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PHILOSOPHY AND POPULAR MORALS
IN ANCIENT GREECE.

PHILOSOPHY AND POPULAR MORALS IN ANCIENT GREECE.

*An Examination of Popular Morality and Philosophical Ethics,
in their Interrelations and Reciprocal Influence in
Ancient Greece, down to the close of
the Third Century B.C.*

BY

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PHILOSOPHY AND POPULAR MORALS
IN ANCIENT GREECE

GENERAL

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P R E F A C E.

THIS Essay was awarded the Hare Prize in February, 1906. Since then it has been practically rewritten.

The subject is twofold. In the first place, we have to consider the circumstances which gave rise to moral philosophy in Ancient Greece, and the process of its development through the criticism and absorption of popular ideas; and secondly, its subsequent reflex influence on popular life and thought down to the close of the third century B.C.

It is to the latter problem—discussed in Part II of this Essay—that I would call special attention. The influence of popular thought on philosophy has been discussed in detail by modern writers of learning and repute; and in this province I have done little more than collect and systematize their conclusions. The influence of philosophy on the mind and conduct of the people has, so far as I am aware, been wholly disregarded. Lack of evidence, and the illusive nature of the subject,

will supply obvious reasons for this lamentable neglect ; and there is a widespread opinion, even among professed students, that philosophy must be something different in kind from commonsense ; and that a philosopher with practical aims and sympathies is a contradiction in terms.

I am indebted to Professor Bury for recommending a comparative method of study. He pointed out that an examination of similar movements in modern times, where the evidence is full and often conclusive, might cast the light of analogy on my more remote and obscure subject, and suggest fruitful lines of inquiry. This turned my attention to the Utilitarian movement in the last century, with its political, social, and moral propaganda : its discussion-circles : its tracts and journals : its patrons and parliamentary representatives : its public, and its manifold direct and indirect achievements. I beheld a philosophy in action ; and although I could not by any magic of scientific deduction trace the lineaments of a past age in the history of the present, yet the whole problem which I was to investigate seemed to grow nearer, and to become more intelligible, more interesting, and more human. A number of possibilities suggested themselves to my mind ; and I felt less inclined to deride the sanguine records of Diogenes Laertius concerning the activity and influence of the ancient philosophers, when I found similar activity and similar influence

ascribed on unimpeachable authority to a similar class of men, with similar aims, a century ago.

Our teachers have a perverse habit of scheduling certain Greek authors and certain passages in those authors as "peculiarly modern in sentiment." I call it a perverse habit, because it tends to persuade us that the greater part of Greek literature, and the main features of Greek thought and civilization, are interesting merely from an academic or aesthetic point of view. It obscures the fact that the fundamental conceptions at the root of almost all our social, political, and ethical movements, and the antagonisms of thought and temperament which underlie all our social and religious controversies, may be traced in the ancient records of Greek life and thought. The circumstances may be different, but there is little change of principle ; and the same types of character and sentiment recur in both ages.

I cannot send this volume to the press without a word in grateful memory of the late James Adam, LITT.D., Fellow and Tutor of Emmanuel College, who took a most kindly interest in my Essay. All those who have in any way benefited by his tuition and advice, will understand the encouragement I derived from his perusal and generous appreciation of my MS. It was by the merest chance that it came under his notice, and he treated it as if it had been the work of an old pupil.

I wish to thank Professor J. B. Bury, Mr. Leonard Whibley, of Pembroke, the Rev. R. G. Bury, of Trinity, and Mr. Wedd, of King's, for several criticisms and much encouragement; also Mr. A. C. Turner, of Trinity, who has helped me to revise the proof-sheets.

A. E. DOBBS, JUN.

October, 1907.

My references in the foot-notes to Isocrates follow the pagination of Stephanus, except where special notice is given to the contrary; in the case of all other Attic Orators I have written the sections of Bekker.

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PHILOSOPHY AND POPULAR MORALS IN ANCIENT GREECE.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

δίκαιον καὶ ὄσιον μετὰ φρονήσεως γενέσθαι.—PLATO, *Theat.* 176 B.

“FORE-SHADOWS—call them rather fore-splendours of that Truth, and Beginning of Truths—fell mysteriously over my soul. Sweeter than dayspring to the shipwrecked in Nova Zembla; ah! like the mother’s voice to her little child that strays bewildered, weeping, in unknown tumults; like soft streamings of celestial music to my too-exasperated heart, came that Evangel. The Universe is not dead and demoniacal, a charnel-house with spectres, but Godlike, and my Father’s!”

Thus Teufelsdröckh learned his Gospel afresh on the Mount of Vision. He was a man of keen intelligence and strong affections, who had fallen gradually during his youth into a state of apathy and scepticism. For a time his whole existence was a mere enigma to him, a negation

and nothing more. Then, at last, in a supreme moment "came that Evangel," and the new life began.

In his spiritual development three stages are sufficiently obvious. There is the period of childish faith, when the simple rules of custom and tradition are accepted and followed ; there is the period of youthful scepticism, when early beliefs grow faint, and the awakened intelligence gropes wearily for some law which it may call its own ; and there is the period of "conversion," when the full-grown man realizes at last for himself the spiritual significance of human life. Most men, to some extent, pass through these different stages.

The analogy which is often drawn in this respect between the history of a people and the life of an individual must be received with caution. A people is a complex aggregate of individuals, differing from one another in capacity and temperament. They travel along different planes of experience. Some hardly touch scepticism at any point in their career ; others pass from doubt back to the beliefs and customs sanctioned long ago ; others merely sink in the mire of despond ; and others scale the unknown heights in search of a faith altogether new and transcendent. If some press forward, others may lag behind : and there is usually to be found in congregated masses of men a vigorous conservatism, which will not conform to any stereotyped formula of progress. From this point of view there is no real unity in the spiritual development of a people. And yet it is often possible to find therein some traces of a moral crisis and turning-point, when crucial circumstances and the appearance of destructive ideas render the downward path easier and more dangerous than hitherto, and when the old creeds seem to be outworn beyond all possibility of patching, and truth begins to clothe itself in a new vesture.

Such a crisis presented itself to the Greeks, and

especially to the Athenians, in the latter half of the fifth century B.C. It was then that Aristophanes drew his contrast between the old-world morality of his childhood and the subsequent chaos of popular feeling. The Just and the Unjust Argument stand out vividly in the familiar dialogue, as personifications of the old order and the new. The one is a healthy product of the ancient educational system, which trained the heroes of Marathon, broad-backed men, slow of speech, and orthodox in religion and morals. The other is a frank champion of lawlessness, who cuts away the foundations of morality, and fills the city with talkative, pale-faced, narrow-shouldered prigs. He is a representative of the Sophists, who have just established a "reflectory" at Athens. Some years later Plato reviewed the same situation in a tone more restrained, but not less incisive. The first and second books of the *Republic* are, to some extent, a brief critical analysis of the various phases which characterized Greek thought in his day. The orthodox conception of things still survives in Cephalus, the good old man who on the threshold of the grave consoles himself with texts from Pindar; and whose morality, the outcome of a shrewd and genial experience, is spontaneous rather than systematic, based largely on custom and the religion of the poets, supported by the weighty deliverances of the lawgiver, and endorsed by the general voice of antiquity. But side by side with him stands the figure of Thrasymachus, a significant type of all that is riotous and new; and in the second book there comes a lurid picture of the issues at stake. The piety of an earlier age has deteriorated, for the most part, into abject superstition. Faith, in the true sense, has vanished from the earth; there remains only a belief in gods whose favour can be bought with gold—a state of mind worse than atheism. The people have learnt to say a great many things to the disadvantage of righteousness. All that can be heard in

its favour is that in some cases it is the sounder policy ; and, at best, its claims are buttressed up by a baser sort of Utilitarianism.

Both accounts are satirical, and this is not the place to qualify and explain them at length. One thing is obvious: it was a period at which new ideas and new methods of criticism were emerging into prominence. The shadow of a great change brooded over the Greek people. Men were thinking and questioning more than of old. So far the two writers are agreed. In one important respect they differ. The comic poet sees, or affects to see, perfection in the old order. The philosopher finds therein, besides much that is estimable, a certain crudeness of thought which contains within itself the seeds of degeneracy and wantonness. Their attitudes to the intellectual movement differ accordingly. The comic poet is out upon wisdom:—

“ Burn down the chatterers’ stronghold ! Burn it quick ! ”

The philosopher sums up the whole duty of man as “ becoming just and holy with wisdom ” ; to him intellect is a thing not to be crushed, but to be purified and directed aright.

It is with the latter policy that this Essay deals. The object of the moral philosophers in Greece was eminently practical. The end, said Aristotle, is not knowing but doing. There were doubts to be confronted. There were half-truths to be developed and blended together. There were falsities to be swept away. As time went on, and the conditions of living changed, an ever-increasing demand arose for new thought and a new Gospel. Thus the function of philosophy was two-fold—to reap and to sow afresh ; to gather up the fragments of popular morality, arrange and explain them, and to make the results bear on the moral progress of the Greek people.

This two-fold ideal was acknowledged by most philosophers ; but none conceived it more vividly than Plato.

In the seventh book of the *Republic* he imagines a number of men seated in a cave with a fire at their back, and beholding certain shadows cast on the rock-surface before their eyes. The more intelligent of them are turned about so as to see the objects which cause the shadows, and are afterwards led up the steep ascent to the mouth of the cave, to look upon the fair earth around them and the radiant orb of the sun reflected in streams and lakes at their feet; finally, when their eyes can bear it, they gaze upon the sun itself. Herein is figured the education of man—the turning of his soul's eye from fancies to behold ultimate truth. Knowledge, however, brings with it responsibility, and no philosopher in the ideal state may keep his intellectual achievements for his own gratification. "It is, therefore, our task," says the Platonic Socrates, "to constrain the noblest characters in our colony to arrive at that science which we formerly pronounced the highest, to set eyes upon the good, and to mount the ascent we spoke of; and when they have mounted and looked long enough, we must take care to refuse them that liberty which is at present permitted them." "Pray, what is that?" "The liberty of staying where they are, and refusing to descend again to those in the cave" (*Rep.* 519 D).¹ The philosophic rulers of the ideal state will "take for their canvas the moral nature of man, . . . and turn their eyes first to the ideal forms of justice, beauty, temperance, and the like, and then to the notions current among mankind; and thus by mingling and combining the results of their studies, they will work in the true human complexion, guided by the realizations of it among men; . . . they will go on rubbing out here and repainting there, until they have done all in their power to make the moral character of men as pleasing as may be in the eye of Heaven" (*Rep.* 501 A ff.).¹

¹ These translations are by Davies and Vaughan.

My purpose in this Essay is to trace the main features of Greek moral thought and conduct down to the age of Socrates ; to show how moral philosophy arose, and what relation it bore to the popular ideals ; and, finally, to discover how far it reacted upon those ideals, down to the close of the third century B.C.

PART I.

THE INFLUENCE OF POPULAR IDEAS ON THE
GROWTH OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY POPULAR MORALITY.

THERE is some ambiguity attaching to the words "popular morality." They are frequently used in an uncomplimentary sense with reference to the riff-raff of society, or, at best, to the great unthinking majority of mankind, in opposition to the educated classes. This view might seem to derive support from Aristotle's distinction between the ideals of the "many," who "choose the life of cattle," and the more refined ambitions of the well-educated few. No such sneer is necessarily implied in the phrase. If popular morality is contrasted with philosophic ethics, it must mean simply all morality which does not spring from philosophic inquiry, in the technical sense. That Sophocles soared above certain of his contemporaries in the grandeur and accuracy of his views of life, and that his morality was not the morality of the average Athenian, may be admitted. This does not render his ideals a negligible quantity to the student of popular morals. They stand as an eternal witness to the capabilities of the ancient creed. They are part—if the highest part—of the popular morality, and, as such, must be considered in an estimate of the whole.

The philosophic division of mankind into two classes—the fools and the wise—belongs, properly speaking, to a later period than that with which we are at present concerned; to a

Moral
Authorities.

time when wise men and fools had learnt to despise one another, acknowledged no common authority, and drew their inspiration from sources fundamentally different. During the earlier period no such marked disagreement existed. Lawgivers and poets were the recognized authorities on all moral questions. At Athens the school text-books were Homer and Hesiod, together with a corpus of extracts from the gnomic poets.¹ The tragedians were in some sense directors of secondary education.² The lyric poets provided an ethical reference library, as well as a means of social entertainment. All these writers are quoted as moral authorities down to the last years of Greek independence. The popular reverence for Homer may be inferred from Plato's censures in the *Republic*, which seem at times to border on stolidity, and can only be explained on the supposition that something like a theory of verbal inspiration was commonly accepted.³ Of the lyric poets, Simonides

¹ For the public recital of Homer, instituted at the Panathenaea by Hipparchus, see Aelian, V. H., viii, 2 (*teste* Plato, *Hipparchus*). This Hipparchus was noted for attempts to grapple with the educational problem. Plato *Hipp.* 228, c. sq., relates that, having educated the towns-folk, he tried to catch the farmers by erecting in the market-place Hermae with moral maxims engraven thereon, in the hope that this taste of his wisdom might induce them to "ask for more." Two examples are given of these inscriptions: Μνήμα τὸδ' Ἰππάρχου, στείχε δίκαια φρονῶν, and Μνήμα τὸδ' Ἰππάρχου, μὴ φίλον ἐξαπάτα. For further information see Ott. Sluiteri *Lectiones Andocidaeae*, cap. ii (prefixed to speeches of Andocides, *Oratores Attici*, ed. Dobson, London, 1828). The importance of this phenomenon will not be underrated by anyone aware of the place of texts in cottage-life.

² Aristophanes says the tragic poet is the schoolmaster of youths who have left school (*Ran.* 1054 sq.), and lays stress on the moral influence of Aeschylus, chiefly in the matter of hardihood and military virtue (*ib.* 1021 sq. cf. 1035 sq.); cf. Aeschylus' remarks to Euripides (*ib.* 1052 sqq.).

³ In these early days we note Heraclitus' frantic declaration that Homer should have been cast out of the lists and scourged (*Diog. Laert.* ix. 1). We find similar criticisms in Xenophanes. That conservative sentiment was not

was held in exceptional esteem as a moral counsellor with whom it was impious to disagree. The indignation of Strepsiades in the *Clouds* when his son ventured to challenge this view, probably represents a genuine trait in Athenian character.

The general assumption that these poets were accepted as moral authorities is incontestable. It is not suggested that they contain anything like a uniform body of dogma. They present a great variety of ethical ideas, which correspond to successive stages in the development of the Greek mind. Again, the very existence of this gradual development implies that popular beliefs were in a fluid state. The idea that a uniform standard prevailed in all ranks of society needs considerable qualification. In the general progress of thought, some men would naturally lag behind. But the important point is that all phases of popular thought, refined and unrefined alike, are represented in the early poets; and, therefore, their works form a reliable basis of study.

averse to an eclectic treatment of the Homeric religion, is shown in such writers as Aeschylus (cf. Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, vol. iii, § 441). From the latter half of the fifth century onwards the right to censure immoral elements in the Epics was assumed on all sides by the leaders of higher thought and culture, e.g. Plato, Euripides, Democritus (Stob. *Ecl.* p. 408), Isocrates (*Bus.* 228 D-229 C). Among the more reckless and insipid assailants of this later period, we note Zoilus (Ael. V. H. xi. 10), Cephisodorus, pupil of Isocrates (*ἐν τῷ τρίτῳ τῶν πρὸς Ἀριστοτέλην*, attacks the unseemly conduct of Hera and Ares, *ἐφ' οἷς πάντες κατηγοροῦσιν αὐτῶν*: Ath. 122 C), and Daphidas, of Telmessus, a general scoffer at gods and oracles, who came to a bad end (third or second century B.C., Suidas s. v.).

(I) *The Moral Motive.*

A great part of moral philosophy is taken up with the question of motives. The philosopher is always anxious to find a "decent pretext" for what he says and does. As a rule, his first business is to lay down a substructure of ultimate principles, to which all ethical conduct may be referred for its justification. According to Plato, it was in this matter of motives or guiding principles that the popular moralists went most astray. From his point of view, this was necessarily the case; for while the popular teacher and the philosopher may agree more or less in recognizing certain practical rules of conduct, they justify them on different grounds. The former makes his appeal to current feelings and beliefs. The latter is inclined to mistrust them.¹ He must go deeper and explain why they exist, and indeed whether their existence is justified; and more especially so in the case of beliefs whose imperfection has been revealed by experience, and which have given place to moral disorder and scepticism.

In Homer a variety of motives are shadowed forth, Homer: custom, which were afterwards developed and concentrated, and became lodestars of Greek religion, and sentiment. morality. The *Iliad* presents a "vagueness of moral sanction, and an absence of any clear standard of conduct apart from primitive custom." The heroes do certain deeds, and avoid others, because their fathers have acted so, and public opinion forbids them to act otherwise. Custom had produced a sort of unwritten code, which enjoined faithful and considerate conduct towards certain classes—kings, heralds, priests, suppliants, and, above all, blood-relatives and hereditary guests. But custom (*θέμις*) was supported by an incipient moral sense (*νέμεσις, σέβας*), a feeling of reverence for others (*αἰδώς*), and a fear of the

¹ Aristotle is, of course, to some extent an exception, as will be seen.

gods.¹ These motives were calculated rather to deter men from vice than to inspire active deeds of virtue, except in so far as the avoidance of a breach of "custom" entailed the discharge of certain positive obligations. The greatest contribution of Homer to Greek ethics lay in the strong moral feeling which pervades the poems, the feeling that certain actions and states of mind are as beautiful and choice-worthy as certain others are degraded and abominable. Lewis Campbell remarks that the *Odyssey* is an "apotheosis of conduct," the *Iliad* of "personal feeling." In the latter the theme is the righteous indignation of Achilles, relieved by his affection for Patroclus and his tenderness to Priam; and in interludes are sung the virtuous loves of Hector and Andromache, in strong contrast to the pigeon-hearted amour of Paris. The *Odyssey*, on the other hand, is a vast allegory of human endurance, of journeyings far from home and spiritual combats on Calypso's isle. The effect of such representations is to educate the moral sense by an appeal to the heart and emotions. Moral virtue is freed from all considerations of material profit and loss; it is recommended simply as a beautiful thing, which every healthy-minded man must desire. And for this reason Plato ordained that an expurgated edition of the Epics should form the basis of education in his Ideal City.

A sense of the essential loveliness of virtue was Beauty and never, even in the least creditable episodes Renown. of Greek morality, wholly obscured by prudential considerations. The intimate connexion in

¹ Gladstone has pointed out that *vémeois* is not regularly used by Homer in its later sense of "vengeance," but is something akin to "conscience," "self-judgment by an inner law" (*Il.* xvii. 254; *Od.* ii. 138): similarly *σέβας* (*Il.* vi. 417). He defines *αἰδώς* as "self-judgment according to a standard supplied by the opinion of others." Xen. *Cyrop.* viii. 1, 23-27, recommends (1) *εὐσεβεία*, fear of God, which prevents froward acts of men to each other, with prosperity as a reward; (2) *αἰδώς*, respect for one's fellows. So, too, *ibid.* viii. 7, 22 sq., where the advantages of *αἰδώς* are noted.

the Greek mind of the moral and the aesthetic is familiar to every student. A kindred motive, with an occasional alloy of selfishness and vulgarity, is found in that desire for praise and renown which is inseparable from the aspirations of a vigorous race.¹ It is unhappily not superfluous to add that the best Greeks were actuated, within certain limits, at all periods by sentiments of fellowship and mutual responsibility.

Sooner or later, in the development of the moral consciousness, feeling and custom give place to
 Utilitarianism, calculations of profit and loss. A man finds that his happiness depends to a large extent on the attitude which his neighbours adopt towards him. Experience tells him that the practice of virtue will win him their esteem; and that right dealing towards others is the best way of securing their good offices, which are so essential in the battle of life. Moreover, superstition or conviction warns him that piety and justice can win for him the favour and support of Heaven. Thus with the great majority of men the chief recommendation of virtue is that it pays. "Honesty is the best policy," not only with men, but also with God.

The hope and fear of Divine recompense are prominent in Greek literature from the earliest
 Religion. times. It was a doctrine particularly attractive to the mind of Hesiod. The spirit of true and serious

¹ *εὐδοξία*, *τιμή*, *ἔπαινος*, are employed in this connexion. Isocrates sets forth *εὐδοξία* as the motive prevalent in ancient Athens, which led to private self-restraint and loyal public service (*Paneg.* 56 B). Such motives become a commonplace in the Attic Orators. In almost all cases *δόξα* is set off against monetary gain and slothful ease. *φιλοτιμία* raises slaves to the level of freemen (*Xen. Oec.* 9), and distinguishes men from beasts (*Xen. Hiero.* vii. 3). There is a curious passage in *Xen. Anab.* vi. 1, 20 sq., where Xenophon almost persuades himself to accept the command of the army by considerations of the reputation he may gain thereby; the question of his duty comes as an after-thought, and does not influence his decision.

religion breathes through the opening lines of the *Works and Days*;—

“With ease God maketh strong, and bringeth low,
Exalting meekness, and dishonouring pride.”

Justice is represented as the maiden daughter of Zeus, put to flight by impious men, and sending up to her Father a pitiful wail for vengeance. So far, we see merely the shadowy background of primeval faith, a sense of the controlling and corrective power, “the not-ourselves, which makes for righteousness.” This consciousness of responsibility to a Divine tribunal introduces into the popular creed an element which, if alien to morality in the strict sense of the word, is at least a healthy incentive to just conduct; but this, like most of the truths which Nature seems to implant in the heart of man, is capable of perversion. Before men can gauge the value and import of the simplest intuition, much experimenting is necessary. Imagination is ever ready to interpret the most abstruse problems of religion and morality. A primitive seer arises with some divine intuition, a hazy, untutored basal notion. It at first perplexes and worries its possessor. Knowing a little, he feels he can and must know more. The dim outlines of his Gospel he fills in with a phantasmagoric mythology of his own invention, till the original truth is obscured under much unwarrantable rubbish, which shall sorely nonplus the antiquarian of a future age. Take this Hesiodic doctrine of a God who rewards virtue and punishes vice. It is capable of developing into the sublimest religious creed. It may lead to a reverent following of God’s will, because it is God’s will: to a seeking after the higher rewards of life; to an absolute trust in a Providence who knows what is good for us better than we ourselves, and who will raise up the humble and meek, not to the lofty places of worldly desire, but to the safe and impregnable regions of spiritual consolation.

It may even reach a distant vanishing-point in that "morality tinged with emotion," which Matthew Arnold held to be the essence of true religion. But in the early stages of religious thought men cannot be content to say simply that God rewards and punishes. They must explain also how He rewards and punishes. Material prosperity is to them the most obvious, perhaps the only, measure of happiness; consequently it is conceived as the most fitting sphere of the Divine recompense. Hence arises the doctrine that God will materially reward the just, and materially punish the unjust.¹ But the morality which is based on this view has no sure foundation. Sooner or later, experience shows that good people do not get their share of this world's fortune. The optimist who has cried, "Never have I seen the righteous forsaken, or his seed begging their bread," by degrees becomes pessimistical; for the wicked "have children at their desire, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes." And then, with the first burst of scepticism, comes an impetuous revolt against all the claims of morality which have hitherto rested on a doubtful hypothesis.

" Let me not then work justice toward man
Henceforth, nor yet my son! for to be just
Is evil, when the unjust profiteth." ²

The outburst may subside, quelled by that hope which feeds upon despair; but there remains the sad suspicion that perhaps the old Faith was falsely grounded, and that perhaps, after all, it does not pay to be good. This suspicion is not prevalent in Hesiod: usually he accepts the ultimate triumph of Justice as an axiom. It is in the gnomic poets that a persistent tendency to scepticism first appears.

¹ Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 225-243.

² *Ibid.* 270 sqq. Cf. Hom. *Il.* xiii. 631.

But if God did not reward the good, and neglected to punish a large number of the wicked, the average man failed to draw the full sceptical conclusion. If his neighbour's misdeeds were done with impunity, his own faults might not be so lightly judged. Fear remains long after hope has vanished, and superstition does not incline her victims to draw logical inferences. Men might give up expecting any material reward for their sacrifice of selfish lusts and impulses; they could not wholly shake off the uneasy feeling, that the indulgence of those impulses might some day bring down the fire from Heaven to consume them. Thus it is that a large part of Greek Ethics, so far as they are based on the popular religion, is intimately connected with the Gospel of Fear; and henceforth the *Divine Envy, Justice, and Nemesis* are the main questions occupying the minds of popular theologians. We have already noticed in Hesiod the conception of *Justice*, who gives evil men their due. This contains in germ the later doctrine of *Nemesis*. Side by side with this, there is a lower and wholly superstitious notion of a malignant Deity, who must be appeased by the scrupulous performance of sacrifice.¹ Next comes the doctrine of a *Divine Envy*. For the conception of a Deity who must be propitiated by sacrifice is not far from that of a Deity irascible and jealous. It was observed that especial difficulties, and often signal reversals of fortune, attended the man who outdid his fellows in the ordinary pursuits of human ambition, and likewise him who transgressed the limits of legitimate conduct. The fall of such men was readily ascribed to the envy of God. Any transgression of mediocrity, whether in the form of legitimate excellence in laudable exploits or of sinful extravagance and riot, was equally offensive to a Deity whose hand was ever swift to check "insolence" in all the works of His

¹ Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 336 sqq.

creatures. "Seest thou," says Artabanus to Xerxes—"seest thou how God with His lightning smites always biggest animals, and will not suffer them to wax insolent, while those of a lesser bulk chafe Him not? So, plainly, does He love to bring down everything that exalts itself."¹ But already, in Pindar and Herodotus, these hazy ideas of God's relation to the world were being analysed. Beside the conception of a merely envious Potentate, whose object was to quell all mankind's efforts after individualism and self-assertion in any form, arose a nobler outlook on human destiny, together with a conviction of the infinite consequences of moral and immoral actions. It was not excellence, but excess, that was now condemned; not great wealth, but the insolent frame of mind to which material prosperity often led. God was no longer regarded as a sportive despot, but rather as a Judge, stern and merciful, punishing the evil deed, even unto the third and fourth generation, but "showing mercy to thousands in them that love Him and keep His commandments." The new conception is embodied in the Aeschylean *Nemesis*, which is emphatically not *Envy*, but "the spirit of distributing to each man his due."

All theological surmisings of this kind are abstruse, and tend at certain periods to pass out of fashion. It was a significant sign of the times, when Sophocles in the *Antigone* pointed out the natural connexion of Creon's misfortune with his wilful character, leaving the workings out of Divine justice comparatively in the background. It was a sign that men were dissatisfied with the attempt to express all things in terms of theology. Moreover, the spirit of scepticism was spreading, aided now perhaps by the powerful logomachies of the Sophists. There is a notable passage in the *Philoctetes*, which bears on this

¹ Cf. Pindar, *Isthm.* vi. 39-42.

question. Philoctetes inquires after the fate of Thersites. Neoptolemus replies :—

“I saw him not, but heard that he was living.”

Philoctetes rejoins :—

“It would be so ! no ill thing perishes,
 Wrapt in the sheltering arms of Providence !
 Yea ! 'tis by grace of Heaven, methinks, that guile
 And villainy revive ; by grace of Heaven
 That Righteousness and Justice pass away.
 How shall I reckon these things ? how approve,
 When in the act of praising I condemn ?”¹

The attitude of Philoctetes is that of an Athenian citizen smarting under the trials of the Peloponnesian War. At such seasons the attempt to base morality on a belief in Divine recompense must have been beset by almost insuperable difficulties.

There was, however, another motive to morality besides those we have mentioned, having many
 Law and Morals. points of contact with the religious doctrine of Justice. This is implied in the characteristic Greek notion that morality was based on law, and, as such, was binding on all members of the body corporate. With the rise of the great political fabrics of historic Greece the somewhat vague principle of social propriety, which had been enunciated in Homer, was replaced by a definitely prescribed standard of right and wrong. The Lycurgean Constitution shows how wide was the scope assigned to the Greek lawgiver, who in many cases was expected to play the part of moral reformer, and to exercise a controlling influence over what is now regarded as the private concern of the individual citizen.² In a few Dorian

¹ Soph. *Philoctet.* 446 sqq.

² The conception of the legislator as moral reformer is clearly emphasized in Plutarch, *Lyc.* c. 8-10. We have several instances of the strict and minute regulations in Greek law concerning matters of private life, e.g. Ath. 429 A

States¹ there were compulsory systems of education, whose object was to train the citizen to be an orderly and efficient member of the community; and the idea was adopted and developed later on by Plato and Xenophon. But, apart from this, an exaggerated ethical importance came to be attached to the special ordinances of the lawgiver in so far as they affected questions of discipline and duty. Aristotle noted in his time that a large number of men thought they knew all about justice, if they had learnt the laws of their city;² and since, as he remarks in another place,³ the laws were designed to control the actions of every citizen (in so far as they might affect the welfare of the body corporate), it is a fair inference that to the average Greek the time-

(about drinking), 565 C, D (about shaving), 686 F (about the use of unguents), 150 A (about the food at marriage feasts), Plut. *Sol.* c. 20 (marriage regulations). Aeschines, in his speech *against Timarchus*, makes a parade of the Solonian enactments designed to preserve moral conduct among the young (§§ 6, 7). These include (1) regulations to ensure morality and discipline in schools and gymnasia, with penalty of death (§ 12); (2) stringent laws to protect children against immoral designs on the part of their elders and guardians (§§ 13 sq.); (3) law imposing civil and religious incapacities on any citizen guilty of *éταλπησις* (§ 21). This last enactment does not seem to be directly intended as an attempt at moral reform. The civic incapacities are rather based on the idea that a man unable to govern himself cannot govern the city (cf. the scrutiny of moral character imposed on candidates for the Boulé. See § 195, and Wolf's note: "Nec enim lex in homines vitam privatam agentes, sed in eos qui publicis negotiis se immiscent, inquirit." See also Scholiast's note to the same effect). (4) Similar law forbidding a man to hire out himself or any other citizen for immoral traffic. It will be seen that Athenian law was governed by more "liberal" principles than the Spartan.

¹ Ar. *Eth. Nic.* 1180 a, 25, cf. *Pol.* 1272 b, 24.

According to Plutarch (*Lyc.* c. 13), Lycurgus considered education, rather than numerous written decrees, the chief business of the legislator; but, it may be remarked, he took "education" in such a wide sense that he practically controlled all the private relations of life by law—e.g. his minute regulations as to marriage customs (*Lyc.* c. 15).

² *Eth. Nic.* 1137 a, 16.

³ *Ibid.* 1129 b, 11 sqq.

honoured laws of his city appeared as a concise recapitulation of his duty to his neighbour, even when they did not regulate his conduct to himself and his household.¹ They were the patterns by which to live;² and probably his highest ambition was to conform to their standard.

It is, however, the assumed prerogative of the higher minds in every age to advance beyond the laws of conventional life; and perhaps a large proportion of thoughtful men in Greece began early to suspect the existence of that distinction between the good citizen and the good man, which was afterwards worked out by Aristotle.³ A good citizen is he who scrupulously fulfils his public duties, and obeys the laws of the city; but there is often a great gap between the requirements of civil law and the requirements of conscience. The most upright legislator cannot settle by any hard and fast rule that intricate conflict of duties, which besets the nobler part of mankind from age to age. The *Antigone* of Sophocles seems to be an elaborate discussion of the obligations of the citizen in regard to legal ordinances. The heroine, "technically disobedient but morally most duteous," opposes to the arbitrary command of Creon the sure unwritten laws of Heaven. These higher laws are the true justification of morality; and the special enactments of legislators, which vary in different places and at different times, are morally righteous just in so far as they embody them.⁴

¹ *Eth. Nic.* 1134 b, 9 sqq.

² Plato, *Prot.* 326 D.

³ Arist. *Pol.* 1276 b, 34.

⁴ But it is wholly wrong to regard the *Antigone* as anarchical in profession. It is at most an essay in passive resistance. The attitude approved is that exemplified in Socrates some years later: the ruler's decree claims obedience as law, but invites criticism as being contrary to the principles of enlightened morality: see Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, vol. iv. § 463.

This conception of a transcendent law of right had been foreshadowed in the Aeschylean theology, where Law denotes the will of God, to which the human will must conform. But it was not present, at any rate in its unalloyed simplicity, to the mind of the average Greek. In the rising democracies it was not the unwritten, but the written, law which excited the greatest reverence and attention. The wealth-seeking merchant or the pleasure-seeking man of fashion might find little inclination to look beyond the list of legal pains and penalties, which barred his course and enforced a decent behaviour hardly worthy of the names of justice and sobriety. This goes without saying; but there is another point. The Statute Book was in some sense an inspired work; and good law-abiding folk were liable, through sheer witlessness, to confuse moral principle with the regulations framed to protect it. Thus arose among the ill-disposed a utilitarian morality of the baser sort, founded solely on a fear of drastic penalties, which led Aristotle to remark that "the many yield to compulsion rather than reason, to punishment rather than a love of what is noble"; and among the well-disposed a stereotyped subservience to certain formulae and an unintelligent following of custom, which led Plato to make such unpleasant allusions to "the men who practise mob-and-State virtue," whom he compares to "bees and wasps and ants," and "other tame and political" creatures. Under such circumstances it was only too likely that many comparatively harmless young men, when asked who or what was responsible for their ethical judgments, should, with Meletus in the *Apology*, blurt out "the laws," and thereby fall easy victims to the first Thrasymachus who came their way. When the Sophists—or some of them—declared that morality was mere "convention," they were in great part stating an historical fact.

Thus the moral choice of the early Greek was, as we have seen, swayed by a number of different motives. A line of conduct might be recommended to his aesthetic sense by its loveliness and propriety, or to his mercenary instincts by its promise of winning the favour of God and his neighbour. He might follow the course of convention and written law, or the higher dictates of moral principle. He might be controlled by fear of public censure, or by the honourable desire of a good reputation. Of these motives some were of high and paramount significance, and likely to prove valuable material to the philosophy of the future; but several dangerous pitfalls have appeared in the path of those who were actuated solely by superstitious or mercenary considerations, or followed the blind lead of convention.

(II) Ethics of the Individual.

As we have discovered a considerable variety among the motives which governed the conduct of the early Greeks, we may expect to find a corresponding diversity in their ethical tenets and ideals. The aims of those who barely conform to the rules of propriety owing to the promptings of selfishness or fear, cannot be as elevated as ideals which are the fruit of an earnest desire to grasp the essence of human well-being in its highest form. Nevertheless all sections of mankind are agreed, in name at any rate, as to the object of their endeavours. All men seek for good ; good as it seems to them, although it is probable that but few men form a worthy estimate of its meaning. The early Greeks sought for good, and in speaking of good, which they interpreted in many different ways, they thought primarily of the good of the individual. As Grote remarks, "The ancients considered the sentiments and actions of each individual to a certain extent as affecting others as well as himself ; as imparting to others enjoyment or misery, and creating in them gratitude or resentment ; but still in the main the primary point of view, the ethical *standpunkt* of the ancients, was the position of the person himself ; to advise him as to the means requisite to becoming happy was the grand ethical problem."¹ Self-development and self-discipline are the keynotes of all that is best, self-enjoyment of all that is worst, in Greek morals. Except perhaps at certain Dorian centres, where individualism was discountenanced, a man's relation to his neighbour was a secondary though prominent question. When in the *Republic* Plato attempts to vindicate the claims of justice, he only incidentally exhibits it as the good of the community at large ; his main contention is that it is the good of the individual.

¹ Grote, *Fragments on Ethical Subjects*, p. 51.

It will, therefore, be convenient to consider in the first place the ideals which presented themselves to different sections of the people in their search for individual well-being, and next to observe how far these ideals were modified or enlarged by the claims of duty or the requirements of social life ; and yet we must remember how inseparable these two aspects of virtue became to a people who plunged with such zest into all the interests and enjoyments of society and politics.

When Plato made his three-fold classification of "good things" into goods of soul, goods of body, and external goods, he rendered intelligible one aspect of those ethical problems which had presented themselves to all thoughtful Greeks from the earliest times.

Long before ethical phraseology was invented, the Greek was conscious that the joys of sensual pleasure and the glow of bodily exercise were essential to his happiness, and side by side with such feelings as these he was aware of other higher and perhaps more difficult emotions, which his nature led him to appreciate. The battle and the sports such as heroes love filled him with ecstasy. The bumper of good Pramnian wine came as a "welcome physician after toils adjudged." He drank on, till sleep or sage caution made him drop the cup. And yet he had a heart too for poetry and the worship of the gods ; and he could cry over a suppliant foeman, and mourn long nights for a fallen comrade, not with sadness of countenance only, but with radical tearings of hair and other Heaven-sent irrationalities. Such was the life of Homer's warrior-chieftains. They were human creatures compounded of soul and body, a higher and a lower nature, welded together in a sort of discordant harmony. And they were conscious of a world external to themselves, on which their happiness to such a large extent depended, and which was in great part beyond their control. For

the external world contains fields and oxen and lusty male children together with venison-pasties and wine. Moreover in a sense the external world holds honour and reputation in its keeping; for no man can receive honour, unless certain folk, external to himself, agree to honour him. In all probability their primitive intelligence fixed on goods of this last sort as the highest; and they would pray a great deal for oxen and male children, and very little for a humble and contrite heart. It would, however, be misleading to suppose that the Greek habit was to look upon a man's well-being as tripartite, so as to distribute it among three pigeon-holes labelled respectively, "spiritual," "physical," and "external." It was adversity alone which led the Sophists and other moralists to remark that apparently there is a certain class of goods, namely, the external, which circumstances may render beyond our control; and that there is another class of goods, namely, the physical, which are largely dependent on the aforesaid; while yet a third class, the spiritual, may be our final refuge. Thus adversity stimulated analysis, and analysis produced the tripartite division. But the prosperous Greek in the great ages of Greece, or, as he is sometimes vulgarly called, the Sunny Greek, looked out on life as a whole. So close was the relation of his soul and body, and so intimate their connexion with the external world, that these three spheres of activity—if I may so call them—blended into one, and he felt their "good things" all alike necessary to his true well-being. Yet Soul and Body were not reduced to a dead level, or confused. Harmony, and not confusion, was the lesson which the Greek learnt, as his civilization advanced and his aesthetic taste was educated by the beauties of nature and the art of man. In the harmonious blending of his activities a position of honour was accorded to the Soul, which ruled without subjugating the Body. By the better class of men luxury and asceticism were equally tabooed.

The blind life of beasts was scorned, as the subtle yearnings of the spirit were comparatively unknown. That type of the Greek mind, which we are now considering, knew nothing of Plato's cryings after God, for the simple reason that it conceived God, not as an exalted intellect "on the other side of Being," but as a man—or rather as a plurality of men—more powerful and beautiful than we are, but still possessed of bodies and passions like ourselves. These anthropomorphic deities dwelt in stream, ocean, and woodland glen. They breathed the same pure air as we do, and ranged about the lovely vault of heaven. They loved and drank, pitied and hated, received men's sacrifices and gave gifts in return. As such the Greek loved to think of them, and, forgetting the more discreditable episodes of Homeric theology, sought to model his life by theirs. As they had passions, so his passions were sacred and lawful; as their bodies were beautiful, so he would cultivate his own with exercise and nutriment; as their bodies were ruled by an indwelling soul, so he would temper his whole life with reasonable discipline. All this reappears in Plato, but only as an occasional relief to his lofty, uncompromising asceticism. It was the ideal which Sophocles attained in his own life, a serene mind and a perfect body united in a genial use of external goods.¹

The elements which composed the basis of this ideal were a desire to use one's natural capacities to the utmost, and a caution which forbade excess. It was only to be expected that most characters should fail to combine the two in due proportion. Self-development and the full use of life are principles which may easily appear as incentives to frivolity and license. The licentious

The Law of Self-development and its perversion.

¹ Isoc. *Evag.* 203 C, D, enumerates the main elements of the highest popular view of happiness: (1) good birth, (2) excellence of body and mind, (3) honourable success, (4) long life without weakness of old age, (5) many and good children; cf. Plut. *Sol.* c. 27.

side of Greek life is too obvious to be overlooked. The Greeks openly recognized the sensual instincts, and set apart for their gratification certain definite seasons of public festivity. Still, the very openness of their revels removed, to some extent, the evils of vice: nor is there any reason to assume that even at the Great Dionysiac Festival the Athenian people as a whole became besotted, or that the young drunkards lost their self-respect. Browning describes Aristophanes after one of his signal victories as

“ Impudent and majestic ; drunk, perhaps,
But that’s religion ” ;

and yet

“ There was a mind there, mind a-wantoning
At ease of undisputed mastery
Over the body’s brood, those appetites.”

To the Greek such an outbreak was not necessarily a breach of moderation. Immoderate conduct was unseasonable conduct : and youth was in a sense the season of indulgence. Even such a shrewd moralist as Pindar could bid his soul “gather love when life is young.” Even Sophocles, if we are to believe Plato’s good-natured scandal, drank deep of the forbidden cup.

But the law of moderation was often enunciated in a stricter form than this, and especially so in precepts addressed to the young. Indeed it seems, in some measure, a direct contrast to the law of self-development, although

The Law
of
Moderation.

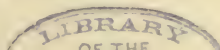
both sprang ultimately from the same source, the desire of the individual to realize himself as far as possible under existing circumstances. The life and powers of man were, to the Greek mind, essentially limited. It was by adapting himself to his limited circumstances that he attained his true goal. All extravagances were therefore harmful. Sensual excess destroyed the body. Spiritual yearnings after the impossible diverted the soul from her

real purpose, and filled her with unavailing disquietude. "To yearn for the impossible is a soul's disease." Symonds uses this proverb to explain why Greek tragedies end with a note of quiet, whereas the closing scenes of modern drama are frequently intense with baffled hopes and passion untamed. The reason is that paganism looking to the present life alone sought to lull unavailing desires to rest, while Christianity sees infinite possibilities beyond the grave. With Christianity this life is but the opening Act, which paganism took for the whole Play. Had an early Greek publicly proclaimed the Gospel of Everlasting Life, he would most likely have incurred a prosecution for impiety. The gods were immortal, and they alone. Man was mortal and must submit with due decorum to his lot. Thus it is that a strain of something very like humility is blended with the self-assertion of the Greek. Man is mortal, and must think mortal thoughts.

Occasionally, in the stress of action, at some crisis in the national life, the latent heroism of this great people asserted itself in defiance of human limitations, opposing the weakness of David to the strength of Goliath.¹ But in the ordinary routine of existence the path marked out by their sages led cautiously onwards over solid earth of fact, not through airy regions of the ideal. There was no longing for the far-off, the future, the impossible; the palpable things of the present, of the Eternal Now, were accepted and welcomed as the supreme realities. τὸ δὲ πρὸ ποδὸς ἄρειον ἀεὶ σκοπεῖν χρῆμ' ἅπαν.

Some qualification of these remarks is needed. To say that the Greeks confined their attention to the immediate present would be to insult their practical good sense. If to build too much on the future appeared futile, to make no provision for it was equally absurd. A man's

¹ The heroes of the Persian wars are always represented as rising above logical reckonings. Arist. *Eq.* 569 sq.; Lys. (?) *Epitaph.* § 23; Hyp-*Epitaph.* vii (Blass).



happiness must be judged by his life as a whole. It became a proverb that no one should be called happy till after his death. Indeed the law of moderation is only intelligible as a far-sighted principle controlling a long span of life. Moderate ambitions are conducive to a continuous and even prosperity; and this the Greek prized more than a chequered career, wherein signal triumphs alternated with humiliation and defeat, and bounteous replenishment only made the succeeding void more painful by contrast. This moral is the continual burden of Pindar's song; and there is a passage in the eleventh Pythian Ode which concentrates it in a few pregnant lines.

The poet prays that he may have noble desires (*ἐραίμαν καλῶν*). Noble desires, however, are by no means synonymous with anything extravagant or ideal, in the modern sense of the word. The "noble things" here spoken of are "possible" things—that is to say, practicable and reasonable ambitions. They consist of a moderate position in the city—a mean between the poverty of the small shopkeeper and the impious luxury of the tyrant; of "merits in which all have interest"; of public-spirited achievements which become a gentleman; and, above all, of a heart free from insolent pride. The last scene of such a man's life is happy, and he leaves to his descendants "the glory of a good name superior to all possessions."¹

¹ θεόθεν ἐραίμαν καλῶν

δυνατὰ μαιόμενος ἐν ἀλικίᾳ.

τῶν γὰρ ἀνὰ πόλιν εὐρίσκων τὰ μέσα μακροτέρῳ

δλβψ τεθαλότα, μέμφομ' αἴσαν τυραννίδων·

ξυναῖσι δ' ἀμφ' ἀρεταῖς τέταμαι· φθονεροὶ δ' ἀμύονται

τῶν εἰ τις ἄκρον ἐλὼν ἀσυχᾶ τε νεμόμενος αἰνὰν ὕβριν

ἀπέφυγεν· μέλανα δ' ἀν' ἐσχατιὰν

καλλίονα θάνατον ἔσχεν γλυκυτάτα γενεᾶ

εὐώνυμον κτεάνων κρατίστην χάριν πορών. (*Pyth.* xi. 52 sqq.)

This is the orthodox Greek view. There were numberless heretics who preferred adventure to prudence—e.g. Miltiades and Themistocles in their

As we saw, the desire for self-development and fullness of life led in certain instances to sensual indulgence. So too the sense of human limitations, besides enforcing a wise self-control and a moderation of impulses and emotions, often paved the way for a definite deterioration in morality. So long as the dignity of human life is jealously guarded by a high doctrine of man's place in the Universe, there is little apparent inducement to moral degradation. When, however, poets and philosophers begin comparing man to a fly and his life to a shadow, we expect to find them lenient in their demands of the human character. This expectation is fulfilled in the case of Simonides. His anthropology is pessimistic.¹ His standard of morals, too, does not err on the side of severity. The doctrine of this Court poet is a sort of easy-going "worldly moderation." Hard is it for a man to become truly good in mind and limb. Let him be not too impracticable, and let health, beauty, riches, and friendship, in this order of merit, be the objects of his ambition.

It is somewhat discomfoting to find that Simonides was regarded as a moral authority by the people at large.² The truth is that he struck a note of material ease and prosperity, which has a subtle attraction for human ears. The philosophers were from the outset confronted with a problem which must occupy the minds of reformers in every age, and which is intensified in times of material prosperity. The majority of mankind is always liable to esteem the more obvious elements of happiness as the only

later years, Alcibiades and several others of the same stamp. The ideal of a short and strenuous existence is likewise heretical (e.g. Achilles).

¹ ἄνθρωπος ἐὼν μὴ ποτε φάσῃς ὅτι γίνεται αἰρίον,
μηδ' ἄνδρα ἰδὼν ἄλβιον, ὅσσον χρόνον ἔσσειται·
ὠκεία γάρ, οὐδὲ τανυπτερόγυοι μύλια
οὐ τόσα μετὰστασις.

² Cf. Plato, *Rep.* 331 C; Aristophanes, *Nub.* 1355 sqq.

objects of desire.¹ Physical life is more obvious than the mental and moral; and consequently physical strength and beauty tend to absorb attention, to the exclusion of intellectual interests and labour for the public welfare. Again, there is a constant temptation to ignore the true meaning of external goods, and to value the mere possession of wealth apart from its use.² The Greek people were not exempt from these marks of human frailty.

There are certain natures on whom the feeling of limitation acts with far different effect. The Orphism. caged bird is not always respectful to its captor; and the sun-light flooding in through the prison bars does not always prompt the inmate to a life of easy acquiescence in the decrees of fate. There is such a thing as defying nature, or rather believing her to be more generous than is commonly supposed. The lower noble

¹ κάλλος, πλοῦτος, ἰσχὺς σώματος, and τιμή (Plato, *Rep.* 491 C, *Meno* 87 E; Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1095 a, 22 sqq.): cf. the half-comic, half-serious summaries of happiness in Aristophanes; e.g. Peithetairus promises ἀγαθὰ πάντα to men, if they will take the birds as their gods; and ἀγαθὰ πάντα consist of (1) plenty of food, (2) plenty of money, (3) health, (4) length of life (Arist. *Av.* 587-608): cf. the list, *ibid.* 731 sqq. The conventional use of εὐδαιμονία as a synonym for "comfortable circumstances" appears in the Orators (Antiphon, Or. ii. γ. § 8, Isaeus, Or. vi. § 23. Cf. Phocylides ap. Plat. *Rep.* 407 A. Δίξασθαι βιοτήν, ἀρετήν δ' ὅταν ᾗ βίος ἡδῆ).

² The early Greek moralists ridiculed the barbarians for amassing huge quantities of wealth far above their needs, and then priding themselves upon it; and from the express warnings of philosophers it would seem that the Greeks themselves followed the barbarian example (see esp. Xen. *Oec.* ii. 11, Isoc. *ad Dem.* 7 E). It was especially noted that tyrants and oligarchs erred in this direction.

The whole question of riches will come up again in connexion with the later period. We may note that the popular over-estimate of riches produced a reaction in some minds. Aristides (and, according to Ael. *V. H.* ii. 43, Ephialtes and Lamachus) was famous for his poverty. He prided himself on it more than other men prided themselves on their riches (Plut. *Arist.* c. 25, *teste* Aeschines the Socratic). This peculiar form of asceticism re-appeared in certain philosophers (e.g. Socrates, Ael. *V. H.* ix. 29) and adherents of philosophy (e.g. Epaminondas, Ael. *V. H.* v. 5, and Phocion, *ibid.* vii. 9).

spirits are trodden down, the higher they set their hopes. The sense of sin generates the assurance of forgiveness. The transitoriness of this mortal life awakens in men a consciousness of something eternal, in which they may claim a share. This attitude of mind found expression in the Orphic Mysteries. Orphism was from the first associated with some sort of *Catharsis* (purification), and this idea of *Catharsis* was closely connected with some hope of immortality. For by purification the worshipper became in a sense God-possessed—a notion probably taken on from the older Dionysiac worship—and this God-possession was an assurance of the future union of the soul with God. The life on earth was regarded as an imprisonment in an impure sphere of existence as a consequence of previous sin. This view of life is a peculiar one, unlike anything that we have met hitherto in the study of Greek morality. It presents an attitude of rebellion against human limitations and the Greek ideal of moderation and propriety. No doubt it was disgraced, in numberless cases, by formalism and materialistic associations. But this does not matter. The point is that such an attitude was possible to the Greek mind, and that such ideas were in the air.¹

They did not mean the same thing to all worshippers. One conceived the *Catharsis* to be wrought out by ritual, another by that practical purity of life to which the ritual was a means. A thoughtful man and a superstitious man would naturally form different conceptions of the union with God. But the discovery that there are such things as purification, immortality, and God-possession, is valuable. However crudely such notions are interpreted, they

¹ Burnet objects (*Early Greek Philosophy*, p. 87) that the "Greek Mysteries did not embody ideas, they contained nothing in the least resembling dogma" (cf. Zeller, *Pre-Socratics*, i. p. 61); and quotes Aristotle (ap. Synes. Dion. 10) τοὺς τελομένους οὐ μαθεῖν τι δεῖ ἀλλὰ παθεῖν καὶ διατεθῆναι: if so, the Mysteries probably did "embody ideas," conveyed not by dogma, but by ritual.

are in themselves highly suggestive and capable of unlimited development. We shall have more to say on this subject when we come to deal with philosophy.

(III) *Social Ethics.*

All this time there has been little, if any, reference to that part of a man's conduct which affects his fellows. Of the four cardinal Greek virtues—*Wisdom, Courage, Temperance, and Justice*¹—the second and third to a large extent imply self-discipline in relation to others on behalf of the common good of all, while *Justice*, apart from its peculiar connotation in Plato's *Republic*, is invariably interpreted as a form of altruism, comprising, in its more extended use, a man's whole duty to his neighbour, and, in its restricted sense, a certain aspect of that duty.

