny the Omnipotence of God on a priori grounds, as inconsistent with the dualism of life, not merely, as Mill denies it, on grounds of experience and upon the facts of Nature, and the laws of life.

On the other hand, the Christian churches, however difficult they find it to reconcile their theories with the words of Christ about the times of ignorance, and the hardness of human hearts, and the winking

of God thereat; not to add also the very suggestive words, "my Father worketh hitherto and I work," in spite too of St. Paul's "groaning and travailing of the whole creation," appear to assume God's Omnipotence; an Omnipotence consciously and purposely waived in man's case, because a man must be free to obey God or not to obey, if he is to be good at all; but otherwise unbroken and unlimited.

They ignore the difficulty that it is not man's necessary freedom which stands in the way of the conception of an Omnipotent Goodness (that is only a permitted and an apparent exception), but also the laws of Nature and the facts of life itself, however well men behave and however much they strive to live up to the divine conscience within them.

Plato's doctrine of matter, as free and negative and resistant of good, appears, as is often said, to correspond to the Devil in later theology, and to involve an ultimate Manichæan dualism; which the Christian churches seem to feel themselves bound to deny in theory, though in practice probably most men, consciously or not, accept it, and agree with John Stuart Mill about it. Why the churches of to-day should balk at dualism and Manichæism, only a trained theologian can explain: it is part presumably of the modern churches' loss of faith in the Devil. Disraeli, who was a much more careful thinker than his anti-Semitic countrymen were willing to believe, observed once that there was no argument against the personality of the Devil which could not be applied also against the personality of God; nor was that a mere jest proceeding from heresy and schism, from hardness of heart, and contempt of the word and the commandments.

An illustration of this difference and this difficulty is found in the attitude of Christianity and Platonism towards things "necessary": we all of us naturally assume that if a thing be really "necessary" it cannot be evil; manual labour, menial labour, a slave's

labour even, cannot be evil, if it be necessary to life; the man who performs it faithfully is a good Christian, as good in his humble way, and with his single talent, as the more honoured labour of the more gifted man; equal proportionately to the man of ten talents; the conclusion follows not only from the Christian parable but from the goodness of God: but to Plato, in spite of God's goodness, things "necessary" *τὰ ἀναγκαῖα* are often identical (e.g. *Rep.*, VI, 493*c*) with things "evil"; Plato is not concerned to justify and console the slave for his mean and sordid round and task; rather perhaps he assumes that from the evil in matter it follows that all sorts of things are at once evil and yet inevitable and necessary: war, prostitution, slavery, abortion, infanticide, and the like (p. 130, *supra*); Christian instinct naturally is up in arms; and to avoid the appalling corollaries of Plato's dualism takes refuge in the very difficult doctrine of God's Omnipotence; some mediation and mediator is wanted.

All this and the other topics of this chapter illustrate once more the familiar words of Emerson, "Out of Plato come all things that are still written and debated among men of thought," or, as it used to be put in Oxford lecture-rooms in the disparaging, depreciatory, deprecatory way of the English, or, shall I say rather, with truly Socratic *μείωσις* and *λιτότης*, or better still, with an irony worthy of Plato himself, "there is no sort of rubbish and nonsense which you won't find in Plato."

I am indebted to my old Magdalen School classical master, Mr. St. George Stock, for that most illuminating comparison and contrast of the American and the English minds and modes of speech (preface to Plato's *Meno*, p. 7. Clarendon Press, by St. George Stock).

CHAPTER VIII

GREEK RELIGION

IT may seem absurd to write on the Greek point of view or on any national point of view, and say nothing of the national religion; beyond an *obiter dictum* that Sparta was at once the most religious and the most unscrupulous of Greek states.

But in fact, what is there to be said? Philosophy, says Bacon, was the religion of the ancients; and it is true, I think, that only in the philosophers, in Socrates and Plato, does religion seem to be part of their serious view of life. With the rest religion appears to be but slightly connected with conduct; the Delphic oracle, no doubt, had a measure of vital religion when it enforced ceremonial purifications, as a symbol of purity of mind and heart, before a consultation of the priestess; still more when it told the man who was meditating embezzlement to go on with his embezzlement (Herodotus, VI, 86), and then explained to him, when he was overtaken with dire penalties, that his question had been an insult to the god, who had answered him according to his iniquity; possibly, too, when it greeted the visitor to Delphi with the mystic inscription "εἶ" over the temple, interpreted to mean either "Thou art," that is, each man is a living soul, a personality, not a beast that perishes; or "Thou, God, art" or "Thou, God, art One"; it is for such and similar reasons, presumably, that Plato, who disparages alike the theology of his country, and the theologians, that is, the poets, whom he treats as the exponents of theology and its prophets, Homer and Æschylus and Simonides

and others (*Rep.*, I, 334*b*; II, 379*c*–381*d*; 383*a*, *b*, *c*; III, 386–393*a*), makes an exception in favour of Delphi and introduces its oracle, as a court of appeal, into his ideal city of Callipolis (*Rep.*, IV, 427; V, 461*e*, 469*a*; VII, 540*c*).

Popular religion, in fact, appears to have been in Greece chiefly a matter of ritual and ceremony, of outward act, but not of thought or creed: "Croyez ce que vous voulez faites comme les autres," as the French have summarized it. Being a worship of local deities with local influence and interests only or chiefly, it made no appeal or no perceptible appeal to the universal conscience of Greece; but prompted rather the aphorism which suggests Gibbon yet came from the oracle itself, "that religion is true for each man which is the religion of his own country" (Xenophon, *Mem.*, IV, 3, 26).

Religion was a political bond between Athenian and Athenian or between Spartan and Spartan; the Church was part of the state, not a separate, still less a rival, power; the system was Erastianism of an extreme kind. (Dr. Arnold, by the way, as a classical scholar, conceived the idea that the same thing might work in Great Britain properly, and debated with himself whether Unitarians and whether Jews should be disfranchised.) Heresy, as such, therefore hardly existed, in spite of the trial of Socrates and the banishment from Athens of Anaxagoras and Diagoras; and of the prosecution for impiety of Protagoras (Diogenes Laertius, IX, 54: Timon of Phlius, fragment XLIX (17), line 7, Wachsmuth's edition). Socrates was imperilling the safety of Athens if he introduced new ideas of deity and a new personal religion of conscience and "a still small voice"; he was introducing new deities and making light of the local gods; similarly the mutilators of the Hermæ in 415 B.C., were not so much heretics to the Athenians as traitors to Athens; expressing their contempt for her state-system and her democracy by

insulting the statues of her gods; probably they were not, as a matter of fact, political traitors in league with Corinth or Sparta, so much as young "intellectuals" indulging their new-found gifts of philosophy and free thought, to scoff at the reigning theologies (*Rep.* VII, 539*b*); similar outrages have occasionally occurred in Oxford colleges, the product of the same youthful ὕβρις (p. 118, above) or insolence of the intellect; νεανιεύματα, "vivacities" as Plato calls them (*Rep.*, III, 390*a*), "youthful excesses"; no one takes them more seriously than he takes the youthful "Bolshies" of the same colleges; but to the Athenian δῆμος they looked like downright treason, and in fact it is altogether likely that Socrates would have escaped condemnation, in spite of his novel Theism or "Protestantism," if he had not been associated in the people's mind with reactionary politics and politicians, with Critias, Charmides, and others of the Thirty Tyrants: with the young aristocrats who were his chief companions, not of his own choosing but from force of circumstances (*Apology*, XXI, 33*a*, *b*) (and see above, pp. 21, 144).

To explain such a religion is to explain it away; perhaps the most interesting feature of its creed is the doctrine of νέμεσις; of the jealousy of Heaven; the Greeks were a jealous race, even beyond the usual human measure of that ubiquitous vice; and they fashioned gods in their own image; "God suffers no man to boast except Himself" (Herodotus, VII, 10, 5). "He strikes the tallest trees, the highest palaces" (Herodotus, VII, 10, 4), and gives a man or a state or a race a taste of prosperity, then dashes the cup from their lips or passes it to another (Herodotus, I, 32; III, 40; VII, 46). "The small cities become great and the great cities small, and human happiness moves in cycles and has no abiding stay (Herodotus, I, 5). The poet Æschylus—in spite of Plato's harsh rebukes of his popular and immoral theology (*Rep.*, II, 383*a*, *b*, *c*)—is at pains to moralize

this naïve doctrine; it is not prosperity, he demurs, which brings divine vengeance, it is the insolence (ὕβρις) which prosperity breeds (Æschylus, *Agamemnon*, 446–458 and 727–750).

Herodotus himself moralizes the doctrine in a larger and more picturesque fashion, as might have been expected: his revised version is that God not only puts down the mighty from their seat, but in the same degree exalts the humble and meek; he ransacks Nature and human life for illustrations; quaint to grotesqueness; it is the meek and humble rabbit which presents the phenomenon of superfetation (Herodotus, III, 108); the dangerous animals multiply very slowly and at great cost; the meek, in other words, inherit the earth; or, as some modern philosopher has put it (Prince Kropotkin, I think), "The sea is to the herring, not to the whale; the air is to the sparrow, not to the eagle," or again, the goat is a sufficiently pungent creature, but, in the benevolent compensations of Nature, his instinct is to rub his beard against a certain shrub, whence he furnishes to his owners one of the choicest perfumes of commerce (Herodotus, III, 112). "Out of the strong has come forth sweetness."