It is at least questionable whether "duty" in the technical sense should be considered part of the ethical vocabulary of the Greeks. But where
 The idea of "Duty." conduct ceases to be merely "self-regarding" and becomes "extra-regarding," as affecting the happiness of others, certain obligations are commonly recognized which imply the first elements of a sense of duty. In Homeric times there were rudimentary obligations dictated by religion, custom, and natural instinct, and involving acts of succour and forbearance towards certain specified classes, such as priests, kings, suppliants, strangers, guests, relatives, and so forth. By the fifth century this simple code of morals was in many respects out of date. The organization of state and society had undergone a series of changes, and had assumed a more complex appearance. As a necessary consequence, the intercourse of men under these new conditions had produced a perplexing mass of

¹ There seems to have been an idea that, as *Temperance* was the special virtue of youth, so on reaching manhood one acquired the other three: *Isoc. Evag.* 193 B.

social and moral problems which were only partially solved by popular opinion.

The early Greek belonged, like other human beings, by birth and circumstances to several organic groups. He was a member of the Hellenic race, of a particular city, of a social class, of a family and of a circle of friends. Furthermore he found himself in close and frequent contact with other men, outside these respective groups, towards whom he acknowledged general obligations of good behaviour, or with whom his relation was one of rivalry or aversion. A popular code of ethics necessarily lays chief stress on the fulfilment of certain positive duties to country, class, family and friends; and in all probability pays small attention to the rights of outsiders. The philosopher may be expected to regard the world from a more impartial standpoint. Moral reform consists largely in widening the range of popular sympathies.¹

The sentiment of Hellenic unity was based on the hypothesis of a common origin and a common culture. But, beyond the institution of festal reunions and of a central oracular shrine, its results were mainly negative. It implied a contempt for the barbarian world, but it did not issue in a confederacy of Greek States.² These had their individual interests to sustain; and the clash of these interests suggested many problems of political morality which will be considered later. The claims of Hellas were replaced in

¹ For summaries of rudimentary duties, religious, civic, and domestic, set before children in the ordinary course of education, see Isoc. *ad Dem.* 4 D-5 C, Plut. *de lib. educ.* c. 10, cf. Gorgias (fr. *Funeral Oration*).

² This was the policy of Cimon and his party, taken up by orators at the Olympic Festivals. The Periclean Colony at Thurii (445 B.C.) had a distinctly Panhellenic aspect (Abbott, *Pericl.* p. 117). The Amphictyonic council has been mistaken for an attempt to realize a Federal Union of Hellas; on this see Freeman, *Historical Essays*, second series, pp. 222 sq. (Macmillan, 1873).

practical life by the claims of the city. The Greeks recognized that the performance of certain social and political functions, and the observance of certain rules of propriety and self-restraint, were as necessary to the well-being of the community as they added grace and dignity to the life of the individual. The most obvious duty of the citizen was to perform military service with skill and courage. The soldier who gave his life in battle was honoured; the coward was liable to contempt and loss of privilege. The citizen was also expected to subordinate his selfish appetites to the dictates of law, and to deal legitimately in his business transactions. Thus the two cardinal virtues of courage and justice were sanctioned and enforced by the idea of loyalty to the State. Moreover, in democratic centres at any rate, the rich were required to make generous contributions to the entertainment of their poorer brethren, and to undertake other expensive duties of a more serious nature. (And here we may note incidentally the existence of an economic problem, of no slight ethical import, involving questions of moral responsibility between rich and poor: we shall hear more of this shortly.¹) Devotion to the State was the passion of noble souls from the mythical Theseus to that "last of the Greeks," Philopoemen; and civic life provided a sphere

¹ Isocrates was much troubled by this problem in his day, and looked back characteristically to the good old age of Athens, when the poor did not envy the rich, and the rich thought it a disgrace not to assist the poor (Isoc. *Areopag.* 146 A, D, 150 C, D, 156 E; *Paneg.* 48 E sq.). How far true? We note that in Solon's time such matters wore an ugly aspect, the rich being oppressive and unscrupulous, the lower classes unemployed and down-trodden, and that reforms were projected (Plut. *Sol.* c. 31); so, too, in early Sparta (Plut. *Lyc.* passim). Other isolated points may be noticed—(1) With the law against idleness at Athens went a provision of outdoor relief for the impotent (Lys. *Or.* xxiv, with Taylor's prefatory note); (2) individual efforts of charity (Plut. *Cim.* c. 10, *Pelop.* c. 3), individual attempts to relieve debt (Ael. *V. H.* xiv, 24, date?); (3) Theoric Fund, see Abbott, *Pericles*, p. 137; (4) there is something like an appeal for the poor in Arist. *Eccles.* 413 sqq. *Lysist.* 1188 sqq. But the problem remains and grows.

of generous self-sacrifice. But the inherent disadvantages of the system must not be overlooked. The conception of courage and justice as civic virtues led naturally to a certain narrowness of view. There was always a tendency to confuse justice with obedience to legal ordinances; and the popular mind does not seem to have recognized *moral courage* side by side with bravery in war. It is not surprising that Sparta, whose whole scheme of morality was based on the exigencies of military training, should have set war-like bravery first among the virtues; but the same view is traceable elsewhere.¹ Again, loyalty to a single State and the Greek passion for autonomy narrowed the range of vested interests, and in time filled Greece with confusion, thereby giving rise to a host of moral and social evils.

Thus the Greek, in his public capacity, owed certain precise obligations to the city of which he was a member. Generally speaking, the family and the circle of friends and associates were the centres of his private life. The ties and duties involved need not detain us long. They are inherent and permanent conceptions of the human mind, and vary hardly at all from age to age. It was universally admitted in Greece that the natural affections of family and kinship should issue in deeds of mutual service and forbearance. There were frequent breaches of this rule; but such occurrences were admittedly scandalous and contrary to the recognized dictates of public opinion. The relation of friend to friend is more important. Friendship all the world over is associated with certain obligations. It evokes self-sacrifice, constancy, fair-dealing. The Greek idea of friendship had two features worthy of note. There were in it an element of romance and an element of caution, which were advocated respectively by two

¹ N.B.—Dem. (?) *Epitaph.* § 22, cf. Ath. 627 B-D.

separate schools of moralists. The generous youth chose his friends freely, often inconsiderately ; and a separation was regarded with the keenest remorse. Popular sages pointed the obvious moral. "The circumstances of human life make partings inevitable: bear this fact in mind. The weaknesses of human nature render friends faithless, or convert them into enemies ; therefore be cautious in bestowing your confidence." Then there was that peculiar form of passionate friendship which united pairs of friends, two youths or a man and a youth, leading in many cases to a complete self-abandonment and an emotional ecstasy, elevating and civilizing the character, and "linking emotion to action in a life of common danger and toil." Here, too, we meet with a protest. Such a relationship must have given rise to suspicion in certain quarters. Too often it was sensual, immoral, and ruinous to both parties. Fathers and relatives became anxious and critical ; and the cry was taken up by moralists and rhetoricians. These two tendencies of thought—the prudential and the romantic—were followed out in the development of philosophy.

In each of the relations hitherto considered, we have found a tie of natural sympathy or common interest binding the individual to his fellows.

Conflicting Interests : The forces acting in such cases make for unity and agreement, and the result is more or less satisfactory. There is more need for ethical reflection and for the intervention of philosophy in cases where passion and prejudice have erected a barrier between individuals or classes. It is natural to recognize the rights of a friend or an equal ; but it takes time and thought to appreciate the worth, and to admit the moral claims, of one whom we regard as a foe or an inferior. In this way, Greek thinkers were confronted with a variety of ethical problems. Sometimes there were downright oppression, cruelty, and injustice to be removed. Sometimes the evil was merely a

mild form of prejudice or a lack of appreciation. This will become clear if we take concrete instances. The orthodox Greek view of the inferiority of (1) Barbarians, Slaves, barbarian and slave,¹ and the diverse culture and conflicting interests of different Greek cities, led, in varying degrees, to acts of brutality and injustice. These facts are too notorious to require detailed illustration. The treatment of enemies, public and private, involved a similar attitude, and led to kindred problems in philosophy. "Benefit your friend and injure your foe," was the rough and ready popular maxim. This entailed as a corollary the denial of an enemy's rights to ordinary justice, and an almost unqualified assertion of the *lex talionis*.² The mutual relation of social classes offered problems differing widely in scope and importance. The dealings of (3) Trade, rich and poor have already received some attention, and their grave ethical significance has been

¹ The Spartan treatment of Helots was notorious, Ath. 657 D, Isoc. *Panath.* 270 C, 271 B; partly due to the fact that they were a danger to the State, Ath. 272 A, cf. Plato *Legg.* 776 D, Ath. 272 F, 265 C-267 B. The case at Athens was different; "slave" is used by the orators, etc., as a term of abuse: a slave's happiness seems to have depended on his master's good pleasure, although he had some legal protection (Becker, *Charicles*, p. 370 fin.); there are several indications that the actual treatment was not inhuman, and in some cases generous, Andoc. *Or.* ii. § 23, Lys. *Or.* xxx. § 36, Dem. *Or.* ix. § 5 sqq., *Or.* xlv. § 89, Isoc. *Paneg.* 66 D, *Panath.* 271 B, cf. Arist. *Vesp.* 441 sqq., *Pax* 1130 sqq. cf. Pausanias i. 29, 6; the old family nurse appears, Dem. *Or.* xlvii. § 68, etc. There was evil enough in the system itself to demand reform.

² ὁμοίως ἀσχερὸν εἶναι νόμιζε τῶν ἐχθρῶν νικᾶσθαι ταῖς κακοποιταῖς καὶ τῶν φίλων ἠττᾶσθαι ταῖς εὐεργεταῖς: Isoc. *ad Dem.* 7 C. cf. Orators (*passim*): see Thomson, *Euripides and the Attic Orators*, pp. 77 sq., where a mass of sixth- and fifth-century evidence is collected. So too Xen. *Cyrop.* viii, 7, 7. Exceptions:—(1) a slow and treacherous revenge was likely to be unpopular, Lys. fr. κατὰ Τίσιδος: cf. Dem. *adv. Lept.* § 153; (2) obvious cases where dignity forbade retaliation, Plut. *Pericl.* 5, cf. Ael. V. H. xiv. 26, Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1125 a. 3; (3) noble instances of self-restraint, Lyncurgus and Alcander, Plut. *Lyc.* c. 11; Aristides, Plut. *Arist.* c. 25 (noted as exceptional); Hermocrates' plea for mercy (Plut. *Nic.* 28).

noted. The attitude of gentlemen to tradesmen is not less interesting. The Greek gentleman, of good birth and education, prized above all things a life free from trivial cares and mercenary pursuits, which he held to be inconsistent with nobility of character, and to leave no leisure for self-development or service of the State. The contempt thus engendered for trade and merchandise was, for obvious reasons, most conspicuous at Sparta; even at Athens, where such pursuits were followed by a large and respectable part of the community, the antipathy was maintained by conservative sentiment, and adopted with a few modifications by the philosophers.¹ Finally there is

Women and
Marriage.

the all-important question of the Greek treatment of women and of marriage. For the sake of greater precision we may confine our attention to Athens, where the main interest centres in this case. It is well-nigh impossible to unearth a picture of real life, and of the views of respectable men, from the heap of sarcasm and abuse which has been taken too often as a statement of sober fact. Sneers at marriage and the alleged shortcomings of the sex are at the present day relegated to the music-hall or the inferior novel. The modern gentleman has been educated by a long tradition of chivalry and romance to higher views, or at any rate to polite speech on the subject. The Athenians of the fifth

¹ For opinion at Athens and Sparta, see Plut. *Lyc.* c. 24, *Sol.* c. 22, *Ages.* c. 26, and the Old Comedy (*passim*). At Sparta we have the blunt contempt of a dominant military class for any occupation but military training, war, the chase, and social intercourse. At Athens, trade and commerce, though looked down upon, are encouraged (see Plut. *Sol.* l. c.), and a distinction is made between agriculture and trade. For a complete statement of the gentleman's contempt for trade, see Xen. *Oec.* iv. 2, 3; for the favourable view of agriculture, as producing good, honest men and capable soldiers, see *ibid.* v. vi. (cf. Old Comedy, *passim*). Plutarch's contention that in early times trade and commerce were held in repute (*Sol.* c. 2) is not proved by the scanty evidence he produces. His quotation from Hesiod should of course refer to agricultural labour, and anyhow does not express the gentleman's point of view.

century had not the benefit of this experience, and consequently argued from imperfect data and spoke without reserve. That a man was superior to a woman, and that man's distinctive virtues were the only real virtues, were matters of common belief. This tendency of thought is shown in the first two great tragedians. The women whom they admire and bring into prominence, such as Clytemnestra and Antigone, are frankly masculine figures. The treatment of women under the democratic régime followed as a natural result from these premises. Their education was neglected. They were kept under supervision and their liberty was restricted, largely with the intention of guarding their morals, but with the unfortunate result of enervating their character. The actual place of women in the household, and the relation of husband and wife, were not necessarily so unsatisfactory as these facts would seem to imply. It would be possible to abstract from Greek poetry a great many cynical theories of marriage, which no doubt stand for much actual unhappiness and degradation. The working theory seems to have been that marriage was primarily a prudential arrangement, securing for the bridegroom a housekeeper and a partner in rearing children, and for the bride a good, honourable guardian. The young couple were married not for love but for convenience, and often with a view to forming a respectable family connexion.¹ This can only be suggested as a general rule; it would be unfair to dogmatize. Anything like romance between man and wife seems to have been exceptional; but homely affection often followed, if love did not often precede, the match.²

¹ Lys. *Or.* i. § 6 sq., *Or.* xix. §§ 15 sq.; Dem. *Or.* xl. §§ 14 sq., *Or.* lix. § 3, *Or.* xx. § 64; Isoc. *Aegin.* 385 E, sq. Xen. *Oec.* vii. 10-29 (a complete and not unpleasant exposition of a prudential match).

² Romance; Callias and Elpinice, Cimon and Isodice (Plut. *Cim.* c. 4) seem decided exceptions to the ordinary rule: the expression used of Cimon, ὑπερφιλῶν τὴν γυναῖκα, is significant (cf. Xen. *Cyrop.* iii. 1, 36). No

All these problems exercised the great minds of the philosophic era. But there are problems of yet more general importance, which are not produced, though they may be affected, by special conditions of civilization and society, and which concern the relations, not of classes, but of individuals. Take, for instance, the questions of truth and honesty. There was a continual conflict between the powers of guile and honour going on in Greece from the earliest times. Hesiod complained of the princes who dealt unrighteous judgment. To restrain the greed of powerful men was, we are told, the aim of Solon and Lycurgus. Solon figures in literature as the strict disciplinarian, who looks askance at deceit, even at literary fiction, and who keeps his hands free from ill-gotten gains, which always (he thinks) involve punishment. The next scene of the conflict is laid in the earlier part of the fifth century. Plutarch draws a vigorous contrast between Aristides and Themistocles. Aristides and Cimon are impervious to bribes. The former goes out of office poorer than he came in. Themistocles and the majority of public men, on the other hand, are open to every sort of corruption. Aristides is scrupulously fair and impartial in his judgments. Themistocles, following a custom prevalent in Greece, takes it for granted that he may favour his friends. Thus there was a healthy tradition, making for truth in word and deed both in public and private life, and put forward in wise maxims, of which the simple formula—"Speak the

doubt these representatives of the old aristocracy retained some measure of the ideas handed down from the monarchical age. Elpinice seems to have been an entirely independent and dignified lady (Plut. *Pericl.*, c. 28). Affection in conventional matches; see Xen. *Oec.* vii. 42, which brings out the possibilities of the popular view, and is not, I think, an original idea of Xenophon: cf. Plut. *Sol.* c. 20—passages throwing light on conjugal happiness and fidelity; Arist. *Vesp.* 606, sqq.; Isaeus *Or.* ii §§ 8 sqq., *Or.* viii. § 30; Lys. *Or.* xiii. §§ 42, sq.; Xen. *Symp.* viii. 3; *Cyrop.* viii. 1, 28; *Hiero.* iii. 4, iv. 1.

truth and pay your debts"—is a type. At the same time, there was in practice a grave divergence from this teaching, so that the Greek markets stank in the nostrils of less sophisticated races as licensed haunts of perjury and deceit.¹ The teaching itself was unstable. An ominous controversy as to the relations of justice and expediency had been raised by Hesiod and Solon, without being thrashed out. To this was added a similar controversy concerning truthfulness. "Dost thou not think it base to tell a lie?" asks Neoptolemus in the *Philoctetes*. "No!" replies Odysseus: "not if it brings safety."² A sad falling-off this from the ideal of Achilles, and the moralizing of Solon! But the question, though now formulated with painful directness, was no new one. Such problems were not merely of theoretical importance, but indicated a time-honoured struggle going on perpetually in the mind of the people, perplexing law-givers and moralists, and gaining in intensity as social life grew more complex and the intellect more subtle. Honesty was everywhere applauded as a sentiment; and as a fair-weather policy, with its contingent reward of a good reputation, it was generally pursued in practice.³ But in the stress of conflicting interests it was not so obvious what course the merchant or the politician would choose. Perhaps philosophy here also may have somewhat to advise.

¹ Herodot. i. 153; Diog. Laert. i. 103.

² Soph. *Phil.* 108 sq.; cf. Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1151 b. 19. The question of the justifiability of deceit in certain cases is discussed by Plato (in the *Republic*), and by Xenophon (*Anarch* in war is justifiable, expounded at length in *Cyrop.* i. 6, 31-33). Evidently a pressing problem in these times.

³ Cf. the account of Borso, first Duke of Ferrari (1450 A.D.), in Villari's *Life and Times of Savonarola*, p. 7 (English trans.): "He loved justice, and caused it to be strictly observed whenever it did not clash with his interests; but better than justice itself he loved his title of 'the Just,' which was universally conferred upon him."

CHAPTER III.

THE AGE OF TRANSITION.

WE have not yet considered Euripides, for he belongs to a new era. He was the first great popular poet who ruthlessly and systematically criticized popular ideas. But, novel and independent though his attitude may seem, he was not so much the creator as the child of his age. In his youth forces were already at work which must have troubled orthodox moralists of the Old School.

Scientific inquiry was no longer the prerogative of a handful of recluse philosophers, who on the confines of the Greek world elaborated physical theories of the universe, which the populace might easily ignore. Methods of careful and scrutinizing research came to be applied in every department of human activity. Treatises were published on the arts of medicine, music, and so forth. "What was not reformed was codified; and both processes went almost hand in hand."¹ It was not long before the same treatment was dealt out to questions which were nearest and dearest to the hearts of Greek men and women—questions of conduct and the like, which had hitherto been taken as settled by custom and the verdict of antiquity. Speculation was brought down from heaven to earth. "Cosmology, in the widest sense of that term, was superseded more and more by Anthropology in an equally comprehensive sense."² Many things contributed to this result. There are epochs in every age of intellectual activity, when philosophers grow weary of reasonings

¹ Gomperz, vol. i., pp. 386 sqq.

² *Ibid.*, p. 495.

far removed from daily experience, and carry their thoughts to the nearer issues of practical life. The impulse to Physical or Metaphysical investigation flags of its own accord, or is crushed by insuperable difficulties. Early Greek thinkers, in time, grew tired of the incessant conflicts of Monists and Pluralists. Moreover the logical puzzles, raised by Zeno, seemed to put an end to the possibility of knowledge on such subjects; and an increasing sense of human dignity brought man into the foreground, as an object worthy of human study and also of human criticism. The same displacement of the centre of interest is noticeable in the Athenian Drama of the period. The abstruse theology of Aeschylus was falling out of vogue. Sophocles, his successor, had ushered in a humanistic movement. The gods are not absent from his plays, and there is still the background of religious dogma; but the chief interest centres in the conflict of human wills and the play of human emotions. The keen activities of business and civic life, intensified by the political emancipation of the great middle and lower classes, were causing men's attention to be absorbed more and more in human and practical concerns. Thus the popular tastes united with the general trend of speculative study to bring into prominence a class of educationalists whose aims were exclusively practical. With them started the so-called Sophistic movement.

Even in so far as they dealt with ethical questions, the
The Sophists. Sophists cannot be considered professors of scientific ethics: a science of ethics being as yet unknown. They were not in any complete sense philosophers or savants, but popular teachers with various aims. The Sophists of rhetoric made it their business to equip their pupils for public speaking, which was beginning to play an important rôle in every department of civic life. Learning to speak implies a handling of many ideas. Thus indirectly a professor of rhetoric, like Gorgias, may

have instilled a number of moral notions into the minds of his pupils. The Sophists of culture dispensed information on various branches of literature and science. Nettleship compares them to those popular lecturers of the present day, who, without being specialists or savants themselves, devote their energies to propagating the researches of higher students.¹ This comparison should be received cautiously. It must not be supposed that the Sophists were mere underlings of previous and contemporary philosophers. They were not as a whole even interested in the Physical and Ontological theories with which philosophy had been hitherto mainly concerned; and in the province of ethics they raised a number of problems, of which only suggestions can be traced in the philosophy extant in their day. These problems are important for an understanding of the period with which we are now dealing, and also because of their influence, direct and indirect, on the ethical science of the near future.

(1) *Some New Ideas of the Sophistic Era.*

Much controversy has raged in modern times over the "Homo-Mensura" doctrine of Protagoras. *Homo-Mensura.* If it implied, as I believe, that the individual man is his own measure of right and wrong, its importance as a theoretical principle was enormous.² It helped to inaugurate a new age of liberty. The right of private judgment was admitted in the sphere of morality, at the same time as the greatest city of Hellas was reaching her highest level of political freedom. The practice also ascribed to Protagoras, of arguing on both sides of a question, may be taken as an indication of the trend of affairs.³ It implied that moral judgments were not so

¹ *Lectures on Plato's Republic*, pp. 23-25.

² I have argued this question at some length in Appendix A.

³ ἀντιλογία: *Ar. Rhet.* ii. 26; *Diog. L.* ix. 51; cf. *Arist. Nub.* 1038 sqq., 1172 sq., *Vesp.* 1470 sq.

simple as had been hitherto supposed; that traditional rules were to be tested by a balancing of reasons for and against any line of action; and that the ultimate decision of ethical questions rested, not with tradition, but in the consciousness of the individual whom they concerned. That there was danger as well as strength in this new emancipation, is obvious. Protagoras never meant to say that every man should be allowed to set up his own opinion as universally valid. He would have replied to a consummate villain like Aristotle's "libertine," who heartily believed in his villainy, by explaining that, so long as he remained in such a frame of mind, his opinion was true to himself, though not necessarily true to other people. This, so far as it goes, is an important and defensible position. A man's beliefs must always be proportionate to his capacity for believing. But is this all that can be said on the question? Moral truth can only be grasped by the individual relatively to his individual capacities. But is it dependent for its existence on his capacities? If we may judge from the procedure of the *Theaetetus*, it would seem that Protagoras had, to say the least, failed to make this plain. Plato's whole life was devoted to a combat against such a position of ethical uncertainty. He postulated certain ultimate and universally valid moral laws, which were in no sense modified or affected by the limitations of the individual seeking to apprehend them, but remained eternal patterns or standards of right and wrong, and gradually revealed themselves to the human mind as it acquired the power of correct reasoning.

In other respects, too, there was a breach with conventional theories of morality. For some time "Nature" and "Custom." philosophy had been occupied in searching out the ultimate reality underlying natural phenomena. When enlightened methods were brought to bear on human affairs, a similar process was followed. An

effort was made to unearth the important truths necessary to the guidance of human life, which had hitherto been obscured by prejudice and custom. Thus arose the distinction between the natural and conventional order of things, between the law of nature (*φύσις*) and the law of custom (*νόμος*). This distinction was strengthened by the progress of historical knowledge. It had been observed by Herodotus that a great diversity of customs existed in different countries.¹ The prudent historian had contented himself with noting that all customs deserved reverent obedience. Such a solution was not likely to satisfy the keen intelligence of the Sophistic Era. If (argued the Sophists) different peoples hold to different, and often contradictory, ordinances, these cannot all be correct and unalterable. If their notions of justice, for instance, display a wide diversity, then either justice is a human convention, or at any rate natural justice is not coincident with all human notions on the subject. This reasoning suggested the theory of a social contract set forth at the opening of the second book of Plato's *Republic*, to the effect that the notion of justice owed its origin to an agreement among the members of a political organization to refrain from injuring each other; in other words, justice was a conventional, not a natural, ordinance. This theory, that social morality is based on convention, was not necessarily in the first instance tainted with Antinomianism. It was rather put forward as a means of combating a popular prejudice, whereby the laws of a State were regarded as inviolable decrees of a divinely-inspired lawgiver. The danger came when hot-blooded novices like "Thrasymachus" and Callicles (who, by the way, was no Sophist) pleaded it as an excuse for their doctrine that "might is right," as explained in the *Gorgias* and the *Republic*.

¹ Herod. iii. 38. Cf. Plut. *Them.* c. 27: νόμοι διαφέρουσιν ἀνθρώπων ἄλλα δ' ἄλλοις κατὰ κ.τ.λ.

Thus a distinction must be made between two sections of the Sophists, who held morality to be based on convention. There were those who considered convention a good thing, if freed from irrational prejudice; and there was "Thrasymachus," who maintained that the natural life was not bound by moral considerations, and that no sensible man would bow to moral dictates if he could help doing so. But there was yet another kind of Sophist, who, like "Thrasymachus," opposed nature to convention, but, unlike him, held that the life according to nature (*κατὰ φύσιν*) was inconsistent with riot and self-indulgence. In Plato's *Protagoras*,¹ Hippias is made to complain that "Law is the tyrant of mankind, and often compels us to do many things that are contrary to nature." With this he couples a plea for greater friendliness and unity among men of diverse countries and nationalities. Mr. Benn thinks that his doctrine of "self-sufficiency" was based on the idea of a return to nature, and associates him with Prodicus as a founder of what he calls the "physiocratic method" in ethics. Mr. Benn's statement of the case is full of interest; and he notes the intimate connexion of physics and morality in the early philosophers, who (he maintains) looked upon the universe as the embodiment of moral laws.² Now the thesis put forward comes to this: The early Physicists were continually aware of a moral law pervading nature, and controlling its phenomena; and some of the Sophists, notably Hippias and Prodicus, reasserted this notion, and claimed that human lives should

¹ 337 c.

² Benn, *Philosophy of Greece*, esp. pp. 89, 14c. The idea of a moral law pervading nature has some foundation in the popular theology, which attributed natural phenomena to the agency of divine beings, whose will was also the sanction of moral conduct: further, Benn calls attention to a couplet of Solon (Bergk. fr. 12)—

ἐξ ἀνέμων δὲ θάλασσα ταρασσεται· ἦν δὲ τις αὐτὴν
μὴ κινῆ, πάντων ἐστὶ δικαιοσύνη.

Cf. Arist. *Nub.* 1290 sqq. Xen. *Cyr.* viii. 3, 38.

be guided by the moral principles at work in the universe. But there is no evidence that Prodicus insisted on "life according to nature"; nor is there any indication as to the precise meaning of Hippias, when he preached this doctrine. Did he imply that there are certain principles of morality which are in force throughout the natural world, or simply that a certain kind of life is in accordance with man's normal state—that is to say, with the fulfilment of the career which nature has marked out for him? This must remain uncertain. But, whatever the Sophists meant by "life according to nature," the fact that they brought the phrase into prominence is important. It is no exaggeration to say that all subsequent philosophy is largely concerned with its interpretation. Plato and the Stoics became intoxicated with the idea that moral laws ruled the world, and that "natural" life was life in obedience to these laws; and by thus intimately associating human morality with Cosmic principles they seem to have been following out a tendency of thought inherent from the first in the popular mind. Aristotle, as we shall see, denied the connexion of morality with physics or metaphysics herein implied. "Life according to nature" meant for him life according to man's normal nature—a cultivation of his special capabilities in obedience to the deliverances of science, not about the constitution of the universe, but about the functions of the human soul.¹

It was not likely that critics, who so freely scrutinized the legal basis of society, would fear to pry into those religious hopes and scruples which had hitherto acted as incentives to good conduct. A

¹ It may be legitimate to call the champions of νόμος Empiricists, and the champions of φύσις Intuitionists. The controversy has been constantly recurring, in one form or another, throughout the history of philosophy. Cf. Bentham's opposition to the French philosophers of his youth with their assumption of self-evident laws of Nature (Dicey, *Law and Opinion in England*, pp. 143 sq.). Possibly some parallel might be worked out between ἀνθρωπος μέτρον and *Laissez-Faire*.

fragment of tragedy by Critias has been preserved, in which the speaker passes on naturally from a statement of the conventional origin of law to enunciate his theory that religion sprang from a similar source, and that belief in superhuman beings was introduced by some sagacious politician in order to promote order and discipline.¹ The doctrines of Providence and Divine Recompense had already passed from the safe-keeping of Aeschylus. To many minds the mystery which had enveloped these doctrines hitherto seemed a mere cloak of falsehood and unreality. Enlightenment is never entirely exempt from pessimism. As knowledge of the world increases, the problems of pain and suffering present new difficulties. Adverse experience at this time bore fruit in frequent instances of despair and unbelief. Diagoras of Melos—a man of great piety—is said to have turned atheist because Heaven refused to requite certain injuries he had sustained. The inhabitants of Ceos became a byword for gloominess. There were more suicides in that island than in any other part of Greece.²

The religious uncertainty thus awakened was supported by a strong sense of the difficulty of obtaining reliable evidence on the most ordinary occurrences of daily life. Even the direct experiences of sensation were constantly

¹ Critias fr. *Sisyphus*. (Nauck).

There is a good deal of truth in Mullach's statement (*Frag. phil. Graec.* vol. ii., p. lxi): "Omnino tenendum circa belli Peloponnesiaci tempora neminem fere fuisse apud Graecos hominem philosophiâ et literis perpolitum quin, repudiatis poetarum et pictorum portentis, totam de diis immortalibus opinionem a viris sapientibus olim reipublicae causâ fictam putaret."

² Gomperz, vol. ii., p. 10. Cf. Soph. fr. 103 (injustice of the Divine government): Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, vol. iv, p. III.

It is interesting to note the vehemence with which Plato insists in the Republic that human misfortunes are not to be laid to God's account. The same thought appears in Democritus (Stob. *Ecl.* p. 408): οἱ θεοὶ τοῖσι ἀνθρώποις δίδουσι τὰ γαθὰ πάντα καὶ παλαι καὶ νῦν πλὴν ὅπσοσα κακὰ καὶ βλαβερὰ καὶ ἀνωφέλεα, τὰδε δ' οὐ παλαι ὅστε νῦν θεοὶ ἀνθρώποισι δωρέονται, ἀλλ' αὐτοὶ τοῖσδεσι ἐμπελάζουσι διὰ νόου τυφλότητα καὶ ἀγνωμοσύνην.

challenged by contemporary scientists. It is therefore a matter of small wonder that men hesitated to jump to conclusions concerning the more abstruse problems presented by theology. Metaphysical theories of Being were summarily dismissed by Gorgias. Protagoras declared the existence of gods to be too great a problem for short-lived mortals to discuss with any certainty; and for this reason he was put on the black list along with Diagoras, Hippo, Anaxagoras, and possibly Prodicus. It is impossible to determine the precise beliefs of various Sophists on such matters. Charges of scepticism and irreligion are hurled against some of them by writers who have no claim to be considered impartial or even intelligent authorities. Origen credits Antiphon the Sophist with a denial of Providence.¹ Philodemus calls Prodicus "either an atheist or at least a sceptic."² But the important point is this: the Sophists cannot have openly preached scepticism even as regards the established religion. A direct avowal of scepticism would not have been tolerated by a popular audience.³ The fate of suspected heretics

¹ καὶ τὴν πρόνοιαν ἀναιρῶν ἐν τοῖς ἐπιγραφομένοις περὶ Ἀληθείας παραπλησίως τῇ Κέλσου ἐπιγραφῇ. Origen *adv. Celsum* i. 4; see Sauppe, *Comment. de Antiphon. Soph.*, p. 9. Sauppe thinks that Origen has read into the physical conceptions of Antiphon a meaning not originally intended. He adduces evidence from fragments of Antiphon (*fr.* 108, 80, Blass) to prove that he believed in a Deity. See Gomperz, *Greek Thinkers*, vol. i., p. 585 (bottom) ff.

² Philodemus *περὶ εὐσεβείας*, pp. 75 sqq. (restored by Diels, *Hermes*, xiii. 1, *Atacta*). Περσαῖος δὲ δηλὸς ἐστὶν . . . ἀφανίζων τὸ δαιμόνιον ἢ μὴθὲν ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ γινίσκων, ὅταν ἐν τῷ περὶ θεῶν μὴ ἀπίθανα λέγῃ τὰ περὶ τοῦ "τὰ τρέφοντα καὶ ὠφελοῦντα θεοῦ νομομίσθαι καὶ τετειμῆσθαι πρῶτον" ὑπὸ Προδικίου γεγραμμένα, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα τοὺς εὐρόντας ἢ τροφὰς ἢ σκέπας ἢ τὰς ὄλλας τέχνας ὡς Δῆμητρα καὶ Διόνυσον καὶ τοὺς . . . Herein is implied *à fortiori* a similar charge against Prodicus; but as Persaeus, with the rest of the Stoics, conceived the gods of tradition to be symbolic representations of different aspects of the Divine nature, so Prodicus may have believed in a Deity dimly discernible behind the Greek Pantheon.

³ Plut. *Nic.* c. 23 (on Anaxagoras' theory of eclipses), Xen. *Symp.* vi. 6, sqq.; Euripides would have found it unsafe to translate his religious utterances into a prose treatise. N.B. Diog. L. ii. 117 (*περὶ τούτων μὴ ἐρώτα, ἀνόητε, ἐν ὀδῷ, ἀλλὰ μόνον, Stilpo*).

shows how quick the orthodox party was to scent apostasy. In the select circle of Pericles there was room for unlimited free-thought. The work of Thucydides, who discards without apology all belief in the miraculous, was obviously written for a set of advanced rationalists ; and it is significant that the speeches which he puts into the mouth of Pericles are free from any allusion to the popular faith. But the Sophists, as popular teachers, were in a different position. They had to consult the tastes of a heterogeneous, and often prejudiced, audience. Some of them, notably Gorgias, seem to have maintained an attitude of easy conformity. His *Funeral Oration* contains a pious allusion to Nemesis. Others, who were more interested in religious thought and more keenly alive to its difficulties, in all probability took the course assigned to Protagoras in Plato's dialogue.¹ Protagoras is there made, for the purposes of practical teaching, to deal freely in the conceptions of the popular creed, although in the passage referred to he clearly designates his discourse a myth or apologue, which would no doubt tend to check any literal belief on the part of his hearers. This attitude of compromise, which fails to conceal a wide and deep divergence from accepted standards of faith, indicates a tendency in the intellectual development of this age to discard theological problems, as insoluble and of little practical importance.

(II) *The Sophistic Teaching.*

What precise effect these new ideas had on the popular mind, is one of the most difficult problems which beset the student of Greek life and thought. In so far as they had any direct effect at all, it must have been due almost entirely to the teaching of the Sophists and of philosophic

¹ Plato, *Prot.* 320 c, sqq.

tragedians like Euripides, and to comedy, which in some sense advertised what it caricatured. Here, however, we are met by Grote's caution, that it is senseless to speak of a Sophistic propaganda, as if the various members of the profession taught from a uniform syllabus. Such a notion has been sufficiently exploded by our recent investigation of the attitude of different Sophists to certain questions of the day. The old-fashioned view, that these popular teachers consciously set about demoralising the Greek race, has long since been discredited. It is too comfortable and summary a solution to be satisfactory; and it flies in the face of much conclusive evidence. Since George Grote published his admirable defence of the Sophists, the whole problem has assumed an entirely new aspect. The moral respectability of the class, taken as a whole, may be assumed as proven beyond reasonable doubt. It is a mere truism that Protagoras, Gorgias, Prodicus, and in the next generation Isocrates,¹ gathered round them in various parts of Greece circles of enthusiastic young men who admired their characters no less than their talents.² The moral integrity of some few Sophists still challenges examination; but, in respect to the acknowledged leaders of this great movement, the questions which remain undecided do not concern their character and intention so much as their actual influence and the place they occupied in the moral development of the Greeks. To deduce good

¹ Isocrates does not concern me in this chapter, the matter of which does not extend beyond the close of the fifth century.

² Πρωταγόρας μὲν ἄρα ὁ Ἀβδηρίτης καὶ Πρόδικος ὁ Κεῖος καὶ ἄλλοι πάμπολλοι δύνανται τοῖς ἐφ' ἑαυτῶν παριστάναι ἰδίᾳ ξυγγιγνόμενοι, ὡς οὔτε οἰκίαν οὔτε πόλιν τὴν αὐτῶν διοικεῖν οἶοι τ' ἔσονται, ἐὰν μὴ σφεῖς αὐτῶν ἐπιστατήσωσιν τῆς παιδείας, καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ σοφίᾳ οὕτω σφόδρα φιλοῦνται κ. τ. λ. Plato, *Rep.* 600 C, D: this means a good deal, if we allow for Plato's bias. For Gorgias, see Gomperz, vol. i, p. 477. See, for a general statement, Isoc. *Antid.* p. 110, who says that the fathers of the pupils are glad to see them associating with the "political" Sophists, which is inconsistent with the prevalent charges of immoral influence.

results from excellent intentions is not a sound method of logical procedure.

Let us survey the situation in the first instance from the standpoint of their contemporaries.

There was something startling, at first sight something outrageous, in this outburst of intellectual energy, perhaps (with the exception of the Renaissance) the most remarkable that the world has ever seen. The movement was a popular one, in full harmony with the needs of the time; and yet, by its boldness and unconventionality, it stirred resentment in all ranks of society. The aspect of itinerant teachers who sojourned in numerous cities without apparently belonging to any, and who advertised their wares and accepted pay for imparting knowledge, struck at the root of Greek prejudices and transgressed all rules of propriety. Their subtleties awakened suspicion in the breasts of ordinary matter-of-fact folk. Their ill-concealed criticism of existing beliefs and practices savoured of atheism and anarchy. The *Clouds* of Aristophanes, with all due allowance for its burlesque tone, enables us to appreciate the sentiments of conservative Hellas on the appearance in her life of new factors, which seemed at once vulgar, impious, and revolutionary. With a few notable exceptions, the leaders of the two great political parties which stood opposed to each other in almost every Greek city of this period—the party of democratic progress and the party of conservatism or reaction—were alike predisposed to take alarm. Criticism is in itself repugnant to those who set their hopes upon tradition; and the establishment of an aristocracy of intellect is equally inconsistent with the claims of an old, privileged order, and with the levelling tendencies of a democracy. Indeed, it was from the representatives of democratic mediocrity that these new teachers encountered the most serious opposition. If the aristocrat despised them as vulgar and impertinent, the popular

Popular Opposition
to the Sophists.

agitator denounced their influence as immoral and subversive of all public security.¹

Against this wholesale repudiation of the apostles of enlightenment, we might have expected that Plato would expostulate with all the resources of his matchless satire. He does indeed draw a deep line of demarcation between Anaxagoras and Protagoras, between philosopher and Sophist; a distinction which the average Athenian may well have been at a loss to comprehend. But towards the Sophists as a class he nourished feelings of suspicion and contempt. The leader of a great educational movement, he reserved the quintessence of his wrath for those whom he considered the pseudo-educationalists of his age. We may pass lightly over the offences of avowed opponents; but we cannot away with the disgrace which parasites and would-be supporters cast on the cause dearest to our heart. It is, however, absurd to suppose that Plato stepped from his intellectual throne to join in a popular outcry. His discernment was deeper and truer than that of his compatriots; and if he agreed with them in condemning a certain class of men, he probably did not altogether share their reasons for doing so. There are several objections to all that is implied in the dictum of Gomperz, that "Plato's most emphatic language was reserved for those features [of the Sophists] at which the aristocratic sense of his countrymen, and especially of his peers, took particular umbrage." As Grote has pointed out again and again, his platform was that of a radical reformer, not of a conservative or reactionary. It is true that he ridiculed

Plato and the
Sophists.

¹ See esp. Isoc. *Antid.* p. 88. The political bias against the new learning is shown in the impeachment of Socrates by the leaders of the restored democracy: the opinions of Anytus, one of his accusers, concerning the Sophists generally are known from Plato (*Meno* 91 C. sqq.). Xenophon (*Ap. Soc.* 29-31) represents him as a typical hard-headed man of business, who stops his son receiving instruction from Socrates.

the Sophists for taking pay, and for their superficiality; but the former charge was by no means a central point of interest to him; and the latter was based upon a far deeper scrutiny than the average aristocrat can have devoted to the question, and became instinct with new meaning under his treatment. His whole outlook on the history of this movement was based upon an intelligent, if prejudiced, investigation of its different phases, as must be obvious to any student of the successive definitions in his Dialogue, *The Sophist*.¹ He never classed the Sophists together in indiscriminate confusion. The Sophists of culture are carefully distinguished throughout his writings from those of rhetoric; and these latter from the notorious Eristics of the *Euthydemus*. But perhaps the strongest reply to Gomperz is given by Plato himself, when he brings Socrates into conversation with the representatives of popular opinion. In the *Meno* (92D) he makes Anytus confess that his scathing denunciations are based on no acquaintance with the objects of his hatred. Again, in the *Republic* (492A), he makes Socrates say to Adeimantus, "Perhaps you think with the multitude that youths are corrupted by the Sophists, and do not perceive that society itself is the greatest Sophist. . . . Don't you see that the Sophists do nothing else but follow public opinion? They teach nothing else but the popular dogmas." The passage reads like an extract from Grote's defence of these teachers, whom he considers "neither above nor below the standard of their age." Plato was not prepared to follow in the wake of popular, or even aristocratic, sentiment. He had his own reasons for hating the Sophists and dreading their influence; and a brief survey of his criticism falls within the scope of this treatise.

In a passage of great dignity at the close of the *Gorgias*

¹ See Prof. Jackson's paper on the *Sophist*, *Journal of Philology*, vol. xiv.

(515A) Socrates asks Callicles: "Tell me, then, . . . was there ever a man who was once vicious, or unjust, or intemperate, or foolish, who became, by the help of Callicles, good and noble?" By the same standard Plato was constantly judging the Sophists, and he found them all, in greater or less degree, wanting. Some of them—the Eristics, for example—were directly and consciously pernicious.¹ By far the greater number were respectable men; their only fault was that they followed a generation which it was their duty to lead. They were stewards of high mysteries, and betrayed their trust. They consulted the pleasure, not the good, of their flock. They might incidentally benefit a few young men of virtuous disposition; but they did not go to the heart of the matter. They had no radical theory—no philosophy of first principles—and consequently, as he argued, no vital system of education. Plato's meaning can only be made plain by his own exposition. I therefore propose to examine the teaching of the *Protagoras* and the *Gorgias*, and thereby to elicit his views on the two most respectable schools of Sophistry, which may be roughly designated the schools of culture and rhetoric.

In the former Dialogue Socrates is pulled out of bed by Hippocrates, who with all the robust and intelligent youth of Athens is rushing off to hear the famous Protagoras, just arrived in the city with two others of his profession—Hippias of Elis, and Prodicus of Ceos. For all his eagerness, Hippocrates is somewhat ashamed of paying court to a Sophist. Socrates, without any round denunciations, impresses upon him the gravity of the step he is about to take. The Sophists are "dealers wholesale and retail in the food of the soul"; and he feels it important that his young companion should test the soundness of this food before absorbing it. He

¹ Cf. Plat. *Soph.* 264 C, sqq.

therefore proceeds to the house of Callias, where the celebrities are staying, with the purpose of hearing their professions and sampling their practice. Protagoras is thus given an opportunity of describing at length the method and aim of his teaching. Socrates puts him a direct question: "What will Hippocrates learn, if he associates with you?" "He will learn," answers Protagoras, "prudence in private affairs as well as public; he will learn to order his house in the best manner; and he will be able to speak and act for the best in the affairs of State."¹ The Sophist professes to make his pupils "good citizens,"² not merely capable citizens, but "noble and good" men.³ His theory of education is quite orthodox. The child is to be trained in honourable and holy conduct from its earliest years, by the admonitions of "mother, nurse, father, and tutor."⁴ The growing boy is to go to school, where the efforts of all his teachers will be devoted to his moral welfare. When he reaches manhood, the city's laws are to be his pattern and example. In all this there is no hint of those impious and revolutionary principles which popular opinion laid so freely to the charge of the Sophists. There is no trace of that scepticism which figured so large in the popular conception of Protagoras, and which led to the public condemnation of his work about the gods. So far from being immoral, he shudders at the suggestion of Socrates, that the good is identical with the pleasant.⁵ Plato is not angry with the man. There is something venerable in the portrait he draws; and yet, all the time, he seems to be laughing in his sleeve. When the Sophist comes to explain his system, he declares that skill in poetry is the principal part of education; "and this," he continues, "I conceive to be the power of knowing what compositions of the poets are correct, and what are not, and how they

¹ Plato, *Prot.* 318 E.² *Ibid.* 319 A.³ *Ibid.* 328 A.⁴ *Ibid.* 325 C, sqq.⁵ *Ibid.* 351 C.

are to be distinguished." ¹ By way of illustration he starts a difficulty in a passage of Simonides.

So far as the Sophists present are concerned, the episode which follows is a grim farce. They display eagerness and confidence, but they contribute nothing of any permanent value to the discussion. Protagoras himself does not rise above superficialities. After his exalted professions, this sample of his practice comes as an obvious bathos. His vaunted scheme of education results in a captious indictment of Simonides, without any real attempt to fathom or discuss the true ethical import of his poetry. Had the dialogue stopped abruptly at this point, it might be quoted by Gomperz in support of his theory. The whole scene is so far Aristophanic in purport and execution, except that the charge of immorality is not even noticed. But as Plato proceeds, he reveals something more than a traditional prejudice against the method of these Sophists. He goes deeper and puts his finger on the reason of their failure, as he considered it. It is not eloquent harangues or minute verbal criticisms that will save men and nourish in them the seeds of virtue, but a turning of the soul in upon itself—a thorough self-reformation based on self-knowledge.² It may be objected that this is too much to ask of the Sophists, and that these Sophists of culture, with whom we are now dealing, produced many excellent moral discourses, such as the *Fable of Heracles* and the *Trojan Dialogue*. The first part of this objection is not strictly relevant; for Plato is not passing a moral judgment on the Sophists, as a number of critics appear to have assumed; he is merely trying to determine their place in the history of education. The latter point is true, and Plato virtually admits it; for the discourse on Simonides incidentally provides much material for moral instruction.

¹ Plato, *Prot.* 339 A.

² *Ibid.* 343 A.

But it is just here that he aimed his attack. The Sophists of culture, he argued, so far from being the freethinking revolutionists whom various sections of society dreaded, were tame and insufficient; men of industry and good intentions, but with no particular gospel for an age which was already beginning to cry out for a new conception of the meaning of life. They followed the generation which they seemed to lead.

The *Protagoras* is written in a somewhat light and bantering vein. The Sophists concerned are treated as useless rather than obnoxious. In the *Gorgias*, Plato is in deadly earnest throughout. More serious issues are raised, and a more dangerous class of teacher is attacked. The rhetorical Sophists are pilloried as parasites of the democracy, flattering the worst vices of the mob and its rulers. Yet even here we are not listening to the stock charges of an aristocrat. Plato's analysis of the evil, and of the various stages of its growth, is far too subtle and discriminating to warrant any such supposition. The Dialogue is from one point of view a tragic tale of deterioration, in which Gorgias, Polus, and Callicles play successive parts. The fact that these three are brought forward successively, and not simultaneously, is significant. Each of them represents a stage in the influence of the rhetorical art. The progress is from the respected teacher to the unprincipled man of the world; and the transitions are natural, and carefully marked. Gorgias himself is not portrayed as the acute impostor, "who was not ignorant that probability is superior to truth, and who by force of argument could make the little appear great and the great little,"¹ but as an honourable professor, who protests that he is not to blame if his pupils make an unfair use of his teaching. A man, he says, "ought to use rhetoric fairly, as he would use his athletic powers."² Polus

¹ Plato, *Phaedr.* 267 C.

² Plato, *Gorg.* 457 B.

is another teacher of rhetoric, evidently an admirer of Gorgias. He is, however, a younger man, more up-to-date, and bolder. He seems to feel a slight contempt for the scruples of the older Sophist. Whereas Gorgias has stipulated that his art is only intended for honourable purposes, Polus comes forward with the thesis that rhetoric implies power, and is therefore a good thing in itself apart from all questions of justice and injustice. With Polus the ideal of rhetoric has clearly fallen. He has received from Gorgias a mighty impulse to cultivate the gift of speech. He has become intoxicated with a sense of the power which eloquence imparts; he is blind to the difference between liberty and licence. In his heart he admires Archelaus, the Napoleon of his day; and nourishes a cynical idea that everyone else is of the same opinion. "I daresay," is his ironical rejoinder to Socrates—"I daresay there are many Athenians, and you at their head, who would rather be any other Macedonian than Archelaus."¹ It is the old story of deterioration. Gorgias presents his pupils with a glittering weapon, in the pious hope that it will be fairly employed. Polus passes on the same weapon, but without any scrupulous cautions as to its use. It falls into the hands of Calicles, who is not a Sophist but a man of the world. With him the doctrine that "might is right" takes a more decided form. The cloak of respectability, which Polus had cast round the sword, is thrown off, and the naked steel appears. Polus had reserved one plea for honesty; he had admitted that dishonesty is a disgrace. Calicles boldly challenges this position. He asserts the unbridled selfishness of the wise, the able, and the courageous, to be nature's law; moral restraints, he declares, are based on mere convention, which tames the noble spirit of our young lions.²

¹ Plato, *Gorg.* 471 D.

² *Ibid.* 484 A. Certain critical observations on Plato's attitude will be found in Appendix B. They do not seriously affect the main argument in the text.

Plato's condemnation of the Sophists comes to this:

Summary of
Sophistic Teaching.

The professors of culture, notably Protagoras, Hippias, and Prodicus, were tame and useless; the professors of rhetoric, notably Polus and Thrasymachus, were dangerous; but neither class maintained doctrines which were very much in advance of, or behind, the moral ideals current at the period. Plato differs from Grote mainly in so far as he is aware of certain evil effects issuing indirectly from the Sophistic teaching. These effects will be considered shortly; at present it is necessary to point out certain elements of permanent value in their ethical propaganda, which Plato has overlooked in his special pleading, and which even Grote seems to neglect, when he declares that the new teachers were "neither above nor below the standard of their age." In the first place, their destructive criticism—the attack on convention, prejudice, and superstition—was, so far as it went, a valuable contribution to Greek thought, and marked an epoch (even if only an epoch of transition and negation) in its progress. Again, in the midst of much rather commonplace and average moral exhortation, they did not fail to throw out lucid hints which seem to have been adopted and developed, when philosophy took upon herself the task of reconstructing ethical belief. The fundamental idea of an organized system of moral and political education, which was first enunciated by the Sophists, became the very charter of the great schools founded by the philosophers, no matter how keenly they criticized Sophistic theories on the subject. Protagoras, together with Prodicus and Hippias, may be taken to have discriminated between outward circumstances and the inner life, and thus to have inaugurated that process of comparing and estimating the various elements of human happiness, which was carried on with greater or less accuracy by all moral philosophers, from Socrates onwards. Protagoras

insisted on cheerful contentment (εὐδία), Hippias on self-sufficiency and independence of external circumstances (αὐτάρκεια). Prodicus was the apostle of death; but, in the course of his lugubrious pessimism, he emphasized an important ethical truth. Wealth, he said, and other so-called goods owe their value to the use that is made of them; to a bad man they are positive evils.¹ The fragments of Antiphon show that he took special care to analyse the moral disposition. A temperate man, he said, is one who has passed through a period of temptation, who has consciously and deliberately resisted evil, and who has so far mastered himself that no hankering after self-indulgence vitiates his good purpose.² Lastly, we find in Gorgias the idea of a practical union among the Greek cities,³ which was afterwards taken up by Plato; and in Hippias⁴ the still nobler conception of an ultimate bond of sympathy subsisting among all members of the human race, Greek and barbarian alike; while Alcidas, a generation later, attacked the institution of slavery as

¹ τοῖς ἐπισταμένοις ὅπου δεῖ χρῆσθαι τοῖς χρήμασιν, τούτοις μὲν ἀγαθὸν (sc. τὸ πλουτεῖν), τοῖς δὲ μοχθηροῖς καὶ ἀνεπιστήμοσι κακόν, Mullach, vol. ii., p. 140. Cf. Thales, ap. Diog. L., i, 35, τί ὠφελιμώτατον; ἀρετὴ· καὶ γὰρ τᾶλλα τῷ χρῆσθαι καλῶς ὠφέλιμα ποιεῖ.

² ὅστις δὲ τῶν αἰσχρῶν ἢ τῶν κακῶν μήτε ἐπεθύμησε μήτε ἤψατο, οὐκ ἔστι σὺφρων· οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ' ὅπου κρατήσας αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν κόσμον παρέχεται (ap. Stob. Flor. 5, 53), with this couple σωφροσύνην δ' ἀνδρὸς οὐκ ἂν ἄλλου ὀρθότερόν τις κρίνειεν, ἢ ὅστις τοῦ θυμοῦ τὰς παραχρήμα ἡδονὰς ἐμφράσων κρατεῖν τε καὶ νικᾶν ἡδυνήθη αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν· ὅς δὲ θέλει χαρίσασθαι τῷ θυμῷ παραχρήμα θέλει τὰ κακῶν ἀντὶ τῶν ἀμεινόνων. Blass. fr. 6, emend. Sauppe.

³ Not an original idea by any means, but one that required emphasizing.

⁴ See Plato, *Prot.* 337 C. Hippias "employed non-Hellenic sources of history, and devoted himself to the annals of barbarian tribes, with equal impartiality" (Gomperz, vol. i., 433). Perhaps this idea of the brotherhood of diverse races was accompanied by a greater sympathy with slaves and dependants, and a kindlier feeling for the poor and the labouring classes. Cf. Prodicus (pseudo-Plato, *Axioch.*, pp. 366 sqq.), who alludes with compassion to the sufferings and hardships of τοὺς χειρωνακτικοὺς . . . καὶ βαναύσους.

transgressing the natural law.¹ In this respect the Sophists prepared the way for the philosophers of the third century B.C.

(III) *The State of Popular Morality.*

The schools of rhetoric, temporarily established by the Sophists in different cities of Hellas, supplied the rising democracies with an instrument of speech which created a revolution in literature, and made its power felt in law courts and political assemblies. The advance made was accompanied by new temptations, with which the popular morality may have proved unable to contend. A similar danger can be discerned in the various intellectual problems which arose in this age of criticism. Aristophanes states bluntly that the Sophists attacked the basis of popular morality in three directions. They undermined (1) the belief in a divine recompense for sin,² (2) the reverence for law and custom,³ (3) the formula, honesty is the best policy.⁴ It is significant that these are precisely the buttresses which Plato observes to have given way⁵; and to this extent he joins hands with the comic poet. We noticed in the last chapter how largely popular morality was built up on religious considerations, and on a reverence for custom and law. The Greek of the old school believed that God punished certain actions and rewarded others. To the customs and laws of his city he likewise attached a religious importance, believing them to have emanated in many cases from an inspired legislator, who, as often as not, received quasi-divine honours.

¹ Schol. ad Aristot. *Rhet.* i. 13. Cf. Lycophron's denial of the distinctions of birth, Aristot. *fr.* 82. For a general account of the progress of such ideas on slavery, see Newman, *Politics of Aristotle*, vol. i., pp. 139 sqq.

² Ar. *Nub.* 396-402.

³ *Ibid.* 1420-29.

⁴ *Ibid.* 1060-82.

⁵ Plato, *Rep.* 358 E-365 A.

Views of Plato and
Aristophanes: Danger
Ahead.

Now these were the two beliefs with which the criticism and inquiries of this age were most nearly concerned; and although it is wrong to suppose that the serious discussions of a few advanced thinkers were comprehended or appreciated by the masses, yet the Sophists must have done something to stimulate reflection among their hearers, and destructive criticism spreads on occasion with great alacrity, so as to loosen popular beliefs, even though those beliefs are not openly discarded. Plato's view of the situation is embodied in his portrait of the boisterous freethinker, Thrasymachus, whom he takes to represent in some degree a tendency of thought and a moral disposition prevalent in Greece at the time; in the vivid contrast he draws between the manners and creed of the aged Cephalus and those of the younger generation; and in that scene between the ingenuous youth and the free-thinker, wherein the former is cross-questioned about his ethical creed, gives the conventional old-fashioned replies, and walks off sorely bewildered.¹

Criticism and analysis were by no means the only forces which may have tended towards the weakening or dissolution of popular morality. The great social and political changes which took place in the most vigorous states during the fifth century implied to some extent a break with the ethical ideals and restraints of the past.² Paternal methods of government and discipline were abandoned or modified in the direction of liberalism.³ New classes rose

Social and Political
Changes.

¹ Plato, *Rep.* 537 E-539 D.

² These changes are noticeable mainly in Ionian cities, and in a few Dorian cities, such as Argos, Syracuse, and Tarentum: it is not so in the chief Dorian centres, Sparta and Crete; nor in Arcadia, Boeotia, Thessaly: Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, vol. iii., pp. 436, 438.

³ Baumhauer (*quam vim Sophistae*, etc., p. 87 sqq.) remarks that the curtailment of the powers of the Areopagus by Ephialtes meant the fall of a great safeguard of morality at Athens. The lament of Isocrates on the social and moral evils produced by this change is familiar (Isoc. *Areopag.* 147 A, B).

to prominence and power over against the aristocracy. The influence of the old families gradually decreased. The self-made man began to leave his impress on the tone and ideals of society. He asserted the rights of the individual, and inaugurated a new era of unlimited competition. It is obvious that the Sophistic teaching, which laid stress on individual ability and intelligence, both followed and stimulated this movement. It was proverbially an age of business and litigation, whatever that may imply. One question which suggests itself is how far the traditional rules of honesty maintained themselves in this new atmosphere. But there were other problems even more conspicuous. The political emancipation of the lower classes introduced a fresh phase of the conflict between rich and poor. The poor man was now a prominent factor in political life. His complaint made itself heard with perilous insistency. The balance of power was inclining to his side. His circumstances had bred in him a large measure of thoughtlessness and irresponsibility. The rich man now found reason to complain in his turn of unjust exactions, sycophants, and demagogues who pandered to the mob and gratified its worst passions. Apart from this there is an alleged tendency in democracies, if left to themselves, to run riot, and at times by a strange inconsistency to substitute the

Abbott thinks that the Areopagus lost its old importance at an earlier date, when Cleisthenes (509 B.C.), by his creation of a board of strategi, diminished the powers of the Archons, and thus of the Areopagus, which was recruited from the latter (*Age of Pericles*, p. 82). The decline of this tribunal and the development of the popular courts by Pericles may be taken as rough landmarks in the progress through which the influence of the old families, and of their traditional ideas, was supplanted by the influence and ideas of the democracy (*ibid.* 259). But this is only a partial truth. Even Isocrates (l. c. 147 C) admits that the democratic leaders of his day, who became members of the Areopagus, assumed a dignity and moral reserve suitable to the traditions of that body; and it is mentioned with unfeigned respect and deference by the Orators of the fourth century (Dem. *Or.* xxiii. § 75, *Or.* lix. § 105; Aesch. *Or.* i. § 92; Lyc. § 12; Dein. *Or.* i. § 7).

dull tyranny of average opinion for individual freedom. These dangers made themselves felt at Athens in the days of Pericles. He met them during his lifetime, partly by his authority and example, and partly by seeking to educate the popular mind through the medium of refined entertainment. After his death there was a relapse. At present we may note these facts, without discussing the actual result.

The moral effects of the Peloponnesian War, which broke out in this period, have been described
 The War. in a familiar passage of Thucydides.¹ Piety and forbearance, he says, have vanished from the earth: there is no such thing as honour; everyone appeals to self-interest. His statements refer apparently to the political parties and cabals of the day. How far the disorder extended to private life and polluted the morality and affections of men in the discharge of their social duties, must remain a matter of conjecture. During the course of the war Athens was subjected to severe trials and hardships, which led to a temporary demoralization of society.²

It is not my purpose to write a complete account of popular morality in this period, but
 The State of Popular rather to exhibit certain broad tendencies and characteristics which serve
 Morals: Athens. to illustrate the passage to philosophic ethics; and it will be convenient, for the sake of accuracy and precision, to look for the moment exclusively at Athens as the mirror

¹ Thuc. iii. 82; cf. 40-44, 58, v. 89.

² The crowding of the country people into the city, where the insufficient accommodation was rendered the more irksome by enforced idleness and bad sanitary arrangements, must have had a demoralising effect (Plut. *Pericl.* xxxiv). The plague made matters worse: it was a period of confusion and despair, when the restraints of law and public opinion may have ceased for the time. Cf. the period of the Thirty Tyrants (see Isocrates, *Or.* xxi). See Abbott, *Age of Pericles*, pp. 214 sq. and 236.

which most faithfully reflects all the activity and vicissitudes of the Greek mind. To deduce effects from causes is always a perilous process, and nowhere more so than in the sphere of history, assuming the freedom of the human will; and, in this particular instance, to infer a general dissolution of morals from the existence of a few forces moving in that direction would be nothing short of idiocy. Amid the maze of perplexities which envelop the inner life of this period, perhaps the most signal and incontestable fact is the existence of a strong body of conservative opinion permeating society.

There still remained a large number who had been bred in the religious and ethical traditions of (1) The
Conservatives. a by-gone age. For them the old Faith had a sanction which the rumoured speculations of Anaxagoras could not destroy. Their early education and the experience of a long lifetime were their safeguard against the destructive influences of the new learning. To the searching criticisms of a younger generation they could oppose the verdict of antiquity. Time-honoured conventions and the tenets of a simpler age presented no difficulties to their unsophisticated minds, but still contained for them the secret of human life. Such were the ancient worthies who look out at us from the pages of Plutarch—sincere, sometimes illiterate folk, steady or convivial, as the case may be, renowned in counsel and action, patriotic, often incorruptible. And in this age there still lingered for a time grave, honest Nicias—a man pious to an annoying extent; rather timid in his habits, but a loyal servant of the State; brave and compassionate in war; and in his domestic life an excellent father, who grounded his son solidly in Homer¹—perhaps, on the

¹ For Niceratus and his Homeric education, see Xen. *Symp.* iii. 5, *et passim*. This Niceratus fell a victim to the Thirty Tyrants; Xenophon sums him up as *ἄνδρα πρὸς ἅπαντας ἐπιεικῆ καὶ φιλόανθρωπον, πλούτῳ δὲ καὶ δόξῃ σχεδόν πρῶτον ἅπάντων Ἀθηναίων* (Xen. *Hell.* ii. 3, 39; cf. *Symp.* viii. 3,

whole, the most amiable and pathetic character in Greek literature. These men were diverse and signal instances of a type which philosophy might modify, but could not wholly destroy : a type which was moulded under the old aristocratic *régime*, and remained long after that *régime* had given way. Xenophon brings it before us again in the persons of rich, horse-rearing country gentlemen, like Ischomachus, with their satellites, the hardy agricultural labourers, among whom religion and patriotism are kept pure and allied with sober habits ; in the person of Autolycus, the young athlete with a respectable, orthodox father ; and of Hermogenes, the Socratic, fearless, gentle, and religious after the traditional fashion. It recurs in the citizen warriors of the fourth century, "trained in the good things of their ancestors," men of courage and honour¹ ; in Lycurgus, the orator, and a host of others. It can be discerned, on a humble scale, even in the New Comedy.²

where he is mentioned as having an affectionate wife) ; Demosthenes recalls him as a type of courage and public spirit (Νικήρατος ὁ τοῦ Νικίου ὁ ἀγαπητός, Dem. Or. xxi. § 208 ; cf. Lys. Or. xviii. § 6). Nicias, a son of the above, is the subject of a compliment in Arist. Eccles. 428. This admirable family was much respected at Athens, partly because of their faithfulness to the democracy (Niceratus and his uncle Eucrates perished under the Thirty ; another uncle, Diognetus, was banished by them), partly no doubt because of their exemplary and generous lives. For the popular treatment of Nicias, see Plut. Nic. iv : he was equally respected by friend and foe (Plut. Alcib. xiv), although his moderate political principles and his opposition to popular clamours were suspected (Plut. Nic. xi). Under the restored Democracy two attempts were made to confiscate the family property : the first was foiled by an overwhelming majority—Dobree, *Adversaria ad Lys.*, xviii (128) ; the second called forth a notable speech of Lysias for the defence, which dwells pathetically upon the virtues and misfortunes of the family, and seems to appeal with confidence to popular feeling on the subject (Lys. Or. xviii).

¹ Lys. (?) Or. ii. § 69 : for another instance of the old ideal, ἀνδραγαθία, see Hyperides, Or. ii. § 13 (Blass).

² Such a play as the Trinummus (Plautus, from Philemon) ; cf. Megadorus and Eunomia in the Aulularia (Plautus).

It may be assumed that the better part of the upper classes remained on the whole conservative.

(2) **The Middle Classes.** Beside them ranged the great mass of the citizens, comprising many elements and dispositions which almost defy classification. Among them were men of education, trained in rhetoric and general culture, and aware of the intellectual problems of their age; and also men of hardly any education, who professed to despise the Sophists. In religious matters the people as a whole were not sceptical, although their faith may have been in many cases half-hearted. The orators habitually appealed to their religious feelings in conventional language. Omens and oracles were treated with superstitious respect. Ceremonial observances were enforced and multiplied. Charges of atheism were bandied about freely; and the misfortunes of the impious elicited the obvious comment. All this, however, does not imply that their religion exerted a potent influence on their lives. Wickedness and worship go often hand in hand. Thucydides makes the Melian envoy threaten Athens with Divine vengeance. The Athenian replies, that from all accounts the gods take as much as they can get from each other, and will not look askance if men do the same. To discover the people's morality we must go beyond and beneath their religious professions.

Isocrates records two diverse judgments commonly passed on Athens in his day. Her friends called the city pleasant, and the inhabitants gentle and unselfish: her enemies pointed to the sycophants.¹ The orators of that period pass eulogies when they are in a good temper. Athens, they say, stands first in culture, intelligence, piety, philanthropy, honesty, and patriotism.² At other times they tell a different tale. It is from such conflicting state-

¹ *Isoc. Antid.*, p. 128.

² *Dem. Ep.* iii. § 11; *Lyc. Leocr.* § 15; *Isoc. Paneg.* §§ 29, 83; *Panath.*

ments as these that the morals of the Athenian democracy have to be deduced. The commonplace charges are well known. Aristophanes represented the Demos in his own day as litigious, vulgar, harsh, snappish, and fickle. Euripides withdrew from public life with a shriek of contempt, to make an elaborate attack upon parvenus and mob-leaders. By way of a doubtful compliment to his contemporaries, he made his heroes "litigious, mean, quarrelsome, and selfish"; and then he was accused of "drawing men as they are." Plato, in the early fourth century, was disgusted at the aspect of a city "chock-full of liberty and free-speech, where anyone may do what he likes"; he dismissed the "popular assembly, the law courts, the theatres, and the camp" in a few words as uproarious and unphilosophic.¹ That the Athenians were litigious and their legal pleadings full of vulgar abuse, and that the self-made man with mercenary ideals was much in evidence, are facts to which the orators of the fifth and fourth centuries testify beyond the possibility of doubt.² But litigation is, from one point of view, a reasonable and just substitute for club-law and malice. Nor is it safe to conclude that the discipline of the law courts hardened the hearts and degraded the affections of the Athenian people. In the first place, only a small part of the community were regular attendants—the old, the infirm, and the very poor. Secondly, if the juries were sometimes accused of severity by the defendants, to a strict disciplinarian like the orator Lycurgus they seemed sentimental and lax.³ The most important section of the

¹ Plato, *Rep.* 492 B, 557 B.

² On litigation see also a very notable scene in Xen. *Anab.* v. 8; on the self-made man, see Xen. *Ap.* 29–31.

³ Lyc. *Leocr.* c. 1–4. Rich and influential villains found it easy to compromise suits, and even to elude justice, after sentence had been pronounced. Dem. *Or.* xxi., Dein. *Or.* ii., Isaeus *Or.* iv. vii. Failure to restrain sycophants is a constant complaint of the Orators. The remarks of Lysias *Or.* xxx. § 30, εἰδὼς ὅτι ἡ βουλή ἢ βουλευούσα, ὅταν μὲν ἐχη ἱκανὰ χρήματα εἰς διοίκησιν, οὐδὲν ἐξαρτάνει, ὅταν δὲ εἰς ἀπορίαν καταστῆ, ἀναγκάζεται εἰσαγγελίας δέχεσθαι καὶ

people, the bulk of the middle class, was not occupied in dealing with litigants, but in business and politics. It was in all probability composed of respectable citizens with bourgeois ideals of comfort and success, intolerant of innovations, tempted like most business men by a balancing of profit and honesty, occasionally running wild (and with good excuse) at the news of a political conspiracy, and perhaps towards the close of the Peloponnesian War growing sour, irritable, and despondent. The philosophers were content to regard such men as thoughtless, mercenary, and vulgar: for it was the young men of fashion and little principle, growing to maturity in this period of change and distraction, whom they seriously attempted to educate, and in whose reformation they saw an indirect means of elevating the popular ideals.

In the *Clouds* of Aristophanes it is the young blood, Pheidippides, who is permanently demoralised by the Sophists; his old father, Strepsiades, soon discovers that vice does not pay, and comes back to his former creed. This is a rough and figurative statement of fact. It was among the young men of oligarchical and philo-Spartan tendencies that a marked deterioration really took place; the democrat had a vital interest in the maintenance of order, and looked on their proceedings with aversion and disgust.¹ There

δημύειν τὰ τῶν πολιτῶν καὶ τῶν ῥητόρων τοῖς πονηρότατα λέγουσι πειθέσθαι (date 399 B.C.), need not imply conscious dishonesty on the part of the authorities—a charge which the orator would not have dared to make; it rather implies that under ordinary circumstances legal opportunities for extortion were dismissed with humane contempt.

¹ *Lys. Or.* xiv. §§ 41 sq., illustrates the strong feeling of the democracy against this class, and esp. against Alcibiades (see Jebb, *Att. Or.* i. 255; cf. *Andoc. (?) Or.* iv, probably the work of a late Sophist; cf. *Plut. Nic.* xi., *τοῦ μὲν γὰρ Ἀλκιβιάδου καὶ τὸν βίον ἐβδελύττοντο*, cf. *Arist. Ran.* 1425; *ἡ πόλις ποθεῖ μὲν, ἐχθαίρει δὲ, βούλεται δ' ἔχειν*, and which expresses a more correct view: the wonderful personality of Alcibiades touched the Athenian heart at times; but the affection for him was at all times dubious, and passed away after his final departure from the Athenian cause). *Isoc. Or.* xx., *Dem. Or.* xxi., etc., etc.

is nothing so obvious or so lamentable in the history of this period as the moral collapse of a large part of the aristocracy. Even in the earlier half of the fifth century there were men of oligarchical sympathies who were guilty of treason and disorder.¹ But at that time it was at least possible for them to play a loyal and respectable part in public life under leaders such as Cimon. As the power of the democracy extended and the old order of things declined, they became a factious minority without principle or restraint; some of them, like Critias, working avowedly for a political reaction; others, like Alcibiades, assuming a popular part for selfish ends; and the rest turning in careless disgust from public life to a career of pleasure and debauchery.² It is wrong to attribute the immorality of this class primarily to the destructive criticism and new theories of the Sophists. The altered condition of politics and society would by itself serve for an explanation. Immoral and selfish oligarchs, like the Thirty Tyrants, had existed at all times, and especially in the face of a democratic movement, as we infer from the poems of Theognis. Blue-blooded youths revolted naturally against middle-class interference and restraint, in the same way that the courtiers of Charles II were goaded into license and frivolity by a reaction from the Puritan régime. But there *is* a point of contact with the new learning. Critias and Alcibiades, both unhappily associated with

¹ Treasonable correspondence with Persia, Plut. *Arist.* xiii.; also with Sparta in early years of fifth century.

² "The sons of the men who had fought with Cimon and Aristides became intriguers with Antiphon and Theramenes; and when the game fell into their hands, they came forward as the Thirty Tyrants"; Abbott, *Pericles*, p. 354. For the young bloods who spent their time in frivolity and license, see Andoc. *Or.* i. §§ 63 sq. Andoc. (?) *Or.* iv. §§ 22, 39; Lys. *Or.* xiv. §§ 41 sq. (a magnificent diatribe; such condemnations of an aristocratic class by a popular orator at such a crisis are often exaggerated, but never without foundation), Lys. *Or.* xvi. § 13, *Or.* xix. § 10; Isaeus *Or.* v.; Dem. *Or.* xxi. liv., *Or.* lix. § 43 sq., Xen. *Oec.* xii. 11-13; Isoc. *Antid.* p. 124, *Panath.* 149 C, D. For the oligarchical type, see also Lys. *Or.* xii. and Theophr. *Characters*.

Socrates, were men of keen intelligence, fully alive to the negative criticism of their age. Alcibiades seemed an incarnation of the idea that moral distinctions have no substantive value, but are entirely dependent on custom and individual caprice.¹ Critias, with whom we may couple Meno the Thessalian,² answered completely to Plato's picture of Callicles in the *Gorgias*, as an unprincipled individualist, who was willing to press the new criticisms of natural right into his service and to employ unscrupulously the weapon of subtle rhetoric. Callias represents a somewhat different type. In the *Protagoras* he entertains the band of Sophists, just arrived in the city. Xenophon says that Antisthenes introduced him to Prodicus and Hippias.³ He appears to have been an indifferent youth, with good parts but a feeble will, who wasted his time in ease and luxury. The point on which Xenophon lays chief stress is that he utterly neglected those public duties to which he was called by his birth, social position, and intelligence. All that he had got from the Sophists was a shallow culture, and an amiable and playful conceit in his dialectical powers.⁴

¹ Plutarch's *Life* makes this obvious; note also his versatility in adapting himself, superficially at least, and amid temporary irregularities, to the customs of the cities where he sojourned, whether hardy or luxurious (Ath. 534 B). A conversation of his given in *Xen. Mem.* i. 2, 41-46 (esp. 45), illustrates his moral point of view.

² For his character see *Xen. Anab.* ii. 6, 21-29; for the immoral politicians see *Isoc. Paneg.* 51 c, *Panath.* 285 E.

³ *Xen. Symp.* iv. 62.

⁴ Callias proverbially φιλοπότης, *Ael. V. H.* iv. 16, and *δσωτος*, Ath. 169 a, 537 B.C. (*teste* Heraclides Ponticus). κωμωδεῖται . . . πανταχοῦ, ὡς σπαθῶν τὴν πατρικὴν οὐσίαν καὶ μάλιστα ἐπὶ γυναιξὶ μεμηγῶς: *Suidas.* s. v. cf. *Arist. Ran.* 432, *Eccl.* 810: his personal enemy Andocides makes bitter charges against him; *De. Myst.* passim, esp. § 124 sq. In Xenophon's *Symposium* he is on his best behaviour, and Socrates takes occasion to compliment him (viii. 8 sqq.); but the general impression left is that he is rather feeble and easy-going, and, above all, that he is neglecting his duty to the State (viii. 38-43). Socrates seems always to have dealt indulgently with such men, complimenting them on their good points, and at the same time trying to turn their energies into the sphere of public usefulness. For the culture and dialectics of Callias, see a playful episode, *Xen. Symp.* iv. 1-5.

(IV) *Euripides.*

It is possible to divide up Athenian society, as we have done, into different classes and types with their respective ideals. But there still remains something unexplained—a development which was going on apart from practical life, and yet ultimately affected its course. Somehow a stream of intellectual activity had arisen. The average man was more keen-witted and critical than of old. The law court and the assembly had accustomed him to dissect arguments and to appreciate subtleties. In cultured circles this movement resulted in an intense application of the mind to moral and religious topics. Certain positive contributions of the Sophists to this study have been noticed; but the man who most really embodied the higher tendencies of his age was Euripides.

The progress of democracy at Athens implied a revision of precedent and custom. A citizen's worth was to be decided, no longer by birth and privilege, but by ability. To a certain degree also the validity of long-established institutions was called in question, and they themselves were modified to suit existing needs. To carry out this process of criticism to its logical conclusion was the life-work of Euripides. But for this very reason he was not acceptable to his generation. His attempt to dissipate prejudice and superstition was too revolutionary—and the new standard of values which he substituted for the old, was too pure—to render his name popular. Custom as such had little attraction for him. From one aspect, his work was an organized attack upon all written or unwritten laws, which shielded the guilty or imprisoned the weak. "If a malefactor," says one of his characters, "seeks refuge at the altar, I will myself drag him to justice *despite the law.*"¹ Such direct

Attack on
Custom.

¹ Eur. *fr.* 1036 (Nauck). For a clear and convincing statement of the position taken up by Euripides in regard to the νόμος-φύσις controversy, and of his basis of ethics, see *The Moral Standpoint of Euripides*, by W. H. S. Jones (Blackie & Son, 1906), esp. pp. 18-21.

expressions were perhaps rare in his plays; and their frequent occurrence would hardly have been tolerated. He had a more subtle, and in the long run a more effective, method of disputing injustice and oppression.

Lack of sympathy with the female sex, and a contempt for the poor man and the slave were among **Social Ethics.** the darker features of Greek morality.¹ It must then have been startling to a popular audience, when Euripides put noble sentiments into the mouths of slaves, contrasted the magnanimous generosity of peasants with the meanness of recognized heroes, and reserved his finest powers of delineation for the portrayal of noble and devoted women. The stock accusation brought against him, to the effect that he brought down the mighty and exalted the humble and despised, is ample testimony to the effective nature of his attack. His favourite stratagem was to represent nobility in rags. He judged not as the world judges; he looked past externals to the inner man. So much we might conclude, if we had only the characters of Euripides before us without a word of explanation or comment from the poet himself. Occasionally, however, he breaks through his reserve. A noble slave, he declares, is no whit inferior to a freeman.² Birth is a matter of indifference: a peasant with generous feelings is nature's

¹ The statement is a general one. I have already (Chapter I.) pointed out that slaves were often well treated under the Athenian democracy; but the traditional sentiment about them must have survived. At any rate, no citizen would have admitted the apparent paradox of Euripides, that a slave could be as good as a freeman.

² *Ion*, 854. Thomson (*Euripides and the Attic Orators*, pp. 94-96) has collected evidence on this subject. As usual, there are a number of passages for and against slaves. It is pointed out that Euripides nowhere says that slavery is *παρὰ φύσιν*, although some of his utterances imply it. So too, he does not offer anything more than the traditional view of *βάρβαροι* (Thomson, *l. c.* 104); but N. B. in this connexion certain cosmopolitan sentiments, *fr.* 777, 1047, perhaps parodied in Arist. *Plut.* 1151. We may note *Soph. fr.* 855, *εἰ σῶμα δοῦλον, ἀλλ' ὁ νοῦς ἐλεύθερος*.

gentleman.¹ Even a bastard need not be ostracised from society.² The test of worth is nobleness of character; external circumstances are nothing as compared with this. In his defence of women he is equally frank. His extant writings contain bitter censures, as well as signal eulogies. Women, he says, differ in character; there is nothing worse than a bad woman, or better than a good one.³ This seems to be his conclusion. He appears to have made a special study of the sex, with the result that his women, whether good or bad, are always feminine; and it was precisely in attaching a peculiar virtue to the gentler qualities of women, that he proved himself far in advance of his contemporaries. Even philosophy, which seconded his appeals for female emancipation, failed to appreciate these distinctive graces of the female character. It would have seemed irrational to Plato to admit that any intrinsic merit belonged to women which men did not equally possess.⁴

In his general ethical reflections, Euripides followed the same procedure. He looked perpetually below the surface. He sought to disengage from the trappings of circumstances and fortune the permanent and essential things of life.⁵ External goods he found to be transitory and uncertain.⁶ Friends might fail, especially in times of misfortune.⁷ Gods, if gods existed, might not render assistance. And

¹ Eur. *Ion*, fr. 345. ² fr. 378. ³ fr. 497.

⁴ For Euripides' treatment of women, see Benecke, *Women in Greek Poetry*, pp. 51, sqq., and Thomson, *l. c.*, pp. 156-162: the latter thinks that his bitter censures of women are as much the result of keen insight as his eulogies. His view of marriage is undecided: marriage is a mixed blessing; a man should have a good wife or none: beauty of mind and character to be desired in a wife rather than beauty of person (Thomson, *l. c.* pp. 169-171).

⁵ Euripides makes a violent attack on wealth, and sets up nobility of birth in opposition to it; but even good birth is inferior to wisdom and virtue. Thomson, *l. c.* pp. 86 sq., 90; Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, vol. iv. § 468.

⁶ *Hercules Furens*, 511. ⁷ *Ibid.* 561.

if he looked beyond theology to some abstract principle of justice,¹ it was only to discover that this principle was slow and unreliable in its operation.² But in all this he found no excuse for immorality or self-abandonment. Despair, with him, was merely a stepping-stone to heroism. In the last resort, when all else failed, a man might draw upon the resources of his own soul; if he could not enjoy life, he might at least endure it with manly fortitude (*εὐψυχία*).

In all this Euripides, with whom we may couple Hippias and Prodicus,³ was anticipating certain aspects of later philosophy. The vision he beheld was not always so sad. In the background there gleamed, here and there, a faint-shining hope. The great rationalist was at heart a believer, groping wearily amid the perplexities of life, peering, with strained eyes, at the thin streak on the horizon far away. Yet, in another sense, his gaze was not directed to a distant spot. Mankind was essentially his study. In the simplest emotions of every-day life he saw the Spirit of God at work. The self-sacrifice of a good wife, and the love of children—that touch of nature which “makes the whole world kin”⁴—were to him sufficient evidence of the intrinsic value of human existence. It was to the power of man, gradually educated by an ever-increasing experience, that he trusted for the salvation of the world. Hitherto men had blamed God for their misfortunes; Euripides suggested that man should help God. “If one be a zealous worker,” says Orestes, “perchance God’s purpose will be more effectual.”⁵ “No idle man,” says the farm-labourer to Electra—“no idle man, with prayers upon his tongue, can win a livelihood without toil.”⁶

¹ Eur. *Hercules Furens*, fr. 508 ff.

² fr. 969; fr. 832; *Bacchae*, 882.

³ See Gomperz, vol. i. 428 ff.

⁴ *Hercules Furens*, 633; cf. *Andr.* 418.

⁵ *Iph. in Tauris*, 910.

⁶ *Electra*, 80.

(V) *The Task of Philosophy.*

At this point there is an easy transition to philosophic ethics. For the unwearied yearning of Euripides after truth, his determination to grasp the essential beneath the apparent, and his strong confidence in human endeavour—all these characteristics displayed a philosophic tendency. But now there rises a voice as of a strong man crying for the days of his youth, which are fast slipping away—a last and bitter protest of the old world against the new, ordering nature to stop her course and relax her irrevocable law of change. The most powerful organ of this protest was the Old Comedy. It must appear obvious that a comic poet, with his keen joy in the natural pleasures of life, would harbour an antipathy towards any intellectual movement which threatened to destroy the happy childishness of the people, to develop their argumentative faculties, and to turn the better part of the rising generation into pallid students. There is no reason to suppose that Aristophanes had much liking for the sterner part of the old popular morality, or that he felt for the established religion the pious reverence of Nicias. But there is a very strong indication throughout his plays that he considered the old traditions to be amply sufficient for the popular life. If he was not a serious believer, he was at least an obscurantist, and thus a reactionary. We cannot fail to recognize which way the poet's sympathy runs in the *Clouds*. The poetic beauty of some of the utterances assigned to the *Just Argument* is sufficient indication that the author is pouring forth his heart's ideal. Take, for instance, the lines where he is describing the pastimes of an athletic youth of the old school, "crowned with white reeds, smelling of bindweed and careless hours and leaf-shedding poplar, rejoicing in the prime of spring, when the plane-tree whispers to the elm."¹ No

¹ Symonds' translation: Arist. *Nub.* 1005 sqq.

wonder that, with such a picture before him, he hated anything that might threaten its continued realization, whether it were the war, or the rhetoric schools, or the earnest disputations of Socrates! He was a patriot, but a patriot of the ancient times, when war was waged against barbarian oppression, and with an honourable peace in view, not in support of a mercenary squabble between two Greek States, equally grasping and equally to blame.¹ Meantime he craved for the wild, open-air joy of living, with just enough morality to make it decent, and just enough superstition to give it an air of piety. This ideal, primitive and humorous though it sounds, was the expression of his most serious mood; and equally serious was his dread of the fierce progressiveness of his age.

Aristophanes was, after all, merely giving utterance to a policy which, in one form or another, has been maintained by all great reactionaries. There are men in the history of every nation, and especially at its great crises, who

“accept the old,

Contest the strange; acknowledge work that's done,

Misdoubt men who have still their work to do!”

Their proposals may be to re-invigorate some ancient institution which has fallen into disuse, or, more generally, to reinforce certain habits of thought and conduct which the course of criticism has rendered unacceptable or effete. The tacit assumption in all such cases seems to be that the old order of beliefs is not dead, but merely weighed down by an alien accretion, which commonsense can discard with ease. This view is not often sanctioned by actual experience, and the present instance is no exception to the general rule. It is true that the decay of popular beliefs in Greece during the latter half of the fifth century has been unduly exaggerated by many historians in the

¹ Arist. *Pax.* 211 sqq.

interests of sensationalism. Popular creeds for a long time survive the assaults of criticism, by simply disregarding the issues propounded. Circumstances may harden the hearts of men, and exalt self-interest at the expense of moral principle; but a relapse of this kind does not imply a complete and perpetual apostasy. At Athens the restoration of democratic government, after the Thirty Tyrants had been expelled, meant a fresh start and a reversion to those ancient tenets upon which social security had been found by bitter experience to depend. And yet there was abundant room for dissatisfaction. The generation which grew up during the war and the first stages of the Sophistic movement had its wits sharpened by the new system of culture, and its morals tried by social tumult and discord. To the intelligent there must have seemed something inadequate in the old State religion, with its sanctions and formalities, and in the traditional statement of ethical obligation. It was to the young men of vivacious appetite and ready discernment that Socrates and Plato felt themselves sent on a Divine mission; and a large part of their activity is meaningless, except on the hypothesis that there was a practical demand for a new gospel of life. An era of criticism necessarily demands as its fulfilment and counterpart an era of reconstruction. But even supposing that ancient motives were still potent, and the ancient code of morals still accepted, there was nevertheless a work for thoughtful men to perform. Change and progress are the sovereign laws of perfection. The old creed of the Greeks was, as we saw, hampered in many ways by prejudice and selfishness. The motives recognized were not always pure. The rule of truthfulness and fair-dealing was at best uncertain; and, during this period of business and increased competition, honesty was assailed by manifold temptations. The problems thus arising, together with others which have been indicated in the preceding chapter, demanded a more thorough treatment

than moralists had undertaken hitherto. The call was answered by the philosophers.

For a short time we shall be occupied with the development of moral philosophy. We shall inquire how far popular notions were codified and rearranged thereby, and how far new thoughts and new points of view emerged. We must then return to the sphere of actual life, and estimate the influence of philosophy upon it.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF PHILOSOPHIC
ETHICS.

INTELLECTUAL liberty has been defended in modern times, and indeed, more or less, in all ages, on the hypothesis that, “by systematic discussion of first principles, men are freed to understand the full bearing and the true grounds of their professed belief.” The Greek philosophers, from Socrates onwards, had a yet stronger plea, in that the belief itself was threatened in many quarters. The idea that justice pays both with men and with gods was challenged in theory, and seemed to be disproved as a practical maxim by experience. The philosophers took up the challenge, and attempted to show that happiness and morality are inseparable :—

“Happy and good are terms synonymous ;
Happy *and* good, or neither, must thou be.”

Now, in demonstrating this proposition, two courses are open. Happiness may be taken in the popular sense as meaning pleasure, comfort, worldly prosperity, and the like ; and it may be urged that honest and temperate conduct tends to the attainment of these objects. Or happiness may be reinterpreted as something altogether transcending this commonsense view, and implying morality as part of itself. Both these lines of argument

appeared in the Greek philosophers. The object in all cases was, by working back to first principles, to discover the rightful end of human ambition, and to set morality in its proper relation to this end. By this process some attempt was made to bridge the alleged gulf between justice and expediency—between virtue and true success. In such a scheme the religious motive may find its place. Indeed the Greek philosophers were, as a whole, deeply religious. They maintained the old faith that the just man should receive the reward of his deeds, although under their treatment the reward assumed more and more a spiritual nature. Custom and traditional sentiment were dealt with in a somewhat different manner. At some stages of philosophic speculation they were cast aside, as an imposture and a hindrance to systematic thought and conduct; at others they were admitted with reserve, and only as a subsidiary element in the progress to reasoned conviction, based upon knowledge of the ethical end. It must be remembered, however, that moral philosophy starts always, in the first instance, from the standpoint of custom. It may render the basis and obligation of morality clearer; but, in working out a system, it makes free use of ethical ideas already existent in the popular consciousness. These supply abundant material for analysis and reconstruction. Thus, to a large extent, the Greek philosophers made it their business to “work into shape the ample supply of ethical ideas stored up in poetry, and underlying custom.” The old “propriety of conduct” was not abrogated, but placed on a firmer basis of knowledge; and this was so in two ways, for not only was the general relation of morality to happiness worked out with varying fullness and certainty, but the meaning of special ethical laws and conceptions was elicited and developed by patient thought and a persistent deduction from experience. It was natural, too, that in this process new notions should appear, as philosophy advanced; and thus the old

morality was supplemented as well as systematized. In this manner philosophy absorbed and extended the work of previous moralists. It brought knowledge to the aid of custom and tradition ; it attempted to bridge the alleged gulf between expediency and justice, and to reconcile the claims of morality with the requirements of an adequate and consistent life ; it combated the relativist theory of Protagoras, by giving a permanent and absolute value to moral distinctions. Finally, it laboured to systematize and reform the old ethics of propriety, and to establish the new rule of conduct on a sure and rational basis. This statement is, after all, a general one, and represents the collective result of Greek philosophy rather than the peculiar achievements of any one man.

The author of the *Magna Moralia*, in a résumé of the previous history of ethical science, says :—

The Dawn of Moral Philosophy. “The first to attempt this subject was Pythagoras. His method was faulty, for he made virtue a number, justice a cube, etc.” The Pythagoreans were a religio-philosophical brotherhood, who devoted their lives to the cultivation of virtue and science. They were neither popular moralists nor, in any complete sense, professors of ethical philosophy. It is said they were the first to formulate the four cardinal virtues, which are “traceable in Pindar and afterwards in Plato.” Their doctrine of metempsychosis, their theory that virtue is a well-defined and harmonious state of soul, and their watchword, “follow God,” stimulated Plato’s thought and left their mark on his moral system. A similar interest attaches to the isolated ethical utterances of Heraclitus and Democritus. The general notion of Heraclitus, that man’s highest privilege consists in the cultivation of the Divine reason or “fire” in him, and thus in his approximation to the life of the pure primal element, finds certain obvious echoes in Plato and the Stoics. Democritus forestalled the post-Aristotelian

Schools with his gospel of "passionless calm."¹ Both of them, together with Anaxagoras, laid stress on the inward and spiritual nature of happiness. But the history of scientific ethics must be taken to begin seriously with the Socratic movement.

(I) *Socrates.*

Regarding all physical and cosmological speculation as useless and impracticable, Socrates devoted His Aim and Method. his attention almost exclusively to human affairs and matters of every-day importance.

He left no scheme of ethics. He was a pioneer, and his business was not so much to teach as to set men thinking. Later writers called attention to his method of reaching definitions of general terms or concepts by a process of induction from normal facts of experience or observation. He would take, for instance, some ethical term such as Justice, or Piety, and try to arrive at a definition of its content by combining and arranging a number of commonly accepted examples of its usage. Thus, in examining the meaning of justice and injustice,² he would

¹ Diog. L. ix. 45. τέλος δὲ εἶναι τὴν εὐθυμίαν, οὐ τὴν αὐτὴν οὖσαν τῇ ἡδονῇ . . . ἀλλὰ καθ' ἣν γαληνῶς καὶ εὐσταθῶς ἡ ψυχὴ διάγει. "A number of ethical precepts, bearing the name of Democritus, have been preserved, and they all point towards the same ideal of passionless calm"—Benn, *The Philosophy of Greece*, p. 214: he traces this to the lack of political activity and of "traditions of a great public life" in the Ionian cities.

² Xen. *Mem.* iv. 2, 11 sqq.; where, however, the investigation is not brought to a conclusion.

Brandis contends that "the origin of Socrates' doctrine of concepts appears to be his desire to establish against the Sophists the absolute worth of moral determinations" (Zeller, *Socrates etc.*, p. 89, note 1). This is, at any rate, the effect of the Socratic process; for whereas Protagoras had been content with a relativism which allowed truth to the isolated impressions of the individual, the practice of definition led men to seek the absolute truth which underlay the variety of superficial views and appearances.

adduce a number of situations in which one man is led to adopt a certain line of conduct towards another, in order that, by exhibiting a variety of such actions under different circumstances in various lights, he might arrive at a general classification of just and unjust deeds, and hence gain a satisfactory definition.

This method of systematic thought is the keynote to his whole career. It was not of isolated virtues only that he sought to form a definite and measured conception. He applied his attention, and directed that of his hearers, to human life as a whole. Life was to him an art to be pursued in accordance with rule and method, and by the rational choice of means adapted to a recognized end. Hence arose his fundamental doctrine, that virtue is knowledge—knowledge of the right end to be pursued, and the right means to be chosen. It is tempting, in the light of Aristotelian analysis, to introduce a formal correction, and to replace the formula—“Virtue is knowledge,” by—“Virtue rests upon knowledge.” But something of the Socratic paradox is lost in the process. For in identifying the two notions, Socrates implied not merely that knowledge is the condition of virtue, but that it inevitably leads to virtue. The ignorant man cannot be, the enlightened man must be, virtuous; for no man (he thought), knowing what is best, acts perversely. Looking out on a world of moral chaos with feelings of pity rather than indignation, he saw a great people wholly incapable, as he thought, of appreciating their true interests. Moral blindness, a lack of right understanding in the most serious matters of life, seemed to him to lie at the root of all the great moral failures of the past and present. Firmly believing in the identity of the good and the expedient, he felt that, if he could but open men’s eyes to the true facts of the case, the moral problem would be solved once for all. No man, who had been brought to face the real issues involved in

Virtue and
Knowledge:
Utilitarianism.

his right or wrong use of life, would ever again swerve from the paths of righteousness. In following out this principle, he tried to demonstrate that virtue, social and individual, was to the good of the doer, and thus—as Gomperz expresses it—to eliminate the conflict between the “lower selfish will” and the “higher altruistic will.” The form in which he presented his utilitarianism can only be regarded as tentative and incomplete. The great idea of a life, wherein actions are measured in reference to a clearly conceived end, he handed on to others. He himself left no system, but rather fragments of a many-sided experience. The exigencies of his position constrained him, for the most part, to adopt the tone of a popular preacher, seeking to recommend morality as a good thing for an incongruous variety of reasons. Thus in conversing with men who prized reputation above the honest fulfilment of their duties, he argued that the best way to gain a good repute is to be good. On another occasion he repeated the fable of Heracles, which promises as the reward of a virtuous life such external blessings as wealth, good food and rest, domestic joy, honour, and a place in the memory of future generations. There is in such utterances no sign of the higher utilitarianism of Plato, who taught that virtue conduces to a healthy condition of soul, and is therefore choiceworthy apart from its material consequences. As was natural, however, he sometimes adopted a loftier tone. He spoke of intemperance as ruinous to soul as well as body.¹ He recommended temperance, not so much on the score of its external advantages, as because in itself it brought spiritual satisfaction to well-disposed men.² On one occasion³ he argued that material advantages, such as riches and health, are not in themselves ultimate elements of happiness.

¹ Xen. *Mem.* i. 5, 3.

² *Ibid.* i. 6, 8.

³ *Ibid.* iv. 2, 31-35.

It has been suggested that, by appealing as he did to the consciousness and needs of the individual, he fostered a definite breach with the morality of social custom. The distinction between society and the individual, between politics and ethics, was hardly known to the popular mind. The Greek, in democratic communities at any rate, devoted so much time to the duties and pleasures of civic life that he came instinctively to conceive his ethical ideal in terms of political activity. Service of the State was a source of moral inspiration. The simplest acts of self-restraint received their sanction from the laws, which were often held by commonplace folk to express the full requirements of morality; and conversely, moral reform was regarded as a special province of the lawgiver. The Socratic system of disputation, it is true, tended to a growth of individualism, and served to impress on the disputants the necessity of examining social conventions by the light of reason. But Socrates himself never attempted to break up the vigorous political life of the city-state, or to underrate the importance of law. On the contrary, he was convinced that the laws of the State, together with the ethical precepts of natural theology, were expressions of moral obligation. The theory of concepts was, no doubt, useful to him as a means of developing and improving this aspect of his teaching. He was thereby enabled to examine the true essence of ethical notions, and to direct attention to the absolute and permanent principles which underlay them. But his respect for established laws remained apparently unabated. Moreover, so far from discouraging civic activity, he sought to arouse in young politicians a more adequate conception of their moral responsibilities. He was never tired of urging them to acquire competent instruction, and to think out the true meaning of justice, in order that their efforts might be directed to the establishment of sound

Morality and
Convention.

laws. Moral principle he held to be guided in practice by the existing law, and thus a good legislator might exercise a material influence over popular morality.

Beyond his theory of concepts and his view of human life as an art, which was to be studied as such, and his close coupling of virtue and knowledge,¹ it must not be supposed that Socrates enunciated many ideas which were unfamiliar to the popular mind in his day. For his high estimate of law we find precedent in popular opinion, and his utilitarianism was only an enlightened form of that popular theory which based just conduct on the expectation of an adequate return from God and men. When we come to consider his teaching as applied to special details of life, it is still more obvious how slightly he diverged from current ideals. "The task," says Gomperz, "to which Socrates applied himself was that of securing full recognition for a rule of life already in existence."² His most signal characteristic, his partial asceticism, was only an accentuated instance of that spirit of moderation and endurance which was so common a theme with early moralists. He had no desire to crush the body, but only to obtain freedom for higher activities. He was present at scenes of social festivity, the banquet and the theatre. He held that care of the body was conducive to mental culture, thus expressing from a somewhat different point of view the old rule, which inculcated a consistent and harmonious development of human faculties.³ He had nothing of the intellectual asceticism of Plato, or the self-mortification of the Cynics. On the question of a man's relation to his fellows, he repeated many of the commonplaces of popular ethics. He emphasized perhaps with uncompromising

¹ Perhaps even the ἀρετὴ ἐπιστήμη paradox may be traced back, in some degree, to the popular maxim, "Γνώθι σεαυτόν."

² Gomperz, vol. ii., p. 73. Cf. Zeller, *Soc. etc.*, p. 117, paragraph 2.

³ Xen. *Mem.* i. 2, 4.

force the spiritual and moral, as opposed to the carnal, aspect of love; but his contention was in no sense original. At the same time it may be granted that he made a peculiar use of friendship, as a stimulus to intellectual activity, thus anticipating Plato.¹ His attitude towards women was rather one of considerate treatment than of affectionate appreciation. At times his utterances seemed to suggest that the procreation of children was the end of marriage.² In regard to the treatment of enemies, there is no direct evidence that his teaching rose above the popular view ascribed to him by Xenophon: "It is the virtue of a man to vanquish his friends in well-doing, and his enemies in ill-doing."³ To slavery he was no more opposed in principle than Plato or Aristotle, although with them he would have rebuked inconsiderate behaviour on the part of masters.⁴

But in three respects he definitely contributed to the enlargement of popular notions. The practice of definition necessarily tended to clarify and expand men's ideas as to the meaning and scope of particular ethical laws. The emphasis, too, which he laid on intentions as opposed to actions, fostered that deeper sense of moral sincerity, which we have already noticed as one of the most encouraging

¹ Xen. *Mem.* i. 6, 14.

² *Ibid.* ii. 2, 4 sq. See Xen. *Symp.* ii, 9; Socrates suggests, half in fun, *ὅτι ἡ γυναικεία φύσις οὐδὲν χείρων τῆς τοῦ ἀνδρὸς οὐσα τυγχάνει, γνώμης δὲ καὶ ἰσχύος δέεται*, a foreshadowing of Plato's schemes of female emancipation. Probably Socrates himself would not have gone beyond the homely reform sketched in the *Oeconomicus*. For the interest he took in Aspasia, see Plut. *Per.* c. 24.

³ *Ibid.* ii. 6, 35. Zeller argues that when Plato, in so early a dialogue as the *Crito* (49 a), makes Socrates condemn any return of evil for evil, he is probably reproducing a genuine Socratic doctrine; but there is no reason to suppose that Plato, at any period of his literary activity, refrained from putting his own ideas into his master's mouth. Probably, however, in this matter, as in many others, the conduct of Socrates infinitely transcended his teaching.

⁴ *Ibid.* iii. 13, 4.

features of the age of enlightenment.¹ Thirdly, he was far above his generation in his views of the dignity of labour. When occasion required, he set himself to combat the Greek gentleman's contempt for manual tasks, or for any occupation which reduced those who took part in it to a humble or dependent position.² Work of the meanest kind he held more honourable than idleness. In support of this opinion he quoted Hesiod,³ to the great discomfort of his contemporaries. "He maintained that the best men and the dearest to the gods were those who, in agriculture, performed their agricultural tasks well; in medicine, their medical; and in politics, their political duties; but that a man who did nothing well was neither useful for any purpose, nor dear to the gods."⁴ A dung-basket which performed its function was more beautiful in his eyes than a gilt corslet which did not fit.⁵

Plato was the true spiritual heir of Socrates; but prior to Plato in point of time and development came other philosophers, who laid hold on isolated parts of the master's teaching. The work of the Megarian School belongs rather to the domain of logic and dialectics, than to that of moral philosophy. The Cynics and the Cyrenaics, on the other hand, were concerned strictly with questions of conduct.

Both these schools showed the individualistic tendency of Socraticism. Happiness of the individual, based on private thought and effort, was their aim. Self-sufficiency

¹ Xen. *Mem.* iv. 4, 12.

² *Ibid.* ii. 7, 7-11; 8. These passages modify, if they do not contradict, the sentiment ascribed to him by Aelian (*V. H.* x. 14), that idleness, i.e. freedom from business, is the condition of a free and liberal life. His pupil, Antisthenes, maintains the distinction between *βαναυσική τέχνη* and *καλοκάγαθία* (Xen. *Symp.* iii, 4).

³ *Ibid.* i. 2, 57.

⁴ *Ibid.* iii. 9, 15. Levien's Translation.

⁵ *Ibid.* iii. 10, 14; and 8, 6. Cf. Xen. *Symp.* v, 4-7.

was the watchword of the Cynic, self-gratification of the Cyrenaic. Law, custom, and propriety were things of secondary importance to the latter; they were abrogated and defied on principle by the former.

It has been said that "Euclid supplied Plato with his theory of Ideas, Antisthenes and Aristippus with his theory of Good." The philosophic importance of the Cynic and Cyrenaic teachers lies in the fact that they registered views, however partial and revolutionary, on the relations of virtue, pleasure, and external prosperity; and thereby stimulated greater minds to define and harmonize ethical principles which might otherwise have been slurred over and confused. The limited sensuality of Aristippus was a one-sided development of the Socratic doctrine that the good *is* the pleasant. Its theoretical value, as a challenge, was somewhat similar to that of Nietzsche's propaganda in modern times. The Cynic tenet of asceticism and self-containment recalls, while it exaggerates, the sterner characteristics of Socrates. But asceticism, rightly considered, is only a discipline, a stage of transition from the laxer to the more chastened use of pleasure. To retire from the world may be at times a necessity; but to be in the world and yet not of it, is the ideal.