The human illustrations may be less bizarre, but they are even more piquant and picturesque; Herodotus reports the eventful history of a certain Magnesian farmer, who came in for a windfall when the Persian fleet was wrecked off his farm; "And so this man, though unfortunate in other respects, became rich with flotsam and jetsam; he had in fact suffered the unpleasant misfortune of killing his own child" (Herodotus, VII, 190). The historian is very careful to record an example of that compensation, that balance of good and evil, which, in his judgment, is one of the secrets of Providence: a secret which mitigates, but hardly cancels the drawbacks of life: "The Trausi," says Herodotus ironically, as though he had never seen the same pheno-

menon among his own countrymen, "when a child is born, lament for him, the ills he will have to bear, recounting all the maladies of human life; but the dead they bury with pleasure and play, recounting the ills from which he has escaped into perfect blessedness" (V, 3).

But perhaps a more striking manifestation of the doctrine is the appeal [Herodotus, VII, 203] made by the allied Greeks to the Opuntian Locrians and the Phocians for help against Persia. Nothing is said about liberty and pride of race, and the other topics which would sound natural in our ears, but the argument which is offered and which convinces the hearers is a sermon on Divine Jealousy, added to counsels of expediency. "The rest of the allies are expected every day: the sea is held by Athens and Ægina: there is no danger: the invader is not a god, but a mortal: but no mortal lives nor ever will live, into whose lot disaster has not entered, and the greater the man the greater the disaster: therefore the invader being mortal will fall from his estate": on learning this the Locrians and Phocians marched to the rescue of Greece.

But in spite of Æschylus and Herodotus and their moralizings, the popular sense of the evil eye, of that divine jealousy, which visits with overthrow anyone who possesses, for example, a ring of surpassing beauty, like Polycrates (Herodotus, III, 41–43), anyone who boasts, like Niobe, of her children's beauty, or even anyone whose children are innocently praised by strangers for their beauty, darkened Greek life, and underlies obviously the incessant preaching of prudence, caution, moderation, which is the burden of the Greek chorus, even in Sophocles, who was not superstitious (*Antigone*, 583–625; 1348–1352), and of Greek drama generally (*Antigone*, 710–717, 1050, 1098, 1242–1243).

And, after all, the idea is still powerful, still enshrined after two thousand years in the popular

phraseology of all peoples; don't boast of your health or your wealth, or touch wood, if you boast; it only needs a few coincidences—and everyone has seen such coincidences—to awake again to life; I have seen in modern Greece, within twenty miles of Delphi, a party of American and Canadian women in danger of being stoned because in the little village of Arachoba, inhabited by Albanians, they had artlessly praised the beauty of the local children. Ancient superstitions meant little to them; found expression, if at all, as a jest; had faded, like the Cheshire cat, into a smile; and yet they were like seamen on a raft, a few planks removed from drowning; world-wide age-old theologies were close beneath them, threatening to submerge the frail craft of their Christianity and their creed of the Divine Love; *their* instinct was Sir Thomas Browne's, to thank God when they saw a beautiful face (*Religio Medici*, p. 284. Macmillan, 1901). The creed of the Arachobans was that God would spoil such faces, were His attention directed to them.

The religion of Rome was even more superstitious, formal, ceremonial; and identical with the Greek in the matter of *νέμεσις*. Paullus Æmilius (Plutarch, *P. A.*, 36), having defeated the enemies of Rome, looked anxiously to see how the jealous gods would "get back" at his country; and was relieved in mind when both his sons died during the celebration of the victory; he had paid, he felt, in his own family the inevitable price of success and his country was safe; but presumably this Roman Jephthah and the other Romans, having a conscience, and an instinct for sound politics and for honesty, connected their crude ritual with their moral insight, *φρόνησις*, and drew moral support from it, as well as all the superstitious fancies of their system of divination and of those other sciences, falsely so called, which play a large part in Livy's history.

This suggestion was itself suggested by some one's

remark—Cicero's, I think—that the crude anthropomorphism of Rome which worshipped a vermilion Jupiter and a raddled image of stone, an aerolite of some sort which fell from the skies, was after all nearer the essence of all theology, that God is very near man, nearer than hands and feet, if we only feel after him and find him, than a lofty Persian monotheism (or Greek intellectualism). Such systems left a plain, material-minded Roman quite cold; he could not bear it yet; anyone who taught it him was taking away his God, not moralizing Him: whereas his image-worship left him a religion. Livy makes the same suggestion in the spirited defence of grotesque Roman ceremonial which he puts into the mouth of Appius (Livy, VI, 41): "To tend the sacred chickens, to watch their feeding and their gestures, and the like, this perhaps is a trifle; but it was by conscientious regard for such trifles and such traditions, that our fathers made the greatness of this city."

Anyone who wants a more modern illustration will find one in the Preface to Mr. Bernard Shaw's *St. Joan*: "The simplest French peasant who believes in apparitions of celestial personages to favoured mortals, is nearer to the scientific truth about Joan than the rationalist and materialist historians and essayists who feel obliged to set down a girl who saw saints and heard them talking to her as either crazy or mendacious." Mr. Bernard Shaw is not unwilling, sometimes, to confirm the churches.

After all, the pagan services of ancient Rome, compact of conservative superstitions, are not much more remote from the thoughts of a westerner of to-day than the ceremonies and services which he witnesses in contemporary Rome, when he finds himself at matins in the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, for example.

But to return to Greece: at first sight, perhaps, a reader of the classics might compare Greece favourably with Judæa; the Hebrews imagined that the

tower of Siloam could not have fallen on innocent men; they provoked our Saviour's protest by their simple instinct and naïve creed; no Greek would have felt their scruples; and yet the reason for the difference of point of view is not so much Hebrew *naïveté* and simplicity as against Greek thoughtfulness and scientific observation, as Hebrew faith in God's justice and mercy, as against the comparative indifference of Greeks for mercy and justice, both in themselves and in their gods.

It did not occur to the Greeks to be shocked because the gods suffered a tower to fall on unoffending inmates; they had not imported these ideas of mercy and of justice into the life of Heaven; they were not of sufficient weight with them in the life of earth; Homer, against whose creed Plato inveighed incessantly, peoples his Elysium with princes and with demi-gods, not with the spirits of just men made perfect, not with saints or even with heroes; Achilles is not there; he was of inferior birth; he was in the other limbo where ordinary mortals went, so exquisitely described by Sir Henry Newbolt, though he was writing not of an Homeric but of an African Hades, in his *Srahmandazi*:

> Yonder sun that fierce and fiery-hearted
> Marches down the sky to vanish soon,
> At the self-same hour in Srahmandazi
> Rises pallid like the rainy moon.
>
> There he sees the heroes by the river
> Where the great fish daily upward swim.
> Yet they are but shadows hunting shadows—
> Phantom fish in waters drear and dim.
>
> Bid farewell to all that most thou lovest,
> Tell thy heart thy living life is done;
> All the days and deeds of Srahmandazi
> Are not worth an hour of yonder sun.

or—in a Greek version:

> *πασῶν νυκτῶν ἡμερῶν τ' ἐν Ἄιδῃ*
> *μία κρεῖττον ἀκτὶς ἡλίου.*

In short, a survey of classical religion or theology, apart from the reading of Socrates and Plato, is not inspiring or edifying. These religions and theologies seem to lack actuality: "La question de Dieu," says some Frenchman broadly, "manque d'actualité"; if he had been commenting on the creeds of classical paganism, the remark would have passed as a truism; and there need have been no careful interpretation of the exact meaning of the word *actualité* in French.

With Aristotle, Greek theology may be said to have reached *εὐθανασία*; the gods have no "moral virtues" in the quaint Greek will-ignoring phrase; it would be derogatory to them to ascribe to them the lower virtues; if they love philosophers, they alone know why they do so; it is quite inconsistent with their unemotional nature; nay, that even the wise man—who has become like the gods in his wisdom—loves nothing and nobody, is the logical inference logically drawn in the dialogue of Plato called *Lysis* (218*a*). Love is the temporary, tentative and provisional emotion of the man who has not yet become self-sufficient, who has not yet realized his potentialities, who is still conscious of wants and needs and limitations: when he has filled these voids he has no further occasion for the emotion of love. "Moral virtues" are only human and "regulative," as Dean Mansel, the Aristotelian, said of them; not part of the Divine nature; they are the means by which the mind of man is swept and garnished and kept free from the lower passions (*Ethics*, VI, 13, 8), so that the spirit of the Divine life, the spirit of philosophy, may have a chance to enter into man and possess him: and this Divine life is thinking upon Thought, whatever that may be (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1074*b*, 34).

CHAPTER IX

STOICISM

I PROPOSE, before finishing this book, to add a chapter on the Romans, if only by way of a foil to the Greeks and in order to point a contrast.

The connecting link between Athens and Rome is the Stoic philosophy. The Stoics were not for the most part Greek in blood, and their system did its best work and rose to its highest usefulness after it had been adopted by the dour, serious and unspeculative Romans; it cannot therefore be expected to illustrate "the Greek point of view" to any large extent; nevertheless, its founders spoke Greek, as the founder of the system which dispossessed them and yet often touched them did not (but Aramaic); for several reasons, then, Stoicism is entitled to a place in a book on "the Greek point of view"; for its relation to Plato; for its relation to the Roman rivals and successors of Greece in world-power; for its relation to that system of Christianity in which both Greeks and Romans were ultimately merged.

Zeno, the founder of Stoicism (one of several philosophers of the name), belonged by birth to Citium, in Cyprus (not in Crete as Bishop Lightfoot has inadvertently written); Diogenes Laertius calls him a "Phœnician" (Diog. Laer., *Zeno*, VII, 3), Phœnician blood being common to a large part of the Cypriots of Citium; his "floruit" lies between 350 and 260 B.C.; his home during the greater part of that time was the natural home for a philosopher, Athens; but his Greek fell short of the Athenian standard; and his death by suicide seems to antici-

pate the *mors Romana* of many of his later Roman followers.

Cleanthes, the second leader of the Stoics, belonged to the Troad by birth and followed Zeno to Athens; but without accepting citizenship there; a self-denying ordinance in which he followed his master; he supported himself apparently as a labourer, and, more curiously, as a pugilist (just as St. Paul was a tent-maker); he ended his life, like his master, and like Aristippus of Tarsus, one of his successors, by his own hands; he had a reputation, like his master, for sobriety, solidity and seriousness; neither was he more an "intellectual" than Zeno before him.

Chrysippus, the third of the Stoics, was a Cilician of Soli; he followed Zeno and Cleanthes to Athens and, unlike them, became a naturalized Athenian.

Very little has survived of the writings of any of these earlier Stoics; it is sufficiently covered by the proposition that they returned much nearer to the bald Puritanism, so to speak, of Antisthenes and the Cynics, than to the intellectualism and idealism of Plato and Aristotle, or to the speculations and theories of Socrates; for obvious reasons they were opposed also, especially in profession and theory, to the Athenian cult of happiness and pleasure as set forth by Epicurus, and in part anticipated by Socrates and Aristotle; they stood to Epicureans somewhat as Pharisees to Sadducees.

The "East," which Stoicism represented, was not the East of speculation and meditation but the East of moralism; Stoicism, as a system of ethics primarily and of character, presents a contrast equally to the intellectualism of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, and to the Athenian and Epicurean creed of happiness.

It follows that the modern readers of Stoicism and Epicureanism, as Jowett used to say of the readers of Lucian or Polybius or Plutarch, and other later Greeks, who might have been reading instead

Plato and Aristotle, or Herodotus and Thucydides, or Sophocles, or Demosthenes, are "keeping poor company."

Stoicism and Epicureanism, in fact, were reactions of an exhausted age; they were creations of the fatigue of the human intelligence and of an era of disillusion; somewhat parallel to the pragmatism of James and Schiller.

Stoicism (with Epicureanism) had its logic and its physics; but these were of little account to the Stoics themselves, and are of no account, therefore, to their modern readers; the Stoic heart was not there, nor therefore its treasure (to invert the familiar words). "Of the subjects of philosophical investigation," wrote Aristo of Chios, the most "Cynical" of the Stoics, "some concern us, some have no relation to us, some are beyond our reach; ethics is of the first class; logic and dialectic of the second; physics of the third" (Diog. Laert., VII, 160, quoted by Bishop Lightfoot in his appendix, *St. Paul and Seneca*, to St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, and by Zeller in his *Stoics and Epicureans*, translated by Reichel).

Aristo, by the way, the least Greek in spirit of the Stoics, was the only Greek by birth, except for Panætius of Rhodes; and even these two belonged to the outskirts of Greece; Posidonius, the most influential missionary of Stoicism in Rome, belonged to Apamea in Syria (Lightfoot, *l.c.*, p. 310); such men as Posidonius were the best of those "domestic chaplains," who for good or for evil were a common feature of the households of Roman nobles through many generations, from the days of the elder Cato to the days of Tacitus; Cato of Utica, for example, had two such chaplains, Athenodorus of Tarsus and Antipater of Tyre (Lightfoot, *l.c.*, p. 310); it was no doubt with their continuous help that he continued during the anarchy of the last years of the Roman Republic to conduct him-

self " tanquam Platonis in Republicâ non tanquam in fæce Romuli " (Cicero's *Letters to Atticus*, II, 1, 8).

The Stoics professed to live *ὁμολογουμένως*; or, again, *ὁμολογουμένως τῇ φύσει*; or again, *τῷ λόγῳ*; or again, *τῷ θεῷ*; that is, apparently, consistently with themselves and their principles; or in harmony with Nature; or with Reason; or with God.

But what did they mean? Their favourite motto, " Life according to Nature," is the vaguest of clichés; ranging from Realism, Naturalism, Animalism, in the moral sense of those words, to " The Simple Life "; Chrysippus, for example, defended his Stoical Cynicism occasionally by appeals to the cynicism of the dog (Plutarch, *de Sto. rep.*, 22, quoted by Zeller, *l.c.*, p. 289).

Plutarch, in another passage (Zeller, p. 81, note), observes that though the Stoics based their system on Nature, many of their ideas were very far indeed from "natural" or popular; conversely, as another ancient critic notes, the Stoic philosopher, living according to Nature, yet thought the natural man, the man in the street, a madman and a fool.

Diogenianus, a Peripatetic (quoted by Eusebius, *Præp. Evan.*, VI, 8, 10), makes this last shrewd thrust, which touches the very heart of the matter (Zeller, pp. 81 and 255). Bishop Lightfoot, in the same vein (*l.c.*, pp. 285, 298, 322, 326), suggests, in effect, that though Seneca writes diffusely of his cosmopolitanism and how he is " the friend of man," yet few men were ever less expansive or more exclusive; his cosmopolitanism was a cherished literary treasure; a precious item of his stage properties; a theory; the Stoics were officers without soldiers; trees without leaves or branches; they had not so much ceased to assemble themselves in church (as later quasi-Stoics often); they had never begun to be a church; but virtue can only be spread through a church.

And yet it is with Seneca, whatever his deficiencies, that Stoicism now and for us stands or falls; for

it is in his voluminous writings that we find the analogies that interest us; analogies of a twofold kind; both with Plato and with Christianity.

Of the two analogies, the affinity with Christianity is by far the more striking, so far as language is concerned.

Lightfoot has examined it carefully in his appendix on St. Paul and Seneca and has set it forth fully.

This affinity is itself again twofold, in outward circumstances and in spirit: (*a*) the Roman Empire has made the world one and the human race one; the man who is a citizen of the Roman Empire, as Seneca and even St. Paul was, is also, in fact and not in theory only, a citizen of the world; the old title of cosmopolitan, of unsavoury memories, when coined by Antisthenes, but rehabilitated by Zeno, was no longer of necessity negative and selfish and dishonest; it had become positive and capable of the connotation of unselfishness; the word, at any rate, denoted now an actual fact for thousands of men, and not an empty and impudent fiction.

But besides this, (*b*) the Roman Empire, by producing a literal and legal cosmopolitanism, had suggested a cosmopolitanism of the spirit; just as Newman's "gentleman," if he is logical, exhibits the external features and graces of Christianity (*University Education*, Chap. vii), so Seneca, as a logician and a gentleman, cannot fail to chime with St. Paul the Christian. "Nature bids me," writes Seneca (*de Vita Beata*, 24), "assist men; whether they be bond or free; whether gentlefolk or freedmen; what does it matter? Wherever a man is, there is room for well-doing"; and again, "This mind for doing good to all may belong as well to a Roman knight as to a freedman, or as to a slave; for what is a Roman knight or a freedman or a slave? Names only which had their origin in ambition or in injustice" (*Epistolæ Morales*, 31, 11); or again, "Servi sunt omnes; immo conservi" (*Epistolæ*, 47, 15).

And these two analogies of circumstance and spirit do not exhaust the affinity between St. Paul and Seneca; there is a third, which is perhaps even more piquant and intriguing; the analogy between the verbal paradoxes and oxymora of Seneca and St. Paul; the wise man of Seneca is alone free; he alone is happy; he alone is beautiful; he, and he only, possesses absolute wealth; he is the true king and the true priest; consul is as consul does (Seneca, *de Beneficiis*, VII, 3, 4, and 6, 10; *Epistolæ*, IX; Lightfoot, p. 305; Horace, *Odes*, IV, 9, 39–44).

Lightfoot naturally compares with these stock paradoxes of Stoicism, echoed even by Epicureans, the more familiar and the more pungent paradoxes of St. Paul; the apostles "are deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things" (2 Cor. vi. 8–10).

St. Paul as a citizen of Tarsus, one of the chief seats of Stoic philosophy, which sent forth Antipater, Archedemus, Athenodorus surnamed Ardylion, a second Athenodorus, son of Sandon, and a second Zeno, and also Heracleides; and which was a neighbour-city to Soli, whence came Aratus and Chrysippus, and neighbour to Mallos, whence Crates and the two Procluses; St. Paul may well have derived, argues Lightfoot, the suggestions of his brilliant paradoxes from the Greek professors of Stoicism in Tarsus and the neighbourhood.

From the same source may well have come also the outlines of other passages, not less familiar and forcible though less paradoxical: "There is neither Jew nor Greek; neither bond nor free; neither male nor female; for ye all are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 28); and again, "Not Greek and Jew; circumcision and uncircumcision; barbarian, Scythian, bond, free; but Christ is all and in all" (Col. iii. 11).

Such are the affinities, of language at least, between Stoicism and Christianity; affinities which have an historical origin in Tarsus probably and are not mere coincidences; though by no means pointing to an acquaintanceship, personal or literary, between Seneca and St. Paul; Lightfoot has naturally rejected the hypothesis as gratuitous and most improbable; can anyone, indeed, imagine St. Paul in close relations with a school of philosophers, who thought that the wise or good man differed from God only in duration? (Seneca, *de Providentia*, I) in close touch with thinkers who could so confound wise and good men with wisdom and goodness in man? Even if the Stoics had revised their creed in this article, and removed the gross confusion between good men and goodness in man, how could the sect of Stoics have recommended itself to the apostle, who was at first "the least of the apostles," and afterwards "the least of the Church of Christ," and finally "the chief of Sinners"?