Epicurus was justified in calling the Cynics "enemies of Hellas"; for they set themselves in opposition not merely to luxury and vice, but also to much that was of permanent value in the traditional view of things. The Cyrenaic system was not so abnormal and unprecedented. In former times Aristippus might have passed for a genial and easy-going follower of Simonides. He always professed to keep himself within bounds, although his interpretation of the proverb "naught to excess" may well have scandalized respectable folk.

CHAPTER V.

THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF PHILOSOPHIC
ETHICS. (*Continued.*)(II) *Plato.*

THOMAS CARLYLE, recalling Giotto's portrait of Dante, described the face as the most touching he had ever seen. "Lonely there, painted as on vacancy, with the simple laurel wound round it; the deathless sorrow and pain, the known victory which is also deathless." Thus too, and with his lip "curled in a kind of god-like disdain," we may picture to ourselves Plato, the mystic, the metaphysician, the poet. But there is another aspect of his genius; a logical and precise tendency of thought, and the wariness of a practical reformer, seeking ever and anon to harmonize his ideals with the sober realities of life, and to find some middle term of connexion between the *Civitas Dei* in the heavens and the "kingdoms of this world." These two tendencies, the yearning idealism of the mystic and the scientific self-moderation of the logician, appear alternately, sometimes almost simultaneously, in his writings. The wild adventuresomeness of his early metaphysical speculations is curbed in the *Parmenides*; his hazardous guesses are put to a severe dialectical test, which does not destroy but only regulates his zeal for truth. The same may be said of his ethical teaching. As the world of Ideas was to him the only ultimate reality, so he conceived the true life to consist in a due subordination of all earthly interests to the pursuit of Ideal knowledge, the consummation of

which he represented at times rather as an ecstatic vision than as a merely logical apprehension of ascertained facts. This view, as enunciated with uncompromising severity in the *Phaedo*, was the result of one of those inspirations which used at certain periods to carry him out of all contact with ordinary experience. In less exalted moments, sage caution and an accurate appreciation of the facts and imperious necessities of human life would lead him to revise his judgments. He would admit that a relative value attached to lesser ambitions, corresponding to the relative reality of the phenomenal world. He would make ethical provision for the unphilosophic mass of mankind, and enter scrupulously into elaborate details concerning the organization of civic life. Flight from the world, and return to the world, are the landmarks of his ethical progress. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that he wrote one half of his ethical dialogues to emphasize points of view which the other half were intended to correct or explain. In the *Gorgias* he denied that any Athenian statesman, past or present, had proved himself a "good politician"; in the *Meno* he ascribed a relative excellence to virtue which fell short of his ideal, and on this score admitted that there had been and were still "good politicians" at Athens.¹ In the *Phaedo* he expressed his disdain of the things of earth; in the *Republic* and the *Laws* he devoted himself to their regulation. In the *Phaedo* he preached a lofty intellectual asceticism, in which the mercantile and sensual instincts were simply starved and obliterated. In the *Republic*, the *Laws*, and perhaps in the *Philebus*, he admitted the gratification of those instincts to be natural and even salutary, provided that they were controlled by the mind.²

¹ *Gorg.* 516 E sq.; *Meno* 93 A.

² *Rep.* 586 D, E., *Legg.* 636 D, E., 641 C, D.: *Phil.* 26 B seems to admit all pleasure if controlled by reason; but 66 C only sanctions pleasures of learning, and of such senses as smell and sight: see Gomperz iii. 198.

Instances of such revision and modification might be multiplied indefinitely.

Zeller says of him that "the blending of the rays of hitherto isolated genius into one focus is the work of his originality and the fruit of his philosophic principle." Certainly no man was more fitted for such a task. His versatile nature, with its rare commixture of poetic mysticism and logical severity, had been gradually trained by a series of remarkable experiences, calculated to stimulate a genius of smaller endowments. He belonged to an aristocratic family, in which intellectual tastes and political interests were cherished with equal fervour. His birth fell in the year 427 B.C., the same year that Gorgias came on embassy to Athens. His youth was passed in the troublous times of the Peloponnesian War. He was taught by his aristocratic associates to look with terror on the "evils" of the democracy, and to seek comfort in the contemplation of Spartan discipline and the ancient social and ethical ideals of his own city. He showed an early interest in philosophy, and fell under the influence of the Heraclitean Cratylus. Then came the momentous years of intercourse with Socrates, followed by travel in Egypt and Magna Graecia, where he had an opportunity of studying the Pythagorean system. There was hardly a sphere of intellectual energy which had not opened its treasures to his inspection; and perhaps his keenest attention was directed to matters of social, political, and ethical importance. As in his ontology he reconciled Heraclitus, Empedocles, and the Eleatics, and borrowed hints from Anaxagoras and even Socrates, so in tracing his ethical system we shall have to look back continually to stray conceptions, which we have already noticed in the popular morality.

At the beginning of the second book of the *Republic*, the Platonic Socrates remarks: "With these words I thought I had got quit of the discussion; but, as it seems, I had only spoken the prologue."¹ In the first book he had been led into conversation with Thrasymachus, one of the advanced school, who were making war on morality, maintaining that justice was conventionally a virtue, but actually a vice. He had controverted this proposition by a dialectical manœuvre, exhibiting the just man as "good" and "prudent." Hence, as the just man was good and his actions virtuous, justice would help a man to perform his functions in life well, and would therefore conduce to his happiness. Moreover injustice led to dissension and bred weakness, whether in State or family. All these arguments might have been employed by the historic Socrates. Such a general recommendation of virtue was characteristic of him. And yet Plato says it is merely a prologue, or preface, to the real discussion.

Plato and
Socratic
Utilitarianism.

This was not the first time that he had seen fit to advance beyond his master's standpoint. In the *Protagoras* he had enunciated a Socratic doctrine, that the good is the pleasant, and that a man should guide his life by a far-sighted choice of pleasures and avoidance of pains. In the *Gorgias* he repudiated this teaching. Pleasure and good, he argued, are not identical.² Pleasure should have nothing to do with moral choice. Virtue is a state of soul-health. That man is happy whose body and soul are healthy; and no man can have a healthy soul who does not act justly towards himself and other men.³ His procedure in the *Republic* is somewhat similar. He does not deny the validity of the Socratic teaching set forth in the first book, and (we may add) in the *Protagoras*. For at the close of the *Republic* he admits that the life of the

¹ *Rep.* 357 A.

² *Prot.* 352-357; *Gorg.* 497.

³ *Gorg.* 506 c. sqq.

just man is more pleasant, and in a general sense more productive of comfort and success, than the life of the unjust.¹ His objection is that Socrates did not go deep enough into the question. I have tried (he makes Socrates say) to prove that justice is more advantageous than injustice, before discovering what justice is.² This will help to explain his uncompromising procedure at the opening of the second book. Justice, he maintains, is a good thing in itself apart from all consideration of its external results. In order to prove his point, he offers to compare the just man and the unjust, assuming for sake of argument that the latter gets all the advantages of a good reputation, while the former is a persecuted martyr without fame or fortune. The reason of this assumption is twofold. Partly he felt, as we have suggested, that an ultimate explanation of morality could not be obtained from Socratic utilitarianism; but partly also he discerned in the existing state of moral opinion throughout Greece a crying demand for something deeper and more explicit.³

There is no need to go at length into the main argument of the *Republic*. In order to discover the true nature of justice, Plato constructs a just State. Just-dealing in the State he finds to consist, not merely in a few mutual actions of the citizens towards one another (such as the payment of debts, &c.),⁴ but in the faithful performance by each citizen and each social class of their proper tasks, by which means they are best able to promote the welfare of the body corporate.⁵ Then by an elaborate psychological analysis, he discovers that there are elements in the individual soul corresponding to the classes in the State. Applying the analogy of the State to the case of the individual, he demonstrates that here just-dealing consists in the performance by each psychic

¹ *Rep.* 589 c, 613 D, E.

² *Ibid.* 354 B.

³ *Ibid.* 365 A-367 E.

⁴ *Ibid.* 331 C.

⁵ *Ibid.* 433.

element of its appropriate function, and that justice is the disposition of soul which induces this result ;¹ it is the substrate, source, and condition of all virtues.² This underlying psychic disposition he presents as a state of soul-health. For, as bodily health consists in a right harmony of the parts of the body, each part performing its proper function, so morality in its deepest and ultimate sense may be traced back to a condition of soul in which the subordinate parts, the lower nature as we say, work in modest subjection to the dictates of reason. Conversely, vice means the disturbance of this psychic equilibrium owing to the licentious indulgence of the lower appetites and desires. Thus Plato reasoned out the position enunciated in the *Gorgias*. The good and virtuous man has a healthy soul; the vicious man has a diseased soul.³ At the end of the treatise, when he has made an elaborate survey of the stages and conditions of moral deterioration, this is his final recommendation of morality—that it conduces to a healthy state of soul.⁴

It is noticeable that the tests to which in the ninth book Plato submits his contention in favour of morality contain a number of hedonistic considerations. The just man, he argues, gets more real enjoyment than the unjust. Now, strictly speaking, his ideal in most of the dialogues is wholly independent of hedonism. It rests on a psychological analysis, which assumes à priori the existence of higher and lower elements in the human soul. Why, then, must he needs recommend the just life as more pleasurable

¹ *Rep.* 443 C-E.

² 433 B. Gomperz (iii. 75) speaks of Plato's "insufficient severance of individual and social ethics." This is misleading. Plato first represents Justice as a social virtue, as realized in the State, and then traces the aptitude for the performance of social duty back to a right disposition of the individual soul (443 C-E; cf. Aristotle *Eth. Nic.* 1130 a, 12-14, ἀρετὴ πρὸς ἑτερον springs from ἀρετὴ ἀπλῶς); but his use of the term Justice to express this disposition is confusing.

³ *Ibid.* 444 C-E.

⁴ *Ibid.* 588 B-591 E.

than the unjust? The reason is stated at length in the *Laws*. We are discoursing to men, he says, not to gods. "Pleasures and pains and desires are a part of human nature, and on them every mortal being must of necessity hang and depend with the most eager interest. And therefore we must praise the noblest life, not only as the fairest in appearance, but as being one which, if a man will only taste, and not, while still in his youth, desert for another, he will find to surpass also in the very thing which we all of us desire, I mean in having a greater amount of pleasure and less of pain during the whole of life."¹ In this latest of his dialogues, Plato's own view of morality has not altered one whit. No advantage seems to him worth purchasing at the risk of the soul's deterioration and disorder. "He who would be a great man ought to regard, not himself or his own interests, but what is just."² "Of all the things which a man has, next to the gods, his soul is the most divine and the most truly his own. Now in every man there are two parts: the better and superior, which rules, and the worse and inferior, which serves; and the ruling part of him is always to be preferred to the subject."³

It may seem that Plato is making too much of his psychology, and that he has introduced into (2) *Metaphysical*. it an unwarrantable distinction between a higher and a lower nature in man. The truth is that his

¹ *Legg.* 732 E sqq. Trans. Jowett; Gomperz says (iii. 232) that in the *Laws* Plato "announces . . . with somewhat diminished confidence . . . the central doctrine of Socraticism touching the inseparability of happiness" (*ἡδονή*?) "and justice." He cites *Legg.* 663 D, where Plato says that, *even if* they were separable (*εἰ καὶ μὴ τοῦτο ἦν οὕτως ἔχον*), the legislator must do his best to foster a contrary opinion. But Plato emphatically re-states his own view that they are inseparable, with *undiminished confidence*; *ἐμοὶ γὰρ δὴ φαίνεται ταῦτα οὕτως ἀναγκαῖα, ὡς οὐδέ, ὧ φίλε Κλεινία, Κρήτη νήσος σαφῶς* (*Ibid.*, 662 B).

² *Ibid.* 732 A; cf. 661 D, E; 728 A; 743 A (Jowett).

³ *Ibid.* 726 (Jowett).

psychology is supported by, and in a sense presupposes, a magnificent ground-work of metaphysics. In a notable passage of the *Theaetetus* he describes the path of human development as a being-made-like to God.¹ Then, proceeding to comment on the folly of the unjust, he says there are two types, or standards, of life : the one high, the other low. The blessedness of virtuous men consists in their approximation to the higher standard, which is realized in the life of God ; the misery of the wicked consists in their degradation towards the lower standard. And after death the good attain unto a "region which is free from ill," and to which the wicked can never rise.² Now, what is the precise meaning and history of this doctrine? The metaphysical conception of Ideal types is patent in the tenth book of the *Republic*. There mention is made of an Ideal bed "existing in nature," of which particular beds are copies.³ Similarly there would be an Ideal man (*αὐτὸ-ἄνθρωπος*), the perfect model of human life ; and in one passage of the same dialogue,⁴ as in the *Theaetetus*, it is further asserted that the just and virtuous man is moulding himself in the likeness of God. But in the *Republic* and the *Phaedo* Plato would have found it as natural to account for a man's excellence by saying that he participated in (*μετέχει*) the Idea of good, as by asserting his approximation to the Idea of man.⁵ In the *Parmenides*, which may be considered prior in date to the *Theaetetus*, an attempt was made to criticize and discriminate these notions. Plato had observed certain objections to his

¹ ὁμολοῖσιν θεῶ *Theaet.* 176 A. Cf. *Rep.* 613 A.

² *Ibid.* 176 E, sqq.

³ *Rep.* 597 B, ἐν τῇ φύσει οὐσα.

⁴ *Ibid.* 613 A.

⁵ The "conception of the Idea as a *παράδειγμα* . . . is also found in the *Republic* side by side with the doctrine of *παρουσία*, *μέθεξις*, or *κοινωνία*, and it is the form in which the relationship presented itself to Plato in the last of his great metaphysical dialogues, the *Timaeus*." Dr. Adam, *Republic of Plato*, vol. ii., p. 173.

earlier theory of Ideas. The tasks he set himself, were a revision of the contents of the Ideal World, and a more thorough analysis of the relation subsisting between the Ideal and the sensible. The Ideas (we gather from this and subsequent dialogues) now fall into two classes : there are Ideas of natural species, for instance, which are regarded as metaphysical entities ; and there are Ideas of ethical qualities and the like, which are logical concepts. The former are "types existent in nature,"¹ to which sensible particulars bear the relation of resemblance or approximation, their excellence being dependent on the closeness of this approximation. The proposition that a man is good by participation (*μέθεξις*) in the Idea of good, is of merely logical importance. Translated into metaphysics, it becomes "a man attains his highest excellence by approximation to the Idea of man." But even this will not fully explain the language of the *Theaetetus*. For the "type" to which the good man is there said to approximate, is not the Idea of man (*αὐτὸ-ἄνθρωπος*), but God ; moreover it does not appear at first sight what is the other and inferior "type." To understand this, we must first go forward to the final development of Platonism in the *Timaeus*. There we have two principles, the *Same* (*ταὐτόν*) and the *Other* (*θάτερον*), by means of which the universe exists. The former, regarded objectively, is the principle of sameness, stability, and permanent spiritual reality ; the latter of otherness, mutability, materiality. In the World-Soul these two principles appear. By virtue of the former, it is one and immutable. By virtue of the latter, it undergoes change and pluralization, and is embodied in a material environment. It becomes pluralized in a number of particular souls, of various degrees of excellence. Each of these particular souls likewise contains the same two principles ; which, regarded from a

¹ παραδείγματα ἐν τῇ φύσει ἐστῶτα.

subjective point of view, are the principles of reason and sense-perception respectively. Now as the excellence of the universe is assured by the predominance in the World-Soul of *Same* over *Other*, so too the welfare of each individual soul is proportionate to the preservation in it of a similar relation between the two principles. The cultivation in it of *Same* implies in a sense an approximation to the Cosmic *Same*, that is to say to absolute Reason, "a being-made-like to God." And this implies not merely an intellectual, but also a moral, progress. For, according to Plato, any indulgence of the sensual appetites produced in the soul a belief that the World of Sense was the true reality,¹ and thus fostered an exclusive cultivation of the element *Other*, which was incompatible with the true life of Reason and the approach to God. Thus, as Gomperz notes, the analogy drawn in the *Republic* between man and the state has been "expanded into an analogy between man and the universe," in that the human soul contains the two great principles which govern the life of the Cosmic Soul. "The great factors of human weal and woe have become . . . merged in Cosmic principles."

It is now time to consider the significant allusion to the belief in immortality at the close of our passage from the *Theaetetus*. In the tenth book of the *Republic* Plato declared that the greatest rewards of justice are connected with the soul's immortality.² At the close of the book³ he explained his meaning. One of two destinies awaits the soul ; it is capable of enduring every evil, or of gaining infinite bliss. If it desires the latter, it must keep to the "upward path" and practise "justice with understanding." There are two elements in this doctrine—first, the proposition that the individual soul is immortal ; secondly, the proposition that this immortality has an ethical significance, and

¹ *Phaedo* 83 C.² *Rep.* 608 C.³ *Ibid.* 621 C.

entails the possibility of gaining a better or a worse lot. Of the former Plato has given a partial demonstration in the *Phaedrus* and the *Phaedo*¹—partial, because his arguments go to prove, not individual immortality, but the fact that the total amount of soul in the universe exists eternally without increase or diminution. That souls are individually immortal, and have an individual destiny, he probably never considered to be logically proven. His view of the soul's destiny began, from the time when he wrote the *Phaedrus*, to shape itself into a theory of metempsychosis. This theory is stated in its final development at the end of the *Timaeus*. Souls advance or fall back in the scale of existence, according as they improve their highest faculties of intelligence or neglect them by subservience to the things of sense.² This is ratified in a companion passage from his latest work, where a further detail is elicited: soul can only exist in conjunction with body—body of some sort, however refined and exalted it may be.³

Plato's ontology goes back for its origin to the philosophy of the past. Here we are concerned with his theory of the soul's destiny, which finds no anticipation in earlier philosophy, except perhaps in some of the fragmentary utterances of Heraclitus, and in those Pythagorean or Orphic tenets of Empedocles, which have no connexion with his physical system. It is unlikely that Plato derived his beliefs from the established religion, to which he gave no heed, except when he saw fit to purify its mythology for popular use, and whose gods he merely tolerated as dignified relics of antiquity. Indeed the orthodox view of life, as we saw, did not encourage yearnings after immortality. For though the orthodox Greek asserted self-development as

Origin of this
Belief.

¹ *Phaedrus* 245 C-E, *Phaedo* 102 B-107 B.

² *Tim.* 92 B.

³ *Legg.* 903 D, E.

one of his cardinal principles, he meant development within certain fixed limits, and during a finite span of life. Above all, he knew nothing of a perfection to be wrought out by despising the things of sense. For views such as these we must look back to another and peculiar aspect of the Greek genius, Pythagoreanism and the Orphic religion. There is a very obvious connexion between Plato and Orphism. But how this connexion should be expressed, is a difficult matter to decide. Zeller,¹ while postulating that the doctrine of metempsychosis "passed from the theology of the Mysteries into philosophy," claims that Plato could have arrived at the belief in immortality and individual perfection by himself. This may be so; but without Pythagoreanism and the Mysteries his teaching on these matters might have taken a very different shape.

The Orphic attitude of rebellion against the limitations of human existence was calculated to win his sincere approval. The soul was for him, as for the Orphics, emphatically bound in the prison-house of flesh "like an oyster in its shell,"² or buried in the body as in a tomb.³ The soul's object was to get quit of its fetters—to separate itself, so far as possible, from the body and all things terrestrial;⁴ and this could only be done, said the Orphics, by a strict self-purification in the present life. In determining what this purification should be, Plato, as we have seen, struck out a line of his own. Certainly it could not consist in ceremonial observances, but rather in something more akin to the higher teaching of Orphism,

¹ Zeller, *Pre-Socratics*, i., pp. 67, 75. While considering this question, I have become more and more doubtful as to the validity of Zeller's arguments in favour of his view that metempsychosis was an Orphic tenet. At any rate it is probable that Plato had the doctrine brought most prominently before his notice during his sojourn among the Pythagoreans of Magna Graecia.

² *Phaedrus* 250 C.

³ *σῶμα σῆμα*, *Gorg.* 493 A, *Crat.* 400 C.

⁴ *Phaedo* 67 C, D.

in abstinence from fleshly lusts and worldly ambitions. But the crushing of the lower faculties meant to Plato the exaltation of the highest—the philosophic or noëtic. Thus with him the true purification was the pursuit of philosophy, and the philosopher was initiated and purified in the highest sense.¹ This purification consisted in an intellectual, rather than a purely moral, asceticism: although Plato always regarded intellectual as implying moral progress. The state of a man's intelligence was his chief point of interest. The wicked man in the *Timæus* goes to Hades "uninitiated—that is to say, a fool."²

According to Orphism, the worshipper whose initiation had been carried far enough became God-possessed. The Cretan mystic even identifies himself with God, in whose vast Being his own individuality is lost.³ According to Plato, the philosopher who lived "righteously with understanding" became like unto God; and had part in Him.⁴ And this earthly fruition of the God-head was with Plato, as with the Orphics, an earnest of a diviner life to come. We have already noticed his view of the soul's posthumous destiny. The theory of transmigration was first enunciated in the *Phaedrus*, a dialogue full of Orphic imagery and associations.⁵ It was only by slow

¹ *Phaedo* 69 C. Mr. Cornford, to whose article on "Plato and Orpheus" (*Class. Rev.*, vol. xvii., pp. 433 sqq.) I am largely indebted in this discussion, points out that the sixth form of Sophistry—which Dr. Jackson has identified with the practice of the Socratic *ἐλεγχος*, whereby bad opinions are removed from the soul—is a sub-division of *καθαρτική* (*Soph.* 226 A. sqq.).

² ἀτελής καὶ ἀνοητός. *Tim.* 44 C.

³ τῶν Κουρήτων Βάκχος ἐκλήθη ὀσιωθεῖς.

⁴ ἐφαπτόμενοι αὐτοῦ (θεοῦ) τῇ μνήμῃ ἐνθουσιῶντες ἐξ ἐκείνου λαμβάνουσι τὰ ἔθνη καὶ τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα, καθ' ὅσον δυνατὸν θεοῦ ἀνθρώπῳ μετασχεῖν. *Phaedrus* 253 A. cf. *Theaetetus*. 176 A.

⁵ *Phaedrus*, 248 E–249 B. N.B. (1) The probation of the philosophers lasts only for three lives, here and in the under-world; for three periods of a thousand years, each period being divided, as we learn from the myth in the *Republic*, into one hundred years on earth and nine hundred in the other

degrees that he released himself from the bondage of myth, and brought his beliefs on this matter into agreement with his ontology.

So far, in all this psychology and metaphysics, there has been little or no connexion with the orthodox channels of popular thought. The contact with popular morals has been mainly a contact of antagonism. Plato has discarded orthodoxy and struck a partial covenant with dissent. When he comes to interpret morality in terms of law and aesthetics, he is dealing at the outset with current and familiar symbols, and with the mature results of popular experience. Yet here, too, there is a continual breaking off from the beaten track into by-paths, and in the end a winged passage from the actual to the ideal world.

At an early stage the popular moralists seem to have recognized two kinds or codes of Law, the divine and the human ; and by degrees these two codes were seen to be in occasional conflict. But the disagreeable fact was slurred over. Both codes in theory constituted the basis of moral conduct, while in practice it may be that the human had the greater force. In detailed application, these Laws were intended to make for order and unanimity as regards the State, and for seemly and moderate behaviour as regards private life.

With such rough materials Plato dealt in a characteristic manner. His idealistic tendency led him to emphasize and broaden the distinction between actual human laws

world. This is in striking agreement with a passage from Pindar, obviously written under Orphic or Pythagorean inspiration :

ἄσοι δ' ἐτέλμασαν ἐστρίς
ἐκατέρωθι μείναντες ἀπὸ πάμπαν ἀδίκων ἔχειν
ψυχάν, ἔτειλαν Διὸς ὄδῳ παρὰ Κρόνου τύρσιν (*Ol.* ii. 75-77).

(2) Apparently at this period Plato believed the purified soul to pass ultimately into a bodiless existence (cf. *Phaedo* 114 C), and to live what the Orphics would call a life with or in God (*ibid.* 81 A).

and the celestial principles of virtue. The latter appear in his writings as the ethical Ideas, which transcend the precepts of custom and tradition and reveal themselves—though obscurely—to the philosophic intelligence. For ordinary men knowledge of these higher laws was impossible, but in practice they might follow the advice of superior wisdom.¹

To the general conception of order, in the State and in the individual, Plato gave his unqualified assent. The brilliant versatile society of the Periclean epoch savoured to him only of “anarchic irregularity, bungling half-knowledge, and amateurish incompetence.” He looked back, as other disappointed souls were doing, to the past, to the golden age of the Persian wars with its entrancing glamour of strictness, reverence, unanimity, and moral freedom wrought out through severe self-discipline;² and yet it was not so much the past that attracted him as his own ideal development of its spirit, embodied anew in a perfect state, every phase of whose life was to be regulated by the same austere methodic principles.³

The State was, to his mind, only the individual writ large. A law-bound State found its pattern in the law-bound healthy soul. The soul of the individual, therefore, must be chastened and restrained. To this end Plato sometimes quoted the popular rule of moderation, forbidding ill-timed laughter, and inordinate joy or sorrow, and commending in various details of life a choice of the *mean* state midway between two opposite excesses.⁴ But

¹ The doctrine of Nemesis appears in *Legg.* 715 E. sqq.

² *Ibid.* 699 C.

³ For the immoral effect of disorderly art, see *Rep.* 424 D, E, *Legg.* 700 sq; cf. *Plut., Sol.* c. 29 (a popular anticipation).

⁴ *Legg.* 728 E, 732 C, 793 C, D, 919 B; *Rep.* 422; Greek moralists made a special crusade against frivolous and excessive laughter, *Hom. II.* xxiii, 784; *Isoc. Or.* i. 5 A; cf. *Ael. V. H.* viii. 13; *Ath.* 261 D, E; the extreme protestants are caricatured in *Xen. Cyrop.* ii. 2, 11-16 (perhaps a hit at Antisthenes).

his idealism made him discontented with this modest principle, and for the *mean* he occasionally substituted an objective *standard of value*, which finds its origin in the philosophy of Pythagoras. The Pythagoreans professed to discern number and numerical proportion in physical, social, and moral phenomena. It occurred to them to abhor, whether in the realm of pure or of applied mathematics, anything of an indefinite nature which defied measurement, and conversely to extol the finite, the regular, and the calculable, and the number or principle of limitation which renders things calculable. There are many traces throughout the Platonic dialogues of this idea in its ethical bearing.¹ It is the ground-work of the *Philebus*. There Plato describes the sensual passions, desires, pleasures, and pains as *indefinite*,² and in their essence devoid of measure and order. They must be *limited* and restrained through the exercise of reason. Perfect mind will *limit* them perfectly; and the resultant moral disposition will be perfect, and will present an *ideal standard* or pattern.³ Since, however, the perfect mind does not exist among men, this perfect limitation is not realized on earth. But as an ideal standard it remains. Approximation to it implies increasing orderliness, while the road to moral ruin is marked by the gradual self-assertion of the indeterminate element in the soul—the blind lusts and passions—and by the consequent loss of intelligence.⁴

In the *Republic* “with the demand for discipline and order there is coupled another for symmetry and beauty.” As *measure*⁵ in any object implies approximation to a standard and obedience to a restraining law, so *symmetry*⁶

(5) Aestheticism
and
Platonic Love.

¹ *Legg.* 741 A, B. ² ἀπειρον.

³ τὸ μέτρον, the condition of the indefinite substrate after it has been properly limited (cf. *Pol.* 283 E); this name is sometimes given to the proper limiting principle or measure (*Phil.* 24 C).

⁴ *Rep.* 402 E, 573 A sqq. *Legg.* 672 B. ⁵ μετρίότης. ⁶ συμμετρία.

concerns the harmonious and proportionate blending of its parts. This idea of spiritual harmony seems to have come direct from the Pythagoreans. In a deeper sense it was intimately connected with those aesthetic considerations which dominated the popular code of life. But, whereas the orthodox insisted on an harmonious development of soul and body, harmony of the soul alone was with Plato the ultimate requirement. Again, while the orthodox asserted generally that in the sphere of morals beauty was essential to goodness, Plato added a rider to the effect that moral goodness was essential to beauty of any kind.¹

It was in connexion with the Platonic doctrine of Love that the aesthetic aspect of morality found its amplest and most ideal development. We noticed a certain conflict and discrepancy in the popular estimate of boy-love. Prudent folk discouraged it altogether as ruinous and immoral, while enthusiasts emphasized its spiritual and ideal manifestations. Socrates seems in part to have held the balance between these two views, by drawing a clear distinction between love which is carnal and love which is spiritual;² but, on the whole, his gospel was cautious and austere, and he mistrusted an emotional outburst. Plato's solution of the difficulty is sketched in the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*. Put shortly it comes to this: indulgence of the emotions is beneficial or harmful in proportion as they are directed toward a good or an evil object. There are two kinds of madness: the mad-

¹ The popular moralists might have agreed that the virtuous soul was beautiful (*Rep.* 401 D) and the evil soul hideous (*Gorg.* 525 A); but would they have agreed that immoral songs were ugly (*Legg.* 655 B)? The relations of soul and body will concern us later.

² Xen. *Symp.* viii. 12-27. There seems to have been no basis in popular religion for the philosophic distinction between Ἐφροδίτη Οὐρανία and Πάνδημος (*ibid.* viii. 9 sq.), as a goddess of spiritual and a goddess of carnal love respectively: see Harrison and Verrall, *Monuments and Mythology of Ancient Athens*, pp. 216, 332.

ness of sense, which is termed frenzy and springs from physical or moral disease, and the madness of spirit, which is termed ecstasy and springs from the inspiration of celestial Love. Love in the true sense is the desire for what is truly good, and therefore truly beautiful; when personified, it is neither more nor less than the spirit of philosophy, the mediator between man and the Ideas, "between the earthly life and the divine."¹

This latter conception is elaborated in the beautiful myth of the *Phaedrus*, which, though transcending the range of Socrates, is yet imbued with his purity and asceticism. Plato has regard to the sensible world, only that he may rise above sense. His gaze rests on the face of the beloved and on the beauties of earth and sky, only that he may see in them the image and tokens of the ideal and the spiritual; and as he ponders on the greater and transcendent beauty, the lesser fades from view, and his soul is caught up, enchanted, terrified almost, and cleansed as by some sacred rite of initiation. No word but "initiation," no symbolism but that of the mysteries, can adequately express his frame of mind. For not by severe fastings only was the mystic purified; the discipline, too, of joy and wonder nerved his heart, and filled him with strange ecstatic yearnings for the life of God. This exaltation of the worshipper out of himself was the purpose of those dramatic representations which formed a large part of the mystic rites; of those journeyings of the mystic through dark passages, "till a wondrous light meets him, and pure regions and meadows receive him, with solemn voices and dancing, sacred sounds and holy visions, among which he who is now fully initiate and has become free and delivered goes to and fro with a crown upon his head, joining in the rapt worship of companies of holy men and pure."² Plato himself taught that an initiation to the

¹ Plato, *Symp.* 201 C-204 B.

² Them. *περὶ ψυχῆς*, ap. Stob. *Flor.* 120, 28. Mr. Cornford's rendering.

vision celestial had been granted to mankind, long ago in distant pre-natal times, when the souls of men followed in the train of gods up the steep of heaven and out into the transcendent realm beyond, the philosophers in company with Zeus and others with other gods.¹ In that vision the soul beheld true Being, Justice, Temperance, Knowledge, and Beauty absolute. This is the reason why the sight of earthly beauty transports the soul of the true lover; for it bears in it the image of the heavenly. But "he who is not newly initiate or who has become corrupted does not easily rise out of this world to the sight of true beauty in the other; he looks only at her earthly namesake, and, instead of being awed at the sight of her, he is given over to pleasure, and like a brutish beast he rushes on to enjoy and beget; he consorts with wantonness, and is not afraid or ashamed of pursuing pleasure in violation of nature."² Platonic Love (we said) is the spirit of philosophy, the yearning after ideal truth. It is only the philosopher, or the lover not devoid of philosophy, who realises the full transport of love. "For he is always, according to the measure of his abilities, clinging in recollection to those things in which God abides, and in beholding which He is what He is. And he who employs aright these memories is ever being initiated into perfect mysteries and alone becomes truly perfect. But as he forgets earthly interests and is rapt in the divine, the vulgar deem him mad, and rebuke him; they do not see that he is inspired."³

"He forgets earthly interests, and is rapt in the divine." "The rules and proprieties of life, on which he formerly prided himself, he now despises."⁴ So far has Plato's philosopher passed from the safe counsels of the ancient law of moderation. There is but one thing needful to him; one unearthly transcendent enthusiasm guides his life. The lesser passions have lost their hold.

¹ *Phaedrus* 250 B, C.

² *Ibid.* 250 E. sqq. (Jowett).

³ *Ibid.* 249 C. D. (Jowett).

⁴ *Ibid.* 252 A. (Jowett).

The lower manifestations of virtue, "mortal temperance" and niggardly thrift, are as dross to one whose gaze is fixed on the celestial archetypes of beauty and goodness. And this is precisely why such unfettered spiritual ecstasy did not run counter, in Plato's mind, to his utterances on the subject of harmony and moderation. He felt that the training and cultivation of the higher emotions was the best way of keeping the lower in check. Energy must be diverted from wrong into right channels. And conversely, the lower emotions must be subject to discipline, simply in order that the development of a man's higher nature may be unimpeded. When Plato came to write the *Timaeus*, he realized that the lower faculties and physical instincts cannot be crushed, or the body neglected, without enervating the character and destroying the harmony of soul. But in the *Phaedrus* he set no cautionary limit to the spiritual life. There was danger, he felt, in the unrestrained gratification of sensual passions, because it filled the soul with riot and discord, and entailed no permanent gain. Spiritual ecstasy, on the other hand, led upwards to that region where "pasturage is found suited to the highest part of the soul," where dwell the ultimate realities and steadfast joys, "which no man taketh away."¹

In the *Phaedrus* the moral purification of men is wrought out by attraction. They are drawn out of themselves. *ἐκπλήττονται καὶ οὐκέθ' αὐτῶν γίγνονται*. They are ravished with love of the Ideal, and the fleshly garb of sensual desires, as it were, falls off them. Moreover, they attain knowledge of virtue in its ultimate reality and transcendent beauty. The ethical Ideas are not laws merely, but aesthetic patterns. They act as final causes. The soul sees them, loves them, and obeys.

¹ Cf. the discussion on *True and False Pleasure* in *Rep.* 583 B-588 A: sensual pleasures bring no *βεβαία πλήρωσις*; intellectual pursuits fill the soul with *μᾶλλον ὄντα*.

The *Gorgias* was Plato's challenge to the immorality, the *Phaedrus* to the morality, of his day.

Knowledge of right, spiritual ecstasy, discipline and beauty in the soul, the cultivation of intelligence and the higher emotions, the hope and fear of Everlasting Life—all these notions, which have hitherto appeared in isolation, were tributary elements in Plato's ethical ideal, the "becoming like to God." His ideal was in itself a magnificent, and almost unwarrantable, enlargement of that principle of self-development which was deeply imbedded in the popular consciousness; it was a projection of popular thought on to a higher plane. His whole scheme of education, directed to the realizing of this ideal, consisted solely in one uniform and gradual process: the projection, so to speak, of the man out of himself; the focussing of his central faculty, "Insight," on the highest good, on the world of spirit; all other virtues, he said, follow naturally from this.¹ It would seem, then, that the most satisfactory way of regarding his ethical theory as a connected whole is to imagine it gradually realizing itself in the education and progress of the genuine philosopher, as he conceived that progress to take place. Afterwards attention may be called to his treatment of the great mass of mankind, who in a pronounced degree diverged from his ideal; to the unadulterated contempt which he showered on certain features of the popular morality, and to the relative approval with which he viewed its more acceptable developments.

"Much learning doth not educate" had been one of the pointed utterances of Heraclitus. It might also be taken as the motto of Plato's educational system in the *Republic*. The cultivation of mind, the direction of the

¹ *Rep.* 518 E.

intelligence aright, was his object from first to last. To this end something more than book-learning, scholarship, and studiousness was required. For, although he made it clear that his philosopher was to be literally a man "fond of learning,"¹ yet mere intellectualism was very far from his thoughts. The universe was in his eyes emphatically the work of God. It displayed a moral design. It was governed by holy laws of Justice and Temperance. Metaphysical study was an initiation into divine mysteries. The man, then, who was to pry into these sacred things, and not only discern the laws of Being, but absorb them and submit his spiritual life to their guidance, must be something other than an intellectual machine. And this becomes more obvious, when we remember that in the *Republic* the Ideas of Justice, Temperance, and Goodness are the most signal features of Plato's metaphysical world; and metaphysical study is recommended, chiefly because of its direct bearing on the problems of practical morality. Thus knowledge of the Ideal World presupposes an adequate moral disposition, not only because the subject-matter is dignified, but also because otherwise it cannot be apprehended. The wicked man cannot discern righteousness. The lustful man can conceive no reality transcending the things of sense.²

So it is that from earliest childhood, before the rational faculties are properly developed, the appetites must be restrained by good habits, and the emotions purified and refined by the discipline of beauty.³ These experiences nourish in the soul a natural sense of what is good and lovely, and of what is bad and hideous.⁴ The intellect becomes possessed of right opinions concerning moral and aesthetic principles. But the philosopher must not rest here. Opinion is an uncertain quantity, and liable to constant change. Custom and tradition are unsure guides.

¹ *Rep.* 376 B; cf. *Phaedo* 114 E.

² *Phaedo* 83 C; cf. *Rep.* 487 A.

³ *Rep.* 518 E, *Legg.* 653 B.

⁴ *Ibid.* 401 E, sqq.

Morality should be based, if not on knowledge of ultimate moral principles, at least on the nearest possible approach to such knowledge. At the head of the Ideal World, in the *Republic*, stands the Idea of Good. Human happiness is made to depend on the discovery and interpretation of this Idea ; for it is only when the ideal principle of good is ascertained that the excellence of things can be rightly estimated, inasmuch as it is the principle of good in everything which gives it its value. Certain modifications of this view are introduced in later dialogues. In the *Timaeus* the Idea of good seems to disappear, and it is asserted that a study of the harmony and movements of the universe is essential to the highest virtue and happiness.¹ But two principles remain clear throughout—there must be an investigation of moral truth in the abstract,² and moral truth is inseparably connected with metaphysics.

It will be remembered that the kinship between man and the universe, worked out in the *Timaeus*, rests on the alleged existence in the universe as a whole, and in all the souls in which the universal soul is pluralized, of two principles, the *Same* and the *Other*, which, regarded subjectively, are the principles of reason and of sense-perception, or, regarded objectively, the principles of stability and of variation. Now, in the universe, the former has so far got control of the latter that unity and stability are manifest amid its changing vicissitudes.

¹ *Tim.* 90 D. Something of the same kind is put theologically in the *Laws*: μέγιστον δὲ τὸ περὶ τοὺς θεοὺς ὀρθῶς διανοηθέντα ζῆν καλῶς ἢ μὴ (*Legg.* 888 B ; cf. 966 C). Zeller says that in the *Laws* "there appears, in the place of scientific cognition, practical good sense or understanding, which in itself presupposes no higher knowledge" (*Plato and Acad.* p. 529): he cites *Legg.* 689 A, where the greatest ἀγνοία is said to be διαφωνία λύπης τε καὶ ἡδονῆς πρὸς τὴν κατὰ λόγον δόξαν, while those in whom there is συμφωνία are called σοφοί. Against this must be set the passages I have referred to (888 B, 965 D, 966 C).

² οὐδέμεθά ποτε ἡμῖν ἰκανῶς ἔξεν τὰ πρὸς ἀρετὴν, περὶ ἧς οὐτ' εἰ πολλὰ ἐστ' οὐτ' εἰ τέτταρα οὐθ' ὡς ἐν δυνατοῖ φράζειν ἐσόμεθα ; *Legg.* 965 D.

Thus the laws of the universe present the workings of reason in all possible perfection. It does not, however, appear at first sight what connexion this has with ethics, or how the interpretation of Cosmic laws can lead to the solution of ethical problems. In the earlier dialogues the relation between ethics and metaphysics is clear enough. The soul has had in a previous existence a direct vision of the metaphysical world, which contains Ideas of Justice and so forth. So it is affirmed mythologically in the *Phaedrus*, and literally in the *Phaedo*. The soul's object in this life is, so far as possible, to regain this intimate acquaintance with the Ideas; when discovered, they act as final causes—their beauty attracts the soul to live after their pattern. She thus becomes equipped with a complete knowledge of ethical laws, and with a stimulus to follow them. In the *Timæus* there is no mention of these ethical Ideas at all. What the soul has seen in her prenatal state, is the "nature of the universe."¹ What the philosopher has to study, are the workings of mind in the universe.² The reason given for this study is the hope that the mind of the individual may become like, and work like, the intellectual principle governing the motions of the universe. It is by studying the workings of the Cosmic Reason that a man's reason comes to resemble and obey it. And this is precisely the working out of Plato's ideal, the "becoming like to God," the development of a man's divinest faculties. "He who has been in earnest in his love of knowledge and of true wisdom, and has exercised his intellect more than any other part of him, must have thoughts immortal and divine if he attain truth, and in so far as human nature is capable of sharing in immortality, he must be altogether immortal; and since he is ever cherishing the divine power and has the divinity within him in perfect order, he must be perfectly happy."³ Such a man will likewise order the lower

¹ ἡ τοῦ παντὸς φύσις. *Tim.* 41 E. ² *Ibid.* 90 D. ³ *Ibid.* 90 B, C (Jowett).

instincts of his nature by the aid of his increased knowledge of the morally organized universe; and we may say more than this: if his desires are set on higher things, the lower impulses will naturally fall into their proper place.¹ Indeed, it is because the lower pleasures and the lower emotions, such as fear, greed, and grief, are inconsistent with, and unworthy of, the higher life that they should be shunned.² The cultivation of the highest in us is the ultimate basis of ethics. Morality, says the dying Socrates, does not consist in a bartering of pleasures and pains; wisdom is the one thing needful—the “one true coin for which all things should be exchanged,” and, if need be, every pain endured and every pleasure forsaken. It is not fear of dishonour or penury that keeps the good man from sin, but the monitions of his higher self, which he will not defile. To him comes philosophy, and “chides him gently, and essays to loose his bonds.” And he considering within himself, not the loss of pelf or physique which the gratification of his lusts and passions will entail, but the degradation which his soul will suffer, casts off the yoke of iniquity, lest, by being chained to the things of sense, he should lose his vision of the Ideal World.³

Such, then, are the education and life of the philosopher. From first to last the central feature of his progress is the turning of the soul's eye to behold the Ideal, the cultivation of the mind in him to resemble in the excellence of its working the mind of the universe. Round this central theme all the rest of Plato's ethical teaching clusters. The soul, in which this life is to be developed, must be harmonized and orderly. The lesser emotions must offer no obstruction; they must learn their proper station. The development of reason thus implies a healthy and

¹ *Rep.* 485 D.

² *Phaedo* 83 B, C.

³ *Phaedo* 69 A; 82 C, D, E; 83 B, C. Cf. *Legg.* 963 A, νοῦν δέ γε πάντων τούτων (sc. ἀρετῶν) ἡγεμόνα, πρὸς δὲ δὴ τὰ τε ἄλλα πάντα καὶ τούτων τὰ τρία δεῖ βλέπειν.

balanced state of soul, as its basis.¹ Nor is the lesson of the *Phaedrus* at all discarded in the later dialogues. In the *Timaeus* the beauty and harmony of the sensible world guide the reason to perceive the hidden beauties and harmonies of thought. The senses, when uncontrolled, make for irrational pleasure; but when subjected to reason, they are useful ministers.² Intellectual study, generally speaking, helps the reason to develop itself and to order the lower faculties aright. The whole human nature is redeemed and sanctified, under the leadership of reason, to the life of reason; and the wage of this mighty labour is growth in reason. Even here the ethical creed is not fully summarized. A man must seek, not his own good merely, but the good of the whole body of which he is a member. "You were created for the sake of the whole," says the Athenian in the *Laws*, "not the whole for the sake of you." In the *Republic* the philosopher is made to quit his course of ideal self-development, in order to raise his fellow-citizens up the steep hill of virtue. Self-development and the development of others are the supreme laws of life. And in the background of this stupendous scheme Plato has set the hope and fear of immortality. Not in one life only, a mere span of three-score years and ten, does he reckon the value and destiny of human souls. His gaze ranges backwards and forwards over a trackless infinity, contemplating for himself and for every other individual being the eternal vicissitudes of a life which knows no end as it knew no beginning.

Plato never thought that his ideal was within the reach of any but a select minority. The mass of men could not be philosophers. But he was too full of ardour for practical reform to make no provision for the average man. Where perfection could not be attained, he was content with relative merit. Indeed he knew no such thing as

Plato's Ideal
and the
Multitude.

¹ *Rep.* 485-487 A.

² *Tim.* 47 B-D.

perfection. Human life was for all men a continual progress, an approximation to the divine. The only difference between the philosopher and the ordinary man was that the former had attained a higher level than the latter in the upward journey. Any advance, however humble, was worth encouragement; and conversely, anything that tended to the soul's degradation was to be abhorred. For the tyrant,¹ who lived on the principle that "might is right," and fell a prey to his desires; for the shrewd worldling,² who limited his vice by considerations of material profit and loss; for the respectable burgher,³ who preferred prudential mediocrity to divine aspirations; and for the legal jobber,⁴ whose soul had become "petty" and "crooked" owing to his miserly pursuits, Plato had only words of pity or scorn. In all these instances he beheld a soul either merely stagnant, or undergoing positive degradation, through preference of worldly interests to the divine. But any sign of spontaneous moral feeling won his respect. In the *Gorgias*⁵ Rhadamanthus is filled with joy at beholding the soul of a private citizen who had "lived with piety and truth, and without being a busy-body in other men's concerns"; and in the *Laws*⁶ the stranger eulogizes the best representatives of Athenian character, "for good Athenians are exceptionally good; they alone live well without compulsion, of their own accord, and by the grace of God." In the same dialogue Plato expresses himself satisfied if "the mass of the citizens live by the voice of the statutes."⁷ So too in the *Republic* a large part of the community does not advance beyond the preliminary education in music and gymnastics (it is undetermined how far the lowest class share in this); for the rest, their moral life is guided by the institutions and

¹ *Gorg.* *passim*.

² *Phaedo* 68 D, E, *et passim*.

³ *Phaedrus* 256 E. sqq.

⁴ *Theaet.* 173 A. cf. *Rep.* 519 A.

⁵ *Gorg.* 526 C (Jowett). cf. *Rep.* 620 C. ⁶ *Legg.* 642 C (Jowett). cf. 777 D.

⁷ *Legg.* 966 C (Jowett).

customs established by the philosophic rulers.¹ A difficulty arises here. Plato was continually inveighing against the mere following of "custom without intelligence,"² which led to a blind and stereotyped existence; and it seems that, however good the laws and institutions of the Platonic State might be, the greater part of its members would not rise above an unenlightened conventionalism; they would have no vital principles of morality to guide them. The objection may be disposed of on two grounds. In the first place, the preliminary education was calculated to produce a spontaneous moral feeling in all who received it, which would make morality for them independent of custom. Secondly, it is obvious that the philosophers were intended to cultivate the intelligence of the rest of the citizens so far as was possible. Plato makes this clear in his later works. In the *Politicus*³ the ruler disseminates a "right opinion" throughout the community; and in the *Laws* the legislator prefaces his edicts with a moral exhortation, in order that they may call forth a more intelligent obedience.⁴

Plato's conception of the infinite value of the soul, and his division of soul into superior and subordinate elements, colour his treatment of certain particular ethical questions, and his regard for certain particular types of life, which the discussion of popular morality has brought to our notice. The popular ideal may be summarized as a harmony of soul and body, a general all-round development of human powers. Plato, who set no bounds to life's ultimate possibilities, and esteemed men in proportion to their aptitude for rising out of the groove of ordinary human existence, felt a continual temptation to decry the

¹ *Rep.* 500 D.

² *Rep.* 619 C. *Phaedo* 82 A. B.

³ *Pol.* 306-end, esp. 309 E.

⁴ *Legg.* 723 A.

body and its needs. In the *Theaetetus* the soul of the philosopher soars aloft, while his body remains on earth an inert uninteresting mass of matter.¹ In the *Phaedo* it appears that the philosopher's main object in life is to separate his soul as far as possible from its material environment. Even in the *Republic*, where a more practical scheme is proposed and the guardians are to be "sound in mind and limb," it is "symmetry of soul" rather than "symmetry of body and soul" that is pronounced the true object of education.² But here, as also in the *Timaeus*, physical culture is commended in so far as it exerts a beneficent reflex influence on the soul.³ The same thesis is maintained in the *Laws*. It is frequently asserted that this latest dialogue presents a return to the old Hellenic ideal.⁴ As a matter of fact, although in many passages the body is recognized as a distinct entity side by side with the soul,⁵ its culture is still made auxiliary to spiritual development; and in working out this principle Plato discards a number of physical excellences, which undoubtedly found a place in the popular scheme.⁶ If he somewhat abated his earlier intellectual asceticism, he did not abandon the fundamental truths which it contained.

The same working out of his fundamental principles is generally manifest in his attitude towards
(2) Artisans. mechanics, slaves, and women. He rationalized, and in part sanctioned, the traditional contempt of the aristocracy for manual art and commerce, on the ground that such activities implied and fostered a natural weakness of principle, starving the nobler faculties of the

¹ *Theaet.* 173 E.

² *Rep.* 410 B-E. Cf. *Legg.* 644 A, 770 C, D.

³ *Rep.* 591 C, D. *Tim.* 86 B-88.

⁴ Gomperz iii. 269. Cf. 230.

⁵ *Legg.* 807 C, 795 E.

⁶ *Legg.* 728 D, E (honour must not be given to the fair, strong, swift, tall, healthy body—although many may think so; but the mean states of these habits are safest, etc.).

mind and breeding covetousness and dishonesty.¹ But he set no caste-like barrier against the mechanic and his family. If a child of the lowest class in his Ideal City showed talent for a higher life, he was to be promoted in the social scale; and it is to be presumed that if Plato had met with mechanics of high character and generous sentiment, he would not have condemned them merely on account of their circumstances. On a closer survey his interpretation of the terms "magnificence" and "vulgarity" is seen to transcend the range of popular thought. For his "magnificence" contained no suggestion of earthly grandeur and genteel ambitions. The truly "magnificent" man was the philosopher who rejoiced in the dignity and magnificence of the Ideal World; and, as compared with this, all other occupations seemed "banausic" and vulgar.²

The political economy of the *Republic* and the *Laws* (3) Slaves. pre-supposes slavery. The line of demarcation between bond and free is drawn deep.³ The slave has less right to the privileges and protection of society. He is the property of his master.⁴ His misdeeds must be treated with severer penalties than those of other men.⁵ His murder calls for cheaper atonement.⁶ It was

¹ *Rep.* 590 C.; N.B. the analogy between craftsmen and the appetitive part of the soul (Gomperz iii. 73); *Legg.* 704, 918 D.

² *Theaet.* 176 C. Cf. *Legg.* 644 A.

³ *Legg.* 777 B; *Legg.* 776 C, repeats the familiar Homeric sentiment, that a man loses half his wits on the day of enslavement (Hom. *Od.* xviii. 322). Plato thinks it unreasonable and impolitic to address or counsel slaves like freemen, or to play with their children (*l. c.* 776 D); contrast the generous spirit of the Athenian democracy (Ch. ii. p. 39, n. 1): contrast Plato *Rep.* 549 A with Isoc. *ad Dem.* 8 D.

⁴ *Ibid.* 882 B.

⁵ *Ibid.* 882 A, 914 A.