By the side of these verbal analogies between Stoicism and Christianity, Platonic analogies whether with Christianity or with Stoicism seem at first sight slender enough; seem to resolve themselves into those anticipations of Stoicism and of Christianity implied in the familiar and often-quoted words of Plato's *Republic* (IX, 592, and VII, 540), that "in Heaven perhaps there is laid up a pattern (of the Ideal State) for him that wishes to see it, and seeing, to set in order his own soul"; or in such general propositions, repeated by Stoics and Christians that God made the world because He is good, and therefore made everything the best possible (Seneca, *Epis.*, 65, 10), or in the doctrine of guardian angels (*Rep.*, X, 618; *Epis.*, 90), or, better, in the Socratic vision of the Judgment Day and the Great Assize; or, possibly and so far as Christianity is concerned, in the Millenarianism, so to speak, of Plato (*Rep.*, X, 615), of which the twentieth chapter of the Book of Reve-

lation (*vv.* 3–5) is, conceivably, a distant echo and a far reflexion (*vide* p. 93, above).

The most striking of these Platonic analogies, verbally at least, is the first (*Rep.*, IX, 592), and it may well have been the inspiration of Zeno's own Ideal City (Plutarch, *Moralia*, p. 329*b*; Lightfoot, p. 306, note) and of St. Augustine's *Civitas Dei*: but there is much less " body " in these Platonic verbal anticipations of Zeno, Seneca and St. Paul than in the verbal affinities between Stoicism and Christianity; and even there, as Lightfoot says, the analogy soon breaks down, when one passes from the letter to the spirit (*vide* Chap. I, p. 26, for Fleury's analogy between the last words of Christ and some words of Seneca).

The analogy between Seneca and St. Paul, verbally striking, amounts in fact only to this, that just as to-day many superior persons echo the language of the Bible, though rejecting Christianity, so, before the full coming of Christianity, Romans of culture, like Seneca, anticipated in part and specially in language its ideals; and this from no mere coincidence; but so far as language is concerned for historical reasons and on account of the Stoic schools at Tarsus and its neighbourhood, and so far as thought is concerned, because all culture, pagan and Christian, tends in all men and in all ages to be one, at least superficially and in theory.

And yet the real anticipations of Christianity, says Lightfoot (and every essay of Dean Inge's illustrates and confirms his judgment), are much more in Platonism than in Stoicism; Platonism is, to begin with, less harsh and less Red Indian, so to speak, than is Stoicism; and though it be Stoical in seeking to destroy and root out poetry and the theatre and emotion as evil things, rather than to regulate them, as Aristotle would have them regulated, as things dangerous, it is never as materialistic as Stoicism, sometimes less materialistic than Aristotle; the

material stars, for example, which Aristotle regards as eternal and divine, are to Plato only fading copies and transient anti-types of the unseen and immaterial stars, that is of Divine Law and Eternal Order; the most perfect copies no doubt of their material kind, but imperfect in the last resort because material (*Rep.*, VII, 529, 530).

As it is written in the "Heaven" or "Uranus" of the Platonist Clough:

> "Then Plato in me said,
> 'Tis but the figured ceiling overhead
> With cunning diagrams bestarred, that shine
> In all the three dimensions, are endowed
> With motion too, by skill mechanical;
> That thou in height and depth and breadth and power
> Schooled unto pure Mathesis might'st proceed
> To higher entities; whereof in us
> Copies are seen, existent they themselves
> In the sole kingdom of the Mind and God.
> Mind not the stars, mind thou thy Mind and God.'"

Again, it is not Plato but Seneca, a Stoic, who says that the good man differs from God only in duration; or that pity is the fault of narrow minds (rather than the redeeming virtue of minds that are weak).[1]

When therefore some of the later Eclectics identified Stoicism with Platonism, they probably only meant that Stoicism and Platonism alike were Puritanic, so to speak, in their attitude to pleasure and poetry and the theatre, and to happiness generally; that they minimized the value of all these things; that with them pleasure was generally negative only, the reaction from previous pain (*Rep.*, IX, 583–586); or,

[1] The Pagan doctrine of pity as the fault of narrow souls reappears in the modern up-to-date Pagan, Mr. H. G. Wells. In his *Men as Gods* pity appears as the quality only of the nurse Lychnis, and the nurse Lychnis is one of the few failures of Utopia; she is allowed to live there, but she is the creature of a lower order, permitted to survive as a menial; not being an "intellectual" she is an outsider in Utopia and does not approach its altars.

as the Stoics preferred to put it in their unreal fashion, pleasure was only an illicit disturbance of philosophic *ἀπάθεια*; whereas Aristotle and Epicurus, often coincident though not identical, were more human; Aristotle's *εὐδαιμονία*, though not pleasure, involving many pleasures, and though not mere happiness covering happiness no less than other and higher things; while Epicurus went further and conceived the best thing in life to be just happiness or even pleasure, though like Lucretius, his follower, he remained a very Stoical or Puritanic variety of hedonist, and by no means an Epicurean; rather a preacher of "the simple life."

The Eclectics, in short, only meant perhaps—to use the language of modern controversies—that Plato and the Stoics were "Prohibitionists" in our language aiming at the eradication of pleasure, poetry and emotion (like Savonarola after them); Aristotle and Epicurus "Moderates" seeking the purification rather than the expulsion of the emotions of pity and fear; if these two, Aristotle and Epicurus, afterwards part company, it is only because Aristotle is always thinker, theorist and "intellectual," while Epicurus pushed the simple life so far into simplicity as to deprecate hard thinking; *παιδείαν πᾶσαν φεῦγε*, wrote Epicurus (Diog. Laert. on *Epicurus*, 6; Plutarch, *non posse*, etc., V, 12, 1).

In these matters of poetry and pleasure and emotion it is obvious that Aristotle, if not even Epicurus, rather than Plato, represents best what I have called the Greek point of view; there being always in Platonism generally, not merely in Platonic theology, a subcurrent of ardent Puritanism and wistful piety.

The Cynics, by the way, some one has amusingly written, confounded virtue with acorns (*Rep.*, II, implies the jest), but the Stoics and even Plato sometimes (*Rep.*, X) confused philosophers with Red Indians, in the assumed philosophic superiority to the emotion of pain; the idea indeed so fascinated

the wise men of the ancient schools generally that Epicurus himself occasionally could not resist its appeal; "The wise man may be happy even on the rack; he can bear with a smile pains the most violent, and in the midst of torture exclaim, 'How pleasant!'" (Diog. Laert., 118; Plutarch, *non posse*, etc., 3, 6; Zeller, p. 450), a picture at once pathetic and ludicrous: presumably the nemesis which dogs the thoughts of a high-minded man when his system makes no room for religion; he cannot, will not, dare not, face the naked horrors of life as they are revealed before him.

But of course it was the Stoics in the person of Seneca who went furthest in these extravagances of phrasing, and denounced in the vein of Nietzsche that which is the cardinal passion of the age in which we are living, and by no means its worst feature; rather, perhaps, its best, the best of which we are still capable, that passion of pity which is akin to love: and has not yet been spoilt for us (with love), by Realists and Psychoanalysis.

The best proof, I presume—to give another paragraph to Seneca—that Seneca was not a Christian, if any proof be needed, is that only so can he be saved from the charge of the grossest of hypocrisies, grosser than British hypocrisy at its worst (British hypocrisy being understood to be an ugly French name for somewhat fitful and wavering aspirations).

It was, I mean, the unreality and emptiness of Stoical magniloquence which made it easy and venial for a cultivated man like Seneca to contradict in the hour of difficulty his high-flown idealism of theory, and to submit himself again tamely to the familiar rôle of Nero's courtier; if a Christian had written all that Seneca wrote after the fashion and pattern of Christianity, he could not have belied his principles so completely without being guilty of the uttermost form of hypocrisy, and of sinning against the Holy Ghost, against all his beliefs and reverences

and humble faiths; whereas Seneca, philosopher, courtier and man of the world, only sinned against a thin and luxurious rhetoric and a tepid and self-centred "culture."

The Stoics in general—to return to Stoicism from this digression to Seneca—built so little on thought and knowledge that the world has agreed to treat them as moralists rather than as philosophers; but technically and literally their misnamed "life according to Nature" was also styled "life according to Reason," and was an echo, a verbal echo, of the aphorism of Socrates and Plato that Virtue is Knowledge: Aristotle they did not profess to echo equally; Aristotle knew too much of the deficiencies and ἀπορίαι which accompany knowledge to follow Plato closely (*Ethics*, X, 10, 3).

It is no wonder—to draw conclusions from all this—that though Stoicism has many more verbal parallelisms with Christianity than has Platonism, it was never as near to Christianity as Platonism was; never so akin in missionary zeal to Christianity as was Platonism; nor that, after Stoicism died, it was under a new form of Platonism that the pagan philosophers of Greece made their last stand against Christianity (Lightfoot, p. 319).

Stoicism therefore is interesting not so much as a forerunner of Christianity, though its verbal parallelisms be legion, but as a sour and desiccated moralism, which appealed strongly to many superior persons of a very masculine race; including some members of that race (like Lucretius) who never called themselves Stoics, who even imagined themselves Epicureans. But in fact a Roman was generally "anima naturaliter Stoica"; to a Roman the "Nature" or "Knowledge" or "Reason" or "God" on which he based his life was at bottom "Will" (Zeller, p. 241).

It is not necessary to dwell here on that far-fetched and impracticable unity of the virtues and on the similar unity of the vices, which the Stoics theoreti-

cally accepted, when they announced that he that had one virtue had all, and that he that was guilty of the least offence was guilty of all; the idea is only an echo—like much else in Stoicism—of the Socratic and Platonic speculations of the meeting-place of all virtues in knowledge; it belongs to the realm of abstract and airy speculation, and is wholly removed, fortunately for poor human nature, from fact and from practice; it appears again, in the interval, in Aristotle's doctrine of φρόνησις as embracing all virtue (*Ethics*, VI, 14, 6); and apparently in a more familiar document, more nearly contemporary with later Stoicism, in the Epistle of St. James (II, 10), and is not unlike in spirit to the wire-drawn speculations of some Christian theologians about the exact limits of regeneration, sanctification, justification; or in the curious thirteenth article of the Church of England; "Works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of His spirit are not pleasant to God; forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ, neither do they make men meet to receive grace, or (as the School-authors say) deserve grace of congruity: yea, rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but that they have the nature of sin": probably, if the Church to-day also does not doubt, it is only in the opposite sense, that she is ready to ascribe all Christ-like thoughts and deeds, whenever and wherever found, to the immanent grace of Christ and to the inspiration of the spirit of Him Who said: "My Father worketh hitherto and I work."

And yet no doubt the Stoics were not much more patently wasting their time on these unreal discussions of the unity of all wise and good men (if only peradventure two such men could somewhere somehow be found) or on the corresponding unity of the fools (of whom there were as many millions as there were souls in each community) than in following Chrysippus into his questions of moral casuistry;

"May a philosopher properly earn a talent of money by throwing three somersaults?" (if he can do so, as perhaps Cleanthes could (*vide* p. 167)), the somersaults referred to by Plutarch (*de Stoic. repug.*, quoted by Zeller, p. 269 note), or "May a man help himself to the best cut of a joint before his father is served?" (*ibid.*, p. 284, note), or "May a man cross his legs in the presence of a lecturing philosopher?" (*ibid.*), or—most engrossing of all minor questions for a Greek philosopher—"May a philosopher shave?" (*ibid.*). Here we reach the philosophy of advertisement and the advertisement of philosophy; and also the Pacifist reluctance to shed blood; the unwillingness was father of the doubt.

The Stoics paid for their neglect of political and scientific speculation by losing themselves in the unprofitable mint, anise and cummin of so-called Ethics.

But in what sense—it is worth asking—can they be said to have neglected political speculation while preaching *πολιτεύεται ὁ σοφός*? In the sense that there is, as already suggested earlier in this chapter, a contradiction between their boasted citizenship of the world and their practical withdrawal from it; they withdraw from their own small cities because they are citizens of a world-wide state; of Macedon or of Rome; but as they cannot in practice engage in politics under despotisms, they practically withdraw from public life not less than Aristotle's *θεωρητικός*; and without his justification; for they have already abjured also useful science and speculation for minute and frivolous minutiæ of Ethics; they withdraw much more absolutely *ä fortiori* than the Platonic philosopher, who has to spend half his time in the politics of his state, and more than half his time as long as he is in his prime and fit for the duties of government.

The contradiction was noted from the outset of the Stoic sect (compare p. 169). Plutarch noted

it (*de Stoic. repug.*, 2, 1; Zeller, p. 308) and Seneca's answer is only the admission that the practical and political maxims of Stoicism were merely exoteric and popular; "You should judge us," answers Seneca, "from our actual practice" (Seneca, *de Otio*, 6, 5; *de Tranquil.*, 10; Zeller, p. 308).

It is true (Zeller, *ibid.*) that Stoic cosmopolitanism was less fraudulent than the original variety; the original cosmopolitanism of the Cynics was merely negative and dishonest; an escape from patriotism and from public and domestic duties at a time when there was no world-state to which a philosopher could transfer his service; whereas Zeno, thanks to Alexander, and the Stoics of Rome, thanks to the Cæsars, were really living in world-states and could call themselves citizens of the world less negatively and more honestly; nevertheless, under no system of government, not even that of Alexander or of Marcus Aurelius, can a man serve his fellows without in some degree mixing with other men and becoming a man among men, though not necessarily "a politician" in the strict sense; but how can a man really mix with other men and become a man among men, and illustrate the social if not the political virtues of humanity, if he be one of the elect, one of the wise and good, and they are all fools?

Zeno and Seneca can be citizens of the world only as Carlyle was, by their writings; by writing for the world, for the elect and for the mostly fools; but if so, their writing does not entitle them to dwell upon their public life; they must be justified, if at all, by their θεωρία; Carlyle can escape on this plea; he studied history and wrote history, both for philosophers and fools; Seneca can escape on the plea that his moral essays and letters have helped the world to understand moral questions; otherwise he will have to face the harder task of showing that his public service of the state under Nero was good for Rome and Romans; but no system which so far

eschewed science and speculation, as did Stoicism, and yet served no public purpose by writing or by statesmanship, or both, is entitled to plead its nominal citizenship of the world as an offset to its deficiencies in *θεωρία*; in science, that is, and in philosophy.

Stoic cosmopolitanism was better than the Cynic variety in so far as it did not openly flout social virtues, and, in theory recognizing them, went on to practise them also, no doubt, in the case of the best of those "domestic chaplains" of whom the world needs a more detailed history; but its exclusiveness, its grotesque intellectual and spiritual pride, and its despair of human nature, left it in large measure empty, verbal, rhetorical, merely literary; and on its literary side defective in the intellectualism which redeemed the literary life of Aristotle's wise man; doubly empty and verbal and defective when compared with the Platonic philosopher of Plato's *Republic*, and with the actual Plato; who tried hard to redeem *his* Nero and migrated to Syracuse to do so.

In short, the maxim *πολιτεύεται ὁ σοφός* was a misleading misnomer—due in part to the poverty of the Greek language—even in the days of Aristotle when politics and political life were still possible (see the last paragraphs of Chapter V on "Hellenism in Language")—even then the Stoics' *βίος πολιτικός* was a loose term covering the wider but indefinite *βίος πρακτικός* and connoting social as well as political and practical life; doubly a misnomer in the days of Stoicism itself when politics proper had no meaning for men living under a Macedonian or Roman Empire. *πολιτεύεται ὁ σοφός* can only mean now that the wise man does not live to himself only but to his neighbours also; that ethics rather than politics and social rather than political life is the function of the Stoic; whence the concern of Stoicism with ethics to the exclusion both of speculation and science on the one hand, and of politics proper on the other.

Yet even this social life and these social ethics are

in danger and even in process of disappearing as soon as the other side of the system reveals itself; the αὐτάρκεια of the good man and the folly and madness of the unregenerate, of the overwhelming majority, that is, of mankind; when you need a lantern to find a good man, as the Cynic said, are you likely to spend much time and effort in this original research? The Stoic is entering by the strait gate and into the narrow way, whither few enter and where few tread; he is living in a population perhaps of "thirty millions mostly fools"; his humanity is tempted to give up social service, and, if it does, his inhumanity will not be redeemed by the science and speculation of the Peripatetics, nor by the missionary zeal of the first academy and Plato.

Aristotle, were he alive to-day—as Mr. Benn has said—would find his place as a research Fellow in some graduate University: Plato might be a hard-working clergyman of the Church of England and a religious rationalist of the type of Dean Inge: but the Stoics would supply no such useful recruits to science or to Christianity; the old pride of Cynicism, as Plato said, would still be peeping through the only half-patched rags: the bald silence of Antisthenes, the tub and lantern of Diogenes would be still in evidence.

There is a pungent tradition that Zeno was first drawn to philosophy by reading Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (Zeller, p. 378, note); the legend, true or not, is *ben trovato*; illustrating well the inferiority of Zeno to Plato and showing how banal was the spirit in which he read Socrates; a reader and admirer of the *Memorabilia*, Sunday-school literature in large part, with a few concessions to Greek realism, and undisguised and frank admission of the honesty-the-best-policy idea, an idea sometimes heard in Sunday Schools, is not likely to do much for philosophy.

If I were not touching on Stoicism as a half-way house between Athens and Rome, it would be more

pertinent to a book on the Greek point of view to dwell at length on Epicurus and substitute him for Zeno; Epicurus was Athenian by origin, Zeno was not; and although Epicurus marks as much as Zeno, or even more than Zeno, the deterioration in philosophy and speculation which set in with the deaths of Plato and Aristotle, he was yet nearer to the Greek point of view even in his practical renunciation of religion and still more in his humanity and benevolence and frank cult of happiness; a very temperate and restrained happiness, after all, as far removed as possible from the voluptuary's or gourmand's or even gourmet's ideals; "When I want to be luxurious, send me a little piece of Cythnian cheese" (Zeller, p. 459, note) as who should say, "Send me a little package of Camembert."

Epicurus was less Puritanic in his attitude to the theatre and poetry and emotion than Plato and the Stoics, nearer to Aristotle, who in these matters expressed better the Greek point of view; Epicurus' gods were like Aristotle's, *rois fainéants*, constitutional kings who reigned but did not govern; left upon their thrones in deference to popular instinct and popular sentiment; to wholly reject God was—in Aristotelian language—*λίαν ἄφιλον καὶ ταῖς δόξαις ἐναντίον* (*Ethics*, I, 11, 1).