⁶ *Ibid.* 865 D (cf. *Euthyphr.* 15 D): cf. Lyc. *Leocr.* § 66, οὐδὲ τὸν μὲν ολκίτην ἀποκτείναντα ἀργυρίῳ ἐξήμιον, τὸν δὲ ἐλεύθερον εἰργον τῶν νομίμων ἄλλ' ὁμοίως ἐπὶ πᾶσι καὶ τοῖς ἐλαχίστοις παρανομήμασι θάνατον ὤρισαν εἶναι τὴν ζήμιαν: Lycurgus is speaking of the uniform severity of the old law: he seems to imply that in his own day practice had introduced a change, and that the

not contrary to Platonic principles to regard the average slave, who was a barbarian and excluded from the education and ideals of the Greek people, as something less than an ordinary human being. But there seems a logical inconsistency between such thoughts as these and the recognition that "many a man has found his slaves better in every way than brethren or sons,"¹ and that a good example may sow in them the seeds of virtue.² It was because Plato confined his attention in social and political matters to the development of the Greek race, that he was continually overlooking the claims of the non-Greek peoples which feed the slave market in his Ideal City.³ The distinction between bond and free, in a moral sense, was not unknown to him; and his frequent references to the importance of the inner life, as opposed to the outward circumstances of a man, suggest a somewhat broader view of international rights than is expressed in his plea for Greek union in the *Republic*.⁴ His ethical principles find a more logical issue in his cosmology, in his conception of the universe as a "College of Souls" knit together by imperishable bonds of a common destiny and duty.⁵ Here is the Stoic doctrine in embryo.

In his treatment of women Plato was more punctilious

(4) **Women.** and logical, and consequently more in advance of Greek, and especially of Athenian, opinion.

He started generally with the proposition that "the female nature is less capable in the matter of virtue than the

murder of a slave was treated with comparative leniency. So too, the old law protected freeman and slave alike from *ὑβρις*, Dem. Or. xxi. §§ 58 sqq.; Aesch. Or. i. § 17; Hyp. fr. 123 (Blass); Lyc. fr. 72 (Tur.); Lys. Or. i. § 32. The last-named authority says that the penalty was doubled in the case of outrage on freemen. That slaves should have been protected by law at all seems to have caused surprise and called for comment: Aesch. *l. c.* Dem. *l. c.*

¹ *Ibid.* 776 D (Jowett).

² *Ibid.* 777 E.

³ *Rep.* 469 B, C.

⁴ *Rep.* 469 B-471 C.

⁵ *Legg.* 903.

nature of men";¹ but he could not rest here. It would be, he thought, a mere concession to prejudice, if he despaired of the female character. It would be a serious and unnecessary loss to the community if the women were left without an organized routine of duties.² The system of female education and the organization of female duties, which he suggested, were more remote from the ordinary Greek ideals than they are from practical realization in modern times. He proposed that women should be educated in company with the male sex,³ in all the duties of the male citizen.⁴ Even here he was still greatly influenced by popular thought. He tried to make his women men: he recognized no distinctively female sphere of work.⁵ Moreover the relationship of man and wife was not the highest that he knew. The marriage tie in the *Laws* is stricter than in the *Republic*.⁶ But the aim of marriage in both is objective; the production of good children is the chief consideration.⁷ The highest spiritual relation known to Plato was that of man to man.

The *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus* idealize the Greek view of friendship. When Socrates insisted (5) Friendship. that the object of friendship was the mutual help and sympathy of two friends in a life of virtue and generous ambition, he was preaching an ideal which was realized every day by the best men around him. He himself went a step further, and enlisted friendship in the

¹ *Legg.* 781 B. For the connexion of Plato's schemes with the "nature" movement, indicated in ch. iii. p. 49 sq., see Dr. Adam, *Republic of Plato*, vol. i. p. 280; note on *Rep.* 451 C sqq.

² *Ibid.* 805 A.

³ *Ibid.* 771 E, 805 A. *Rep.* 456.

⁴ *Rep.* 456 A.

⁵ Cf. Zeller, *Plato, etc.*, p. 457. The circumstances of Athenian life explain Plato's arid condescension and occasional rudeness, e.g. *Tim.* 42 B (cf. *Legg.* 781 A, C, 806 C).

⁶ *Legg.* 841 D, in agreement with the best popular sentiment.

⁷ *Ibid.* 721 B, 773 B, E, 783 D. Cf. *Rep. Bk. V.*

service of philosophy.¹ This conception was developed with a certain romantic intensity by Plato. The sensual aspect of friendship thus gave place, more and more, to the spiritual.² The path of his moral philosophy in this, as in all other questions, was marked by the subordination of body to soul.

The general obligations of one human being to another, which are summed up in the words, Justice, (6) Social
Morality. Honesty, or Social Duty, need not detain us here. The *Republic* is largely an attempt to bridge over the supposed gulf between Justice and Expediency, between individual and social well-being. It is explained that Justice implies not merely the discharge of a few special obligations, such as the payment of debts, but the scrupulous performance of such functions as shall best contribute to the welfare of one's fellow-citizens. There is a duty to foe as well as to friend. On this question Plato seems to waver. In the *Crito*³ he condemns the recompense of evil for evil. In the *Philebus*⁴ he calls it "neither unjust nor envious to rejoice at the misfortunes of one's enemies." Perhaps it is safer to emphasize his argument in the *Republic*.⁵ A good man must not be maltreated, even though he be an enemy; and no one must be maltreated, if that involves any detriment to his moral character or his capacities for good.

"A profound ethical intuition," it has been said, "would seem necessarily to depend on a profound religious insight. For the best man is he who loves good for its own sake, and pursues it in a reasonable manner. But to pursue it reasonably is to

Conclusion.

¹ Xen. *Mem.* i. 6, 14.

² Cf. and contrast *Phaedrus* 256 B and *Legg.* 636 C, 841 D.

³ *Crito* 49 A.

⁴ *Phil.* 49 D.

⁵ *Rep.* 334 C-336 A.

pursue it with an intelligence of its place in the Universe ; and not merely an intelligence, but a passionate apprehension." No philosopher ever realized the truth of this principle more fully than Plato. His "ethical conviction assumed more and more the nature of a religious confidence according to which mind and the object of mind are the supreme realities, the measures of all else in the Universe, at once the end and cause of all that is." This conviction was accompanied by another, respecting the comparative unimportance of all things transitory, unstable, material. He might have said of philosophy what Newman said of the Catholic Church : "She regards this world and all that is in it as a mere shade, as dust and ashes, compared with the value of one single soul ; . . . she considers the action of this world and the action of the soul simply incommensurate, viewed in their respective spheres." With Plato, as with the Catholic, there is one ultimate good, one thing needful, one transcendent enthusiasm to which all else must be subordinated, and on the cultivation of which human well-being depends ; and the object of human activity has been described by both schools in similar terms, by the one as an approach and approximation to God, and by the other as an entry into the Kingdom of God. These similarities, however, are accompanied by important points of difference. One of these may be mentioned here. The Christian consecrates his feelings and emotions to the love of a Divine Master. The Platonic ideal is reached by a consecration of the intellect to objects of intelligence. This contrast will at once suggest a difficulty concerning the place of morality in Plato's philosophical scheme. It is easy to see how the love of a God, conceived as morally good, may turn the sinner from his evil way, and transfuse his whole moral being with a passionate enthusiasm for all that is noble and true. But it does not appear at first sight why metaphysical study should have this effect. We have already

attempted to meet this difficulty ; but as its solution carries us to the heart of Platonism, we need not apologize for recurring to it before passing on to Aristotle. The explanation is twofold. Not only does devout intellectual study, the development of the highest part of the soul, imply *per se* a due subordination of the lower parts, and a purging of the lower emotions ; but the path of intellectual improvement is also the path of ethical knowledge. Plato never separated intellectual and moral wisdom. The highest objects of intellectual study contained for him a moral significance. Moral law and order reigned throughout the length and breadth of the universe. By gazing on the heavens, the philosopher drank in, consciously or unconsciously, the highest principles of moral goodness. In learning the economy of nature, he learned also the economy of his own soul.¹ The man who with reverence and affection studies the most divine and orderly things, must live after the pattern of that whereon he centres his enthusiasm.² Cultivate the things of the mind, which are also the divinest, most beautiful and noble things, and the evils both of the individual and of society will fly. This was the sum of Plato's teaching. He sought to create in men a moral enthusiasm, by pointing to the things above. For anything like an ethical code we must look to Aristotle.

¹ *Tim.* 47 B-D.

² *Rep.* 500 C, D.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF PHILOSOPHIC
ETHICS. (*Continued.*)(III) *Aristotle.*

WHEN Arcesilas transferred his studies from the Lyceum to the Academy, he felt that he had been promoted to the company of gods, or carried back to the Golden Age.¹ A diametrically opposite experience awaits the student of moral philosophy, who turns from the Platonic dialogues to the *Nicomachean Ethics* of Aristotle. In place of the most dazzling literary masterpieces known to the ancient world, he finds a systematized mass of lecture notes, which make no pretension to elegance of style. The business-like commonsense of the practical man has replaced the inspirations of the poet; logical accuracy and comprehensive impartiality are substituted for mystic enthusiasm. So different in temperament are the two philosophers, that they would seem to stand at opposite poles of human experience. Each of them may claim an absolute supremacy, so far as temperament and method are concerned, over about one-half the thinking world. It would be hard to find a philosopher in whose horoscope neither Platonism nor Aristotelianism is in the ascendant. It would be still harder to find one who could completely reconcile the two points of view. Plato started in his reasonings from God and the divine order of things.

Aristotle and
Plato.

¹ Diog. L. iv. 22.

Aristotle started from man and the facts of human experience. To Plato, God was the measure of goodness both in man and throughout the world. To Aristotle, man was the measure of goodness, so far as it concerned human life. Some few generations back, Protagoras had enunciated his doctrine: "man the measure." While reposing in the individual man the supreme right of judgment on moral questions, he had left it logically uncertain how far the ethical caprices of each individual were to be sanctioned. To escape from these difficulties Plato had carried ethics up into the Ideal World. "God will be to us the measure of all things, much rather than any man, as some folks say."¹ This was his reply to Protagoras. The answer which Aristotle returned is magnificent alike in its common sense, and in the shrewd appeal it made to the better part of the popular consciousness. In every line of action virtue and the good man, as such, are the standard of judgment.² The good man is the measure of ethical good. And who is the good man? Everyone knows, "unless he is defending a thesis."

This is a fair omen for one hoping to arrive at a connexion between popular morality and Aristotelian ethics. It seems that, whereas Plato has raised ethics above the plane of ordinary thought and experience, Aristotle is returning steadily from the heights of speculation to the level of every-day life. The utterances of wise men carry some weight, he says, but the ultimate test of ethical truth lies in common experience and the stern realities of existence; all that will not meet this test is mere theory.³ It has been maintained that the more logical and accurate a philosopher becomes, the nearer he approaches to common-sense; and if this be so, it follows that, as

General Characteristics of Aristotle.

¹ *Legg.* 716 C (Jowett).

² *Ar. Eth. Nic.* 1176 a, 17. Cf. 1113 a, 32; 1107 a, 1.

³ 1179 a, 17.

popular morality is evolved by an application of common-sense to the facts of every-day experience, an accurate and logical philosopher, with an eye to fact, will be in closer sympathy with popular views than one who resigns himself to a transcendent enthusiasm, or is guided by his own unique experience in a valuation of the goods of human life. Accuracy implies comprehensiveness, and a comprehensive treatment of any subject is impossible without due attention to the sentiments of ordinary men. When, moreover, the aim of a treatise is practical, and its suggestions are intended to be applied directly to the conduct of the average citizen, it is probable that the writer will make full use of current opinions which have been tested in practical life and sanctioned by long experience. All these characteristics, a love of accuracy and comprehensiveness, caution and moderation, and a definitely practical aim, are found in Aristotle. He refused to abet the pious fraud of those who made out pleasure to be a bad thing in order to deter the multitude from excess.¹ Fraud and inaccuracy would be found out sooner or later, and could not be a sure guide of life. He revelled in working out a reconciliation of seemingly contradictory views, by showing that they were only different aspects of one and the same truth. No system of ethics seemed to him profitable which did not disdain extravagance and eccentricity. He submitted every phase of Greek morality to a careful inspection, and finally rejected only such sentiments as were debased or extravagant, bestial or inhuman, too hellish or too divine. Such systems are worthless if they are not practical; and he was never tired of emphasizing the practical nature of his treatise.² It is significant that he gave little or no attention to a theory of right and wrong; and that the freedom of the will, which is usually debated in terms of physiology or metaphysics, he assumed tentatively as a matter of

¹ *Ar. Eth. Nic.* 1172 a, 27.

² 1103 b, 27; cf. 1179 b, 1.

experience. His chapter on Voluntary and Involuntary Action, destitute as it is of speculative ingenuity, was designed to teach the practical man how to dispense praise and blame, and to guide the judge in the pronouncement of a legal penalty.

All these elements in the character of his teaching, his accuracy, his broad sympathy, his practical outlook, and his shrewd grasp of the conditions of real life, make it likely that at every turn Aristotle will be found to utter sentiments which are a juster development of the popular consciousness and more intelligible to the popular mind than the idealism of Plato or the one-sided aberrations of Antisthenes and Aristippus; and this expectation is confirmed on the most superficial perusal of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. He quotes with obvious approval the saying of Hesiod:—

His Attitude to
Popular Thought.

“Rumour, borne on myriad tongues
Of the people, fainteth not—
Fainteth not, for 'tis divine.”¹

He declares that they who presuppose that what all the world aims at is not good are talking sheer nonsense; “for what all men think, we take to be true.”² He believed that no human soul was without its share of truth, and that the voice of the people was in some sense the voice of God. What he thus maintained as an axiom, he followed out in theory. In examining an ethical problem he collected the general opinions held by any considerable section of the community, placed them side by side with the views of the cultured and thoughtful minority, and compared and criticized the evidence thus obtained.³ His

¹ *Ar. Eth. Nic.* 1153 b, 27. Hesiod *W. and D.* 763.

² 1172 b, 36.

³ 1145 b, 2 sqq., on which Burnet comments “not all *φαινόμενα* are *ἐνδοξα*, but only *τὰ τοῖς πολλοῖς* and *τὰ τοῖς σοφοῖς φαινόμενα*” (thus a *σοφιστικὸς λόγος*, which only appeals to a few unwise men, is not accounted an *ἐνδοξον*). Cf. 1098 b, 26 sqq.

work is literally honeycombed with popular views. Many of his statements are backed up by quotations from history,¹ or illustrated by episodes in the legal contests and every-day routine of the Athenian citizen. He cited Pericles as an instance of moral wisdom. He ransacked the consciousness of the Athenian *dicast* for a code of moral responsibility. Many of the refinements which he introduced with regard to the voluntariness and involuntariness of an action, are traceable in the speeches of Antiphon.² He supported his contention that the virtue of Courage is strictly applicable only in the sphere of military conduct, by pointing to the distinctions which kings and commonwealths showered on meritorious soldiers.³ He saw in the name *mesidioi*, sometimes assigned to arbitrators, a confirmation of his doctrine that "corrective" justice aims at a *mean*.⁴ Many of the vices which he condemned stand embodied in characters either drawn straight from life or borrowed from the current literature of his day. Many of his sentiments and ethical types bear the stamp of Middle and New Comedy. His usurer, dicer, footpad, and pickpocket haunted the marts and brothels of every city in Hellas. Nor was he merely attracted by the lower aspects of society. His sketch of Liberality is a graceful tribute to the average Greek gentleman. His chapter on Magnificence is, from beginning to end, a recapitulation of popular ideas of propriety and good taste. The instances by which this virtue is illustrated are all taken from Athenian custom. The companion vices of Vulgarity and Meanness are treated in a manner equally consonant with popular feeling. In the province of moral virtue his highest flights and most signal failures are alike legitimate developments of fundamental

¹ *Ar. Eth. Nic.* 1116 b, 18; 1117 a, 26.

² *Bk. iii.* init. see Burnet's notes.

³ 1115 a, 31.

⁴ 1132 a, 23.

tendencies in the Greek mind. His noble analysis of Friendship, proceeding from an attempt to reconcile two diverse popular views on the matter of unselfishness and self-love, is in essence no more than a logical survey of Greek experience. His portrait of the High-minded Man is a naïve apotheosis of the self-confidence and self-respect which were inherent in the Greek idea of self-development ; while the unmistakable aroma of conceit, diffused by this paragon, could only have pleased a philosopher who shared the fancies of a people too young to have an adequate conception of humility.

The Aristotelian scheme of ethics centres round certain fundamental principles ; and although his argument leads back in many cases to the standpoint of common opinion, these principles find their origin for the most part in previous philosophy and must be studied in connexion with it. "Virtuous Energy of Soul" is the central term in his definition of happiness. Happiness (*εὐδαιμονία*) is an "intimate and steadfast" possession of the individual. It depends primarily on a man's character, on the state of his soul, not on his fortune. The internal and spiritual nature of happiness had been the theme of philosophers, from Heraclitus onwards.¹ The Academic doctrine stated that happiness consists in the "possession of virtue." So far as this went, Aristotle was in agreement with it. He agreed with the Academy in his contempt for the masses, who made an unprincipled pursuit of pleasure the end of their lives, and for the luxurious tyrants who set them this example. They were living the life of

¹ Heraclitus, *ἦθος ἀνθρώπων δαίμων fr.* 121. Anaxagoras, ap. Ar. *Eth. Nic.* 1179 a, 13. Democritus, *εὐδαιμονία οὐκ ἐν βοσκήμασιν οἰκεῖ οὐδ' ἐν χρύσῳ ψυχῇ οἰκητήριον δαίμονος fr.* 10, 11. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 279 B, cf. *Eth. Nic.* 1129 b, 4-6. Xenocrates ap. Ar. *Top.* 112 a.

cattle.¹ They were whiling away in mere amusement the time which should be devoted to more serious pursuits.² Those who had no higher object than the attainment of wealth were violating nature.³ Those who sought honour as their chief end were more refined, but still blind to their true interests.⁴ All these classes of men were controlled by phantom ambitions. A right state of soul was essential to happiness. So far Aristotle agreed with the Academic teaching; but his commonsense told him that it was incomplete. A virtuous man, to get satisfaction, must be able to act. At the Olympic contests, it was the strong who won—yes! but the strong who made use of their strength. So too in life, action was the necessary consummation of a good character.⁵ Xenocrates seems to have realized this, for in his definition of happiness he coupled with virtuous disposition the possession of such external means as are necessary to its exercise:⁶ and this was a vague expression of Aristotle's own view.

In insisting that the perfect life was made up of positive virtuous activities, and that the average
 (2) Physical and External Needs. man, who could not retire from the world and devote himself to speculative research, would need a moderate pittance to enable him to carry out his duties to society, Aristotle found himself in direct opposition to the Cynics. The Cynic temper was not to his liking. Their indifference to social and domestic ties conflicted with his axiom, that man is naturally a social being. Their self-sufficiency was that of the hermit, not of the reasonable human creature with a wife and children to look after and fellow-citizens to serve.⁷ Their contempt

¹ *Eth. Nic.* 1095 b, 19; cf. Plato, *Rep.* 586 A.

² 1176 b, 12 sqq. ³ 1096 a, 6.

⁴ 1095 b, 22 sqq.; cf. *Phaedo* 82 sq. ⁵ 1099 a, 3 sqq.

⁶ Clem. *Strom.* ii. 500 P (Dindorf), ὑπερτερῆ δύναμις.

⁷ *Eth. Nic.* 1097 b, 9 sqq.

for physical needs seemed a blunt negation of the laws of existence.¹ Their disregard for the feelings was equally inhuman and unnatural. Those who call a man on the rack happy, he declared, are wittingly or unconsciously talking nonsense.² "A man is not quite happy, if he is altogether ugly or of discreditable birth, or desolate and childless."³ But the most obvious cause of his objection to the asceticism of this school lay in the fact, that a lack of bodily and external equipment incapacitated a man for the full exercise of his moral nature. If he was starved, he could not display the virtue of temperance. If he had no money, he could not be liberal; and so forth. Great misfortune might blunt his powers, besides impeding their exercise.⁴

Opposition to the Cynics thus helped to elicit Aristotle's conception of happiness. The happy man must possess a good mental and moral disposition, and be able to make active use of it. For this purpose he would require a moderate supply of "external goods."⁵ His body, too, must receive proper nutriment and culture. An excessively ugly and physically degenerate man would meet with certain obvious inconveniences in life, especially among a people who set such a high price on beauty and strength as the Greeks. On this question, however, Aristotle seems to follow Plato more closely than popular opinion. He does not regard physical strength and beauty as things good in themselves.⁶ Mental and moral activity is represented as the only absolute good;⁷ and bodily health is recommended, as in Plato, because it is essential

¹ Aristotle insists on *σώματος τροφή*, *Eth. Nic.* 1178 b, 34; cf. 1099 b, 27.

² 1153 b, 19.

³ 1099 b, 3.

⁴ 1100 b, 25.

⁵ But his needs in this respect are few, 1179 a, 1 sqq.

⁶ 1114 a, 23, is possibly an exceptional passage.

⁷ 1102 a, 16; cf. 1098 b, 12; cf. Plato *Euthyd.* 279 B, *Phil.* 48 E, *Legg.*

to the preservation of life, and because of its beneficent influence on the soul.¹ The next essential is length of life. As virtue finds its consummation in activity, so virtuous activities are not complete without duration. A man, who is cut off in his prime, does not realize his personality to the full. These considerations serve to illustrate the definition of happiness enunciated in the middle of the first book. "Energy of soul in accordance with virtue, and, if its virtues are many, in accordance with the best and most complete, and this during a complete span of life:"² or as it is expressed somewhat more fully a little later—"May we not call happy the man who energizes in accordance with complete virtue, and who has sufficient stock of external goods, not once and again, but for a full lifetime?"³

There are many points of contact between this statement and the more refined aspects of popular opinion. The law of self-development and self-realization combined with the law of moderation to make Solon and others prize the life of health, virtue, and moderate comfort; and Aristotle, according to his wont, notices this point of agreement.⁴ Most men, too, except the Mystics who looked upon this sphere of existence as the dreary vestibule of heaven, must have echoed the demand for a complete span of life on earth.⁵ In adhering to this view, Aristotle parted company with the Cynics, who regarded time as a mere external condition of no importance, and with Plato, in whose eyes temporal existence was swallowed up in

Comparison with
Popular Morals.

¹ *Eth. Nic.* 1178 a, 14.

² 1098 a, 16 sqq. ψυχῆς ἐνέργεια κατ' ἀρετὴν, εἰ δὲ πλείους αἱ ἀρεταί, κατὰ τὴν ἀρίστην καὶ τελειοτάτην, ἔτι δ' ἐν βίῳ τελείῳ.

³ τί οὖν κωλύει λέγειν εὐδαίμονα τὸν κατ' ἀρετὴν τελείαν ἐνεργοῦντα καὶ τοῖς ἐκτὸς ἀγαθοῖς ἰκανῶς κεχορηγημένον, μὴ τὸν τυχόντα χρόνον ἀλλὰ τέλειον βίον; 1101 a, 14.

⁴ 1179 a, 9; cf. Herod. i. 30.

⁵ cf. Pindar, *Isthm.* vi. 39-42.

eternity. Plato denied the limitations of human life. Aristotle, like the majority of the Greeks, accepted them and paid them constant heed in his scheme of human perfection. From this point of view his praise of the intellectual life is exceptional and startling.

The intellectual life (he said) is the highest that a man can lead. Speculation and scientific research are the most perfect forms of energy. This decision is the final result of his Ethics. The mind is the highest part of man. By a decree of nature it has supremacy over all other human endowments. The mind alone takes cognisance of the most beautiful and divine objects; and as it is the divinest thing in us, its energy is perfect happiness.¹ If it is the best, it is therefore the truest part of a man's personality. It is his real self. It is also the immortal part of man, and its exercise is nothing less than a "practice of immortality." Thus the warnings of prudence, the maxim of Pindar that "mortal things benefit mortal men," and the maxim of Sophocles that "mortal nature must be mortal-minded," lose their force.² For by virtue of mind, man is in some sense immortal. We must not then heed these remonstrances, "but, so far as in us lies, be immortal, and strive in all things to live according to the highest in us."³ Such a life is nothing less than an approach to the divine. "The life of the gods is blessed throughout, and this is true of men, so far as any likeness of the divine activity appertains to them."⁴ It is not surprising to find echoes of Platonic asceticism in this connexion. A human being, says Aristotle, cannot hope to realize this ideal continually,

¹ *Eth. Nic.* 1177 a, 13-17.

² Pindar, *Isth.* v. 20. *Soph. fr.* 528 (Nauck); cf. Epicharmus ap. Ar. *Rhet.* ii. 21.

³ *Eth. Nic.* 1177 b, 31; cf. Plato *Tim.* 90 B.

⁴ 1178 b, 25; cf. Plato *Theaetetus* 176 B.

but, so far as he can, he regards all external things as a mere hindrance,¹ and pursues a life of isolation.²

But even the philosophic student, who attained intellectual virtue, was in some sense a "social
Moral Virtue. animal," bound to exercise the inferior virtues, and subject, so far as his circumstances demanded, to the obligations of practical morality: and practical excellence was all that the average man could hope to acquire. Therefore the examination of moral virtue, to which the greater part of the *Nicomachean Ethics* is devoted, does not lose its importance. Moral virtue is, according to Aristotle, the excellence of the irrational part of the soul, whereby it performs its function in proper subordination to reason. It is the appropriate excellence of a thing, said Plato, that enables it to do its work well.³ This general principle forms the starting-point of Aristotle's inquiry. In following it out he enunciated his theory of the *mean*, which he proceeded to illustrate by a syllabus of particular virtues and the corresponding vices, that is to say, of the particular ways in which the psychic element in question can act. But before dealing with the *mean* and the special virtues in which it is displayed, it may be well to explain Aristotle's general notion of the moral will and disposition,⁴ the manner in which they are trained, their relation to the intellect, and the motives by which they are guided in action. In a somewhat
(1) Action and Intention. difficult passage towards the close of the tenth book, he questions whether morality is determined more by the will or by the deed; virtue, he says, is not complete unless the will can show itself in

¹ *Eth. Nic.* 1178 b, 4.

² 1178 a, 22.

³ *Rep.* 353 A sqq. cf. *Eth. Nic.* 1097 b, 25; 1106 a, 15.

⁴ ἔξις: I have used "disposition" throughout to represent ἔξις, which is a fixed disposition, whereas διάθεσις is changeable.

action.¹ But there is nothing here to prove that he took account of the deed rather than the intention. In other passages he makes the reverse quite clear. An action, he says, cannot be considered pure, if it is not performed with a willing heart, and after a deliberate and disinterested choice which is the fruit of a fixed and virtuous disposition.² A man may do just actions and yet not be a just man. He may act under constraint, and unwillingly, or from degraded motives. Moreover he cannot be really just or brave, or virtuous in any way, until he feels a distinct pleasure in virtue.³ In emphasizing the necessity of pure intentions and a right disposition, Aristotle was carrying on the best traditions of the Academy, for which we found a precedent in the higher popular teaching of the Sophistic era. The man who thought evil was, from the Academic point of view, as morally bad as the man who wrought it. The man who cast a wanton glance on places of ill-repute, was as sinful as he who entered into them.⁴ A right action done involuntarily, through legal constraint, was morally worthless.⁵

To this extent Aristotle was at one with Plato; but the deeper we go into their theories of the
(2) Morality and Intellect. the moral disposition, the more obvious does their fundamental disagreement become. Plato's perfectly moral man was the philosopher who had studied the ideal laws of morality. He was a metaphysical student. In the *Republic* he is represented as climbing the scale of universal knowledge, till he reaches the supreme Idea of good, which shall enable him to solve all

¹ 1178 a, 34.

² 1105 a, 31; cf. 1111 b, 5; 1120 b, 7; 1116 a, 27 (cf. Plato, *Phaedo* 68 D); he condemns the selfish utilitarian theory of Justice, 1121 b, 28 (cf. Plato, *Rep.* 358 E sqq.).

³ 1099 a, 17. cf. 1104 b, 4; 1120 a, 26; 1120 b, 30; 1122 b, 7.

⁴ Xenocrates ap. Aelian *V. H.* xiv. 42; cf. Eur. *Hipp.* 317; *Orest.* 1604.

⁵ Xenocrates ap. Plut. *Col.* 1124 E; cf. Ar. *Eth. Nic.* 1179 b, 10.

the problems of life. In the *Timaeus* it is more vaguely stated that a study of the hidden laws and harmonies of nature will help him to rule himself after their pattern. Aristotle's most signal point of divergence from Plato consisted in his complete separation of the provinces of ethical and metaphysical knowledge.¹ The criticism² which he devotes to the "universal good" theory of the *Republic*, applies in its main contention to the later phases of Platonic thought. The laws of the universe may be good, but their goodness is different from the goodness of human ideals. There may be an analogy between the good of mankind and the good of superhuman forces; but the study of physics and metaphysics cannot supply the details of an ethical creed. Thus Aristotle rules out the necessity of metaphysical knowledge in the formation of a good practical disposition. He treats in the same way all abstract theorizing on the unity and essence of virtue. Practical morality has no need of such knowledge.³ The moral knowledge which he demands is something quite different. It grows up in the mind by custom and habituation. The child is told what he must do and what he must avoid. He is corrected and stimulated. A proper moral feeling is produced. He comes to choose the right course instinctively. This instinct, as it is being developed in him, controls his intellect, and guides it to the enunciation of correct principles. Habit has taught him to look upon lying and intemperance as pernicious and loathsome; and thus his intellect arrives at a principle of truth and temperance.⁴ In the production of a good moral disposi-

¹ See 1141 a, 21 sqq.: a half-way stage between the Platonic and Aristotelian views of *φρόνησις* is found in Xenocrates ap. Clem. *Strom.*, p. 441 (Dindorf), τὴν φρόνησιν . . . διττὴν· τὴν μὲν πρακτικὴν, τὴν δὲ θεωρητικὴν· ἣν δὴ σοφίαν ὑπάρχειν ἀνθρωπίνην· διόπερ ἡ μὲν σοφία φρόνησις· οὐ μὲν πᾶσα φρόνησις σοφία.

² 1096 a, 11-1097 a, 13.

³ Cf. 1105 b, 12; 1105 a, 31; cf. 1103 b, 27.

⁴ 1140 b, 11 sqq.; cf. 1151 a, 15.

tion the intellect reacts on the virtuous impulse so as to control its vagaries;¹ moreover the intellect is called upon to reason from a general principle to a particular line of conduct, so as to discover what must be done under particular circumstances, in order that the end desired by the good instinct may be realized.² Thus true morality is as dependent on a sound intellect as moral wisdom is on a good instinct and disposition.³ Plato had laid stress on the importance of good habits inculcated in youth, without which the mind could not be directed to the appreciation of moral truth.⁴ He, too, had pointed out the danger of a merely conventional morality, which left its possessor without any rational conviction of ethical principles. But, whereas he had held that this conviction could not be fully attained except by a course of logical and metaphysical inquiry, Aristotle believed it to grow up naturally in the mind of a man well educated by discipline and precept. Plato in the *Gorgias* had utterly repudiated the wisdom of the Athenian statesmen past and present; in the *Meno* he had made amends only so far as to grant them an inferior kind of wisdom, and an inferior virtue based upon it. Aristotle took Pericles as a model.⁵ He was undoubtedly nearer than Plato to what we may call, for want of a better expression, the commonsense view, and thus nearer in all probability to the theory and practice of the better representatives of the Greek populace. For although the popular teachers had not enunciated in all its fulness his view of the mutual relations, and the development, of a moral disposition and moral intelligence, yet they looked in the same direction as he did for types of moral wisdom, and they sought to create good moral character by means specifically the same.

¹ 1144 b, 9.

² 1144 a, 20 sqq.

³ 1144 b, 30.

⁴ *Rep.* 518 C-E.

⁵ 1140 b, 8.

Aristotle was always saying that the good man is what he is, and does what he does, for the sake of moral beauty,¹ and that the good man is kept from evil courses not by fear, but through a sense of shame.² These two motives, the one incentive, the other deterrent, were, so to speak, the ideal motives of popular morality. But no discerning eye could fail to see that the pursuit of expediency and pleasure played a considerable part in the formation of popular character and the control of popular conduct; and these motives had been encouraged perhaps by certain tendencies of the Sophistic era. Aristotle stoutly denied the alleged distinction between virtue and expediency, or virtue and enjoyment. The noblest activities, he said, are also the most useful and the most pleasant.³ Life has no higher blessing than the privilege of virtuous activity; all other good things are either means to this end or included in it. The error of intemperance lies not in the desire for enjoyment, but in the misconception that pleasure of the moment is best.⁴ It would be possible to abstract from his treatise certain psychological and metaphysical ideas, which serve as a rough ground-work and defence of morality;⁵ but these ideas were never correlated, or combined into a formal proof. He looked upon the proposition that the good man lives the best life and has the truest pleasure, as an axiom or truism, which would commend itself to the well-bred and experienced man.⁶ He

¹ τοῦ καλοῦ ἕνεκα 1115 b, 12; 1120 a, 23; 1122 b, 6; 1151 b, 19; 1155 a, 28.

² 1179 b, 11.

³ 1099 a, 27 sqq.

⁴ 1146 b, 22.

⁵ E.g. the psychological analysis, 1097 b, 22 sqq.: the Mystico-Platonic doctrine that man being rational stands midway between beasts and gods, and must subordinate impulse and passion to reason, 1149 b, 35 sqq., and 1177 a, 12: the theory of "natural pleasures." Metaphysical argument is definitely followed out in connexion with the *intellectual life*.

⁶ 1099 a, 11.

had no patience with those Cynics who looked askance at pleasure of any sort. Such an attitude was merely inhuman. Its advocates were unfeeling boors, scarce worthy to be called men.¹ They were entirely ignorant of human nature and its demands. "The feeling for pleasure is nurtured in us from our childhood, wherefore it is difficult to eradicate it, stamped as it is in our inmost being ; and besides, we measure our actions, more or less, by the pain and pleasure which they yield."² A man must be taught from his earliest childhood to delight in virtue and hate vice.³ If nature has gifted him with a good moral instinct, a little reproof and guidance will turn his energies in the proper direction. And as every energy is accompanied and consummated by its corresponding pleasure and satisfaction,⁴ the adherence to virtuous energies will lead him to appreciate virtuous and natural pleasures. Thus the love of pleasure becomes in its turn a stimulant to morality. In his pursuit of the beautiful, the expedient, and the pleasant, a good man goes right, and a bad man wrong.⁵

Such in outline is Aristotle's theory of moral education ; and such are the motives he wished to

(4) *The Mean.* inculcate and control. The moral disposition is not merely a vague enthusiasm for good, but an enthusiasm firmly established by habit and directed by an inviolable principle of moral choice. This principle is the *mean*. A good character is a precise and accurately determined character, wherein impulse guided by intellect makes for the realisation of the *mean* in action.⁶ This doctrine will be found to present a striking instance of Aristotle's return from Platonic idealism to a more generally accepted Greek view. We distinguished two

¹ 1104 a, 22 ; 1119 a, 6 sqq.

² 1105 a, 1 sqq.

³ 1172 a, 21 ; cf. 1104 b, 11.

⁴ 1174 b, 20 sqq.

⁵ 1104 b, 30.

⁶ 1106 b, 36.

conceptions of morality in the *Laws*. In a few passages¹ Plato repeated the old rule of moderation, as old as Homer, according to which right conduct lay in the avoidance of two opposite extremes—such as excessive laughter and excessive sorrow, excessive pleasure and excessive pain, abstemiousness and gluttony. This is the doctrine of the *mean* pure and simple. In another passage² he substituted for the *mean* (τὸ μέσον) an objective standard of perfection (τὸ μέτριον). Now the Aristotelian doctrine of the *mean* likewise presents an ethical standard. It is deduced from ordinary facts of experience.³ Too much or too little food is injurious to health; the *mean* amount, midway between excess and defect, preserves health. So also in the sphere of morality, temperance and courage seem to lie midway respectively between the two excesses of gluttony and fearfulness, and the two defects of total abstention from sensual pleasures and total absence of fear. Virtue is thus the one right disposition amid a series of wrong dispositions, erring in opposite directions. As the Pythagoreans said, evil is of the measureless and infinite class, good of the limited and finite. There is one way to be virtuous; there are many ways to be vicious.⁴ So far, there appears to be considerable agreement between Plato and Aristotle. They both offer standards of moral conduct, strictly determined to the exclusion of all that is irrational and immoderate. A closer scrutiny, however, reveals the underlying difference between these standards, which is merely a marked instance of the cardinal difference between the two philosophers. The Platonic standard is an ideal one, irrevocably fixed and wholly independent of human capabilities. If man cannot reach it, so much the worse for him. His duty is to strive after it continually, in spite of failure and disappointment, and perhaps with little hope of complete success. The Aristotelian standard

¹ See above, *Legg.* 732 C, 792 C, D, etc.

² *Legg.* 691 C. ³ 1104 a, 17 sqq.

⁴ 1106 b, 28 sqq.

is based upon a consideration of human frailty. He bids us aim at what we can achieve, "the *mean* judged relatively to our powers."¹ Again, while the Platonic term (*μέτριον*) implies a fixed standard, from which all imperfect states diverge indefinitely, the Aristotelian (*μέσον*) implies a middle point between two extremes, each of which is more or less fixed.² Plato looks straight at the ideal man, and all the sorts and conditions of men on earth are considered merely as unlimited instances of failure and degradation. Aristotle starts with the human society around him. The evil is as real to him as the good. Vice is as calculable as virtue. The Cynic and the libertine, the coward and the dare-devil, the prodigal and the miser, are fixed and obvious types of character; their immoral dispositions are as formed and permanent as those of the temperate man, the courageous, and the liberal. A man is to arrive at moral perfection by a practical avoidance of that extreme of vice to which he is the more prone.³ Indeed from the moral point of view the *mean* is an ideal;⁴ but it is an ideal attainable by

¹ Compare *Eth. Nic.* 1106 a, 28 sqq, with Plato *Polit.* 283 E sqq. In the former passage Aristotle distinguishes (a) *πλέον* and *ἐλαττον* in the sense of "more," and "less," of a thing (*κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ πρῶγμα*), from (b) *πλέον* and *ἐλαττον πρὸς ἡμᾶς*, "too much," or "too little," of a thing judged in relation to our requirements; we choose the *μέσον πρὸς ἡμᾶς*, if we take what is neither too much nor too little for us. In the latter passage Plato distinguishes (α) *πλέον* and *ἐλαττον πρὸς ἄλληλα*, implying "more" or "less," in reference to two things judged relatively to each other, from (β) *πλέον* and *ἐλαττον πρὸς τὸ μέτριον*, "too much" or "too little" of a thing judged by an outside standard, *τὸ μέτριον*. Now it will be seen that (a) corresponds exactly to (α), and expresses the same fact. Now compare (b) and (β). When Aristotle speaks of the ethical "mean," he refers to that which is neither "too much" nor "too little" for our capacities and requirements. When Plato wishes to approve of an ethical disposition, he sees whether it errs in excess or defect, not *πρὸς ἡμᾶς*, but *πρὸς τὸ μέτριον*.

² 1107 a, 2.

³ δεῖ τὸν στοχαζόμενον τοῦ μέσου πρῶτον μὲν ἀποχωρεῖν τοῦ μᾶλλον ἐναντίου.

⁴ κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν, . . . μεσότης ἐστὶν ἡ ἀρετή, κατὰ δὲ τὸ ἀριστον καὶ τὸ εὖ ἀκρότης.

certain practical rules of thought and conduct. Plato would never have admitted that his ideal was realized on earth. Aristotle must have been able to supply instances of his perfect man; otherwise a number of his utterances lose their effect. This is the difference between the two standards; and it is needless to point out which was the nearer to popular conceptions of moderation and propriety.

A little more than three books of the *Nicomachean Ethics* are devoted to the working out of Particular Virtues: an ethical code by the rule of the *mean*. Methods of Plato and Aristotle. Aristotle's object is to define, with all possible fidelity to fact, the scope and application of particular virtues and vices. Here too his method and results present a striking contrast to Platonism. Plato's idealistic tendency led him to spiritualize and extend the content of ethical terms. Aristotle tried to "narrow them down to their most literal meaning." In his earlier dialogues, when he was aiming at Socratic definitions under the influence of Socratic doctrine, Plato traced all the virtues with which he dealt back to a knowledge of good and evil, and thus tended to obliterate the distinctions between them; and even in his later dialogues his use of ethical terms was so broad and vague, that they continually overlapped one another. Aristotle above all things separated them, by noting the exact limits of their application. And since he sought to determine their significance with strict reference to ordinary usage and the facts of experience, his accuracy brought him in most cases more into harmony with popular sentiment.

The simplest instance is his treatment of Liberality and Magnificence. The former was restricted in Attic usage to Liberality in money-matters. The latter was to some extent a sort of magnified Liberality; it was, says Burnet, "a form of goodness, regularly expected of the

Athenian upper classes, and showed itself chiefly in public services and donations." Aristotle accepted the restriction of these virtues to the sphere of monetary expenditure. Plato, on the other hand, idealized them, and extended their scope. When he used Liberality in the narrower sense, he qualified it with the phrase "in money-matters."¹ Without such restriction, "liberal" and "magnificent" referred in his dialogues to the liberal or large-minded disposition engendered by philosophic pursuits.² Similarly Truthfulness (*ἀληθεία*), in Plato, implied truth to philosophic reality.³ In Aristotle it meant either the social grace of talking properly about one's achievements, without boastfulness or vulgar self-depreciation,⁴ or else the higher moral virtue of speaking and acting truthfully in important matters of life; in this latter connexion he cited the conduct of Neoptolemus in the play of Sophocles.⁵

If Plato's stray notices of these three virtues were too ideal, his treatment of the cardinal virtues was altogether too complicated to please Aristotle. He had adopted the popular list of four cardinal virtues: Courage, Temperance, Wisdom, and Justice. We have already said something of Aristotle's divergence from, and agreement with, Plato in regard to the intellectual virtues, included under the term "Wisdom." The other three remain to be considered. In two of his earlier dialogues, the *Laches* and the *Charmides*, Plato had searched for definitions of Courage and Temperance. Fear, he said

The Cardinal
Virtues:
(1) in Plato.

¹ *Theaet.* 144 D. τὴν τῶν χρημάτων ἐλευθεριότητα.

² *Rep.* 486 A, 536 A.

³ *Rep.* 508 E, *Phil.* 65 A.

⁴ *Eth. Nic.* 1127 a, 14 sqq.

⁵ 1146 a, 20; cf. 1151 b, 19; cf. also 1165 b, 10-12, where, in characteristic Greek fashion, he condemns deceit among friends.

in the *Laches*, is the expectation of evil to come.¹ Brave men are they who know what is terrible and what need not be feared, and who, in virtue of this knowledge, maintain a proper attitude to their fate. Courage can be displayed not, as is supposed, merely in battle, but also in perils by sea, in the hazards of political life, in disease and poverty, and in conflict with passions and desires.² Moreover, since courage is (on his hypothesis) knowledge of what is and of what is not terrible, that is to say of good and evil things to come; and since the knowledge of future good and evil is the same as knowledge of present good and evil, courage is traced back ultimately to knowledge of the good and evil in life.³ A similar process is followed out in the *Charmides* with regard to Temperance. Plato starts by discarding the popular notions that Temperance consists in quietness of behaviour, in walking and speaking slowly, in feeling shame and modesty, or in minding one's own business. It must rest ultimately on self-knowledge, on knowledge of what is good and evil for oneself, that is to say, of the good and evil of life. So Courage and Temperance are both reduced to knowledge of good and evil, and the same might be said of Justice. In the *Republic* an attempt is made to discriminate these ethical concepts by the aid of psychology. The soul is divided into three parts: the rational, the spirited, and the appetitive. Courage is the virtue displayed by the spirited part in combating external terrors, and in keeping down the carnal passions and lusts. Temperance is the agreement of all three parts of the soul as to which shall rule and which obey. Justice is that state of soul which enables them to carry out this agreement, and to perform their appropriate functions.⁴ It is thus the substrate of all virtue; just dealing to others

¹ *Laches*, 198 B.² *Ibid.* 191 D, E.³ *Ibid.* 199 B C.⁴ *Rep.* 433 B.

is merely a natural result of the healthy state of soul which Justice implies. In the later dialogues it is difficult to see how far this interpretation of the three virtues is preserved and implied. The extended sense of Courage is sanctioned in the *Laws*;¹ but Temperance and Justice present considerable difficulties. In the *Timaeus* Plato assigns to Temperance the definition discarded in the *Charmides*, and attributed in the *Republic* to Justice. "It has been well said of old that knowing oneself and one's business, and doing it, belongs to the temperate man."² In the *Laws* it is doubtful whether Justice or Temperance holds the central position. In one passage it is said that Courage implies Justice as its basis.³ Elsewhere Temperance is made the condition of all virtue.⁴

It is refreshing to turn from this confused use of language to the logical strictness of Aristotle. (2) In Aristotle. He agrees with Plato that all virtues, social and individual, can be traced back to a central unity; but this unity is not Temperance or Justice, but Virtue Simple, the generally virtuous disposition of the individual concerned.⁵ Temperance, Justice, and Courage are quite distinct aspects of this disposition in three different relations. Justice is a social, not an individual virtue. It is a mere metaphor to talk of Justice as subsisting between the various elements of a soul.⁶ On the other hand, Courage and Temperance are primarily individual virtues;

¹ *Legg.* 633 C, D.

² τὸ πράττειν καὶ γινῶναι τὰ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐαντόν, *Tim.* 72 A; cf. *Rep.* 433 A, τὸ τὰ αὐτοῦ πράττειν . . . δικαιοσύνη ἐστὶ.

³ *Legg.* 660 E.

⁴ ἀλλὰ μὴν τό γε δίκαιον οὐ φύεται χωρὶς τοῦ σωφρονεῖν, *Legg.* 696 C; cf. ὁ μὲν σώφρων ἡμῶν θεῖός φίλος, ὁμοῖος γὰρ, ὁ δὲ μὴ σώφρων ἀνόμοιός τε καὶ διάφορος καὶ ἄδικος, *ibid.* 716 D.

⁵ ἀρετὴ ἀπλῶς 1130 a, 13.

⁶ 1138 b, 6-13.

their social bearing is a secondary consideration. In defining the content of these three ethical terms, Aristotle's severe analysis carried him as much away from popular usage in one direction as Plato had gone in another. If Plato's interpretation was more comprehensive, abstract, and universal than that implied in popular parlance, Aristotle's interpretation was more precise, limited, and exclusive. Plato had extended the application of Courage. Aristotle was undoubtedly nearer to popular usage in limiting it to the behaviour of generous warriors in battle;¹ but the word must have been generally employed in a looser sense. Again he confined Temperance to the sphere of those senses, taste and touch, which men share with beasts;² but it is manifest from the *Charmides* that the term was applied popularly to a great many details of polite behaviour. A whole book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* is devoted to Justice. Here again he limited the popular view. One of the Elegiac poets, probably Phocylides, had said that "in Justice all virtue is summed up"; that is to say, as Aristotle explains, Justice, in the sense of all social virtue, is the crowning proof of a good moral disposition.³ After noting this, he proceeded to deal with justice and injustice in the limited sense of right and wrong dealing with respect to money, honour, and property.⁴ Having made this limitation, he enunciated a practical scheme of civil justice, borrowed in the main from the practice and convention of existing polities. We must remember, he explained, that the object of our quest is justice in the strict sense, that is to say, political justice; and this exists among free and equal citizens who share in the life of the

¹ 1115 a, 26 sqq. At 1117 a, 3, he corrects Homer's mistake in equating *Courage* with passionate daring; passion is not *Courage*, but its natural basis.

² 1118 a, 23 sqq.

³ Cf. the vague use of ἀδικεῖν in the law courts.

⁴ τὴν ἐν μέρει δικαιοσύνην.

city with a view to the self-sufficiency of the whole.¹ What has been said must not be taken to mean that the statute book is an infallible guide to just dealing. To understand the laws, a man must have an intelligent insight into the principles on which they are based. Nevertheless the laws may be taken as defining the scope and general tendency of justice.

In his treatment of these three virtues Aristotle was nearer in spirit to popular thought than Plato had been; his divergences from it were the natural fruit of his desire for logical accuracy. Three more points remain to be considered, his attitude to enemies, to slaves, and to women. His ethics of hostility and revenge are simply a recapitulation of the ordinary Greek view. He approved the popular maxim, "Benefit a friend and hurt a foe"²—a sentiment which Plato had more than once called in question. His reason for this approval was a popular one. Vengeance, he said, is just, and the just is beautiful, and it is the part of a brave man not to be worsted.³ On the question of

(1) Enemies. slavery, he was practically in agreement with Plato. He agreed with him in deprecating the enslavement of Greek captives. A Greek captive was a slave by convention, and not by nature; thus much truth underlay the radical theory that slavery was a mere convention.⁴ But the barbarian was free-born in his native land alone.⁵ Aristotle believed, quite as much as Plato

¹ 1134 a, 25 sqq. At 1134 b, 18 sqq. he notices that πολιτικὸν (νόμιμον) δίκαιον contains both φυσικόν (natural) and νομικόν (conventional and local) δίκαιον. That he is dealing with no abstract principle of fair dealing, becomes obvious when he introduces τὸ ἐπιεικὲς as a means of correcting the obvious shortcomings of legal justice; τὸ ἐπιεικὲς δίκαιον μὲν ἔστιν, αὐτὰρ κατὰ τὸν νόμον δὲ, ἀλλ' ἐπανόρθωμα νομίμου δικαίου (1137 b, 11 sqq.).

² *Rhet.* I. vi. 26, 29.

³ *Rhet.* I. ix. 23.

⁴ *Pol.* 1253 b, 20; 1255 a, 3 sqq.

⁵ *Ibid.* 1255 a, 33; cf. 1252 b, 5 sqq.

and the Greek populace, that slavery was necessary to social life, and was in itself both just and natural. A human being who was only fitted for menial and physical tasks, was ordained to serve those who were fitted for intellectual and social activities.¹ Justice and friendship in the ordinary sense were impossible between the master and the slave quâ slave ; but he admitted that justice and friendship might exist between the master and the slave quâ man.² It remained for the Stoics to assert the fact, that a slave is primarily a man and has a claim to the common rights of mankind.

In his regard for women Aristotle again diverged from Plato. Following the Greek view that man's activity is the only true activity, Plato had sought to emancipate and ennoble the female sex by a proposal to educate them for a share in civic duties. Aristotle returned to the ordinary Athenian doctrine, that women should stay at home and lead a retired life in modesty and silence.³ He agreed with Plato in regarding them as morally and intellectually inferior to the male sex,⁴ but differed from him in recognizing a distinctively female sphere of work. He agreed with the popular moralists in basing marriage on the theory of a division of labour between man and wife ; he differed from them, in so far as he pronounced a panegyric on domesticity.⁵ From this point of view he regarded marriage almost as a sacrament, bringing life-long joy to both partners.⁶ There is no doubt that his ideal, if not actually realized, was more capable of fulfilment throughout the length and breadth of

¹ *Pol.* 1254 b, 16, he explains the advantages accruing to the slave from this arrangement. *Ibid.* 1255 a, 2 ; 1260 b, 3 ; 1260 a, 12 sqq.

² *Eth. Nic.* 1161 a, 32-b, 3.

³ *Pol.* 1260 a, 28.

⁴ *Ibid.* 1254 b, 13 ; 1260 a, 12 sqq ; 1277 b, 18.

⁵ *Ibid.* 1277 b, 24.

⁶ *Eth. Nic.* 1162 a, 19 sqq.

Hellas than the Platonic. Plato might look to Sparta for the beginnings of his educational scheme. He might see promise of female proficiency in the cultured circle of Aspasia.¹ But the average Greek man looked upon his wife as a house-keeper and a mother of his children; and Aristotle merely asked him to turn this idea to good account.

It is convenient to pause here and summarize the development of moral philosophy down to the death of Aristotle, in relation to the old ethical ideals of the Greek people. This development is summed up in the work of Plato and Aristotle. There was nothing of philosophical importance in the Socratic teaching which was not incorporated in the Platonic dialogues. There was nothing of importance discovered by the Academy after Plato's death which did not appear in Aristotle. The two other schools of the period which dealt to any extent with ethics—the school of Antisthenes, and the school of Aristippus—are mainly interesting in that they emphasized isolated points of view which Plato and Aristotle combined, and which reappeared in the two greatest post-Aristotelian systems. The chief interest attaches now to Plato and Aristotle themselves.

The first business of these philosophers was to solve certain problems which the questioning spirit of the Sophistic era had called to the fore, and to which the popular teachers had been unable to return a satisfactory or unanimous reply. These problems touched the very roots of morality. How far, it was asked, is morality in itself a good thing and necessary to a man's well-being?

¹ This is a mere conjecture. There is no means of discovering Plato's opinion of Aspasia. Even if the *Menexenus*, wherein she is mentioned, is authentic, we are left uncertain whether or not the compliments paid to her political insight are "writ sarcastic."

And where must a standard of right and wrong be sought? Are moral distinctions mere matters of individual caprice, or are they determined by universal principles? To these questions Plato and Aristotle gave no uncertain answer. Immorality, they said, is inconsistent with happiness. Morality is intimately connected with man's well-being, and is the surest safeguard of his peace of mind. Moral distinctions are valid throughout the world, and determined by an unerring law of life. To establish and recommend these truths, Plato marshalled a host of psychological and metaphysical arguments; while Aristotle relied on the good sense and experience of practical and well-educated men. Plato appealed to God, Aristotle to man. Plato took the Divine Mind, Aristotle the best human intelligence, as the criterion of morality. Both were agreed that virtue is incompatible with debased motives, and that good deeds necessitate pure intentions and a willing heart which delights in goodness. But when it was further asked what constitutes a pure intention, and what motives should direct it, the two philosophers again diverged from one another. Plato idealized the popular motives; Aristotle sanctioned them more or less as he found them. We should be virtuous, said the popular moralists, because virtue is beautiful, because it is enjoined by the law of moderation, or because it is prescribed by custom and civil statutes, and so forth. Aristotle, like the popular teachers, incited his hearers to virtue, for the sake of its essential beauty. Plato, too, spoke of beauty as an incentive to virtue, but he meant in most cases the beauty of the Ideal World, which draws the philosophic soul away from earthly interests. Aristotle practically repeated the popular law of moderation in his theory of the *mean*. Plato substituted for the *mean* an ideal standard, set in the heavens. Aristotle had a high respect for custom and civil statutes as moral guides. Plato tended to mistrust custom, and looked from legal enactments to the Ideal

laws of the universe. A similar difference appears in their respective views of moral wisdom. Plato made the highest virtue dependent on metaphysical knowledge; Aristotle denied the influence of metaphysical research on practical conduct: he connected morality with such practical knowledge as might be found, to a greater or less degree, in every experienced and well-disposed man about him.

In his interpretation of ethical terms Aristotle was nearer than Plato to the ordinary Greek usage. Such a summary statement is not possible with regard to his ethical ideal taken as a whole. His praise of the speculative life would have been unintelligible to a popular audience. When, however, he confined himself to the sphere of practical activities, he showed himself a Hellene of the Hellenes. The old Greek ideal comes back in all its magnificence. Its elements are perhaps better defined, and their mutual relations more clearly estimated. The comparative values of soul, body, and external fortune, are worked out with precision and loftiness of thought. Bodily vigour and beauty, and material possessions, are more scientifically subordinated to the goods of soul than in the popular scheme. But the central notion of virtuous activity and a genial use of life, and the love of liberality, friendship, and decent behaviour, which recur again and again in the *Nicomachean* treatise, are in strict harmony with the best popular teaching. Far different is the lofty idealism of Plato. Friendship and the virtue of liberality are spiritualized in his dialogues to such an extent, that the ordinary Greek gentleman may have failed to recognize them. Our attention is turned from the free and active use of life to the inward condition of the soul. Happiness is determined by the possession of a good disposition, not by its active employment. The popular law of self-development becomes lost in the ideal notion of an approach to God. The law of moderation, which bade

mortal men think mortal thoughts and comply with the limitations of human existence, had little control over the philosopher who set no bounds to the infinite capabilities of every soul in the universe. When Plato pondered on the deep problems of soul-destiny, it was to Orphism, and not to the established religion, that he looked for inspiration.

The political background of ethics is maintained in Plato and Aristotle. Behind the individual stands the state. Social and political reform is the basis of moral regeneration. The ethical ideal is still conceived, to a large extent, in terms of political activity. The old clear-cut division between Greek and barbarian is preserved. The Greek is a moral being, worthy of notice; the barbarian is a slave, to be nourished and trained mainly for his master's good. This, however, in its unqualified form, is a misleading statement. Plato, at any rate, was far too much interested in the individual, to confuse moral and political science. Both he and Aristotle¹ make happiness, in its highest form, almost independent of political and social conditions. Moreover Plato's theory of the universe, which recognizes all souls as making up one great Cosmic Soul and bound together as parts of the same whole, seems to point forward to a beating-down of the barrier between Greek and barbarian, between the freeman and the slave; so too does Aristotle's distinction of the slave quâ slave and the slave quâ man.

¹ In *Eth. Nic. Bk. X.* (*θεωρητικὸς βίος*), though not in the *Politics*.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF PHILOSOPHIC
ETHICS. (*Continued.*)(IV) *Stoics, Epicureans, and Sceptics.*

ARISTOTLE died in 322 B.C. Within half a century of this date, Zeno and Epicurus had founded schools at Athens; and Arcesilas had been elected president of the Academy. These three teachers reflected in a marked degree the circumstances of their age. Their systems were "the offsprings of despair. Of despair in religion: for the old mythologies had ceased to command the belief or influence the conduct of men. Of despair in politics: for the Macedonian conquest had broken the independence of the Hellenic States and stamped out the last sparks of corporate life. Of despair even in philosophy itself: for the older thinkers, though they devoted their lives to forging a golden chain which should link earth to heaven, appeared now to have spent their strength in weaving ropes of sand."¹ A great outburst of scientific zeal has been followed more than once in history by a sudden loss of interest in pure speculation and research. This is eminently exemplified in the course of Greek philosophy, from the latter decades of the fourth century onwards. The death of Plato and Aristotle left a void in the world of science and metaphysics which no one could fill. Besides this, the political chaos of the age raised the demand for a rule of life adequate to guide and comfort men under their altered circumstances. It turned the

¹ Lightfoot, *Ep. to Philipians* (1st ed.), p. 269.

attention of philosophers to practical concerns. It further modified their whole treatment of ethics. Aristotle had held ethics subordinate to politics. He preferred the good of the city to that of the individual, and contemplated the individual as part of the city; for it was in civic life and in union with others that the individual attained perfection. But now public life was full of inconveniences, and men sought refuge in privacy. Philosophers abandoned, or at any rate relaxed, the search after some means of political reformation. They sought for happiness within. "Stoic apathy, Epicurean self-satisfaction, and Sceptic imperturbability, were the doctrines which responded to the political helplessness of the age."¹ It followed that these schools likewise lost that respect for local laws and customs which exerted so great an influence on the popular morality of early times; they looked for "a basis of universal morality in the simple relation of man to man."²

For their general attitude towards life there was no lack of precedent in earlier thought (even omitting all notice of the Cynics and Cyrenaics). Self-sufficiency had been a favourite theme of Euripides and Hippias; Prodicus had preached indifference to external circumstances. "Plato and Aristotle had declared that reason constitutes the essence of man . . . and that man's highest activity is thought, turned away from all external things and meditating on an inner world of ideas. It was only a step further in the same direction for the post-Aristotelian philosophy to refer man back to himself, thus severing him most completely from the outer world, that he might find that peace within which he could find nowhere in the world besides."³ But it was decidedly a step further; and when we contrast the negative contentment which was the last resort of these schools with the positive energies

Breach with
the Past.

¹ Zeller, *Stoics, etc.*, p. 18.

² *Ibid.* p. 478.

³ *Ibid.* p. 20.

insisted on by Aristotle, an impassable gulf seems to open between the new philosophy and the old, no less than between the new philosophy and the old popular ideals.

Of the new schools, two were dogmatic and the third

(1) The Sceptics. sceptical. The Stoics and Epicureans had, each of them, a definite theory of ethical good, which they supported by a ground-work of theology and physics. The philosophers of the Middle Academy denied the necessity of this ground-work, and were content to substitute ethical probability for ethical truth. Their sceptical attitude was due partly to a reaction from the previous dogmatism of their school, partly to the logical inference that, if happiness could be obtained by the Stoic and the Epicurean alike despite their diverse dogmatic hypotheses, it could be obtained without any definite creed at all. Perhaps, however, they owed their scepticism still more to that pessimistic line of reasoning which had affected earnest minds in Greece for more than a century. Their pedigree thus goes back to the Sophistic era, even if it does not include such acknowledged popular moralists as the Gnomic Poets.

The Stoics and Epicureans demand more attention.

(2) The Epicureans. It seems hard at first sight to express the relation of Epicureanism to the old popular morality. Possibly it may be done thus. Take a pious and well-disposed Greek of the good old school, with a desire for self-development and moderate self-gratification. Imbue him with some measure of moral and religious scepticism. Leave him to digest it among political circumstances which discourage his participation in public life. He will probably emerge from this discipline a follower of Mimnermus or Aristippus, aiming at as much positive pleasure as he can get. Then hand on to him the Platonic doctrine that most pleasure rests upon a want, that is, upon a previous pain. He will probably conclude that happiness consists in comfort, in the avoidance of bodily

and mental annoyance, and in the pursuit of such refined pleasures as produce a lasting and undisturbed satisfaction. He will then have grasped the main principles of Epicureanism. There are several elements in the Epicurean teaching which recall the brighter side of the popular life and thought: a belief in many gods, who live a placid and delightful existence; an easy conformity to the established religion; good taste; a love of beauty; and an indulgent treatment of the emotions. These philosophers were true Greeks in their regard for friendship, which, despite the utilitarian theory on which they based it, succeeded in bringing out the noblest side of their character. In some instances they rose above popular teaching and practice. Although Epicurus could not condemn unlimited sensuality under certain conditions,¹ his own life was saintly, almost ascetic. Although his theoretical defence of honesty was so insecure that once, when asked if a man might be unjust, supposing he ran no risk of detection, he refused to reply,² yet he and his disciples constantly asserted that righteousness was inseparable from pleasure, and pleasure from righteousness, and that the popular distinction between virtue and happiness was shallow and false.³ A love of pleasure, wedded to refinement, in most cases implies a distaste for immorality and crime. Considering further the Epicurean sense of compassion, their kindness to slaves and dependents, and their quiet endurance of privation and disease, it appears that they were not without a contribution to the progress of moral thought in Greece.

If the Epicureans recall in some sense the more genial aspect of the Greek character, it will be
 (3) **The Stoics.** found that the Stoics develop its sterner and ascetic tendencies. The Stoic belief in a Law of the Divine Reason, for instance, enjoining right action and forbidding wrong, suggests the ideas of Divine Law

¹ Diog. L. x. 142.² Zeller, p. 455, *note* 3.³ Diog. L. x. 140.

shadowed forth in Aeschylus and resumed in Plato. The Stoic contempt for things of the flesh appears to be a simple repetition of Orphic or Pythagorean principles. But the fact that most early Stoics of any note came from the East, has led certain scholars to see in Stoicism "the introduction of a Semitic temperament and a Semitic spirit into Greek philosophy."¹

The Semitic spirit, so far as it exists, may be taken to imply an inwardness of life, and a resolve to meet the decrees of Fate with calm resignation. It cannot be held responsible for the paradoxical self-sufficiency of the Stoic wise man, his suppression of the emotions and his harsh indifference to external fortune. These developments are due rather to the cold logic of Greek philosophy working out the Semitic principle to extreme conclusions. They would seem to be the fruit of a bitter logical reaction against the more sober philosophy of Aristotle and the general trend of popular sentiment.

The influence of outside criticism, and the demands of practical life, led the Stoics to relax somewhat of their harsh insensibility. But the beautiful humanity of the old popular ideal was lost for ever. In some respects, too, the Stoic contempt for externals was in its effect not merely harsh but criminal. Such was their indifference to life that in many cases they advocated suicide, under the dignified title of "reasonable self-removal." Although suicide was not unknown in Greece in former times, yet popular sentiment had always condemned it as a religious offence involving pollution to the neighbourhood.²

¹ Grant, *Ethics of Aristotle*, vol. i. p. 308. Lightfoot, *l. c.* p. 271.

² Burnet deduces this from Aeschines, *Or.* iii. § 244 (Burnet, *Eth. Arist.* p. 245). Aristotle thought suicide (to avoid vexation) cowardly, *Ar. Eth. Nic.* 1116 a, 12, cf. 1138 a, 5 sqq. Plato goes nearer Stoicism; he condemns suicide, except "under the compulsion of some painful and inevitable misfortune," *Legg.* 873 C.

But if the Stoics eliminated much that was both sensible and amiable in the moral philosophy of Aristotle, they contributed certain important ideas which had been lacking hitherto.

Human
Brotherhood.

With the exception of the Cynics, Greek thinkers had acquiesced in the exclusive attitude maintained by their race towards the non-Greek peoples. The natural corollary was slavery. The Cynics had merely snarled at this exclusiveness, repudiating it as they repudiated all social customs. The Stoics met it with their positive doctrine that all rational beings are fellow-members of one great city, which is the world.¹ They objected to the institution of slavery as an infringement of human rights. Even if they did not seek to abolish it altogether, they yet insisted that a slave should be treated with perfect justice, and that his master should regard him rather as a hired servant than as a possession.

These are merely particular instances, illustrating their general principle that all rational beings are bound together by a law of mutual service.

Self-sacrifice.

"We are members of a great body," wrote Seneca; "Nature has made us kin."² "No man can live happily who considers himself alone, and turns all things to his own advantage: if thou wouldst live for thyself, thou must live for another."³ This is fully consonant with early Stoicism. The great idea of self-sacrifice had at length emerged in the development of the Greek mind. It was not the self-sacrifice of friend for friend, or of the soldier for his country, but of man for man. The Cynic knew nothing of such heroism. He sought salvation by retiring within himself. The Stoic, too, retired within himself, but there in the depths of his being he discovered a principle

¹ In Cyprus, where Zeno spent his childhood and youth, the Greek and Phoenician populations were fused to a remarkable extent (Isoc. *Evag.* 199 A); perhaps this suggested cosmopolitan ideas to him.

² Sen. *Ep.* 95.

³ Sen. *Ep.* 48.

of reason, which bound him to his fellows who shared with him this divine faculty. At such an experience Plato had hinted darkly, without developing it so fully in his practical teaching.

The conception of self-sacrifice is deeply associated in our minds with the word *duty*. Whatever stray hints of this idea may be gathered from the previous developments of popular and philosophic thought, it is by no means distinctly formulated therein. It is not at once obvious even in the Stoic morals. The idea of duty, "entirely conformable as it was to their point of view, was only gradually developed in and by means of their philosophy."¹ We have a clear suggestion of it in their references to *conscience*²—a term inseparable from the idea of moral responsibility. Aristotle used the same term in the sense of "consciousness" that certain facts are what they are.³ But moral consciousness is not the same thing as conscience. Conscience implies self-judgment and a sense of strict obligation, and this was not distinctly formulated in Greece before the time of the Stoics.⁴

If we take Aristotle to have crystallized in his system the highest aspects of popular morality, the later schools appear on comparison to have lost much of the comprehensiveness and freedom of the old Hellenic view of life. Nevertheless Greece owed them a debt for certain elements of morality which they re-emphasized, and for others which they introduced for the

¹ Grant, *l. c.*, vol. i., pp. 323 sq.

² *συνείδησις*; Lightfoot, *l. c.*, p. 301.

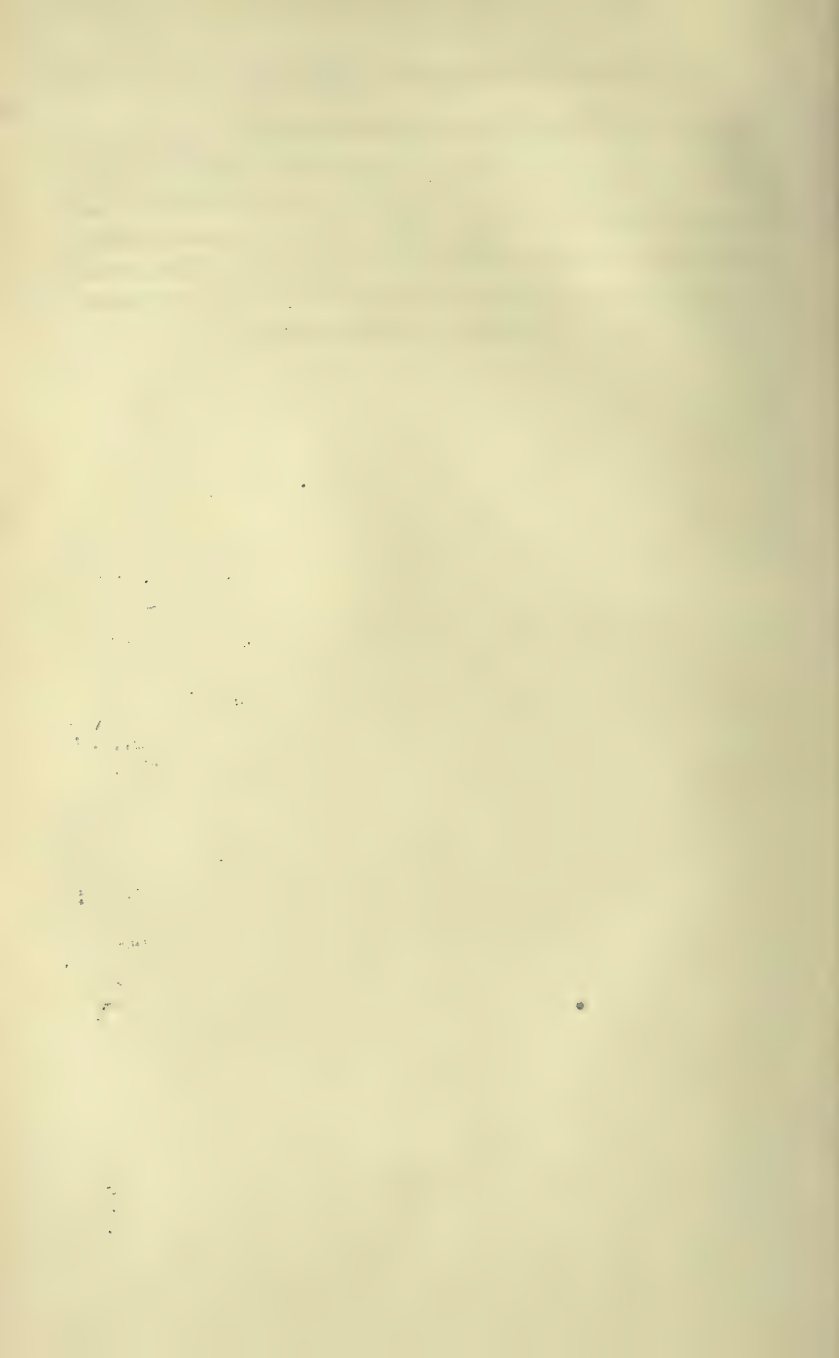
³ *Eth. Nic.* 1095 a, 25, *συνειδότες δ' ἑαυτοῖς ἀγνοίαν τοὺς μέγα τι καὶ ὑπερ αὐτοὺς λέγοντας θαυμάζουσιν.*

⁴ See Appendix C.

first time. Epicureanism with its gospel of refinement, of compassion and forgiveness, and with "the generous and humane character of its morals," would seem to have infused a gentler spirit into the Greek ideal. Stoicism stands at the very opposite pole of thought and experience. Its teaching sounds like a deep undertone of sad remorse and stern self-chastisement, swelling on a sudden above the placid and even melody of Greek life; like that solemn pilgrims' chant in Tannhäuser, which struggles to make itself heard above a lighter strain. The Stoics taught in the main three things—duty, self-sacrifice, and service (conceptions of no slight ethical importance, "in spite of rumours to the contrary"). If they did not solve the enigma of life, they saw more than most men in their day.

The end of moral teaching, said Aristotle, is moral action: "not knowing, but doing." So far, we have followed the progress of moral thought from the first ages, when popular teachers and poets registered their theories of good, through the early period of scepticism and disintegration. We have seen how moral philosophy had its origin in doubt, and how Socrates and subsequent thinkers reasserted in various ways the claims of morality, connecting them with theories of happiness variously defined. We have exhibited the elements of which these ethical systems were composed, and traced them back in many cases to popular thought and practice. This study, so far as it goes, is a legitimate one. The world cannot afford to lose sight of the ethical speculations of antiquity; and many of these speculations may control the conduct, and enlighten the minds, of our own and future generations; many of the truths for which Plato and Aristotle fought have been realized and fulfilled in modern life. Greek moral philosophy has thus in part answered Aristotle's expectations, and embodied itself to some extent in practice. But had it the direct and immediate effect for

which its noblest professors earnestly hoped? Did it there and then in ancient Greece make the majority of men better and happier than they had been hitherto? In short, did ethical philosophy react on the popular morality, whose ideas it had purified and rearranged? To answer this question we must go back to the Cave of Plato's myth, and dwell for a time with its inmates.



PART II.

THE

REFLEX INFLUENCE OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY
ON POPULAR THOUGHT AND CONDUCT.

CHAPTER VIII.

BACK TO THE CAVE.

Καταβαίνειν παρ' ἐκείνους τοὺς δεσμώτας . . . —PLATO, *Rep.* 519 D.

IN the parable with which the seventh book of the *Republic* opens, Plato tells us that, when the Documentary
Evidence. philosopher has returned to the cave, his sight is for a short time perplexed by the semi-darkness which prevails around him. Everything in the world outside and above was lit up by the sun's rays; everything below in the cave is hazy and only partially revealed by the light of the fire, which burns there without ceasing. This part of the parable might be applied to the present treatise. In tracing the influence of popular morality on moral philosophy, we were working in the sunlight of clear documentary evidence; in tracing the reflex influence of philosophy on popular morality, we search with little hope for some lucid and relevant testimony, on which to build up a tangible and honest theory. Hitherto we have been mainly occupied in comparing the ancient ideals of the Greek people, which are distinctly set forth in popular literature, with the speculations of an intellectual minority, which are still more distinctly formulated in a host of extant philosophical treatises. We have now to ask how far these speculations found an echo in the popular life and ideals of the ages during which, and after which, they were first propounded. This essay stops short at the year 200 B.C.; and, as moral philosophy may be taken to commence with Socrates, we are concerned henceforth with the period of his professional activity, and

the two centuries which followed his death. The evidence is fragmentary, and in most cases biassed. The popular attitude to philosophy and the schools must too often be deduced from anecdotes, preserved by late writers on the authority of unscrupulous pamphleteers. The popular life and thought of the period are veiled in an obscurity which has bred in the minds of modern historians theories so diverse as those of Curtius and Holm. The prospect darkens more and more with the decline of political life. Long gaps appear in the historical record. The extant treatises and fragments are seldom concerned with the inner life of the time, and then too often display an utterly uncritical spirit of wholesale abuse. The documents dealing specially with society and manners—the character-sketches of Theophrastus, the idylls of Theocritus, the mimes of Herondas, and Comedy—hardly profess to take a comprehensive or serious view of the world. These authors, writing for the amusement of their own generation, selected for the most part such episodes and types of humanity as might excite laughter or create a sensation. The average respectable citizen, who is so important to the historian of morals, would cut a sorry figure on the stage of mirth and satire.

The lack of full and conclusive evidence on these matters is not the main difficulty. It is a comparatively easy task, by collecting hints scattered throughout the extant literature, to hazard certain probable conjectures as to the state of popular morals and the popular estimate of the new learning. But there still remain those problems which, under all circumstances, and even in the face of abundant contemporary evidence, beset the outside observer who scans the shadowy borderland between speculation and custom, between logic and life. It is much harder to determine how far large masses of men absorb a body of reasoned thought, than to calculate the

Scope and Limits
of Philosophic
Influence.

debt which philosophers owe to popular and conventional ideas. The procedure of philosophers is conscious and deliberate, and as a rule they duly formulate their passage from premiss to conclusion. It is therefore possible to discriminate with some degree of accuracy the popular elements at the root of their systems. Ordinary men, on the other hand, who are unversed in the art of minute self-analysis and precise reasoning, are seldom fully conscious of the mighty influences which sway their lives. The thoughts of learned and thoughtful men filter gradually through society. The people drink in here a little, and there a little, of the inspiration diffused among them. When they express themselves, they are not careful to ask how their thoughts have developed. They do not, and probably cannot, cite their authorities. The historian who attempts to discriminate the various factors of their ethical ideal, and to trace them back to the principles enunciated by different philosophers, is very much in the position of a man who would analyse the débris washed up on the sea-shore, and discover whence each particle of it originally came. The task appears still harder when we reflect that philosophy is not the only force which governs popular thought and conduct. The trend of history and the growth of experience mould the lives of successive generations far more than written and promulgated dogma. In a sense, ethical dogma is only an expression of the history of its time, and of the growing experience which affects all men, philosophic and unphilosophic alike. Stoicism and Epicureanism grew out of certain social and political conditions, which arose in Greece during the latter half of the fourth century B.C. And if we find Stoical or Epicurean tenets reflected in the general life and thought of that and succeeding periods, it is hard to decide whether this result was due to the influence of these philosophies or to the social and political changes out of which the philosophies themselves sprang. If the Greeks became less exclusive

and more tolerant of the barbarians, was this due to Stoic cosmopolitanism, or was it a necessary result of Alexander's conquests, which assisted, if they did not produce, that particular Stoic doctrine? The theory that all nations are united by the bond of humanity, is closely associated with the communistic ideal, which recognizes the social claims of the individual. But were the philosophers the only people who in this age recognized that men are brothers, and that the poor must not be trodden down by the rich? It seems possible that a generous statesman might have drawn some such lesson from the financial and agrarian troubles of the period, without the assistance of philosophy. Take, for instance, the case of Sparta in the middle of the third century. Denis sees in the reforms of Agis and Cleomenes "plus une singularité historique qu'une marque des nouveaux principes." I would put the matter somewhat differently. We know that Cleomenes was educated by the Stoic Sphaerus, who attended him during a large part of his remarkable career. But was his conduct due to Stoic teaching more than to his natural temperament, the experience of his age, the example of his predecessor Agis III, and the inspiration of ancient Spartan ideals, which contained so many Stoical features?

The same problem recurs in modern times. What was the precise part played by Rousseau in the French Revolution, or by the Utilitarians in the legal and economic reforms of the last century? In such cases philosophy appears not as the principal source of the movement, but as an intellectual weapon by which educated men of action express the thoughts already labouring within them, and direct a populace in whom circumstances have bred the desire for change. The philosophers start from the data of practical experience. They elaborate a system of political and moral conduct, closely connecting it with abstract principles, and welding their ideas together in logical sequence. The conclusions which they attain can

be realized only in so far as they are generally recognized to be indispensable. And the success is due, not so much to correct and urgent reasoning, as to "the occurrence of circumstances which incline the majority of the world to hear with favour theories which at one time men of common sense derided as absurdities or distrusted as paradoxes."

These strictures must be remembered in considering the influence of Greek speculation on society. It is wrong to regard the philosophers as men of superhuman wisdom launched suddenly into a distracted world with a ready-made panacea for human ills, expounding to an attentive audience, step by step, the sequence of their systems from premiss to conclusion, and finally converting common men into philosophers. If philosophy is to work effect on popular life and custom, it must labour not in sublime isolation, but in conjunction with other forces more obvious and perhaps more potent than itself. It must take existing influences and circumstances into partnership, and share therewith the credit of its triumphs. Moreover, its ideas cannot take root in the popular mind without being modified by contact with the stern realities of actual life. We must not expect to find the world becoming philosophic. The common man lives by facts and practical suggestions, not by system and logic. If he comes under the influence of philosophy, he may adopt its conclusions, but he supplies his own reasoning.¹

¹ For the scope and limits of philosophic influence, see Leslie Stephen, *The English Utilitarians*, vol. i., p. 194; Dicey, *Law and Opinion in England*, pp. 23, 309.

CHAPTER IX.

THE RESOURCES AND POSITION OF THE SCHOOLS.

“At Bowood Bentham stayed over a month upon his first visit, and was treated in the manner appropriate to a philosopher. The men showed him friendliness, dashed with occasional contempt, and the ladies petted him.”—SIR LESLIE STEPHEN, *English Utilitarians*, vol. i, p. 184.

THE position of a philosopher is at all times incongruous. It is assumed that he should be perfect, and that he must be ineffectual. His virtues are often taken for granted. The notion that he can have any influence is tacitly denied. To call him to account in this matter seems at once rude and insipid. And yet many philosophers, like their less speculative brethren, have practical ends in view. They proselytize and intrigue. They open channels of communication with the world. They experience triumphs and defeats; and their martyrdom is not imaginary because it is sometimes lingering and obscure. Thus it is legitimate to assign them their place in history, and to inquire what forces they brought to bear on the lives and fortunes of others, and what appearance they presented to the world.

(I) *The Schools viewed from within.*

It has been said of the greatest Teacher who ever lived, that, whereas human nature is impatient and rushes forward to results, the Divine nature can wait. A new creed, if it is worth anything, cannot gain general recognition in a day. The master gathers round him a few disciples—select and ardent spirits, but probably of little influence. They stand alone for a time in the face of popular indifference or hostility. Then a movement is set

on foot. Leaders of life and thought grow curious, and seek instruction. A new literature is called into existence. Pamphlets and discourses circulate. Proselytes are received within the fold. The word works in secret, and, if circumstances are favourable, becomes in time the standard of orthodoxy.

Such is the ideal course of development : it remains to be seen how far it was realized in the case of Greek philosophy. The growth of the schools is familiar. The interest excited by the Sophists was inherited by the Socratic teachers. According to Xenophon,¹ many Athenian citizens and resident aliens associated with Socrates. Plato attracted pupils from all quarters of the Greek world.² The schools of Aristotle and Isocrates were even more largely frequented.³

Meantime the philosophers were journeying from place to place, everywhere collecting round them little knots of eager young men.⁴ They lectured to princes. They debated with each other in royal courts for the amusement or instruction of munificent patrons. Pyrrho, Anaxarchus, Callisthenes, and Onesicritus followed Alexander to the ends of the earth.⁵ In the next century, Sphaerus even obtained admission to Sparta.⁶ Nor was their energy as

¹ Xen. *Ap. Soc.* 17.

² Zeller, *Plato, etc.*, pp. 553 sqq.

³ I make no apology for mentioning Isocrates; he claimed to mediate between the so-called philosophers and practical life. His claims must be admitted, if only that they may be tested: for the size of his school, see Sanneg, *de Scholâ Isocratedâ*, pp. 7, 9.

⁴ E.g. Callisthenes σπουδαζόμενος ὑπὸ τῶν νέων διὰ τὸν λόγον, Plut. *Alex.* c. 53, cf. 55.

⁵ Diog. L. ix. 61, vi. 84 (Menag. *ad loc.*); Plut. *Alex.* (passim); Grote x. p. 159.

⁶ Thirlwall suggests that, as morality became lax at Sparta, the aristocrats let themselves be amused by philosophy, and thus Sphaerus got into this Philistine stronghold (viii. 161).

spasmodic as these considerations might seem to imply. While extending their sphere of operation, the philosophers were likewise organizing their resources. Before the close of the fourth century, schools began to spread from the mother university of Athens to various parts of Greece. In 339 B.C. Heraclides founded a branch of the Academy at his native city, Heraclea in Pontus.¹ In due course Elis, Eretria, Megara, Corinth, and Colophon became philosophic centres.² Nothing is more remarkable in the history of the third century than the increased effort of the philosophers to excite interest outside the student classes. The most prominent schools of the fourth century, the Academy and the Lyceum, were without the city walls. The most prominent school of the third century was opened in the Stoa Poikilé amid the bustle of city life.³ It was at a public disputation in the market-place of Sicyon that Abantidas the tyrant fell. At the same time philosophy acquired a recognized place in the educational curriculum. A visit to the philosophers is mentioned among the ordinary events of a young man's daily life:⁴

¹ Zeller, *Plato, etc.*, p. 560 n.

² Mahaffy, *Greek Life and Thought*, pp. 147, 155. Cecil Torr's exhaustive summary (*Rhodes in Ancient Times*, pp. 125-129) gives no support to the idea that Rhodes had a philosophic school in this period. There were Rhodian Peripatetics of this date, but they probably worked at Athens. I gather from Diog. L. v. 68, that Hieronymus was no exception to this rule. The Stoic school at Rhodes cannot be traced back to this time. Bion the Borysthenite appears to have sojourned, and taught, there for a short time (D. L. iv. 53); but he is too contemptible to be counted.

³ Holm (*History of Greece*, iv. 145) points out the significance of this.

⁴ Terence *Andr.* Act I. sc. 1, l. 30 (Menander). Prusias II (184 B.C.—) is blamed as being completely without education or philosophy (Polyb. xxxvii. 7). We may note two changes which came over the educational system at Athens in the third century: (1) military training tends to usurp the place of athletics; (2) greater stress is laid than hitherto on higher mental education (Mahaffy, *Greek Life, etc.*, pp. 404, 409; cf. Rouse, *Greek Votive Offerings*, pp. 183 sq.). These changes go a long way towards the fulfilment of Plato's suggestions. Athletics and athletic training were criticized as rendering their adherents

and schools were set up near the gymnasia, for the purpose of attracting the youths on their way to and from athletic exercise.

The significance of this development may easily be exaggerated. The philosophers welcomed pupils, and made some attempt to stimulate moral and intellectual interests in those with whom they came in contact ; but, taken as a whole, they did not proselytize after the manner of religious apostles. There were, indeed, notable exceptions to this rule.¹ Socrates conversed with anyone and everyone, and numbered among his most faithful adherents men of

careless of, and useless to, the State by Xenophanes (*fr.* 2, B), Euripides (*fr.* 284, N), and Philopoemen (Plut. *Philop.* c. 3). Intelligence and public service are set above athleticism by Lycurgus, *Or.* § 51, and Isocrates *Or.* xvi. § 33, *Or.* iv. p. 41 A. B. (cf. Arist. *Rhet.* 1414 b ; cf. Polyb. vii. 10). Chrysippus wrote against athletics (Mahaffy, *l. c.* p. 409). Moderate bodily culture is recommended by Isocrates, *ad Dem.* 4 E ; moderate athleticism by Agesilaus (Plut. *Ages.* 21). Attention is turned to military training by Agesilaus, Xenophon (*Ag.* ix. 6 sq. *Cyrop.* i. 2, 8-10), etc. The actual supplanting of athletic by military training must have been furthered by the Macedonian supremacy (for Alexander's views, see Plut. *Alex.* 4). The stress laid on higher mental education may go to the credit of the philosophers. These changes have their bad side. Athleticism did not cease when its prestige fell ; athletic victors merely became snobbish and were given to self-advertisement, having forgotten the old religious aspect of the games (Rouse, *l. c.* pp. 168, 185 sq.) On the philosophic education of the *ephebes* in this period, see Girard, *L'Éducation Athénienne*, p. 304.

¹ The missionary enterprise of Empedocles in the middle of the fifth century can hardly be associated with the spread of moral philosophy : he seems to have confined himself to recommending a Pythagorean diet and working cures. He describes his career thus pompously :

τοῖσιν ἄμ' εἶτ' ἀν ἴκωμαι ἐς ἄστεα τηλεθῶντα,
ἀνδράσιν ἠδὲ γυναιξὶ σεβίζομαι· οἱ δ' ἄμ' ἔπονται
μυριοί, ἐξέρεοντες ὅπη πρὸς κέρδος ἀταρπός.—

(ll. 403 sqq, Mullach).

How utterly different, though similar in purport, are the remarks of Savonarola : "When I have to depart, men and women shed tears, and hold my words in much esteem" (*Letter to his mother, on the occasion of his mission to Lombardy, circa 1488 A.D., Villari's Life of Savonarola, p. 86, Engl. trans.*).

poverty and humble profession. There is a pretty story of his meeting a drunken band of revellers and treating them to a piece of sound dialectical advice.¹ The Cynics were fired with missionary ardour. Antisthenes mixed with disreputable associates, on the plea that he was a physician sent to souls diseased.² Diogenes thought no place too ill-reputed for him to set foot therein. He had a passion for living in a crowd. He pitched his tub in the Metroum at Athens; and, on going to Corinth, selected the Cranion as his place of abode, because most men resorted thither to do business and to get hold of the courtesans.³ Everywhere, in no ambiguous tones, he expressed his opinion of the men and women around him. But his efforts can have been nothing to those of Crates, who was so assiduous a district-visitor, that he acquired the name of Door-Opener.⁴ Such, however, was not the policy of the more prominent schools. Their professors were leaders of advanced thought, masters of controversy, and promoters of higher education. Their pupils were, for the most part, young men with good prospects and fair intelligence, who came either to sharpen their wits for public life, or because they had a serious love of philosophy. It has been said of Isocrates that "he did a service peculiarly valuable to that age, by raising the tone and widening the circle of popular education, by bringing high aims and large sympathies into the preparation for active life, and by making good citizens of many who perhaps would not have aspired to become philosophers."⁵ This is substantially true of other schools besides. A comparatively small number of the young students turned out philosophers; but a large number must have caught from the example and discourse of their teachers an inspiration to

The Student
Classes.

¹ Ael. *V. H.* ix. 29. Cf. similar story of Plato rebuking a gambler; D. L. iii. 38.

² D. L. vi. 6.

³ Dio. Chrys. *Or.* viii. 276.

⁴ D. L. vi. 86.

⁵ Jebb, *Attic Orators*, ii. 33.

honest conduct and disinterested pursuits. Some of them were actual converts, rescued from a career of debauchery; and it was no slight achievement, that so many young men of social prominence should be drawn from all parts of Hellas into an atmosphere of industry and temperance.¹

Thus we see the philosophers gradually spreading their sphere of influence, organizing their resources, and in some measure controlling and stimulating their pupils. Their direct contact with the masses was meagre and exceptional. It has been well said that a great religious movement "works upward from below, not downward from above." The reverse is true of philosophy. The wisdom of this world must appeal first to the wise and prudent. In the Greek schools the immediate circle of disciples was drawn mainly from the student class. But it must be remembered that this class contained men of influence and position, the future statesmen and rulers of Greece. The philosophers attached great importance to social and political reorganization as a means to moral reform. There was also a wide-spread opinion that the tone of private and public life in a state depended on the practical example of its leading men.² Hence the goodwill of practical politicians

¹ Conversion of Speusippus, Plut. *Adul. et Am.* p. 71; *frat. am.* p. 491: of Polemo, D. L. iv. 16 (see Zeller, *Plato, etc.*, p. 564, n. 21). Isocrates thus classifies his pupils: ἐμοί γὰρ πολλῶν καὶ παντοδαπῶν συγγεγενημένων ἀνδρῶν καὶ δόξας ἐνίων μεγάλας ἔχόντων, . . . οἱ μὲν τινες περὶ αὐτὸν τὸν λόγον, οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸ διανοηθῆναι καὶ πράξει δεινοὶ γεγονόασιν, οἱ δὲ ἐπὶ μὲν τοῦ βλου σῶφρονες καὶ χαριέντες, πρὸς δὲ τὰς ἄλλας χρήσεις καὶ διαγωγὰς ἀφνεῖς παντάπασιν, Isoc. *Ἐρ.* iv. p. 413: again, referring to more schools than his own, τοὺς συνόντας τοιοῦτων ἐπιτηδευμάτων (wine, women and cards, cf. Xen. *Oec.* i. 20-22) ἀποτρέπομεν, id. *Antid.* p. 124; cf. p. 125, οἷτινες (i.e. the pupils) ἐν αὐταῖς μὲν ταῖς ἀκμαῖς ὄντες ὑπερείδον τὰς ἡδονὰς, ἐν αἷς οἱ πλείστοι τῶν τηλικούτων μάλιστα αὐτῶν ἐπιθυμοῦσιν, ἔξῃ δ' αὐτοῖς ῥαθυμεῖν μηδὲν δαπανωμένοις εἰλοντο πονεῖν χρήματα τελέσαντες κ.τ.λ.: Demosthenes (*Ἐρ.* 5, to *Heracleodorus*) bears witness to the sound moral influence of Academic education.

² Isoc. *ad Nicocl.* 21 A. B. (see Frick's note), *Nicocl.* 34 D: Aesch. *Or.* i. § 4: Xen. *Cyrop.* viii. 1, 12; 8, 5: Diog. L. vii. 7. This, of course, applies chiefly to monarchical and oligarchical communities.

was a considerable asset to a philosophical school, and meant that, to some extent, a channel of communication was opened between theory and practice, between intellect and society. The political activity of the philosophers and their pupils must be considered in due course. We may remark, incidentally, that they attempted to extend this sphere of their influence by appeals to the tyrants governing Greek cities and those kingdoms outside Greece whose destinies came to be so inextricably associated with her own. They headed embassies to the royal courts. They sojourned there in a tutorial or ministerial capacity. They wrote to solicit boons for their fellow-citizens, to recommend a special line of policy, to demand the punishment of an offender, or to encourage in young potentates a conscientious and intelligent discharge of their duties.¹ It was indeed through the

¹ Plato interferes successfully with Perdiccas in the division of his kingdom (Grote, *Hist. of Greece*, ix. p. 204, see Ath. 506 E, F), and sends Euphraeus of Oreus to be his confidential adviser (Grote, *l. c.*). Anaximenes, pupil of Zoilus and Diogenes, teaches Alexander and saves his native city, Lampsacus, from destruction (Paus. vi. 18, 2-4, Suid. *s. v.*). Aristotle, teacher of Alexander and Antipater (Suid. *s. v.* Ἀντιπάτρ.), gets the former to restore Stageira and Eresus (Ael. *V. H.* xii. 54; D. L. v. 4, Menag. *ad loc.*), writes to him general political advice (Ael. *l. c.*: Grote, *ibid.* x. 204, n. 4), but afterwards falls into disfavour (Plut. *Alex.* 55). He was also friend and adviser to Hermias of Atarneus, for a brief spell student at the Academy and apparently a good ruler (Aristotle *fr.* 7, *cum not.*, Bergk. ii. p. 663; contrast the hostile epigram by Theocritus of Chios, pupil of Metrodorus, Bergk. ii. p. 374), Grote ix. p. 427 sq. Callisthenes, nephew of Aristotle, accompanies Alexander to the East, and writes complimentary histories of the campaign, largely in order to procure the restoration of his native city, Olynthus (Grote x. 159). Philiscus (of Miletus), pupil of Isocrates, writes to Alexander: “δδέξης φρόντιζε, ἀλλὰ μὴ ἔσο λοιμὸς καὶ μὴ μεγάλη νόσος ἀλλὰ ὑγίεια,” λέγων τὸ μὲν βιαίως ἄρχειν καὶ πικρῶς καὶ αἰρεῖν πόλεις καὶ ἀπολείν δῆμους λοιμοῦ εἶναι, τὸ δὲ εἰρήνης προνοεῖσθαι καὶ σωτηρίας τῶν ἀρχομένων ὑγίειας (Ael. *V. H.* xiv. 11; Sanneg, *de Scholâ Isocrated*, p. 32, seems to overlook this; the advice is very Isocratic). Theopompus, pupil of Isocrates, accuses Theocritus, ruler of Chios (and pupil of Metrodorus, pupil of Isocrates, Sanneg, *ibid.* p. 30, n. 23), to Alexander, on the ground of luxury (Ath. 230 F; Theocritus was expelled after Alexander's death, Sanneg, *ibid.* p. 44); also writes to Alexander to complain of the indecent conduct of Harpalus (Ath. 595 A-E). Diodotus, pupil of Isocrates, is recommended by the latter to Antipater's care and notice as a capable

medium of letters and tracts that the philosophers most frequently attempted to convey their thoughts to the general public at home and abroad. Some idea of the extent of this literature may be gathered from Diogenes Laertius. Besides purely technical pamphlets, there were a number of memoirs and popular treatises, which may have attracted the attention of the ordinary reader; also

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Literature.

adviser, whom frankness of speech has brought into disfavour with the authorities in Asia Minor (Isoc. *Ep.* iv. p. 414, Steph.). Isocrates writes to Nicocles, tyrant of Salamis in Cyprus (*Or.* ii), much in the spirit of Socrates, encouraging political study and wise government (cf. *Antid.* 342 D sq., ἡγούμενος ἐκ τοῦ παραινεῖν τὴν τε διάνοιαν τὴν ἐκείνου μάλιστα ὠφελήσειν . . . παρασκευάζων καθ' ὅσον ἡδυνάμην τὴν πολιτείαν αὐτοῖς ὡς οἶόν τε πρῶτατῆν): Nicocles and his father, Evagoras, seem to have been excellent men and wise rulers (Isoc. *Evag.* 196 E, 197 A, 207 A; Jebb, *Attic Orators*, ii. 109): Anaximenes says that Straton, king of Sidon, had rivalry with Nicocles in *τρομφή* and *ἀσέλγεια*, and that both died violently, Ath. 531 D, Ael. *V. H.* vi. 2; but Anaximenes was a foul-mouthed pupil of Zoilus and a personal enemy of Isocrates: and it is also possible he has confused this Nicocles with Nicocles, or Nicocreon, tyrant of Paphos; see Wesseling *ad Diod. Sic.* xx. 21, p. 420. 17 [Dindorf]: Isocrates also writes to Alexander, aged 14, encouraging practical and political studies (*Ep.* 5); to Thebe and her half-brothers, urging free and just government of Thessaly, without effect (*Ep.* 6); also to Timotheus, son of his late pupil Clearchus, encouraging a good government of Heraclea (*Ep.* 7: a just and energetic young prince, Grote x. 396 cf. Ath. 549 D). Theophrastus writes to Cassander *περὶ βασιλείας* (*ἐι γνήσιον τὸ σύγγραμμα*. Ath 144 E). Zeno, invited by Antigonus to come and instruct him and thereby morally influence the Macedonians, declines, but sends Persaeus and Philonides (D. L. vii. 7-9). Cleanthes (said to have taught Antigonus, Suid. s. v.) sends Sphaerus to Ptolemy Philopator (D. L. vii. 177, 185; Ath. 354 E sqq.). Diodorus, the Megarian, Stilpo, and Theodorus the Atheist, at the Court of Ptolemy I (D. L. ii. 101 sq. [Menag. *ad loc.*], 112; Pliny vii. 53). Strato lectures Ptolemy II (D. L. v. 58). Panaretus, pupil of Arcesilas, at Court of Ptolemy III (Ath. 552 C). Stoics at Pergamum (Mahaffy, *Greek Life and Thought*, p. 336).

This list is not complete. The relations of the philosophers with Dionysius the younger, and with the tyrants of Greece Proper in the third century, must be considered later on in detail. It is obvious that many of the above instances do not imply serious influence or even serious effort. Some of the philosophers sensibly disregarded royal invitations; Xenocrates, Menedemus, and Ephorus (pupil of Isocrates) are said to have refused Alexander (Grote x. 159, n. 2); Zeno refused Antigonus (D. L. vii. 9); Cleanthes and Chrysippus refused Ptolemy Philopator (D. L. vii. 185).

tragedies and elegiac poems with a philosophic bearing, no doubt designed to the same purpose.¹ A certain number of comic and tragic poets appear to have emerged from the schools, and may have infused into their compositions the doctrines which they had learnt therein, although in most cases the fragments are too scanty to admit of a positive judgment.² Isocrates encouraged his pupils to undertake solid historical works. The fragments of Theopompus and Ephorus display a distinct attempt to moralize and preach; but their ethical value, at any rate in the case of the former, is vitiated by bombast.³ It would be interesting to know the extent of the reading public in this period. The spread of cheap literature, and the establishment of a distinct class of booksellers and writers, appear to have commenced during the Peloponnesian War. As time went on, public libraries were founded, largely under royal patronage; and men of a literary turn collected poetical and technical works. Cargoes of books were conveyed over seas. Isocrates speaks as if his own writings were familiar to educated men throughout Greece, and especially at Athens. Anything like a wide popular study of philosophical literature

¹ Diogenes and Crates wrote tragedies for this purpose (Nauck, p. 808, 2nd ed.), and Crates elegiacs (Bergk, ii. p. 364 sqq.). For popular Cynic and Stoic tracts, see Zeller, *Stoics, etc.*, p. 48.

² Theodectes, pupil of Isocrates and Aristotle, wrote tragedy; Sanneg, *de Schol. Isoc.*, pp. 35 sq., 49. Asclepiades, pupil of Isocrates, tragedy; *ibid.* p. 38. Astydamos the younger, pupil of Isocrates, tragedy; *ibid.* p. 49 sq. Aphareus, stepson and pupil of Isocrates, tragedy; *ibid.* p. 50 sqq. Menander was a pupil of Theophrastus and friend of Epicurus. We may notice that Lewis Campbell sees traces of Pythagoreanism in Epicharmus (*Religion in Greek Literature*, p. 166; cf. Müllach, *Frag. Phil. Graec.* vol. ii. p. lxiii, "Epicharmus Pythagoricae sapientiae sectator, idemque poeta comicus, cf. vol. i. p. 132).

³ My judgment is based on the fragments preserved by Athenaeus; Sanneg (*l. c.* p. 39) remarks that the historians of this school had a good deal of showy style, which tended to divert them from the pursuit of severe truth.

was probably out of the question.¹ But there was one writer of philosophic temperament whose influence it is impossible to exaggerate. It is almost certain that in his lifetime the poet Euripides was mistrusted and disliked at Athens by the people as a whole, although stories are told of his popularity in other parts of Greece before, and shortly after, his death. By the middle of the fourth century his fame was established, and his wisdom generally acknowledged, among his compatriots. His plays were reproduced on the stage, and his tradition carried on by a school of tragedians, which sprang up during his lifetime and continued far into the next century. He was quoted respectfully by the comic poets, who did much to familiarize the common people with his views; and it is probably to his inspiration that the more serious utterances of the New Comedy must be traced.²

¹ On the spread of literature, see Curtius, *History of Greece*, vol. v. p. 173 sq. (Ward); cf. Arist. *Ran.* 52 sq., 1113 sq. (Paley's notes). *πολλὰ βιβλία γεγραμμένα καὶ τᾶλλα πολλὰ ὅσα ἐν ξυλίοις τεύχεσιν ναύκληροι ἄγουσιν*, are found wrecked at Salmydessus in Pontus, Xen. *Anab.* vii. 5, 14. For Isocrates, see Isoc. *Evag.* 204 B, *Panath.* 285 C, *Antid.* 321 A B, and § 87 (Blass); Dion. Hal. *Vit. Isoc.* ch. 10'; Jebb, *Att. Or.* ii. pp. 13, 45, 428. Euthydemus, the young Socratic, collects a library of poets and sophists, Xen. *Mem.* iv. 2, 1. For famous book-collectors and royal libraries, see Ath. 3 A B, Sanneg, *ibid.* p. 26 (library founded by the tyrant Clearchus, pupil of Plato and Isocrates), Harrison and Verrall, *M. and M. of Ancient Athens*, p. 145 (library in the Ptolemaion at Athens), cf. Plut. *Alex.* 8. Aeschines the Socratic sells dialogues to Dionysius the younger, D. L. ii. 61 (Menag. *ad loc.*). Axiothea, lady pupil of Plato (D. L. iii. 46, Menag.), is said to have been attracted to the Academy by reading one of his works (Them. *Or.* iv. quoted by Menag. *l. c.*); cf. similar stories of Zeno and his *Σωκρατικὰ βιβλία* (D. L. vii. 2 sq. & 31).