The real difference between Stoics and Epicureans seems to hinge chiefly on the difference between the various meanings of "the simple life"; the simple life of the Stoics tended to reproduce Cynicism, modified by lip-service to "knowledge" "reason" and "God," and by minute casuistry on ethics; the simple life of the Epicureans suggests rather the bucolic vegetation of "the city of swine," mocked by Plato in the second book of the *Republic*; what, indeed, can there be of real difference between Stoic *ἀπάθεια* and Epicurean *ἀταραξία*? The words seem to connote the same thing; if there be any real difference it must lie in the difference between a system

which preaches simply "virtue"; and another which preaches the larger and vaguer word "happiness"; and this difference, if happiness be anything deeper and more moral and more permanent than Aristippus' μονόχρονος ἡδόνη, than the vulgar hedonism of the man of pleasure, is not for most men very great; Aristotle's εὐδαιμονία, for example, shows how readily the two ideals of virtue and happiness slip into one and are connoted by one and the same word; only that the word εὐδαιμονία implies at once more emphasis on social life and friendship than the word "virtue," and also infinitely more intellectual activity (to Aristotle's mind, at any rate); accordingly the Epicureans were more human and sociable than the Stoics, and their wise man, for all his affectation of occasionally gasping "How pleasant!" from a dentist's chair (p. 176, *supra*), a less self-sufficient, self-centred hermit and cynic and prig.

But it occurs perhaps to some concientious objector, and I note the objection before closing the chapter, that if Christians themselves insisted on the text about the strait gate and the narrow way, etc. —as we never do in these democratic days—what is to prevent *them* also from setting up a new Stoical exclusiveness, and a new Stoic despair of, and contempt for, the man in the street, such as is not far from the mind of ancient philosophy, of Aristotle at least, as well as of the Stoics?

I suppose that if there be anything to prevent it, anything serious, I mean, and not mere political catch-words and clap-trap, it must be that the strait gate, to the Christian idea, does not open to intellectual aristocrats, known as wise men and philosophers, but to sterling character wherever and whenever found; to illiterate not less, perhaps more than, to literate; to babes and sucklings more than to the wise and prudent; and that therefore Christianity, though resting on an aristocracy of its own, of character, will never fall into the visible

and patent and preposterous exclusiveness of the old pagan aristocracies of intellect and culture.

Otherwise, and apart from this safeguard, the text suggests a similar exclusiveness of the elect; and in actual fact exclusiveness has always attended the development and history of the Christian Church, whenever human arrogance and ignorance have dominated humility (the new and Christian virtue) and as often as men have impiously imagined that they have themselves found the strait gate, and passwords and passports and shibboleths for admission thereat; the text does not in reality justify a new recrudescence of the old ὕβρις and insolence of the Greek point of view, but it affords an occasion and an opportunity thereto, not missed by human nature even in an age so refractory and unpromising to exclusiveness as the present.

It may be true—it looks like it—that the ultimate *raison d'être* of this world and the final justification of human life lies only in the production from time to time in each large community of the ten righteous, for whom the rest of us may be continued on this unintelligible earth; but the text offers a temptation to the other thousands of the self-righteous who are ambitious for a place among the ten and on the look-out for a handle to the gate.

CHAPTER X

ROME

AFTER all, a point of view is illustrated not only directly by apposite quotations but by quotations of contrasts and opposites. The chief contrast of classical civilization was between Greek and Roman, as the chief contrast of Greek civilization, and of Pericles' speeches and Plato's dialogues, was between Athens and Sparta; I add a brief chapter on the point of view of Rome by way of throwing into greater relief the Greek point of view.

The previous chapters have been concerned with the mind of Greece, or rather with the mind of Athens; for when one speaks of ancient Greece to-day one speaks of Athens, "the Greece of Greece" (p. 118), and this, though Athens had not only a rival but a successful rival in Sparta, sometimes a reproach in Sparta. It is of Sparta, not of Athens, that Mr. A. E. Housman is inspired to sing:

> The king with half the East at heel is come from lands of morning,
> Their fighters drink the rivers up, their shafts benight the air,
> And he that stands will die for nought, and home there's no returning;
> The Spartans on the sea-wet rock sat down and combed their hair:

and though Spartan be forgotten in herself and not only dead but damned, like her native spirit of Protection, *ξενηλασία*, she has had a successful reincarnation to-day in the kultur of Germany.

But Sparta herself, in spite of the tragedy of Aristodemus which reveals her success in her narrow and Japanese task of engendering the will to victory

(Herodotus, VII, 229–231, and IX, 71), in spite of her military success against Athens, and in spite of the military successes of the modern Teutonic Sparta, is practically forgotten by the historian, and would be forgotten entirely if it were not for seven wise men; four Athenians, and three other Greeks owing nothing to her in blood and political allegiance, Herodotus, Aristotle and Plutarch: that ancient Sparta survives in history is due chiefly, apart from the comedies of Aristophanes, to the perversity of philosophers who characteristically swim against the stream, and magnify the state which is not their own, and elect for their approbation the virtues which they do not find at home.

Thus it was that Socrates, Plato and Xenophon, the Carlyles of Athens, never tired of holding up Sparta to Athenian admiration; they even insisted whimsically that the essence of her system was not militarism nor athletics, as the man in the streets of Athens supposed, but philosophy (p. 67, above): the philosophy, they meant, implied in a system of obedience, discipline, routine, self-control and patriotism.

And yet it is easy to see that their praise and their idealization of Sparta must be taken with a handful of salt, as the typical philosopher's tribute to the other side, as the expression of the philosopher's determination to contradict the Apostle and to be the other thing to all men; or as the typical University's tenderness for lost causes and forgotten loyalties, or, indeed, not less for impossible novelties and Bolshevisms lost before gained (Mr. J. M. Gibbon in *The University Magazine*, published by the Universities of Dalhousie, McGill and Toronto, Vol. XVII, October 1918, p. 387), or, more generally, as the intellectuals' habit of contradicting the local orthodoxies of the hour (Tacitus, *Dialogus*, 24).

Easy to see is this not only from the more restrained eulogies and less restrained criticism of Sparta to be read in Herodotus, Aristotle and Plutarch, in

the men, that is, who were not Athenians nor writing with one eye always on Athens, but also from the practice, as distinct from the theories, of the philo-Laconians in Athens itself. Socrates spent a life-time eulogizing Sparta, but he never went there, and never would have stayed, one may be certain, had he gone; even had the Spartan *ξενηλασίαι* or alien-acts been relaxed in his favour (p. 67, above).

And therefore Sparta is forgotten, or was, until Japan and Germany revived her "philosophy"; and no man since the four great Athenians and the three other non-Spartan Greeks have thought it worth while to write her history; if there be an exception, it is only the exception, significant enough, of a modern German (p. 104, above).

But though Sparta may be passed over she serves as an introduction to a much greater, to a less "stunted" Sparta, Rome.

I have not headed this chapter "the mind of Rome" for obvious reasons. When one thinks of Athens or of France, it is of a mind; when one thinks of Rome it is never of a mind; not even of a will, perhaps, though that is a more natural thought, so much as of a character.

"The Athenians knew what was right, the Spartans did it," runs an old and charming Greek apophthegm (the Greeks, not Aristotle alone, had the gift of drawing distinctions) found in Plutarch (*ἀποφθέγματα Λακωνικά*, 235, 38); it is even truer if Rome be substituted for Sparta; for the Spartans only did the right thing, when they did it, from force of habit and routine and in the milieu where habit and routine had full swing: they were the sort of people, suggests Plato in his picture of Paradise Gained (*Rep.*, X, 619*c*, *d*), who could not be kept out of Heaven, since they had observed all the regulations about mint, anise and cummin, but who came to grief usually when they reappeared on earth, having no inner law to guide them; moreover, even on earth,

when they found themselves outside the range of the Spartan Ephors, the superintendents of the Spartan κοινὴ παίδεια, they followed neither the principles of Sparta nor those of any other society, but were frankly demoralized (Thucydides, I, 77).

The Romans were not so entirely dependent on their national traditions; dependent they were, as Englishmen are, as are other men, more dependent than Athenians or Frenchmen, but not wholly dependent; they had a larger fund of healthy instinct, of political sagacity, of common honesty; and a much larger store of acquired affection for the common round and the accustomed thing.

When one thinks of Sparta one thinks at once of her sinister combination of patriotism with treachery and of piety with selfishness (pp. 41, 42, above); no reader of the classics passes condemnation so wholesale upon the men of Rome. If Coriolanus for a moment fell away from Roman patriotism and followed the maxims of Alcibiades (p. 37, above), it was for a moment only; it needed only an appeal to Roman family-feeling to restore him; he reverted at once to the sway of natural subconscious and unsophisticated instincts; and this was but one instance of the sterling character of the ancient Romans (Ferrero, Vol. I, p. 13): when some Roman officers were sent home by Hannibal after Cannæ to arrange a ransom, a certain number of them returned to his camp immediately, on the pretence of having forgotten something, before completing their journey to Rome, and afterwards, when the Romans refused to ransom them, sought to break their parole on the plea that they had already kept the pledge which bound them to return, and were now released from it; the next censors made a search for the dishonest sophists and disfranchised them for their "smartness"; nimis callidi exsolvendi juris jurandi interpretes (Livy, XXIV, 18); others, guilty of the same sharp practice and rash enough to divulge it, were

sent back to Hannibal at once; with a severity somewhat similar the same senate about the same date discussed the propriety of executing a certain deserter who had come over to them from Hannibal; the man having previously deserted from them to Hannibal (Livy, XXIV, 45); the senate of Rome may have been "fools" perhaps, as the Germans say of Englishmen, but they were gentlemen (pp. 51, 52, above).