² See Meyer, *Geschichte des Alterthums*, vol. iv. § 476; stories of his early popularity, Plut. *Nic.* 29, *Lys.* 15: Lycurgus the orator has statues of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides erected, and an authorized edition of their works compiled (ps. Plut. *vit. Lys.*): encomia on Euripides, Lyc. *Or.* § 102, Aesch. *Or.* i. § 151: an edition of Euripides is sent as one of the standard works to Alexander, Plut. *Alex.* 8: he is quoted favourably by Comedians, Meineke iii. 288 (Nicostratus), iv. 48 (Philemon), iv. 472 (Philippides); quoted indifferently, *ibid.* iv. 411 (Diphilus) cf. Plautus, *Rudens* l. 86 (Diphilus). For Menander as an imitator of Euripides, see Quint. *Inst.* x. 1, Meineke iv. 705 sqq.

(II) *The Schools viewed from without.*

We must now cross over into the enemy's camp, and survey the progress of philosophy from the standpoint of public opinion. Of all questions the most important and interesting is just this: What appearance did these heterogeneous groups of men, termed "philosophers," present to the minds of practical labouring folk in Hellas? It is an egregious error to draw hasty conclusions in this matter from the long list of honours publicly awarded them, or from the hostile sentences passed against them by popular tribunals. The legal, social, and political position of the schools is, as will be seen, no sure criterion of moral approbation or mistrust. Its gradual improvement was due, in part at least, to causes other than popular reverence and affection. To get to the heart of the matter we must go deeper. It is, however, necessary to start with the bare historical facts, accompanying them with a brief commentary, in order to discover their import, and then to work inwards to the essential elements of public feeling.

Up to the last decade of the fourth century, philosophy was not entirely free from legal obstruction at its headquarters in Athens. In 399 B.C. Socrates was condemned and executed; and the alleged reaction in his favour after his death is based upon very doubtful evidence.¹ In 355 and 353 B.C.

Legal Obstruction
to Philosophy.

¹ D. L. ii. 43 sq (see Menag. *ad loc.*) says, among other things, that Anytus fled to Heraclea, and was at once expelled thence; Xen. *Ap. Soc.* 31, attributes A.'s retirement from Athens to the ill-repute of his son; it is possible he was also expelled from Heraclea under the tyranny of Plato's pupil Clearchus (364 B.C.—), but this supposes him to have lived to a good old age. Them. *Or.* ii. improves the story. The author of the argument to Isoc. *Busiris* agrees with D. L. (*l. c.*). Lang sees in Isoc. *Antid.* 314 B a reference to this alleged repentance (why?). Against these very picturesque statements must be set the hostile references to Socrates in public speeches by Aeschines (*Or.* i. § 173; 345 B.C.) and Hyperides (*fr.* 58, Blass): see Gomperz, *Greek Thinkers*, ii. 118. We may note Holm's remark (vol. iii. p. 33, n 4) that his condemnation "formed no precedent, because the Athenians did not recognize precedents in their legal system."

Isocrates was challenged to an exchange of property ; a perfectly legal and common proceeding, but perhaps stimulated in his case, as he affirms, by popular ill-feeling and suspicion.¹ In 324 B.C. Aristotle was accused of impiety by Demophilus and Eurymedon, and went abroad.² A few years later, Theophrastus was unsuccessfully impeached on a similar charge by Agnonides. The religious prosecutions of Theodorus and Stilpo before the Areopagus must be placed about the same date.³ Finally in 307 B.C. Sophocles got a decree passed, forbidding anyone to keep a philosophical school in the city without official consent. It was the occasion of a bitter attack by Demochares upon the private lives of Plato and Aristotle, and upon the characters and careers of their pupils. Next year the decree was rescinded, and henceforth no attempt appears to have been made to shackle freedom of thought and expression.⁴

¹ "Quod adolescentes corrumperet pravis eloquentiae praeceptis tradendis." Sanneg, p. 11.

² Ath. 696 A, B ; D. L. v. 5 ; Ael. *V. H.* iii. 36 ; the date and the fact that Demophilus was an accuser, make it certain that the motive was political.

³ Theodorus, rescued by Demetrius Phalereus, flies to Egypt (somewhere 317-307 B.C.) ; D. L. ii. 101 ; Ath. 611 B. Stilpo ; D. L. ii. 116.

⁴ Ath. 610 E sq. The decree was undoubtedly due to a political outburst against the Macedonian and unpatriotic sympathies of these schools : Grote x. p. 313 sq. ; Thirlwall vii. p. 360. Thirlwall and Mahaffy (*Greek Life and Thought*, p. 144) suggest that the repeal was due to the commercial losses sustained on the departure of Theophrastus with his numerous scholars. Grote (cf. Holm, *History of Greece*, iv. p. 60) attributes it to the good sense of the Athenians : D. L. v. 37 sq., certainly implies that the motive was respect for Theophrastus. Both accounts are equally plausible. We may note here the alleged expulsion of philosophers by Lysimachus from his kingdom (Ath. 610 E ; cf. the future expulsions by Antiochus, Ath. 547 A, B) ; of Epicureans by the Messenians (Ath. 547 A, Ael. *V. H.* ix. 12, Suid. s. v. Ἐπικούρος) and by the Lycians of Crete (Suid. *l. c.*) ; all on alleged moral grounds : I cannot assign dates, and the instances seem to be isolated and unimportant.

Wilamowitz¹ contends that Demetrius Phalereus placed the freedom of teaching on a firm footing :
 The Philosophers
 rise to honour. and it seems plausible to suggest that
 Theophrastus rendered further assistance in
 this direction during his political ascendancy some fifteen
 years later.² With regard to Demetrius, Holm naïvely
 remarks—his “decrees were even less firmly established
 than his statues : he no doubt protected the freedom of
 teaching, but it was founded and maintained by the right
 feeling of the Athenian people.” It is probable that the
 Athenians were gradually abandoning their religious and
 moral objection to philosophy. Indeed most of the pro-
 secutions, from that of Socrates onwards, were primarily
 due to political causes, although the motive assigned in
 all cases was religious or moral. This supposition, while
 it exonerates the people from the charge of aggressive
 bigotry, detracts somewhat from their generous treatment
 of other philosophers, and suggests that here, too, the
 real motive was political. Thus when Xenocrates was
 sent on embassies to Philip and Antipater, and Crates (of
 the Academy) to Demetrius Poliorcetes (288 B.C.), they
 were selected primarily because these princes were known
 to cultivate the regard of literary men and philosophers.³
 The same may be said of the honours showered on the
 Stoics, and especially of the decree in favour of Zeno,
 complimenting him on his good character and influence,

¹ *Antigonus von Karystos*, quoted by Holm iv. p. 60.

² Deinarchus returns to Athens, *πραξάντων αὐτῷ τὴν κάθοδον τῶν περὶ Θεόφραστον ἅμα τοῖς ἄλλοις φύγασι* (ps. Plut. *vit. Dein.*): this was in 292 B.C. (Thirlwall viii. p. 23). It seems to indicate that Theophrastus had influence with Demetrius Poliorcetes, then king of Macedon, and thus probably influence at Athens.

³ Xenocrates, D. L. iv. 8 sq. ; Crates, Thirlwall viii. 38. Grote (x. 259) thinks that Aristotle, had he been in Athens, would have supplanted Xenocrates on the embassy to Antipater : very suggestive and significant.

which was drawn up at the suggestion of Thraso, legate of Antigonus Gonatas.¹

This is, however, only a one-sided statement. Plutarch says that the Athenians selected Xenocrates as their ambassador, because "his reputation for virtue and wisdom was so great and famous everywhere, that they conceived there could be no pride, cruelty, or anger arising in the heart of man, which would not at the mere sight of him be subdued into something of reverence and admiration."² His character may have partly determined the choice. Certainly his dignified patriotism, so different from the half-hearted attitude of his pupil Phocion, must have raised him in the esteem of his fellow-citizens, and proved to them that a life of speculation was not inconsistent with manliness. Moreover, in later years, when the sentiment of Hellenic independence was extinguished and Athens eked out a precarious existence in abject flattery of foreign princes, the royal patronage, which from the days of Archelaus onwards was lavished on the schools, must have had a strange and unprecedented effect on the popular mind. Hitherto, a philosopher who

¹ D. L. vii. 6, 10-12. Thirlwall thinks these honours were awarded by the Athenians after the close of the Chremonidean War, with a view to currying favour with Antigonus, who for various reasons cultivated Zeno's friendship (D. L. vii. 15). This offers a plausible reason why the keys of Athens should have been placed in Zeno's keeping, which seems a rather fatuous proceeding, unless it implied that he was taken as a surety for the city's good behaviour. The inherent probability of such an explanation makes against Droysen's theory, that he died in 267 B.C., before the war began. For public tombs and statues of Zeno and Chrysippus, see Paus. i. 17, 1; 29, 15; D. L. vii. 182. I can find no statues of Plato, belonging to this period, except one by Silanion (fl. 328 B.C.), placed in the Academy by the Persian Mithridates; D. L. iii. 25. Aristotle had a statue at Olympia, perhaps put up, as Pausanias suggests, by a pupil or a soldier who knew his influence with Antipater (Paus. vi. 4, 5); he also received honours at Delphi (Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscip. Graec.* 2nd ed. vol. ii. No. 915), of which he was soon deprived (Ael. V. H. xiv. 1).

² Plut. *Phocion*, Clough's translation (slightly altered), vol. iv., p. 356.

accepted a royal offer of friendship or profited by royal munificence, had been an object of constant suspicion. Now, in the hey-day of political infatuation, he would be courted and admired; and the teacher who had lifted up his voice in the royal banquet-hall, and run from palace to palace with international secrets in his keeping, might easily pose as the expounder of a strict, though unintelligible, orthodoxy. Again, to look back for a moment, we find that, elsewhere than at Athens before the close of the fourth century, philosophers were respected and consulted on matters of state. It is said that Eudoxus wrote laws for his native city, and that Plato was invited to perform a similar service for Megalopolis and Cyrene.¹ Pyrrho was consecrated High-Priest at Elis, and obtained certain immunities for the philosophers who resorted thither.² Menedemus, from being a public laughing-stock at Eretria, rose to the control of her affairs, conducted embassies to Asia and Egypt, and received honour wherever he went.³

¹ Eudoxus, Plut. *adv. Col.* 1126 C; D. L. vii. 88; so Protagoras is said to have legislated for Thurii (founded 444 B.C.), Heraclides Ponticus *ap.* D. L. ix. 50. Prytanis wrote a new set of laws for Megalopolis, by order of Antigonos Doson, Polyb. v. 93. Plato, *φησὶ δὲ Παιμφίλῃ ἐν τῷ πέμπτῳ καὶ εἰκοστῷ τῶν ὑπομνημάτων ὡς Ἀρκάδες καὶ Θηβαῖοι μεγάλην πόλιν οἰκίζοντες παρεκάλουν αὐτὸν νομοθέτην· ὁ δὲ, μαθὼν ἴσον ἔχειν οὐ θέλοντας, οὐκ ἐπορεύθη* (D. L. iii. 23, see Menag. *ad loc.* for additional references); Plut. *adv. Col.* 1126 c, says he sent Aristonymus (whom Sanneg, *de Schol. Isoc.* p. 24, is inclined to identify with Hieronymus, pupil of Isocrates and, perhaps, also of Plato) to organize affairs in Arcadia. Zeller (*Plato, etc.*, p. 32, n 65) remarks on Plato's alleged reason for not going, that it is contrary to Platonic principles; he adds that Epaminondas would not have invited a philosopher of known philo-Spartan principles (?). Ael. *V. H.* xii. 30, says Plato was summoned as *νομοθέτης* by the Cyreneans, but excused himself on the ground of their idle habits (perhaps on occasion of his visit to Cyrene after Socrates' death, D. L. iii. 6; cf. Plutarch quoted Menag. *ad D. L.* iii. 23). Ecdemus and Demophanes of the New Academy are said to have settled affairs at Cyrene in the third century; Polyb. x. 22, Plut. *Philop.* 1. Let anyone disposed to question these statements on the mere ground of *à-priori* incredibility, read Sir Leslie Stephen's *English Utilitarians*, vol. i. pp. 220-223 (Bentham).

² D. L. ix. 64.

³ D. L. ii. 140 sqq.

But the main question is not yet answered. This bare historical outline proves that by the end of the fourth century the position of the schools had grown secure, and that their representatives had become objects of notoriety and, in many cases, of respect; but it is impossible to determine to what extent the under-currents of popular resentment and suspicion subsided, and how far the increasing respect felt for their personality and character implied an increased amenability to their teaching. Evidence is scanty. The running comment of Aristophanes was carried on by his successors far into the third century B.C. It is on the whole hostile, although its tone gradually improves. Accusations of immoral influence give place to the taunt that abstract theory is sheer nonsense, and that philosophers do not practise what they preach. That the Comic poets had more effect on the popular imagination than is usually admitted by modern scholars, may be inferred from the continual complaints of ancient writers from Plato to Polybius. But the effect of the Comic tradition would weaken as its novelty wore off; and the Athenians were too humorous to remain long enslaved to a jest.¹ For the fifth and fourth centuries

Popular Attitude
to Philosophic
Teaching.

Evidence of
Comedy;

¹ Story of a popular protest against the tragedian Sositeus, when he ridiculed Cleanthes on the stage (D. L. vii. 173, Plut. *de adul et am.* 55 C gives what seems a different version of the same story). Complaints of the influence of Comedy by Plato (*Ap. Soc.*), Isocrates (*de Pace*, 161 D), and Polybius (who charges Timaeus of Tauromenium with slandering Demochares on the mere evidence of Comedy, Suidas *s. v.* Δημοχάρης, Polyb. xii. 13). The following sentence from an American scholar is worth preserving: "The age of the Middle and New Comedy was begun. And now the light crest of its laughter broke often on the exoteric truths of Platonism, and dashed against the walls of the Academy"! (*Classical Studies in honour of Henry Drisler*, Macmillan & Co., 1894, p. 86). The same writer concludes that Theopompus hit nearest Plato's doctrine, later poets becoming more and more superficial (*ibid.* p. 92). This remark might be extended to the Comic treatment of philosophy generally: the Middle Comedy has several witty parodies, which imply special acquaintance with philosophic gossip and even with philosophic

there is contemporary evidence of a more serious nature.

Of Xenophon and Isocrates. According to Xenophon,¹ Socrates was an object of continual derision. The populace clamoured at rich youths who associated with him. With a few notable exceptions, fathers discouraged their sons from following in his train. According to Diogenes Laertius,² he was usually mocked and despised, and sometimes maltreated. At this point begins the valuable testimony of Isocrates, who in many ways supports Plato's criticism of the popular attitude to higher education, and at the same time from his own aggressively commonsense standpoint asserts and partly ratifies the popular contempt for Socratics and Sophists alike. He complains that his fellow-citizens nominally approve the wisdom of ancient poets and sages, but in reality prefer listening to the most trivial comedy. They devote not one moment to the consideration of their true interests. Their leisure is given to sensational entertainments. They regard seekers after truth with suspicion, and are bored at their discourses. Their champions blaspheme against philosophy and education. They dismiss serious thinkers as idle, good-for-nothing folk, and mutter the trite charges of immoral influence; while they entice young men away from the schools to a career of vice and wantonness. The democracy is without thought or intelligence, given wholly to the pursuit of pleasure, orator-ridden, and rushing on

treatises: the New Comedy gets much duller in this respect, which implies that the "rage" was coming to a close. On Aristophanes *Ecclesiazusae* and Plato *Rep.* 449 A sqq; see Adam, *Plato's Rep.* v. App. I.

¹ Parental opposition Xen. *Ap.* 20, 29; contrast Xen. *Symp.* iv. 24, ix. 1 (*Δύκων ὁ πατήρ αὐτῷ συνεξιών ἐπιστραφεὶς εἶπε. Νῆ τὴν Ἥραν, ὦ Σώκρᾶτες, καλὸς γε κάγαθὸς δοκεῖς μοι ἄνθρωπος εἶναι*): popular sneers, Xen. *Oec.* xi. 3, *Symp.* iv. 52-54, vi. 6-8; cf. Plato and Xen. *Ap. Soc.* passim: opposition to his pupils, Xen. *Symp.* iv. 32.

² D. L. ii. 21 (see Menag. *ad loc.*).

like a winter torrent into an abyss of falsehood and prejudice. Yet he admits that many fathers sent their sons to receive instruction, and rejoiced at their progress.¹ Then he turns round on the Socratics and the rival schools. They have grown old in quibbling. They defend fatuous propositions. They write encomia on bumble bees and salts. They teach a morality which, if practised, can only lead to perdition. Their subtleties, their practical inefficiency, and their vast pretensions, kindle scorn and indignation among men of business and good-sense. Their mutual bickerings disgust the world, and imperil the already unstable authority of genuine learning. The curriculum of the Academy is excellent for schoolboys, but otherwise absurd. Young men like the dialogues more than they should; their elders cannot endure them. "I will make no peevish charges," he says in a moment of rare condescension; "I will speak the plain truth: I think the professors of subtle disputation, astronomy, geometry, and so forth, do not injure their pupils, but even benefit them, less than they themselves promise, more than other people imagine."² A bitter indictment this! but probably not an inaccurate reading of popular opinion. The word "philosophy" was used as a synonym for plausible foolishness by Phalinus, Greek envoy of Tissaphernes, to the

¹ For the summary of his views so far, see Isoc. *Or.* ii. 23 C-24 D (date 374 B.C.); *Or.* iii. 28 C (372 B.C.); *Or.* viii. 161 D (355 B.C.); *Or.* xii. 232, 235 B sq. (339 B.C.); *Or.* xi. 230 E (390 B.C.); *Or.* xv. §§ 147, 168-173, 241, 286 sq., Blass (353 B.C.). Isocrates is definitely assailed or sneered at as a teacher of rhetoric, Dem. *Or.* xxii. § 5 (*Schol. ad loc.*), *Or.* xxiv. § 180, *Or.* xxxv. §§ 18, 50 sq., *Or.* lii. § 17 sq.

² Isoc. *Or.* xv. §§ 260 sq. (Blass). For his criticism of the Eristics (including the Socratics) and of other Sophists and philosophers, see Isoc. *Or.* xiii. 292 B-D, 295 C (date 391 B.C.); *Or.* xi. 230 E sq. (390 B.C.); *Or.* x. 208 A-209 D, 210 A-C (370 B.C.); *Or.* xv. §§ 84 sq., 259, 262, Blass (353 B.C.); *Or.* xii. 238 B (339 B.C.). These passages contain many quotations of popular opinion; the peculiar standpoint of Isocrates makes him a fair representative of the "common-sense" view.

Cyreans after the battle of Cynaxa.¹ Lysias in his Olympic Oration dismissed scholasticism in one contemptuous sentence.² Plato, according to a significant legend, surprised his hosts at Olympia by doing himself justice in an ordinary conversation (*ἀνευ τῶν συνήθων λόγων*).³ Two centuries later Polybius complained of "ill-trained disputants in the Academy," who maintained frivolous paradoxes whereby they brought the school into disrepute.⁴ No doubt the more enlightened Greeks could discriminate good teaching from bad, and sound argument from idle paradox. But is it in any degree likely that the great mass of the people did so there and then? Plato and Isocrates testify against such a supposition; and the early records of every great religious or educational movement that the world has witnessed tend to confirm their remarks.

The diatribe of Isocrates supplies a rough and ready explanation of these things. The fault lay partly with the people, partly with the schools. Much of the best teaching was in its very nature calculated to provoke ridicule and disgust. Plato's *Parmenides* will convulse disrespectful readers till the crack of doom. The philosophers made little attempt to conciliate public feeling, or to explain their moral doctrines in a manner suited to the average intelligence. It was a signal misfortune that the Cynics, who spoke most openly and with the greatest directness, had no weapon beyond violent abuse, and no gospel more conciliatory than an outrageous asceticism. Diogenes was treated with jocular compassion, as a spoilt pet, admittedly insane. Crates, a humourless and violent

Causes of Popular
Mistrust and
Indifference.

¹ Xen. *Anab.* ii. 1, 13 (*ἀλλὰ φιλοσόφῳ μὲν ἔοικας κ.τ.λ.*): for the popular contempt of the philosophers as useless, see Plato *Rep.* 487 sqq.; cf. Plut. *Pelop.* 5 (*Ἐπαμινώνδης δὲ κατὰ χώραν ἔμεινε τῷ καταφρονηθῆναι διὰ φιλοσοφίαν ὡς ἀπράγμων*).

² Lys. *Or.* xxxiii. § 3.

³ Ael. *V. H.* iv. 9.

⁴ Polyb. xii. 26.

edition of his predecessor, was an object of serious resentment. He was publicly flogged on one occasion, and on another officially reprimanded for appearing in insufficient attire. There was also something to justify the suspicion of philosophic teaching on moral grounds. Aristippus was treated by the Comedians as an embodiment of licentiousness; and his conduct was not likely to remove this impression.¹ Theodorus, the Cyrenaic, taught a doctrine which must have sounded at least ambiguous to a respectable citizen. Plutarch says that one of his lectures instigated Phocion's indifferent son to fulfil an evil design.² In many cases the infamy of public men redounded to the discredit of the schools from which they sprang. Alcibiades and Critias were long remembered as disciples of Socrates.³ From the Academy proceeded Chaeron of Pellene, Euaeon of Lampsacus, Timolaus of Cyzicus;

¹ Meineke, vol. iii. p. 400; D. L. *Life of Aristippus*; Ath. 343 D, 544 A-D, 588 C, 599 B; Suidas *s. v.*; cf. Aristoxenus of Cyrene, philosopher and bon-vivant, ὁ ὄντως μετελθὼν τὴν πατριὸν φιλοσοφίαν, Ath. 7. C; cf. Dionysius of Heraclea, ὁ Μεταθέμενος, D. L. vii. 167, Ath. 281 D sq.

² D. L. ii. 99. Plut. *Phoc.* 38. May there not be some trace of Cyrenaic influence in the speech of Polyarchus the Syracusan, the friend of Archytas (Ath. 545 A-546 C, *teste* Aristoxenus the musician)? He is described as φιλοσοφίας οὐ παντελῶς ἀλλότριος, and Aristippus stayed at the Court of Dionysius.

³ Critias, Aesch. *Or.* i. § 173, cf. *Hyp. fr.* 58 (Blass); Alcibiades abused by Aeschines the Socratic (Ath. 220 C, 656 F), Antisthenes (Ath. 220 C, cf. 534 C), and probably by Euclid (Suidas *s. v.*). Polycrates the Sophist repeats the stock charge against Socrates; on which Isocrates comments, Σωκράτους δὲ κατηγορεῖν ἐπιχειρήσας, ὥσπερ ἐγκωμιάσαι βουλόμενος, Ἀλκιβιάδην ἔδωκας αὐτῷ μαθητὴν, ὃν ὕπ' ἐκείνου μὲν οὐδεὶς ἤσθητο παιδευόμενον, ὅτι δὲ πολὺ διήνεγκε τῶν ἄλλων, ἅπαντες ἂν ὁμολογήσειαν (Isoc. *Or.* xi. 222 C. D): Isocrates admired Alcibiades (see *Or.* xvi); but the assertion that he was not known to be Socrates' pupil is incredible: Dem. (?) *Erot.* § 56 (perhaps written by Isocrates' pupil, Androtion, see Sanneg, *de Schol. Isoc.* p. 23) speaks of Socrates' partial influence over him. Aesch., *l. c.*, does not couple his name with that of Critias, perhaps because he was a less blatant example than the latter. Aeschines the Socratic, the Greek Micawber, is attacked by Lysias with coarse humour as a reprobate philosopher, Ath. 612 B-F.

from the school of Isocrates, Androtion, Leodamas, and Archias, who hunted down the Athenian Orators after the Lamian War ; from both came Clearchus of Heraclea, and Callippus, the murderer of Dion—all of them in varying degrees bywords for vice or oppression.¹ For a short span Athens witnessed the profligate excesses of her ruler Demetrius Phalereus,² by no means the only philosopher who was morally ruined by Macedonian patronage.³ But perhaps the greatest obstruction to the spread of philosophy was the spirit of rampant sectarianism, which estranged the schools from one another. It is manifest that when the supporters of a movement are divided into contending factions, energy is lost and sympathy alienated. Luckily in most cases they do not begin their disputes till the faith for which they are fighting has taken root, and they have ceased to feel the practical need of united action. Greek philosophy, on the other hand, was cradled in strife. Its exponents had no uniform syllabus, and no sense of corporate endeavour. They reviled each other with the unscrupulous acrimony of which virtuous men alone are capable. The diffusion of literature, which gave their teaching to the world, spread also their mutual

¹ See Zeller, *Plato, etc.*, pp. 30 sq., n. 64 ; Sanneg, *ibid.*, pp. 20 sq., 23 sq. (with n. 14), 25 sq., 35 (n. 27) ; on Chaeron see also Thirlwall vii. 164. I have omitted from this list Onetor and Philonides, pupils of Isocrates (Sanneg, *ibid.* pp. 53 sq.), because there seems not to be sufficient evidence of their unpopularity. For direct attacks on Isocrates and his pupils by the orators see p. 193 n. 1.

² See Zeller, *Aristotle, etc.*, ii. 448 ; Grote, *Hist. of Greece*, x. 297 ; and Thirlwall vii. 355-358, who gives by far the most probable account of his career.

³ Cf. Anaxarchus, pupil of Metrodorus (Sanneg, p. 30 n. 23) ; on whom see Ath. 548 B, C, 250 F ; D. L. ix. 63 ; Ael. *V. H.* ix. 30, 37 ; Plut. *Alex.* 28, 52 sqq. (where he is contrasted with Callisthenes). Cf. Alexinus the Megarian, who wrote a paean to Craterus (? Ath. 696 E) ; and Persaeus the Stoic, more courtier than philosopher, a decidedly questionable man, see Ath. 607 E, F, 162 D ; D. L. iv. 46.

incriminations. The Academy was up in arms against Isocrates from the first. The school of Isocrates retorted with interest. A "whole army" banded together against Aristotle. The inferior Sophists croaked intermittent abuse, and instituted a campaign of forged pamphlets which was taken up, to their eternal disgrace, by the Stoics. This unhappy state of affairs was continued in the next century by the leading schools of that period. It was a "Battle of Books" writ large in real life, with disastrous effect. Plato and Aristotle seem to have been of the few who maintained their dignity; and it is not surprising that the saintly Cleanthes refused to calumniate the private life of Arcesilas.¹

We saw reason to believe that the social status of philosophy improved towards the close of the fourth century. There is little to add. According to Diogenes Laertius, the moral gravity of Xenocrates inspired such awe that ruffians and insolent folk made way for him as he walked by; Stilpo was an object of wonder; and Arcesilas died in the enjoyment of popular veneration.² Again, in a play of Terence, drawn from Menander, an

¹ For the wars of the fourth century see Sanneg, *ibid.* pp. 34 (§ xxi), 57-59; add xxxth *Socratic Epistle*; see also Isoc. *Or.* xii. 236 B sq., *Or.* xv. 311 A (complaints of Isocrates); see also Thompson's *Phaedrus* App. ii (relation of Isocrates to the Socratics). Timaeus of Tauromenium (died 250 B.C., perhaps a pupil of Philiscus, the Isocratic, Sanneg, p. 33 n.) filthily abuses Plato and Aristotle and their pupils, Polyb. xii. 8 and 24 (cf. xii. 12), Plut. *Nic.* 1; cf. the epigram by Theocritus of Chios (pupil of Metrodorus) on Hermias, friend of Aristotle, Bergk ii. p. 374: see also Ath. 220 B (charges of Aeschines the Socratic against Prodicus and Anaxagoras), 220 D, 507 A (charges of Antisthenes against Gorgias and Plato). For the wars of the third century see D. L. iv. 40 sq., x. 3 sqq., Ath. 104 B, 279 F. Contrast Cleanthes' protest, D. L. vii. 171. For forged tracts, see Paus. vi. 18, 2-4 (cf. Suid. *s. v.* Ἀναξιμένης), Ath. 278 E, F (cf. 280 A, B, probably Stoic forgeries), D. L. x. 3.

² Xenocrates, D. L. iv. 6 sq., cf. iv. 7. Stilpo, *ibid.* ii. 119. Arcesilas, *ibid.* iv. 44.

Athenian father expresses himself gratified that his son has frequented the philosophical schools.¹ These details tell us nothing of the public feeling towards doctrine. But at least the normal character of the philosophers was approved, and their educational claims were generally recognized. It may be that the teaching of the third-century schools, which was almost entirely concerned with the practical guidance of life, and which owed its origin in a special sense to the political and social conditions of the time, was capable of influencing popular opinion to a greater extent than had been possible hitherto.

¹ Terence, *Andria* Act. i. sc. 1, l. 30 sqq. Cf. Dittenberger, *Syll. Inscr. Graec.* vol. ii. (2nd ed.) No. 521, l. 34 sq; ἐσχόλασαν (sc. οἱ ἔφηβοι) δι' ὄλου τοῦ ἐν [αὐτοῦ] τοῖς φιλοσόφοις μετὰ πάσης εὐταξίας (date 101 B.C.). Cf. Ael. *V. H.* ix. 33: a young pupil of Zeno undertakes to show his father the practical results of his training; when his father on a subsequent occasion gets wroth and smites him, he displays endurance, and remarks that he has learnt to control himself.

CHAPTER X.

MAINLY POLITICAL.

IN view of estimating the influence of philosophy on popular morals, it may seem scarcely relevant to start with the political and economic problems which are the subject of the present chapter. And yet without some such preliminary excursus it would be impossible to set the main question in its right perspective. The political schemes of the philosophers almost always had an ulterior ethical purpose ; and the political circumstances of Greece, in the fourth and third centuries, offered abundant scope for a moral reformer. Politicians and the general public might be awakened to a sense of social responsibility. The tone of political negotiations might be raised, and the methods of warfare civilized. Legislation and government might be directed to prevent vice ; and economic disputes might be settled so as to improve the moral relations of different social classes. Moreover, the turmoils and feuds of the time offered a serious obstacle to moral progress, and demanded settlement. Let these problems be borne in mind.

(I) *Fourth Century.*

It was a strange, disordered world into which the philosophers found themselves cast in that fourth century B.C. Wholesale expulsions and confiscations, turbulent oligarchies, and "government without scrutiny," were Lysander's greeting to the cities of Asia Minor and the

Political and
Social State of
Greece in Fourth
Century B.C.

Aegean ; followed after a short interval of comparative quiet by the dull, half-civilized rule of Persia. In the far west, Italy and Sicily were the scene of similar commotions, devastating wars, and barbarian aggression. Greece Proper exhausted herself with incessant quarrels, leagues and counter-leagues, party-intrigue and club-law, until the Thebans settled matters fatally by calling in Philip. The speeches of Demosthenes, from the year 349 B.C. onwards, are in the main a reiteration of national woes :—Sparta ruined ; Phocis piteously destroyed, her houses and walls razed to the ground, her territory destitute of able-bodied men, only a few children, women, and old men left ; subjection of Thessaly ; enslavement of Coronea and Orchomenus ; massacre at Elis ; general disorder in the Peloponnese ; and so on till Chaeronea, and after. "There is no place left," wrote Isocrates in 356 B.C., "which does not teem with war, dissension, slaughter, and evils innumerable." Meantime Greece Proper became a congested district, crowded with wandering exiles from east and west, who passively swelled the ranks of the unemployed, or enlisted as mercenaries to plague the civilized world with their outrages and extortions, and to intensify the horrors of warfare by infusing into it something of their own ravenous spirit.¹ All these elements of disquietude combined to embitter life, and to render its battle more severe. In the smaller cities, at any rate, it was a period of intense suffering, uncertainty, fear, and mutual suspicion, when men's hearts failed them,

¹ Isoc. *Paneg.* 76 A, *Phil.* 101 D, *de Pace* 168 B, *Ep.* ix. p. 436 ; Dem. *Or.* xxiii. §§ 162, 165 ; Plut. *Timol.* 30. See Grote ix. pp. 217, 355 ; for vast host of Sicilian exiles who overcrowd Greece, see Plut. *Timol.* 23, 35 ; possibility of emigration, see Isoc. *de Pace* 164 A ; Grote ix. 276 says that few colonies were sent out between 400 and 350 B.C., space being circumscribed by the evil state of Sicily and Italy in the West, and by the Persian dominion in the East (after 387 B.C.). See Jebb, *Att. Or.* ii. 16.

and sympathy was replaced by malice ; a period of severe moral temptation, when friendships were tested in a furnace, and the resources of human feeling were strained to the uttermost. In the more prosperous cities, of which Athens may stand as a type, there was perhaps on the whole less imminent risk, greater staying-power and confidence, and consequently more unity and mutual respect. Yet in Athens, too, we hear lamentations of a prophetic nature, uttered incessantly by men of forethought and divine despair. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint, think Plato and Isocrates. Laws multiply, and righteousness decays. The officials pilfer and accept bribes. The democracy is rotten and misguided, without even a dream of better things.¹ Much of this was echoed by Demosthenes from a widely different standpoint, in his crusade against popular self-enjoyment and irresponsibility. Night was fast closing in on the ancient ideal of public service, with its ties and moral sanctions. Anything like a wider union in the direction of Panhellenism, or a strong fellow-feeling among the Greek states in the interests of peace and good government, was out of the question. There was much oratory on this subject at the Olympic festivals.² The Panhellenic, miso-Persian gospel of Cimon and the Old Comedy was adopted by Agesilaus till his anger turned against Thebes, and perhaps by other statesmen from time to time. But the reception accorded at the beginning of the century to the Cyreans, who embodied this idea, was grimly significant of popular feeling. With tragic irony the cities of Greece sued Persia, and then Macedon, for the means of mutual destruction.

¹ Isoc. *Areopag.* 142 C-E, *Panath.* 148 A, 263 A, B, *de Pace* 169 C, D ; cf. the political life of Demades. Cf. Aristotle *fr.* 63 ap. Ath. 6 D.

² Jebb, *Att. Or.* i. pp. 152, 198.

Wealth and
Poverty.

Thus the spirit of dissension and frivolity spread, working inevitable mischief on the national character, and fostering directly an economic peril of grave social importance. The conflict of poverty and capitalism was assuming ominous proportions. Everywhere expulsion and confiscation menaced the security of trust-deeds, and kindled the passions of robber and robbed alike. At Sparta, some time during this century, a law was passed permitting the alienation of property. The ruling caste dwindled, and land accumulated in the hands of the wealthy, two-fifths being owned by the women. The struggle which went on at Athens, thanks to her careful training in the principles of democratic government, was mild and orderly in comparison to the policy of club-law and wholesale proscription which solved such questions elsewhere; but she too had her share of trouble and disquiet like the rest. In spite of the revival of her commerce in 393 B.C., the city never wholly recovered from the state of financial exhaustion in which she found herself at the close of the Peloponnesian War. The wealth which flowed in thither did not circulate, but helped to augment the capitalist class. The vivid contrasts of ostentation and want, palaces and hovels, very rich and very poor; the protests of the rich against public burdens and judicial prejudice, and of the poor against extortionate usury, unfair taxation, and legal jobbing; the attack of statesmen on the system of doles and pageants, and their appeal for a serious organization of poor relief—all these are familiar topics in the Orators. Isocrates looks back pathetically to the ancient times, when the poor man had a definite place in the social fabric; and when the Areopagus organized labour and induced the rich to advance capital or to let property at a moderate rent. Now, says he, all is changed. The rich are irresponsible; the poor sulk and cheat; business contracts have lost their security. Both classes, in

fact, were discontented with themselves and with each other. The hardships of poverty, and the hardships of wealth, are the burden of Middle and New Comedy, together with much sage reflection thereon of a philosophic nature.¹

There is something infinitely tragic in this page of history. A great nation rushing, Heaven knows whither! destined to glide deeper and deeper into the abyss; and meantime racked with dissensions, social and political, yet to an amazing degree cheerful and frivolous despite its misfortunes.

It was into such a world, then, teeming with such problems, that the philosophers of this century were cast; and the rule which they sought to establish was that of the educated, rational man or body of men. With the exception of Isocrates, Xenophon, and perhaps the Pythagoreans, they do not seem to have attempted a general application of their principles to existent social and political conditions. Their constitutional schemes were admittedly Utopian. Plato published his account of the Ideal State as a pattern set up for all time in the Heavens. Its keynote was an elaborate educational system. It was to education, and above all to the education of rulers, that he trusted for the ultimate solution of social and political difficulties. Regenerate the mind and conscience of humanity, and all will go well.

Yet here and there in these writers are attempts to

¹ On the general subject, see Isoc. *Areopag.* 144 D, 146 A-C, 150 C, D, 156 E, 185 A-C, *Antid.* p. 84; Dem. *Or.* xxiii. §§ 248 sq., iii. §§ 29 sqq., xiv. § 31, xviii. § 127; Arist. *Plutus* (date 388 B.C.); Xen. *Oec.* ii. 5, 6; *Symp.* iv. 30. For rich and poor in the law courts, see Dem. *Or.* xxi. §§ 28, 160, 193, 264; Hyp. *Or.* iii. § 42 (Blass), Lys. *Or.* xix (see Jebb, *Att. Or.* i. 234), *Or.* xxx. § 30; for usury, Dem. *Or.* xxxvii. § 68, xlv. § 86; evils of the dole system, and suggestions of reform, Dem. *Or.* iii. §§ 38 sqq. The proposal of Leptines, aimed against the *immunities* of the richest class (Dem. *Or.* xx. § 141), had many supporters (*ibid.* § 163).

grapple more directly and explicitly with certain current problems of the day. The idea of conscientious and systematic government, based so far as possible on moral suasion, was emphasized by most thinkers who came under the influence of the Socratic movement. There was a tendency to associate this idea with monarchy, the rule of the one capable, educated, and benevolent man.¹ The philosophers, too, whom we take to include Gorgias, Isocrates, Xenophon and others, were unanimous in urging a brotherly feeling among the various Greek cities, justice as opposed to self-seeking in their disputes, and chivalry in their warfare. Aristotle seems even to have hinted at the desirability of a Panhellenic federation,² although his words are as ambiguous as the similar proposals of Isocrates. The speeches of Demosthenes are sufficient to show that a high moral tone entered into Political Morality. the political debates of Athens at this period. Panaetius "used to say that most of his orations were so written as if they were to prove this one conclusion 'that what is honest and virtuous is for itself only to be chosen.'"³ This is not quite accurate.

¹ Xenophon (*Cyrop.* ii. 2, 20 sqq.) seems to advocate a democracy purged of its baser elements and swayed by the moral supremacy of good leaders: in other passages the monarchical idea appears. The *Hiero* criticizes the faults of existing tyrannies, and suggests the replacement of tyranny by paternal monarchy. For the idea of a "responsible" prince who rules by moral and intellectual force, see *Cyrop.* i. 6, 21-25; vii. 5, 71; viii. 1, 1; 2, 9, 14; *Oec.* xxi. 10-12. For monarchical ideas in Plato, see Curtius, *Hist. of Gr.* v. 209: Xenocrates, Speusippus, and Aristotle wrote βασιλικοί νόμοι, Ath. 3 F. The *Nicocles* of Isocrates is a tract in favour of monarchy (cf. Isoc. *Evag.* 196 D). Evagoras, Nicocles, Cleomnis of Methymnae (Isoc. *Ep.* 7, p. 422 E), Hermias of Atarneus, and Timotheus of Heraclea, are practical instances of this principle, and seem to have been indebted in various degrees to philosophy.

² τὸ τῶν Ἑλλήνων γένος . . . δυνάμενον ἀρχειν πάντων, μίᾳ τύχῃ καὶ πολιτείας: Arist. *Pol.* vii. 7.

³ Plut. *Dem.* 13 (Clough's trans.). For his utterances on the subject of political relations, see *Dem. Or.* ii. §§ 9 sq., ix. §§ 7-9, 30 sqq., xiv. § 7, xv. §§ 35 sq., xvi. §§ 10 sq., 28 sq., 37, xx. §§ 82, 151, xviii. §§ 368 sq. *Proem.* xv. xxi.

His argument varies. Sometimes it is that justice should be chosen for its intrinsic merit; sometimes that it coincides with what is expedient; sometimes he merely states that justice and expediency should be combined. His general thesis is that fair-dealing must win in the end, and that Athens in sacrificing her immediate interests to the justice of the Greek cause is securing what will prove best for all parties in the long run. Demosthenes is supposed to have studied at the Academy. At any rate, he has left on record his high opinion of the Platonic teaching, as calculated to promote truth and justice;¹ and it is difficult not to see traces of philosophic influence in his attempt to work out a connexion between right and advantage. Unfortunately the same paraphernalia of logic, the same assertion that justice pays, and the same contrast between real and supposed gain, were used on the other side to enforce the counsels of the peace-party.² It is always hazardous to impute motives in complicated political transactions; and all judgments on such a question must be essentially relative. But the actions and deliberations of Athens as compared with the actions and reputed pretexts of other States, such as Sparta, appear to indicate an improvement in the tone of political morality;³ and this may have been due in no small measure

¹ Dem. *Ep.* 5.

² *Isoc. de Pace* 159 E sq., 164 C-165 A, 183 A-D; cf. *ad Nicoel.* 19 E, *Panath.* 242 C, 272 A, *Paneg.* 51 C, D. It would be possible to collect passages from the other Orators; but the question of justice, etc., is nowhere so fully discussed as in Demosthenes and Isocrates.

³ For Athens, Grote vii. p. 528 sq. Dem. *Or.* xviii. § 115 sq., *Hyp. Epitaph.* iii (Blass), and other passages in the Orators indicate the claim of Athenian policy to be based on Right. For Sparta, see *Isoc. Panath.* 283 E (cf. *Paneg.* 51 C, D); *Plut. Lys.* cc. 8, 22, *Ages.* c. 23 (*re Phoebidas*), cc. 24 sq. (*re Sphodrias*); *Dem. Or.* xxiii. § 139; cf. the debate in the Assembly at Sparta before the expedition into Boeotia, 371 B.C., where one citizen alone protests against the Spartan refusal to disband and reconstitute the army according to the recent treaty, on the grounds of morality and expediency, Grote viii. 166 sq.

to the fact that most Athenian statesmen of this period passed through the schools of Plato or Isocrates. The question of war-methods, which the philosophers were so anxious to civilize, especially within the limits of Greece, is more easily decided. It is a question not of motive, but of fact. Timotheus was praised by his master, Isocrates, for the peaceful means he employed in establishing the second Athenian Confederacy, although Demosthenes was forced to condone certain forcible extortions of his on the plea of necessity.¹ Epaminondas and Pelopidas are said to have sold no Greek captives into slavery.² In other cases noble professions were discarded in practice. Callicratidas, who on one occasion in 406 B.C. declared against the enslavement of Greeks, sold the Athenian garrison at Methymna the very next day.³ Agesilaus, who apparently to some extent advocated a similar policy, yet handed over certain of the Corinthians captured in the Heraeum to the vengeance of the exiled faction, and sold the rest, men, women, and children alike.⁴ The first half of the century shows no general improvement in this respect, and culminates in the unparalleled ferocities of the Sacred War. Nor is it fair to credit Philip with a retrograde influence. His exploits were grander, and his cruelties were exercised over a wider area, than had been possible in Greek warfare hitherto. This is all that can be charged against him; and his actual treatment of Phocis was merciful as compared with some of the proposals put forward in the Amphictyonic Council. Philosophy was not able to stem the tide of barbarism, although in the persons of Epami-

The Ethics of
Warfare.

¹ Isoc. *Or.* xv. §§ 101 sqq. Dem. *Or.* xxiii. § 173.

² Plut. *Pelop. et Marcell.* i.

³ Xen. *Hell.* i. 6, 14 sqq. Grote (vi. 387) appears to have misread this passage.

⁴ Xen. *Ages.* i. 20-22, vii. 4-6, with which compare Grote vii. 510.

nondas and others it may have exerted an occasional influence for good.

Still less effect is noticeable in the sphere of economic reform. The philosophic teaching is of three kinds—conservative and healthy, progressive and chimerical, negative and stupid.

Xenophon and Aristotle seem mainly content with the old system, under which the gentry used their wealth in the public interests; although the former lays considerable stress on the decay of this ideal, which he seems to attribute to the rapacity of sycophants and mob-leaders, as well as to the irresponsibility of the rich.¹ Plato leaves it to his educated rulers to maintain a state of moderate prosperity, mid-way between poverty and wealth, in the Ideal City; at the same time he seeks to revolutionize the existing basis of society by refusing private property to the ruling class.² The Pythagorean doctrine of communism is well known. The Cynics merely shirked the problem by denying its existence. They espoused pauperism as an essential part of the life according to nature. There is a sweet dignity in the verses of Crates and the discourse of Antisthenes, decrying temporal needs; but the needs were real and manifest.³ Perhaps the greatest practical effort in this period may be assigned to Demosthenes. He agitated for a more thorough system of poor relief, to replace the demoralizing charities then in existence. He perpetually demanded sacrifices from poor and rich alike in the cause of public safety. His trierarchic

¹ Xen. *Oec.* xi. 9; *Cyrop.* viii. 2, 23; *Symp.* iv. 29–33. Does a practical suggestion lurk in the parable of Pheraulas and Sacas? P. is rich, but bothered with his riches; S. is poor and discontented: an exchange is effected; and S. administers P.'s money, granting him a small annuity: *Cyrop.* viii. 3, 39–50.

² *Rep.* 422; the suggested communism applies only to the ruling class, *ibid.* 416 D; elsewhere he forbids the other classes to sell their whole property, for fear it should lead to pauperism, *ibid.* 552 A (Adam's note).

³ Antisthenes; Xen. *Symp.* iv. 34–44. Crates; D. L. vi. 85 sqq.

law, which seems to have covered much the same ground as the previous bill of Leptines, and to have been based on more generous principles, was carried in the teeth of a strenuous opposition from the richest class, and brought a just relief to the poorer members of the *symmories*. Again, the city of Tarentum, in which Archytas and the Pythagoreans held an undoubted supremacy, seems to have been singularly free from economic troubles, the rich contributing wisely toward the maintenance of their less fortunate brethren. How far philosophy touched these movements, must remain undecided.

It would be easy to compile a list, more or less authentic, of statesmen who came under the influence of the schools; but little would be gained by this course, since in most instances the details of their activity are unknown. In his biography of the Orator Lycurgus, Philiscus assigned all the public acts of that statesman to the influence of Socrates and Plato.¹ Lycurgus managed the Athenian finances with scrupulous care. He devoted large sums to solid and magnificent buildings. He carried sumptuary laws, and drastic measures to clear the city of rogues and vagrants. He assiduously prosecuted disloyal and profligate citizens. He purified the slave-trade by an enactment preventing the sale of free-born persons "under false pretexts in the Athenian market."² These proceedings were undoubtedly excellent; but why attribute them to philosophy? By the same process of reasoning the sumptuary laws and prosperous administration of Demetrius Phalereus might be laid to the credit of his Peripatetic training.³ In either case it is hard to discover

Philosophic
Statesmen.

(1) Lycurgus.

¹ Schol. ad Plato *Gorg.* 515 D.

² Cf. Dein. *Or.* i. § 24; on his public career, see Jebb, *ibid.* ii. 375, Thirlwall, *Hist. of Greece*, vii. 153 sqq.

³ Demetrius Phalereus; see Grote x. 297 sq., Zeller *Aristotle, etc.* ii. 448, Thirlwall vii. 355 sqq.

any definite philosophic principle at work. These two men, with their wide diversity of aim and character, were no doubt typical of many politicians to whom the schools imparted a general impulse toward good government. The careers of Epaminondas and Dion are more important. They were both men of studious habits and blameless life, and attempted to follow out in politics the principles which they had imbibed in the schools.

Plutarch insists that the true greatness of Epaminondas lay, not in his military genius, but in his character. He was chivalrous and firm in his devotion to friend and country. He was scrupulously honest, generous, and merciful. He was content to forego comfort and even honour in the public cause. These qualities, stimulated by an ardent devotion to the Pythagorean philosophy, won him the confidence of his fellow-countrymen and the respect of patriots in all parts of Greece. He was mainly responsible for the greatness of Thebes during his lifetime. Out of a naturally self-indulgent people he trained an army which became proverbial for its hardihood and courage. Under his guidance, the Theban Band assumed in all essentials the appearance of a Pythagorean brotherhood, temperate, obedient, and bound together by imperishable ties of friendship and loyalty. At the same time, he was free from all share in the political crimes of his fellow-countrymen. He treated with rare clemency the disloyal city of Orchomenus; and broke all precedent by letting the Boeotian exiles, captured at Phoebias in Sicyonian territory, depart on ransom. The fatal decree by which Thebes upset the constitution of the Achaean cities, introduced harmosts, and expelled the anti-democratic factions, was passed in direct opposition to his will. He was out of office when Euphron assumed the reins of tyranny at Sicyon. He was absent from Boeotia when Orchomenus was barbarously destroyed owing to the insurrection of a

discontented party within her walls.¹ After his death Thebes collapsed, and sank deeper and deeper into a state of moral and political stagnation. His memory survived to inspire Timoleon and Philopoemen. Perhaps the most remarkable feature in his career was his conquest of himself. He overcame a retiring disposition, and those scruples of conscience which drove most philosophers from public life.²

If Epaminondas was an encouragement to philosophic statesmen, Dion was their warning. (3) Dion. His intercourse with Plato began during the philosopher's first visit to the Court of Syracuse, about 387 B.C. The history of their friendship and its tragic results has been admirably related by Grote, and need only be recapitulated here in outline. On the accession of the second Dionysius, in 367 B.C., Plato reluctantly quitted Athens to co-operate with Dion in the education of the young prince. If the third Platonic epistle may be taken as evidence, his ultimate object was to transform the Syracusan despotism into a constitutional monarchy, with a sound legislative system, and to re-establish the Hellenic cities in Sicily which lay deserted and half-barbarized after the recent wars. Dionysius received him with a respect that was apparently unfeigned; and the Court became a school. Had Plato pressed home some practical suggestions, backed as he was by Dion's influence, he might possibly have achieved a definite measure of reform. But the dream of his life, and the principles of his political philosophy, were too much for him. He took the one fatal course. He set about the impossible task of

¹ For these details see Grote viii. pp. 184 sq., 246, 254 sqq., 296 sq.

² See Plut. *de gen. Soc.* 576 E, F; cf. Plut. *Pelop.* 4. Alcidas, ap. Arist. *Rhet.* ii. 23, § 10, says that Thebes attained prosperity when her rulers adopted philosophy. For Epaminondas generally, see Roberts' *Ancient Boeotians*, ch. iv. For the subsequent collapse of Thebes, see Dein. *Or.* i. §§ 73 sqq.; Dem. *Or.* xx. § 121; Polyb. vi. 43, xx. 4 and 6.

converting Dionysius into a Philosopher-King, and put him through the regular curriculum of the Academy. The result is well known. He departed, was recalled, and departed again, without success. Meanwhile Dion had been banished, and had spent some time at Athens. There he planned his expedition, and at length set out for Sicily with the blessing of Speusippus and the personal support of three fellow-students, Callippus, Eudemus, and Miltas. His object was two-fold: to establish a constitutional monarchy, and to educate and moralize the citizens through the discipline of good laws. Three things contributed to his failure. After gaining possession of Syracuse, he declined to remove Heraclides when the latter was openly convicted of treason, saying that he had learned in the Academy to avoid resentment. This was the part of a good philosopher, but a bad statesman. Subsequently he was constrained to procure the execution of his rival by underhand means, at a time when such an action was fatal to his own reputation. Secondly, his manner made him appear as a tyrant. Thirdly, his actions confirmed this suspicion. He refused to destroy the Bastille of Dionysius, or to yield one whit to the appeal for popular government. His prejudices against democracy had been strengthened by his philosophic studies; and his attitude in this matter was literally in obedience to Platonic teaching. So he passes from the stage of history: slain by his friend and fellow-student, Callippus. Grass grew in the market-place of Syracuse. Idle men hunted stags and wild hogs in the suburbs of the neighbouring cities. Tyranny had begun again in real earnest. In 343 B.C. Timoleon arrived. Setting before himself the example of Epaminondas, and carefully avoiding the mistakes of Dion, he restored order and good government to Syracuse, and at his death left Sicily re-peopled and prosperous.¹

¹ Grote ix. 50-185; Plut. *Dion* and *Timoleon* (passim).