Another passage in the following book of Livy (XXV, 48) illustrates the Roman sense of the obligations of friendship; a very familiar obligation to a modern with his feeling of personal life and individual duties, but very scantily observed by the political Greeks and by Greek heroes like Timoleon (pp. 17, 32, above): a young Roman, who had made a friend in Capua before the war with Hannibal, declined to fight his friend when the war came and ranged them in opposite camps; private friendship, he said, forbade him "to see" the other, if he appeared on the battlefield; the Campanian jeered at scruples so superfine, as a man of Greek origin might be expected to do; yet it was not willingly or at once that the Roman was driven to fight him; the case is an anticipation of the attitude of some of Cæsar's friends towards his murderers: most men, like Cicero, defended the murder of a tyrant, even of a tyrant who had been a quasi-personal friend; Matius (whose letter remains—Cicero's Letters: *ad Famil.*, XI, 28) expresses the feeling, which would be almost universal to-day with men bound by personal ties of friendship, towards a usurper, that friendship should have stayed the hands of those among the conspirators who had been Cæsar's friends.

Another and more familiar example of the narrow politics of Greece, the broader, wiser, more generous and juster politics of Rome, is furnished by a comparison of the attitude of the two peoples to defeated generals; in Athens, ancient alike and modern, after

a defeat in the field, rises the Parisian cry, so to speak, " Nous sommes trahis "—the defeated general is suspected of having betrayed his army. Nicias would not retreat from Syracuse and return home, while there was yet time, because he was too selfish and self-centred to face an exasperated populace; or, to put it the other way round, because he thought that his countrymen were too selfish and too suspicious to be generous to a beaten general; he thought that they would suspect him of selling the campaign: an observer of Crown Prince Constantine's Campaign in Thessaly in the disastrous war of 1897 noted the same cry from Athens (*Spectator*, Sept. 9, 1922, p. 324). Constantine, so popular after the Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913, was made to bear the brunt of that Greek defeat—though Turks have generally defeated Greeks and not only in 1897 and 1922—and was for years in disgrace, till Venizelos, in 1910, restored his house to popular favour (and suffered much from its ingratitude). Constantine himself suffered again in 1922 from the same causes.

It is difficult to find instances of unsuccessful Greek generals risking their reputation instead of their army, and coming home quietly after defeat to face a disappointed mob: Plutarch has exhumed one such example; a certain Leo of Byzantium (Plutarch, *Life of Nicias*, Chap. xxii).

It may be argued in answer—and it is a fine and delicate point—that there was more ground for suspicions of treachery against a general in the rabid politics of Greece than in sober Rome: no doubt there was; there has been more ground for such suspicions in another state of Greek mood and bitter politics, France; witness the names of Dumouriez and Bazaine; but that is the very point I am trying to make; that narrow and bitter political divisions characterized the Greeks; that political instincts broader and more generous are found in the history of Rome; the Roman Senate even thanked

a general, who had not merely fought and lost a battle, but had lost it after receiving orders not to fight it; they thanked him, though most of them were politically opposed to him, "because he had not despaired of the state" (Livy, XXIII, 61): it never even occurred to them, being Romans and dealing with a Roman general, that there could be any explanation of his defeat worse than rashness and ambition.

The Romans were dull of wit, the Greeks said, slow to suspicion: whereas Athens always seethed with suspicion: worst of all in the year which closes Thucydides' history (Thucy., Bk. VIII), but long before also and long after (Thucy., III, 43, 1, 2, 3); and the same is true of the modern Athens in the west of Europe. It is only a harsh and Greek way of saying that the generosity and kindliness and simplicity of a Roman's heart were more conspicuous than the keenness of his intelligence: he was "honest even to simplicity."

Another illustration of a Roman's public spirit is found in Livy's ninth book (Chap. 38), where the Roman general, Fabius, is asked to sacrifice his private feud for Rome's sake, and to name a private enemy dictator; he listened in gloomy silence and could not trust himself to speak lest his bitterness should express itself too patently; but he swallowed his personal mortification and did as he was asked; not graciously with words of good omen and good temper; that would have been too much to expect of an ancient pagan, even of the Roman brand; he named his enemy dictator in dour silence.

Livy loves these anecdotes of his countrymen's patriotism and has a flair for them; he is right; they are worth more to the reader as a clue wherewith to interpret Roman character and success, than a record of laws and institutions and constitutions.

His nation had that profound sagacity which means political success; some people will call it instinctive

justice and honesty: but by whatever name it be called, it was nearer to deep instinct than to calculating self-interest or enlightened selfishness; and sprang from roots deeper than conscious intelligence. (Was it only conscious intelligence which made our own people pay their debts to the United States before the other debts of the Great War had been paid by other debtors?)

The Romans were not philosophers like Socrates and Plato, but they were not seldom men of sterling character and sound instinct, and these qualities made them an abiding power in the world, even in the presence of the more intelligent Greek, and to the admiring despair of the Greek himself. Plutarch and Polybius, being Greeks, have succeeded perhaps better than any Roman in giving literary expression to the Roman type; Polybius dwells much on their honesty; in Rome, he says, when land changes hands it will often seem as if seals, bonds and lawyers are unnecessary; the word of a Roman is enough; in Greece you will need seals and bonds and lawyers and witnesses, and after all you will be cheated, if you are not very careful (Polybius, VI, 56).

In Greek history, on the other hand, the short list of men conspicuous for honesty is still further shortened, in a sense, by the suggestion, implied though not expressed by the historian, that two of the names belong to the same family and are not independent evidences of Greek probity (p. 42, above); no wonder that the great commerce of the ancient world was Roman, not Greek; that Greek commerce never attained great dimensions; and was hampered by Greek smartness, *δεινότης*.

The Greeks knew too much, resembled too closely the Levantines of to-day. Historians have argued sometimes—Lecky, for example, in his *European Morals*—that lying and dishonesty are the results, not the causes, of commercial poverty; that the nation which has had but little experience in com-

merce, is betrayed by its inexperience into sharp practices; it is a debatable question which each man answers for himself; obviously there is action and reaction in such matters; I suggest that Roman honesty was in fact rather a primary instinct than an acquired taste or a conscious cunning, and that chronology supports the suggestion; it was the earlier, not the later and the experienced Rome, whose honesty has become proverbial.

Primary instincts and national character, it may be retorted, are merely phrases and fetishes; and derive from institutions or conditions or circumstances; or from climate; or from the calculations of intelligence: it may be so: but I find myself demurring that the history of Greek thought and of Greek life is a warning against the attempt to substitute for primary instincts and racial characteristics some apparently easier and more external causes; it is difficult, for example, to forget, yet impossible to remember without "inextinguishable laughter," the reasons why Socrates did not marry his mother, instead of Xanthippe (pp. 54, 57, above): he would certainly have been happier with his mother; she would have understood him better, and he her; and he saw nothing against it but her seniority!

If this illustration of Greek philosophy be unfair and based on the stupidity of Xenophon, let me take instead the moral of Thucydides' history or of Xenophon's or of Herodotus'.

Thucydides lived through the Periclean age; he saw the break-up of tradition and instinct, the incoming of the tide of free thought, education, philosophy, utilitarianism, sophistry; and he thought that its corollary was the Melian dialogue (Thucy., V, 85–111); himself an intellectual, he regretted chiefly the passing of simplicity (III, 83) and ignorance; he was as reactionary as Carlyle or Ruskin; he is supposed sometimes to scoff at oracles; and one would not expect him to believe in them; yet, as a matter

of fact, he comes to the aid of one oracle with a rationalizing explanation which does not explain it away (II, 17, 2), and he deliberately asks his readers to note that the sins and excesses of the Peloponnesian war were accompanied by more cataclysms of nature, earthquakes, eruptions, tidal waves, than any similar period (I, 23) (as though some historian of to-day should pass a similar reflection on the year A.D. 1923). He is anticipating the gloomy reflections of Tacitus (*Histories*, I, 3), that whether or not the gods care that man be happy, at least they are very careful to punish him. Thucydides does not sing a pæan to "the progress" and education and emancipation of the Greek mind, which he had witnessed.

And Xenophon sees only chaos behind and before, and ends his history with the words, "indecisiveness and chaos pervaded Greece more than before" (*Hellenics*, VII, 5, 27), while his defence of philosophy in the person of Socrates only amounts to the desperate plea that Socrates in reality was not a philosopher at all, but a most benevolent and practical citizen, interested in all good works and good causes: a model father and friend and citizen, full of good advice and common sense and shrewd worldliness: an anticipation of Horace here, of Jeremy Bentham there, of Fielding somewhere else (the anticipations which Plato suggests are rather Darwin, Berkeley, Elisée Reclus and Ruskin). Xenophon is exalting not the originality and the thought of Socrates, but his conservatism and sober sense.

Herodotus aims many shafts at his clever countrymen and has much to suggest in favour of simpler peoples: he has seen race-suicide in Greece, but not in Persia (I, 136); he has seen Greek education and Greek commerce: the first suggests to him that the Persian preferred to teach their children to ride straight, to shoot straight, and to speak the truth (Herodotus, I, 136); the second suggests to him (I, 153) the comment of another Oriental, that the

East need not fear a people who met in market-places to lie and cheat each other: but the wittiest and wisest shaft which Herodotus aims is put into the mouth of Anacharsis the Scythian (IV, 77); this traveller, after going the round of Greece, went back and reported that "all the other Greeks were busily engaged on all the 'ologies: but you had to go to Sparta if you wanted to hear or talk common sense." But it is difficult to sum up the contrast of type presented by Greece and Rome, better than it has been done by Virgil (*Æn.*, VI, 847–853), hackneyed though the lines are—

> Excudent alii spirantia mollius æra,
> Credo equidem, vivos ducent de marmore vultus,
> Orabunt causas melius, caeli que meatus
> Describent radio et surgentia sidera dicent:
> Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento;
> Hae tibi erunt artes, pacisque imponere morem,
> Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos.

My pupil, colleague and friend, Professor Rushton Fairclough, of Stanford University, has given a slightly new turn to the familiar lines by preferring for his edition and translation of Virgil in the Loeb series the variant reading "paci"; "to impose usages on peace"; that is, to organize peace, to give it a system; but whether one translates "to impose the ways of peace" or "to give peace ways and works," in either case no one could hit off better than Virgil the salient merits of the ancient Roman, or of his modern counterpart from Great Britain; and the next and last line applies as readily (or applied as readily till yesterday, when democracy and self-determination began the overthrow of all ruling races) to the two kindred peoples of ancient Rome and modern Britain: whose function has been

"To spare who yields submission and to tame the rebel heart."

The lines are better known to the English reader in the translation of A. W. Potts (slightly altered below):

" Others, I know, with better art the breathing bronze will chase,
And from the lifeless marble will upcall the living face ;
Will plead with better eloquence, and better map the skies,
And with the voice of science tell when stars shall set and rise :
'Tis thine, O Rome, to rule the world : from this path ne'er depart,
Thy science is of government and government thine art,
To spare who yields submission and to tame the rebel heart."

It is rare to find appreciations of national types so accurately drawn by a Roman, a member of an unself-conscious race: the lines derive perhaps from Virgil's non-Roman and Gallic ancestors.

It was the province of Greeks to know everything and to do nothing: *πρὸς ἅπαν συνετοὶ ἐπὶ πᾶν ἀργοί* (Thucy., III, 82, 6) (above, p. 69), and to rule no one except—a very large exception—through the spirit, as a woman rules, *πολλὰ φρονέουσα μηδένος κρατεεῖν*, in the familiar words of Herodotus (IX, 16).

All the stock criticism of the peoples of Greece and Rome, apart from Virgil and a few pictures in Cicero's speeches of Greek wit and levity and complaisance (*Pro Cœlio*, for example, Chap. xvii), and the vivacious passage in Juvenal (III, 75–77):

> Grammaticus rhetor geometres pictor aliptes
> Augur schœnobates medicus magus omnia novit
> Græculus esuriens in cælum, jusseris, ibit.
>
> All arts and crafts your hungry Greekling knows,
> And bid him go to Hell, to Hell he goes.
>
> (*Gifford*).

even the criticism most favourable to Rome and damaging to Greece comes from two Greeks, Polybius and Plutarch.

Even when Greek literature lost in Polybius its ancient superiority of style, it retained its acuteness and impartiality, its superiority of knowledge and intellect.

Nature seems to have divided the ancient classical civilizations between hearers of the word and doers; between a race which made it its business to know everything and everyone, itself and other men: and failed, when it failed, only because it wanted to know

too much, and to explain too much, whence its explanations are sometimes of the surface only: and a race which understood nothing and nobody, neither itself nor other men; but conquered and ruled the world in obedience to the blind instincts of a masterful, dumb, sagacious and honest heart. The first lived for impression and expression: the second for action, after all the most sincere and the most solid and most fruitful and tenacious form of expression; the first were the transient flame of eloquence, which breathes from the desk or the rostra or the pulpit, and expires therewith; which yet has done its work if it inspire simpler men to high thinking and plain living, though it have little life of its own beyond thoughts and words, though it relapse after the effort and the inspiration into nothingness or trivialities, or even into the "wretchlessness of most unclean living"; though the orator, in short, become a vaurien, a "polisson de lettres" or "garnement de lettres," dump his children in a foundling hospital, and prove worse than a heathen; though, having preached to others, he himself (on that account rather than in spite of that) sink into a castaway: the second race was dull and heavy: it damped its fires and kept them low, that they might last for the acts and facts of life; it put its emotions into cold storage that they might not be used up prematurely, and effervesce away in transports of words, but "condense within the soul and change to purpose strong" (Newman).

Plato is supposed, by some commentators, by Mr. Prickard, for example, to mean this by his attack on poetry (*Rep.*, X), that it wastes the passions meant for life, meant to drive the engine of life up steep grades and over long distances, by dispersing them in a soft, luxurious flow of thoughts and words. Whether he meant precisely this is very doubtful; but if he had meant it, he would have had a better case than he actually seems to present.

EPILOGUE

TO sum up, Hellenism, the Greek point of view, as it appears in politics, character, literature and language seems to resolve itself into component parts, somewhat as follows:

(1) Individualism as against collectivism. The Greek is an individualist, though he be at the same time the voice of impersonal reason; he is ever afraid, like the Scotchman who refused to row in an eight-oared boat, of losing his individuality; this, in spite of the socialism and patriotism, into which his narrow individualism necessarily drove him with an added force, even against his will.

(2) Intellectual rather than moral force: the intellectual force which has given the world of to-day the foundations of all its sciences.

(3) The consequent measuring of all things ethical and political from the standpoint of conscious self-interest and careful self-culture and art, these being the motives most easily defensible in logical argument, if a man must find logic for all he does; rather than from the standpoint of the instincts of duty and sacrifice; humanism rather than any form of Calvinism; the doctrine of the dignity of man (p. 44, above) rather than the doctrine of the potter's vessel, whether for honour or dishonour.

(4) The scientific instinct of comprehensive knowledge, modified sometimes by the narrower scientific instinct of logic; at other time by the love of rhetoric and style: by the desire for "purple passages."

(5) Humanitarianism, so far as compatible with scientific self-interest.

(6) The gaiety and vivacity of the child (pp. 138, 139, above), the finer fancy, the lighter thought, the gracefulness and artistic sensibilities of the woman (pp. 146, 147, above), as opposed to the phlegmatic dullness and matter-of-fact lethargy of the masculine mind. Like the French and the Irish, the Greeks have been made famous disproportionately by their famous women.

(7) The spirits of thought, reflection, debate, as opposed to action; sometimes also as opposed to passion. A Greek does not want to commit himself by action: *τριγέρων ὅδε μῦθος δράσαντι παθεῖν* (Æschylus, *Chœphoræ*, 313–314).

(8) The tendency in language to art; to euphuism, to euphemism (Eumenides and Euxine, for example, like the absurd "benign tumours" of our medicine), to irony (Socratic or Platonic), to *μείωσις* or understatement; to an animated and vivacious moderation; and to the use of words of a pre-eminently intellectual or artistic cast in place of the corresponding words, whose significance is moral or practical.

Such is Hellenism, and I find a final illustration and illumination of it in Plato's doctrine of the immortality of the soul. That doctrine is so popular that it has been largely accepted, in a way, by Christians of all churches (p. 91, above), but in a way which is by no means identical with Plato's: "I" and "you," we mean, shall continue for ever "I" and "you"; not merely for one term of Heaven or Purgatory; this special Englishman or Canadian, once created, subsists for ever; this is the doctrine of a people full of the sense of character and personality: but Plato, when he speaks of an immortal soul, means an impersonal basis of life, preceding all heredity and all personal gifts and idiosyncrasies and outliving them; he means that this alone ultimately survives, when the personal Englishman or Canadian of these or those ancestors and peculiarities passes away, and his body is laid in the earth: even if we assume for his soul—as our instincts bid us assume—a certain period

of personal reward or punishment in a second life, the only soul which ultimately survives is impersonal, looking back, if it can look back (but Plato does not encourage the hope), on its countless lives and its countless reincarnations, only as partial and personal episodes in its impersonal and broad career: and a philosophic soul is not interested in talking or thinking about persons and personalities (Aristotle, *Ethics*, IV, 3, 31; Plato, *Rep.*, VI, 500*b*), looking back at them perhaps with something of an amused wonder, and it may be a spice of contempt, as alien from itself and rather pitiful. Such a series indeed of lives lived and forgotten again should be "a spectacle"—to adapt Plato's own words used in a slightly different context (*Rep.*, X, 620*a*)—"at once pathetic and absurd and wonderful"; or in Socrates' simpler language in a similar context (*Apology*, 41*b*), "wonderful, not unpleasant"; the impersonal soul could almost afford a philosophic smile at the personality of the bank-clerk in whose guise it had passed a large portion of the nineteenth century, interrupted very curiously by Pythagorean reminiscences of a previous century passed in a Greek galley ("The finest story in the world."—Kipling's *Many Inventions*): at the other "stodgy" personality under whose cover it had taught a dead (and dying) language in a very up-to-date and live University: at the third personality in which it had cobbled shoes and talked "Red" politics in Paris, and so on, and so on; but none of these picturesque or dull varieties is to the immortal soul "I": its "I" is less picturesque, is greyer, less alive than any of them; there is no "I" except the breath of thought which animates every human being.

These mere personalities were never souls, only bodies, only vehicles for a few years of the impersonal monad of soul; they and theirs among two or three of its transitory tabernacles; only two or three of its moving tents, pitched nightly a day's march

nearer Home, nearer re-absorption into the Infinite. It has no real relation to them; or to anything of theirs; it is neither bond nor free, nor Jew nor Greek, nor male, nor female; "there is no marriage nor giving in marriage"; more strange than this, for which there is good warrant, apart from Plato, it is neither brave nor generous nor chaste, for these are only virtues of the moral and emotional and mortal nature, which is of the earth earthy and personal. It has no will: it is pure reason, occupied only in thinking upon thought (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1074*b*, 34; compare *Metaphysics*, 1072*b*, 24).

This is the "soul" of a race, nothing if not intellectual and void of the element of "self," which is involved in will and personality.

The soul is immortal, but just as are the ephemeral insects of an ever-shifting ant-hill: there too, then, are immortal souls:

> "The one remains, the many change and pass;
> Heaven's light for ever shines, earth's shadows fly;
> Life like a dome of many-coloured glass
> Stains the white radiance of eternity."

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Printed in Great Britain by Butler & Tanner Ltd., *Frome and London*