By way of an appendix, turn for a moment to Phocion, surnamed the Good ; the reputed scholar of (4) Phocion. Plato and Xenocrates ; in his private life above reproach ; honoured for a long period, and trusted by the people of Athens ; and, so far as one can see, in his character an embodiment of Platonic justice. He was a Platonist in his simplicity of life ; a Platonist in his love of work ; a Platonist in his speeches, which he compressed so as to make them free from all the embellishments of the Sophistic schools ; and a Platonist in his educational principles, for he sent his son to Sparta for purposes of discipline, and let him compete in the Games, not for the sake of victory, but that the training might make him a better man. In political life he had a reverence for what Plato considered good law and sound government, and a contempt for what Plato considered clap-trap and license. His public utterances, too, suggest that type of satire which lurks in the Platonic dialogues. But what of his political doings ? Thirlwall has written his epitaph : " He despaired and yet acted." Despaired and yet resisted every bid for Greek liberty ! Despaired and yet held it reasonable that some 12,000 Athenian citizens be transported to the ends of the earth ; and would not receive them back at any price ! It is not good that a philosophic statesman should despair in this fashion. His master Xenocrates would have none of these things ; but what would his other master Plato have said ?¹

Phocion's career, to be understood, must be taken as one link in a chain of political tendency, which dominated several philosophers of the Macedonian Supremacy and the Persian Campaign. Denis summarizes the influence of Greek philosophy down to Aristotle as follows : " Cette influence se manifeste surtout dans

¹ Studied under Plato, and Xenocrates, Plut. *Dion* 4, and 14 ; Plut. *adv. Col.* 1126 C : on his career, see Grote x. 292 sqq., Thirlwall vii. 279, and Plut. *Phoc.* passim.

la décadence du polythéisme grec, dans la soumission et l'union de Grèce par Philippe, dans la conquête et la civilisation de l'Asie par Alexandre"; and in the Macedonian conquest of Greece he sees the beginning of a new era, when the spirit of mutual kindness and good fellowship sprang into being from the ruins of Greek autonomy.¹ As to results, no judgment could be more sanguine and misleading; but that philosophy had a part in the movement, is true. Plato died in 347 B.C., at a time when Philip had already begun to encroach upon Greece. There is unfortunately no evidence of the impression which this crisis made upon his mind. He had an ideal of Greek unity, and was not averse to the rule of one man; but it is uncertain whether he looked for anything more than a unity of sentiment, and still more doubtful whether he saw in Philip the makings of a good king. If he favoured the Macedonian cause, it is most probable that he regarded his decision as a choice between two evils: the evil of a semi-despotic government, and the evil of democratic misrule at Athens, combined with interminable squabbles among the Greek States. This, so far as we can see, was the attitude of Phocion and the Peripatetic school. Aristotle went so far as to desire a single constitution for all Hellas, although, be it noted, his words are ambiguous; and it is impossible to conclude that he saw in the levelling policy of Macedon a true fulfilment of his hopes.² Like Phocion, he seems to have accepted the inevitable, and to have exerted his influence at court with a view to conciliation. A more sanguine rôle was undertaken by Isocrates, who did not live to see the final issue of the cause he maintained. This teacher of rhetoric gave himself out to be a mediator between speculation and practical politics. To him the statesman who wrought practical good for

¹ J. Denis, *Histoire des Théories et des Idées morales dans l'Antiquité*, vol. i., p. 239, 251 sq.

² Arist. *Pol.* vii. 7, quoted above.

his country was a philosopher in the highest sense. He revered Pericles.¹ He described the forbearance of Timotheus, in enlisting the Athenian Confederacy by persuasion rather than by force, as philosophical.² His political philosophy consisted of practical suggestions, based on common sense, mingled with a divine love of the impossible. He believed that, if the cities of Greece could be induced to unite in a war against Persia, all the social and political evils of the time would cease. Their passions would be diverted from the unhealthy channel of mutual dissension into the broad stream of a great national enterprise. The cities of Asia Minor would be freed from the Persian yoke. The restless, needy sections of the population would find employment and a fixed abode within the spacious limits of a conquered world. Wealth would flow back into the Mother Country from the treasuries of Babylon, Susa, and Persepolis, and the pauper-problem would be solved once for all. This policy was not original. It was the ancient cry of "Union and Eastward-Ho!" which had been raised by Cimon nearly a century before, elaborated to suit the circumstances of the new epoch, and backed up by the evidence of recent history. Demosthenes pointed out the fallacy underlying the whole scheme. Greece, he said, will not unite, except perhaps in the face of imminent danger; and Persia has ceased to inspire dread.³ Indeed, as time went on, Isocrates made an important alteration in his course. He had begun by urging Athens and Sparta to take the lead. As late as 355 B.C., he laid down the old principle of individual autonomy as the basis of all political progress.⁴ In 346 B.C. he appealed to Philip. However sanguine

¹ *Isoc. Or. xv. § 111* (Blass).

² *Ibid. § 121*, τοῦτ' ἐφιλοσόφει καὶ τοῦτ' ἐπραττεν κ. τ. λ.

³ *Dem. Or. xiv.*

⁴ *Isoc. Or. viii.*

his letter may appear, he must have felt some secret misgivings as to the line which that monarch was likely to pursue. He must have realized that some element of coercion was necessary to the accomplishment of his scheme. He must have feared that the bargain would involve some loss of Greek independence. But was not Greek independence in some measure now a mere pretext for jingoism, anarchy, and social oppression? He worked hard at his perilous task. His pupils, Hieronymus and Pytho, were plotting and clamouring in the Macedonian cause.¹ In 342 B.C. he addressed a letter of counsel to the boy Alexander, already deep in the meshes of Aristotelian dialectic. It is even rumoured that the young hopeful perused the *Panegyricus* with much enthusiasm and many childish vows.² Isocrates did not dictate the policy of Philip and Alexander, but he suggested its outward form. At the Congress of Corinth, in 337 B.C., Philip was elected leader of the Greeks for a Persian campaign; and the settlement of affairs in Greece was based on the Hellenic idea of Federation under an *Hegemon*, which implied domestic autonomy in the federal cities. Next year, the same authority was granted to Alexander, and a similar disposition made. It is useless to surmise what Isocrates would have felt at the issue. The letter of his plan had been executed. Its intention had been ignored, partly because it was impossible. Alexander could not lead the Greeks into Persia, without forcing their acquiescence. He could not unite their cities, without dictating terms as a monarch. He could not maintain the union, without over-riding that principle of autonomy which was the first clause in the convention of Corinth. Thus the main object of Isocrates was

¹ Sanneg, *de Schol. Isoc.* pp. 24, 26.

² Ael. *V. H.* xiii. 11.

defeated at the outset. It was impossible that a number of states, welded together by sheer force, and compelled to vote contingents for a Persian expedition, should feel that unanimity and chivalrous enthusiasm to which he had looked as the only means of removing their political animosities and ennobling their aims. Panhellenism was a thing of the past. It is true that Alexander's conquests stimulated commerce and distributed the treasures of the East ; but the problem of poverty was not solved thereby, as Isocrates had hoped. It is true that a field was opened for adventurers, and that the colonies founded by Alexander and his successors attracted Greek emigrants in the next century ; but the relief thus afforded to the congested districts was inconsiderable. Isocrates in his vast dreams of transplantation had not reckoned with one mighty element in human nature, the love of home. The mercenaries whom Alexander disbanded in Persis and Susiana wandered back westward and filled Europe and Asia Minor again with a horde of unemployed ruffians.¹ Not long after, the Greek garrison in Bactria grew restive and set off home in a body.² In 323 B.C., 23,000 Greek colonists in Asia followed suit, but were treacherously murdered on their way.³ It is said that Leosthenes re-imported 50,000 mercenaries for the Lamian War ;⁴ and when Greece became the fighting ground of Alexander's generals, the demand for mercenaries revived, and the old evil appeared afresh.⁵

¹ Grote x. 231 ; see Thirlwall vii. 81.

² Thirlwall vii. 82, uncertain whether they reached Greece.

³ Thirlwall vii. 220 sqq.

⁴ Paus. i. 25, 5 ; viii. 52, 5.

⁵ Thirlwall viii. 86 ; cf. 106 sq (the *Condottieri*). The material of this paragraph is drawn mainly from Thirlwall, Grote, Curtius, with works of Isocrates, and Jebb's *Attic Orators*.

(II) Third Century.

The death of Alexander introduces a fresh epoch.

State of Greece
from the Death
of Alexander
onwards.

The old problems survived, being, if anything, intensified by the new conditions.

Of the princes who divided the Hellenic world, some crushed the Greek cities, while others fanned the prevailing dissension.

The long struggle of the Diadochi on Greek soil ended in the final triumph of Antigonus Gonatas. Scarcely was he settled on the throne, when Athens rebelled under the leadership of Chremonides. Her attempt failed, and she sank henceforth into a state of careless subjection. Meanwhile the Achaean League had been reorganized in a manner that gave hopes of Hellenic unity and independence. By a combination of violence and diplomacy Aratus, in the latter half of the third century, attempted to extend its influence over the whole of the Peloponnese. The most serious obstacle to his policy was Sparta. In 224 B.C., Cleomenes III proposed to enter the League, on condition that he should be elected general. Rather than accept this compromise, Aratus next year called in the assistance of Antigonus Doseon, who was received with ignominious flattery and granted a position similar to that occupied by Alexander a century before. The catalogue of horrors which followed close on the Battle of Sellasia need not be recapitulated. The fearful assaults of the Aetolian horde on the territory of the Achaeans were watched with ill-concealed gratification by Sparta. Philip V, who posed as the Saviour of Greece, calmly laid aside every patriotic counsel, and protracted the struggle in his own interests. In 215 B.C., he marched to Messene on the pretext of conciliating the two factions who were quarrelling within her walls, but with the real intention of spreading insurrection ; in which purpose he

succeeded admirably. This is typical of his general proceedings. The moral condition of Greece during this unhappy period may be judged from the statement of Polybius, that (in 215 B.C.) the Peloponnesian cities "recommenced the cultivation of the land, and re-established their national sacrifices, games, and other religious observances . . . which had all but sunk into oblivion in most of the states through the persistent continuance of the late wars."¹ Yet in another place he observes that the Arcadian cities, with the notorious exception of Cynaetha, maintained, apparently throughout these years, their characteristic piety and moderation.² In Northern Greece, the Aetolians were spreading confusion everywhere. In Boeotia, by 222 B.C., the administration of justice had practically ceased for twenty-five years, and the attention of people was divided between defensive expeditions and riotous self-enjoyment.³ Athens alone remained at peace, by holding aloof from every noble enterprise.

The methods of warfare were not likely to have improved under such circumstances. Of the Aetolians there is no need to speak. Polybius makes a bold attempt to justify the acts of Aratus. Yet this leader did not scruple to sell into slavery a band of athletes, whom he captured on their return from the Nemean games;⁴ and he appears to have raised no protest when Antigonos Doson enslaved the Mantineans, who had revolted from the Achaean League.⁵ Even Philopoemen, who took Epaminondas for a model, seems not to have imitated his humane disposi-

¹ Polyb. v. 106 (Shuckburgh).

² *Ibid.* iv. 17-21.

³ *Ibid.* xx. 6.

⁴ Thirlwall viii. 134.

⁵ *Ibid.* viii. 204. (Polyb. ii. 57 sqq. regards the action as justified: N.B. Aratus had previously spared them in 226 B.C., Thirlwall viii. 171.) Cf. the remarks of Mahaffy, *Greek Life and Thought*, p. 573.

tion.¹ In one respect indeed an improvement took place. The old practice of arbitration grew common, and at least on one occasion an appeal to arms was successfully averted in this way.²

Isocrates hoped that the Persian campaign would be the means of quieting the economic battle of rich and poor. The hope was not fulfilled. An immense quantity of wealth found its way into Greece, but this only served to intensify the contrast between the two classes. So far as Athens is concerned, the evidence of the New Comedy in this respect is unmistakable. Towards the close of the third century, Megalopolis and Argos were scenes of violence and disorder.³ The latter was surrendered to Cleomenes by the democrats, in the hope that he would introduce a redistribution of property. The notorious dissensions at Cynaetha, as elsewhere, were accompanied by agrarian trouble.⁴ In Boeotia rich men left fortunes for the endowment of dining-clubs, instead of providing for their families; while magistrates purchased the favour of the poor by a ruinous display of charity.⁵ At Sparta, before the accession of Cleomenes III, the whole social organism was in decay. Land had accumulated in the hands of a small oligarchy, who consequently almost

¹ Plut. *Philop.* c. 3.

² Achaean League is regarded as a scrupulous arbitrator in early fifth century, Polyb. ii. 39. Arbitration of Pelopidas in Thessaly and Macedonia, Plut. *Pelop.* c. 26. In third century: Byzantines reconcile Achaeus and Attalus (Polyb. iv. 49; 226 B.C.), Cavarus the Gallic king reconciles Prusias and the Byzantines (*ibid.* iv. 52; 220 B.C.), Philip V averts war in Crete (*ibid.* vii. 12), Mantinea attempts to arbitrate between the Achaeans and Aristippus of Argos (Plut. *Arat.* c. 25; 243 B.C.), unsuccessful attempts of Rhodes, Chios, Byzantines, and Ptolemy to arbitrate between Philip and the Aetolians (Thirlwall viii. 265, 271, 288, 293; 218-208 B.C.). Reasons, general policy and commerce; no trace of philosophic influence discernible.

³ Thirlwall viii. 193, 269 sq.; probably the troubles at Messene were due partly to a financial agitation, Plut. *Arat.* c. 49.

⁴ Polyb. iv. 17.

⁵ *Ibid.* xx. 6.

monopolized the rights of citizenship and passed a luxurious, irresponsible existence, borrowing their manners from foreign courts, and discouraging the old educational system by every means in their power. The rest of the population sank into a state of poverty and despair.¹

With these various problems the philosophers of the third century were confronted. Here again it is useless to draw up a list of philosophic politicians; for in most cases nothing relevant is known about them. There were three, at least, of remarkable energy and apparently disinterested aim. Sphaerus the Stoic was ever at the elbow of Cleomenes, encouraging him and helping to direct his policy. Ecdemus and Demophanes of Megalopolis, the intimate associates of Arcesilas, carried on a liberationist crusade in many quarters. They expelled Aristodemus, tyrant of their native city. They helped Aratus to depose Nicocles of Sicyon. Under their direction the patriot Philopoemen studied the practical tenets of philosophy, although he reserved his main attention for the literature of warfare. They are said to have freed and reorganized Cyrene by special request of the citizens.² The only economic reform carried on under the auspices of philosophy, of which there is detailed evidence, was that of Cleomenes at Sparta. He enforced a general redistribution of land. He made all citizens contribute to the common stock, and thus removed the barrier between rich and poor; while he counteracted the diminution of the citizen-body by admitting foreigners and *perioeci*. The educational system was improved and the

¹ Thirlwall viii. 143-146, Ath. 142 B, Plut. *Cleom.* c. 2 and 3 (*init.*).

² Polyb. xx. 22, Plut. *Philop.* cc. 1-4 (Plut. *Arat.* c. 5 calls the former Ecdelus). It is unfortunate that no record of their legislation at Cyrene survives: so, too, nothing is known of the laws drawn up by Prytanis, the Peripatetic, for Megalopolis, except that they excited violent discussion (Polyb. v. 93).

old morality recalled to life. The part played by philosophy in this movement was probably typical. The primary impulse came, not from the teaching of Sphaerus, but from the example of Agis and the memory of ancient Spartan ideals. Sphaerus nevertheless kept the impulse alive, drew up the new scheme of education, and was perhaps responsible for the young king's assumption of absolute power.¹ The reform was temporary. After the departure of Cleomenes there was a relapse, till in the last decade of the century Nabis, for merely despotic reasons, banished the rich and transferred their property to paupers and emancipated slaves. Sphaerus and Cleomenes no doubt realized the odds against which they were fighting. On the other side, it is extremely probable that Ecdemus and Demophanes influenced Aratus, when at Sicyon in 251 B.C., and again at Megalopolis in 218 B.C., he settled an intricate property-dispute to the satisfaction of all parties concerned.² For, be it remembered, they gave him active support in his *coup d'état* at Sicyon; and they were natives of Megalopolis.

Discordant
counsels of
Philosophy.

Professor Mahaffy contends that about the middle of this century "virtuous men like Lydiades of Megalopolis made themselves tyrants of their native cities, acting on the theory of all schools of philosophy, who seem to have agreed in their myriad tracts on monarchy that the rule of one man is the best form of government."³ The first part of this statement is a generalization from three instances,

¹ See Thirlwall viii. 179 sq.; the monarchical tendency of the Stoics is well known. Sphaerus wrote a *Λακωνική πολιτεία* (Ath. 141 C), perhaps to assist the reform movement.

² Sicyon (dispute raised by returned exiles about their confiscated property), Thirlwall viii. 114; Megalopolis (agrarian dispute between rich and poor, after legislation of Prytanis), *ibid.* 269 sq.

³ *Greek Life and Thought*, p. 230.

of which one at least is doubtful.¹ The latter part is palpably untrue. Abantidas of Sicyon, one of Mahaffy's good tyrants, was slain with the connivance of Aristotle, the dialectician. Ecdemus and Demophanes were ardent tyrannicides. If they were in favour of monarchy, why did they oppose that model autocrat, Cleomenes III of Sparta? The fact is that the philosophers were not agreed. They had no uniform policy. Sphaerus did all in his power to excite the ambition of Cleomenes. Ecdemus and Demophanes encouraged his opponents. These men either did not care about Greek unity, or at any rate in practice did their best to render it impossible. Plutarch's observation that "Stoic doctrine is slippery ground for keen and vigorous natures," sounds very much to the point, and might be applied to schools other than the Stoic; the philosophers who took part in the public life of this period, seem to have acted with more violence than forethought.

¹ I have been at some pains to discover Mahaffy's virtuous tyrants who were stimulated by philosophic motives. He gives three instances—Lydiades of Megalopolis, Cleomenes of Sparta (p. 230), and Abantidas of Sicyon (p. 325): he also cites Strabo viii. c. 382 *ad fin.* (Mein.), to the effect that the tyrants of Sicyon "were, as a rule, moderate and well-meaning men," while he discredits Plutarch's picture of them as "highly seasoned" (p. 325). We may add that Aristodemus of Megalopolis, a predecessor of Lydiades, earned the surname of the "Good" (Paus. viii. 27, 11). These are, so far as I know, the only tyrants for whose virtue it is possible to make out a case. As to Sicyon, no doubt the memoirs of Aratus, from which Plutarch and Polybius drew their account (summary; Thirlwall viii. 103 sqq.), blackened the characters of her tyrants unduly; but Abantidas is the only one who is known to have been interested in philosophy, and there is no proof that his motives for assuming the tyranny were philosophical; Aristotle the dialectician apparently did not think so (Plut. *Arat.* c. 3). Cleomenes is a case in point, in so far as he gathered the reins of authority in his own hands partly, no doubt, at the suggestion of Sphaerus. Plutarch, the "sworn enemy of tyrants" (Mahaffy, p. 325), presents the case of Lydiades as exceptional, if not unique (Plut. *Arat.* c. 30). The passage of Strabo, on which Mahaffy relies (*ἐτυραννήθη δὲ <Sicyon> πλείστον χρόνον, ἀλλ' αἰετὸς τοὺς τυράννους ἐπιεικεῖς ἄνδρας ἔσχεν*, "Ἀρατοῦ δ' ἐπιφανέστατον, ὃς τὴν πόλιν ἠλευθέρωσε) for the general character of these tyrants, is rather cursory.

On the whole, there were very few philosophers in this third century to whom a definite political rôle can be ascribed. This may be explained partly by the teaching of the schools. The Epicureans, who confined their attention to the individual, were not likely to sympathize much with the work of corporations. They adopted a flippant tone in speaking of public men, such as Epaminondas, Philopoemen, and Aratus. "Ils accordaient bien qu'il y avait quelque chose dans Épaminondas, mais ils le traitaient d'entrailles de fer et demandaient ironiquement, quelle démangeaison le poussait à courir le Péloponèse au cœur de l'hiver, au lieu de se tenir tranquillement chez lui, un bonnet bien chaud sur la tête."¹ All their pamphlets were directed against political activity of any sort. "Si les Épicuriens écrivaient sur la royauté, c'était pour dissuader de fréquenter les rois ; s'ils écrivaient sur le gouvernement, c'était pour en détourner les esprits ; s'ils écrivaient sur l'éloquence, c'était pour le tourner en ridicule."² No doubt this attitude was partly due, as Denis suggests, to the hopeless condition of Greek politics ; but it is referable still more to their principle that individual gratification and comfort are the real objects of human endeavour. The reverse is true of the Stoics. In theory they recognized that mankind is a composite whole, and that the individual has a duty to the community of which he is a member ; while they approved of political activity as a means of promoting human welfare. When, however, they came to apply their theory to the actual condition of things around them, they were forced to make important modifications. They would not enter whole-hearted on any political work, if it entailed a compromise between their own morality and that of the

¹ Denis, p. 300.

² *Ibid.* p. 299.

world.¹ Moreover, the public life of those times was too factious to allow the voice of a disinterested philosopher to carry much weight. For these reasons Zeno's precept, "that the wise man shall take part in politics, *unless any objection be found*," left it very uncertain whether philosophers ought to become statesmen or not.²

To this survey of political activity there is little that need be added by way of comment. Most of the public men who frequented the schools had their own ambitions to satisfy; and there does not seem to have been any general attempt, on the part of the philosophers, to work out a practical solution of the problems which are being considered. There were exceptions to this rule. In some instances an active philosopher sought to apply his principles to a definite political situation, often, as in the case of Dion, with rigid formalism, which implied that abstract thought had not been seasoned by experience; and it has already been pointed out that theory can be translated into practice, only in so far as it bends to existing circumstances. Probably the most fruitful results were achieved under the auspices of Epaminondas and Cleomenes. In both cases the times were ripe for a great movement of reform. Both statesmen were naturally disposed to appreciate philosophic teaching, and united a pliant disposition with great administrative ability. Both of them were cautious till the right moment to strike arrived. Unfortunately neither

¹ This may be gathered from the remark about business transactions, *Diog. L. vii. 118*, ἀπράγμονας τ' εἶναι (τοὺς σπουδαίους), ἐκκλίνειν γὰρ τὸ πρᾶττειν τι παρὰ τὸ καθήκον.

² Droysen, on very insufficient evidence, attributes the Chremonidean War to Stoic influence (*Hellenismus*, vol. iii. p. 223; French trans.); Thirlwall sensibly questions this (*viii. 100, n. 1 ad fin.*): it seems at least unlikely that Zeno opposed Antigonus.

of them left a successor to carry on his work. In these troubled times it was a matter of pure chance how far philosophy could make its voice heard with effect ; and the disunion which prevailed among the schools made it impossible that they should present a solid front to the vast obstacles which threatened the virtue and happiness of their nation.

CHAPTER XI.

MORAL AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS.

To drill, direct, and manage a people by means of laws and political institutions, is a proceeding not in itself calculated to diffuse new ethical ideas, although it may facilitate their progress. The path of moral reform is from within outwards. A teacher must remould the heart and conscience of individuals, before he can alter the face of society. Legislation has rather the opposite effect, and is therefore, from a moral point of view, insufficient. The practical work of the Greek philosophers must be judged in the last resort, not by their political achievements, but by the influence they exerted over the minds of men.

Public opinion in Ancient Greece during the period under consideration, as we look back through the mist of centuries, appears well-nigh inscrutable, so far as morality is concerned. For evidence, there is the literature of the day ; especially that of popular writers, such as the Orators and Comic Poets. These abound in ethical sentiments, and sometimes illustrate by implication or direct avowal the actual state of popular morals. But the distinction between literary and popular ethics must be observed. The views propounded in books, on the platform, or on the stage, do not always represent the principles of faith and practice generally accepted at the

time. Literary men are wont to reap the fruits of higher criticism sooner than the audience to which they appeal. If the popular literature is found to contain traces of philosophy, there is an inducement to look for similar traces in actual life.

To begin with literature: it may be possible by a codification of texts to get at the moral tendency of a given author. After this, the course to be adopted is not so plain. The method of proceeding as if certain philosophers exercised a peasant-proprietorship over certain phrases and sentiments, and of ascribing influence accordingly, is at least hazardous. A new ethical opinion is usually the product, not of one philosopher only, but of a general movement in which many philosophers take part, working perhaps in conjunction with forces of a purely secular nature. When such an opinion is found reflected in a popular writer (or in popular life), it is to the general movement in most cases that the credit must be assigned.

(I) *Prose-Writers.*

The Athenian Orators of the fourth century, as Prof. Mahaffy remarks, are peculiarly orthodox. By them the old popular morality is emphasized in a manner which refutes the common theory of its annihilation at the hands of the Sophists. The poets are cited as moral guides. Virtue is recommended as noble, beautiful, expedient, and of good repute. In the catalogue of good things wisdom, virtue, reputation, and gentle birth are ranged in opposition to mere wealth; while only one example remains of a contrast drawn between birth and

The Orators
mainly Orthodox;
with occasional
suggestions of
Philosophy.

character.¹ The duties recognized are loyalty to the state, to friends and relatives, and retaliation on one's enemies. There is not a single passage in which the orthodox views of women and marriage, of the slave and the barbarian,² are abandoned. And yet there are certain tendencies in the Orators, which imply a new spirit at work. It

may not be fanciful to see in Demosthenes, Aeschines, Hyperides, and Aeschines, occasional traces of the ethical phraseology and analysis commonly adopted by the philosophers of the period.³

Again, there is in one passage of Aeschines a deliberate attempt to rationalize the conception of Atè as a mythical statement of moral truth.⁴ Hyperides, in words which recall at once the Platonic *Apology* and the *Phaedo*, suggests the chance of a higher life beyond

¹ Aristogeiton and Harmodius were honoured οὐ διὰ τὸ γένος . . . ἀλλὰ διὰ τὴν ἀνδραγαθίαν, Isaeus *Or.* v. §. 47.

² Contempt of the barbarians is found everywhere in the Orators: see esp. *Lys. Or.* xxxi. § 6, a sneer at οἱ φύσει μὲν πολιταὶ εἰσι, γνώμη δὲ χρώνται ὡς πᾶσα γῆ πατρὶς αὐτοῖς ἐστίν, ἐν ᾗ ἂν τὰ ἐπιτήδεια ἔχῃσι κ. τ. λ. (perhaps refers to some Sophists or Cynics, or merely to unpatriotic folk): a sort of vague cosmopolitanism is found in *Lys. (?) Or.* ii. § 66, of soldiers πατρίδα τὴν ἀρετὴν ἠγγισάμενοι, but the speech is probably the work of a Sophist.

³ οἱ μὲν γὰρ θρασεῖς ἄνευ λογισμοῦ πάντα πράττουσιν· οἱ δὲ θαρράλαιοι μετὰ λογισμοῦ τοὺς προσπεσόντας κινδύνους ἀνεκπληκτοὶ ὑπομένουσιν, *Hyp. fr.* 120 (Blass), cf. *fr.* 206. Again, ὁ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῶν μεγίστων τοὺς νόμους καὶ τὴν σωφροσύνην ὑπεριδὼν ἔχει τινὰ ἕξι τῆς ψυχῆς, ἣ διάδηλος ἐκ τῆς ἀκοσμίας τοῦ τρόπου γίνεται, *Aesch. Or.* i. § 189: τὸ μὲν γὰρ πέρασ, ὡς ἂν ὁ δαίμων βουληθῆ, πάντων γίγνεται, ἣ δὲ προαίρεσις αὐτῆ τὴν τοῦ συμβούλου διάνοιαν δηλοῖ, *Dem. Or.* xviii. § 244.

⁴ μὴ γὰρ οἴεσθε . . . τὰς τῶν ἀδικημάτων ἀρχὰς ἀπὸ θεῶν, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὑπ' ἀνθρώπων ἀσελγείας γίνεσθαι· μηδὲ τοὺς ἡσεβηκότας, καθάπερ ἐν ταῖς τραγωδίαις, Πωινὰς ἐλαύνειν καὶ κολάζειν δασὶν ἡμμέναις· ἀλλ' αἱ προπετεῖς τοῦ σώματος ἡδοναί, καὶ τὸ μηδὲν ἱκανὸν ἠγγεῖσθαι, ταῦτα πληροῖ τὰ ληστήρια . . . ταῦτά ἐστιν ἐκάστῳ Πωινῆ κ. τ. λ. *Aesch. Or.* i. § 190 sq. Cf. Xenophon's attempt to rationalize and justify Apollo's treatment of Croesus (*Xen. Cyrop.* vii. 2, 15-25, contrast *Herod.* i. 91).

the grave.¹ Still more important is the comment of Demosthenes on law and the principle of utility as moral sanctions. Although with Lycurgus he reiterates the popular idea that legal penalties and rewards are sufficient to produce good character, and in one place appears to render legality and morality synonymous terms, yet he recognizes as included in the law of custom a higher law of natural right.² So, too, in company with Lysias, he seizes every opportunity of noting the religious and utilitarian basis of law and justice, with an energy which seems to imply that he felt himself face to face with the moral issues raised in the previous century.³ Of his

¹ πῶς τούτους οὐκ εὐτυχεῖς κρίνειν δίκαιον, ἢ πῶς ἐκλειοῦνται τὸν βίον, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐξ ἀρχῆς γεγενῆσθαι καλλίω γένεσιν τῆς πρώτης ὑπαρξάσης; Hyp. iv. § 10 (Blass): πρὸς δὲ τούτοις, εἰ μὲν ἔστι τὸ ἀποθανεῖν ὅμοιον τῷ μὴ γενέσθαι, ἀπηλλαγμένοι εἰσὶ νόσων καὶ λύπης καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν προσπιπτόντων εἰς τὸν ἀνθρώπινον βίον· εἰ δ' ἔστιν ἀσθησις ἐν Ἄιδου καὶ ἐπιμέλεια παρὰ τοῦ δαιμονίου, ὡσπερ ὑπολαμβάνομεν, εἰκὸς τοὺς ταῖς τιμαῖς τῶν θεῶν καταλυομένους βοηθήσαντας πλείστης κηδεμονίας ὑπὸ τοῦ δαιμονίου τυγχάνειν, *ibid.* ad fin. He is said to have studied at the Academy, D. L. iii. 46, ps. Plut. *vit. Hyg.*, Suid. *s. v.* For the alternatives of annihilation and life in Hades, see Plat. *Ap. Soc.* §§ 29 and 40: for for the two γενέσεις see Plat. *Phaed.* 71 c. sqq. This is a distinct advance on the immortality of fame in Lys. *Or.* ii. § 80 sq.; cf. Gorgias, fr. *Epitaph.* The idea of immortality occurs again, Dem. (?) *Or.* ix. § 46; cf. Dem. *Or.* xx. § 96; Lyc. *Or.* § 140, εἰ τίς ἔστιν ἀσθησις τοῖς ἐκεῖ περὶ τῶν ἐνθάδε γιγνομένων (cf. Plato, *Menex.* c. 21).

² Legal penalties and rewards, Dem. *Or.* xx. § 171, Lyc. *Or.* § 10; legality = morality, Dem. *Or.* xxv. § 28; the law of nature, Dem. *Or.* xlv. § 65, cf. *Or.* xxiii. § 100, Dem. (?) *Or.* xxv. § 77.

³ Dem. (?) *Or.* xxv. § 19 (. . . πᾶς ἔστι νόμος, εἴρημα μὲν καὶ δῶρον θεῶν, δόγμα δὲ ἀνθρώπων φρονιμῶν, ἐπανόρθωμα δὲ τῶν ἐκουσίων καὶ ἀκουσίων ἀμαρτημάτων), § 25 (ἐπεὶ λυθέντων γε τούτων—sc. νόμων—καὶ ἐκάστῳ δοθείσης ἐξουσίας ὅ τι βούλεται ποιεῖν, οὐ μόνον ἢ πολιτεία οἴχεται, ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὁ βίος ἡμῶν τοῦ τῶν θηρίων οὐδὲν ἂν διενέγκοι); cf. Lys. *Or.* xviii. § 17; cf. Dem. *Or.* xxxvi. § 54 sqq. (εἰ δὲ τοῦτ' ἀγροεῖς, ὅτι πίστις ἀφορμὴ πασῶν ἔστι μεγίστη πρὸς χρηματισμὸν, πᾶν ἂν ἀγροήσεις. οὐ παύση καὶ γνώση τοῦθ' ὅτι πολλῶν χρημάτων τὸ χρηστὸν εἶναι λυσιτελέστερον; σοὶ γοῦν, εἴπερ ἀληθῆ λέγεις, χρήματα μὲν τσοαῦτ' εἰληφότι πάντα ἀπόλωλεν, ὡς φῆς· εἰ δ' ἦσθα ἐπιεικῆς, οὐδέποτε αὐτὰ ἀνήλωσας).

connexion with the Socratic movement we have already spoken. If this connexion be admitted even in a general sense, his case is most instructive. There is no trace in him of metaphysical or psychological reasoning. He follows the line taken by Socrates in the *Memorabilia*, accepting the city's laws as the "gift of Gods, the resolution of wise men," and an expression of moral duty; enforcing them by a common-sense utilitarianism, and acknowledging in addition a divine unwritten law of nature. Is the parallel altogether illusory? The two men were, in their different spheres, fighting the same battle for the recognition of the most elementary moral principles in social life. The one, as a philosopher, threw out hints which led his successors into wide fields of abstract speculation. The other, as a statesman, was content with immediate and tangible results. The point to be noticed is this. Supposing a contact between Demosthenes and the schools, the doctrine which influenced him most keenly, so far as can be ascertained from his speeches, was not distinctively Platonic, but Socratic.

The teaching of Xenophon and Isocrates on the expediency of virtue is very similar. While admitting that villainy sometimes triumphs,¹ they maintain as a general principle that justice and temperance pay. All men, says Isocrates, desire what is advantageous, but their notions of advantage differ. Some hold that justice is respectable but useless; whereas in reality it contributes more than anything else to pecuniary profit, reputation, right conduct (*ἂ δέῃ πράττειν*), and general happiness.² Elsewhere he considers a desire for prosperity the sole motive to piety

¹ Isoc. *Or.* viii. 166 B; Xen. *Cyrop.* ii. 2, 25.

² Isoc. *Or.* viii. 164 E-165 C: *Or.* xv. § 282 (Blass); cf. *Or.* ii. 21 B (reputation is better than wealth, because it is good in itself and a means to wealth).

and justice.¹ The same ideas are repeated in Xenophon outside the *Memorabilia*. Granted prosperity and comfort as laudable ends, virtue is the best means to them. This is his principal contention, put sometimes in the form so ruthlessly condemned in the *Phaedo*.² Occasionally in Xenophon, as also in Demosthenes, there are assertions which imply that vice is in itself an evil, apart from all external consequences ;³ but they lie outside the main line of argument, and there is no attempt to establish their truth theoretically. Both Isocrates and Xenophon came directly under Socratic influence. Their utilitarianism is the utilitarianism of Socrates, as it impressed earnest men who had no special bent for abstract speculation. This fact serves by analogy to confirm the suggestion made with regard to Demosthenes.

Little more need be said of Isocrates. In previous chapters he has been considered as a philosopher; he may here be taken as a popular writer; for he claimed to be both. He accepted the fundamental principle of Greek moral philosophy, that true virtue involves reasoning. Like Socrates, he held knowledge to be impossible and relied on good opinion; but he made no attempt to

¹ Isoc. *Or.* iii. 26 B (τὰ περὶ τοὺς θεοὺς εὐσεβοῦμεν καὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην ἀσχοῦμεν καὶ τὰς ἄλλας ἀρετὰς ἐπιτηδεύομεν, οὐχ ἵνα τῶν ἄλλων ἔλαττον ἔχωμεν, ἀλλ' ὅπως ἂν μετὰ πλείστων ἀγαθῶν τὸν βίον διάγωμεν), cf. *Or.* viii. 165 E.

² Xen. *Cyrop.* i. 5, 9 (καίτοι ἐγὼ οἶμαι οὐδεμίαν ἀρετὴν ἀσκεῖσθαι ὑπ' ἀνθρώπων ὡς μηδὲν πλεῖον ἔχωσιν οἱ ἐσθλοὶ γενόμενοι τῶν πονηρῶν, ἀλλ' οἱ τε τῶν παραυτίκα ἡδονῶν ἀπεχόμενοι οὐχ ἵνα μηδέποτε εὐφρανθῶσι τοῦτο πράττουσιν, ἀλλ' ὡς διὰ ταύτην τὴν ἐγκράτειαν πολλαπλάσια εἰς τὸν ἔπειτα χρόνον εὐφρανούμενοι οὕτω παρασκευάζονται. Cf. Plato *Phaed.* 69 A, μὴ γὰρ οὐχ αὐτὴ ἧ ἡ ὀρθὴ πρὸς ἀρετὴν ἀλλαγὴ, ἡδονὰς πρὸς ἡδονὰς καὶ λύπας πρὸς λύπας . . . καταλλάττεσθαι Plato's strictest mood): viii. 7, 24; *Anab.* vii. 7, 20 sqq.

³ Xen. *Hiero* iv. 10. Dem. *Or.* xxiii. §§ 118 sq., 232. Isocrates always attaches some external advantage as a motive, usually reputation.

adopt Socratic methods, which he despised.¹ His policy was to gather together excellent maxims from many quarters; and some of these appear to have been crumbs from the philosophic banquet. He has a distinction between law and morality, between custom and nature. He echoes the current protest against immoral myths, and quotes the Pythagorean doctrine that kindness and veracity build men up in the likeness of God. He sets virtue (apparently in the sense of endurance and capacity for work) above strength, beauty, riches, and even birth. He tolerates only such pleasures as are consistent with a good reputation, and draws a distinction between pleasures pure and pleasures mixed, in phraseology which recalls the *Republic* of Plato. Finally he mentions a Hellenism "not of birth, but of intellect," which marks a stage in the decline of racial prejudice.² In this miscellaneous assortment of ideas it is possible to trace certain tendencies which are peculiar to the higher thought of the fifth and early fourth centuries; but the fact that Isocrates was himself somewhat of an advanced student, whether sophistic or philosophical, renders his case the less significant for our present purpose.

The same is true of Xenophon. His Socratic training

¹ ἄξιον μὲν οὖν καὶ τοὺς φύσει κοσμίους ὄντας ἐπαινεῖν καὶ θαυμάζειν, ἔτι δὲ μᾶλλον καὶ τοὺς μετὰ λογισμοῦ τοιοῦτους ὄντας. οἱ μὲν γὰρ τύχῃ καὶ μὴ γνώμῃ σωφρονούντες τυχόν ἂν καὶ μεταπεισθεῖεν κ. τ. λ. Isoc. *Or.* iii. 36 C; ἐπειδὴ γὰρ οὐκ ἔνεστιν ἐν τῇ φύσει τῇ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπιστήμῃ λαβεῖν, . . . ἐκ τῶν λοιπῶν σοφοὺς μὲν νομίζω τοὺς ταῖς δόξαις ἐπιτυγχάνειν ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ τοῦ βελτίστου δυναμένου κ. τ. λ. *Or.* xv. § 271 (Blass).

² Law and morals, Isoc. *Or.* xix. 387 D; custom and nature, *Or.* i. 4 A; myths, *Or.* xi. 228 D sqq., but see *Or.* x. 217 D; Pythagoreanism, *fr.* iii (a¹). 7; virtue above birth etc., *Or.* i. 3 B sq.; pleasures, ἡδοναὶ μετὰ δόξης *Or.* i. 5 C, iii. 36 A; ἐν μὲν γὰρ τῷ ῥαθυμεῖν καὶ τὰς πλησιμονὰς ἀγαπᾶν εὐθὺς αἱ λύπαι ταῖς ἡδοναῖς παραπεπήγασι, τὸ δὲ περὶ τὴν ἀρετὴν φιλοπονεῖν καὶ σωφρόνως τὸν αὐτοῦ βίον οἰκονομεῖν αἰεὶ τὰς τέρψεις εἰλικρινεῖς καὶ βεβαιότερας ἀποδίδωσι κ. τ. λ. *Or.* i. 12 B; cf. Plato *Rep.* 585 E. For the wider Hellenism, see *Or.* iv. 50 E sq. (see Jebb, *Att. Or.* ii. 15).

shows itself generally in his systematic discussion of various practical arts and various social and moral problems. The theories of marriage and slave-management in his *Oeconomicus* are careful and considerate. He develops the popular view by bringing out its possibilities without introducing new principles. He divides slaves into two classes. Some, he says, have a sense of honour; others cannot rise above physical appetite. The former he would treat as if they were free-born, but there is no suggestion that slavery is unnatural. Like Socrates and Aristotle, he regards marriage as a prudential arrangement, which should culminate in the mutual service and affection of man and wife. The wife should be trained to the performance of domestic duties. There is no protest against the seclusion of women, and no serious attempt to extend the sphere of their education. Only in one passage does he seem to suggest somewhat humorously that the female nature, though weaker than the male, is yet not inferior in kind, and may be trained to the same pursuits.¹

And yet Xenophon wrote a romance of wedded life. For the story of Panthea, embedded in the *Institutio Cyri*, is nothing less than this. Panthea was the wife of Abratadas, the Assyrian, and followed her lord to battle against Persia. During his absence from the host on an embassy, she remained in charge of his tent. Meantime the camp was stormed, and she fell into the enemy's hands. Her captors, observing her grace and comeliness, tried to soothe her with the assurance that she was destined for a husband—Cyrus to wit—as handsome, intelligent, and influential as the one she had lost; whereupon she tore her garment and wept aloud. Cyrus received news of the woman's astounding behaviour from Araspas, who had been present at her capture. To the surprise of his informant he refused to see her, lest he

¹ Xen. *Symp.* ii. 9 sq. : on slaves, see *Oec.* xiii. 6-9, xiv. 9 : on women, see *ibid.* iii, vii-x. (passim).

should be distracted in the midst of his official duties. Then followed a conventional debate on love. Araspas maintained that good men can keep their passion within bounds, comparing love of the sex to the desire for money and horses. Cyrus in return warned him about playing with fire, and at length challenged him to put his boast into practice by taking charge of the fair prisoner (Cyrus. iv. 6, 11-v. 1, 18). Araspas was no sooner at his new post than he succumbed to a passionate yearning. Panthea rejected his ungainly proposals, and on threat of violence appealed to Cyrus. Cyrus merely laughed at the young man's fall, and refused to interfere so long as there was no resort to actual force. Artabazus, however, who brought the message, rated the offender soundly, till he was overcome with shame and fear. Cyrus, on the other hand, spoke gently to him: were not the Gods themselves subject to lust? But Araspas, fearing that the rumour of his "misfortune" (*συμφορά*, the usual word) had spread, begged leave to quit the camp and went off on a political errand (vi. 1, 31-41). Panthea, who, by the way, had received somewhat questionable treatment from Cyrus, sent to comfort him on the supposed loss of his trusty knight. She offered to atone for the trouble she had caused, by summoning her husband, Abratadas, to fight on the Persian side; for he hated his present master, the Assyrian king, who had tried to seduce her. Abratadas arrived in due course, and an affectionate scene ensued between man and wife (vi. 1, 45-49). Panthea worked military adornments for him out of her own finery; if he appeared nobly clad, it was decoration enough for her. As he rode forth to battle, she bade him prove faithful to her protector, Cyrus; and he, looking up to heaven, prayed: "Grant me, mighty Zeus, that I may show myself a husband worthy of Panthea, and a friend worthy of Cyrus who has honoured us" (vi. 4, 2-9). Abratadas died nobly in the thick of the carnage, and

they carried him to the river Pactolus, where Panthea, receiving his body, decked it afresh in his armour and leant his head upon her lap. Thither came Cyrus to sympathize: "His end was glorious, he died in the hour of victory; he shall receive due honour; and do you be comforted, for you shall have a husband worthy of you; only tell me whom you would like." She answered: ἀλλὰ θάρρει . . . οὐ μὴ σε κρύψω πρὸς ὄντινα βούλομαι ἀφικέσθαι. "Be of good cheer," she said, "I will let you know whom I seek." (Tragic irony this! Cyrus, having a Greek mind for the occasion, cannot be expected to see through it: a hero might kill himself over his comrade's body; but a woman over her husband's—!!!) Then she dismissed them all except her old nurse, whom she bade cover her body when she fell (vii. 3, 2-16).

There is, so far as I know, nothing quite like this elsewhere in Greek literature. It reads like a tale of medieval chivalry, with Cyrus and Araspas thrown in to give it a Greek background. The question is whence this romantic idea came. There were elements of romance in Greek life and poetry before this date, in the intercourse of Cimon and his wife Isodice, and in the elegies of Archelaus and Antimachus the friend of Plato;¹ and there was a kind of one-sided romance in the philosopher-poet Euripides, who drew noble and even feminine wives with selfish husbands. But there was nothing that quite corresponded to Xenophon's picture, whether in philosophy or popular thought. It was probably drawn from Persian lore, in which he seems to have taken considerable interest. I would remark that Aspasia, wife of the younger Cyrus, with whom he may well have become acquainted during the march on Babylon, presented many

¹ Cimon, Isodice, and Archelaus, see Plut. *Cim.* 4; Antimachus, see Benecke, *Women in Greek Poetry*, pp. 108 sqq. Xenophon's episode made an impression in antiquity (Lucian, *Imag.* c. 10).

points of resemblance, both in character and fortune, to the heroine of his romance.¹

This interest in Persian history and civilization is important. Xenophon was not cosmopolitan, if that adjective be applied to the man who endeavours to divest himself of all racial prejudices. He was quite orthodox in maintaining the superiority of Greek to barbarian. He had no words to express his contempt for the Persian character as it exhibited itself in his day. Still his attitude was less exclusive than that of the average Greek. Travel had broadened his mind, as it had broadened the mind of Herodotus in the previous century. He made a Persian prince the hero of an educational treatise, and he was willing to borrow hints from Persian civilization.² He thus took his place in a great movement towards literary cosmopolitanism, which was promoted by the historians of the fourth and third centuries and by Polybius in the second, and which found its consummation in Diodorus Siculus shortly before the opening of the Christian era. What actual part was played by philosophy, it is hard to determine. The work of Hippias and Aristotle may have stimulated interest in foreign studies, and possibly Polybius and Diodorus Siculus came under the influence of Stoicism.³ But the movement as a whole was due, not to

¹ Ael. *V. H.* xii. 1. The cursory notice of her in Xen. *Anab.* i. 10, 2 (τὴν Φωκαΐδα τὴν Κύρου παλλακίδα τὴν σοφὴν καὶ καλὴν λεγομένην εἶναι) rather goes against my theory.

² E.g. Xen. *Oec.* iv. 2-25.

³ For Hippias, see note (4) on p. 64; Aristotle, foreign constitutions in his *Politics*. Historians: (1) fourth century, Ctesias of Cnidos, at the Persian Court, writes *Περσικά* and *Ἰνδικά*; Deinon, father of Cleitarchus, *Περσικά*; Daimachus of Plataea (on embassy to India, 312 B.C.), *Ἰνδικά*; (2) third century, Timaeus of Tauromenium takes Greece to include all countries where Greeks live or rule (Müller and Donaldson, *Greek Lit.* vol. iii. p. 61); Mnaseas of Patara, Neanthes of Cyzicus, and Philemon of Ilion, all at Alexandria, pursue antiquarian studies without respect to race; for Alexandrines of the

theory, but to practical experience and to the political changes involved in the Macedonian and Roman conquests.

Before we leave Xenophon, it may be noted that, like Hyperides, in summing up the chances of a future life he wavers between two views which recall certain phases of Platonism.

The dying Cyrus confesses his faith that the soul, being the vital principle, is destined to survive the body, and is most active and intelligent when freed by death. This is the thesis of the *Phaedo*. He reverts a little later on to the agnosticism of the *Apology*, the alternatives being annihilation and life with God. It is possible that Xenophon borrowed from both dialogues; although, as Dr. Adam suggests, it is also conceivable that "the historical Socrates sometimes conversed in this way." Hyperides is said to have studied at the Academy.¹

Of the prose-writers in this period, whose extant work affords scope for criticism, particular interest attaches to Demosthenes, Isocrates, and Xenophon. All three developed a utilitarian doctrine, which seems to connect itself with the Socratic movement. Xenophon worked out various problems of life from a

third and second centuries, who translate Egyptian, Chaldean, and Hebrew annals, see Müller and Donaldson, vol. ii. pp. 484 sqq.: (3) second century, Polybius writes what is practically a world-history, under influence of Roman universality and perhaps of Stoic views contracted in the circle of the younger Scipio: (4) first century, Diodorus Siculus bases his Universal History on the notion of the unity of mankind (Stoic influence?). See generally Denis, *Histoire de Théories*, etc., vol. i. p. 383, and Smith's *Dict. of Gk. and Rom. Biography*.

¹ Xen. *Cyrop.* viii. 7, 17-20 (ἀλλ' ὅταν ἄκρατος καὶ καθαρὸς ὁ νοῦς ἐκκριθῆ, τότε καὶ φρονιμώτατον αὐτὸν εἶδος εἶναι), and 27 (ὅτι ἐν τῷ ἀσφαλεῖ ἤδη ἔσομαι, ὡς μηδὲν ἂν ἔτι κακὸν παθεῖν, μήτε ἦν μετὰ τοῦ θεοῦ γένωμαι μήτε ἦν μηδὲν ἔτι ὦ). Xen. *Symp.* viii. 12-27 (about love of the soul) may be a further debt to Plato, although I do not think it essentially un-Socratic.

Socratic standpoint, paying special attention to the treatment of slaves and women. He also displayed a vein of romance and a faint tendency to cosmopolitanism, which can hardly be ascribed to his philosophic environment. The latter characteristic was shared by other historians, and it is possible that Stoic teaching may in this respect have influenced at least two of their number who wrote after the close of the third century. Isocrates, also, in one passage emphasized the superiority of character to birth, and in another preached a Hellenism of the mind which transcends all racial differences. These are perhaps the chief points to be noted. Barring Xenophon and Isocrates, who were in a special sense students of philosophy, the result is meagre. It must be remembered that the evidence at our disposal is almost wholly confined to a period when the schools were still under the ban of popular resentment, and before the great practical philosophies of the third century had come into existence.

(II) *Poets.*

Turning from the Orators to the Middle and New Comedy is like leaving the busy forum for a suburban residence, where it is possible to commune with one's own heart and be still. For the most noticeable thing about these poets is, not that they rush headlong into voluptuous riot, but that they reflect. They break on occasion through the conventional farce of the Comic stage, and sermonize on deep problems of happiness and responsibility, always in the same quiet tone, with the same smooth eloquence.

The subject is extensive, and perhaps the least wearisome method of procedure is to review briefly the Comic utterances in connexion with various moral problems, and then to suggest certain lines of contact with philosophy.

The more important passages will be printed in foot-notes for the reader to label at his own risk.

A. The Ethical basis. The utilitarian motive is a commonplace. Justice brings greater pleasure than injustice. Avarice blinds the understanding. So says Antiphanes. Menander in the New Comedy takes up the theme. Justice pays—in most cases: unjust gain is troublesome to the mind. So too Diphilus: avarice is shortsighted; the dishonest man is a slave.¹ In the New Comedy there is also a considerable analysis of the moral disposition. The just man, says Philemon, is he who being able to pilfer refuses to do so, not that he may appear respectable, but because his nature is guileless. Menander emphasizes the importance of deliberate choice in determining the character of an action, and brings out the intellectual basis of morality. It is on the human mind that he relies for judgment; mind is the good man's divinity. Needless to say, he distinguishes between the moral and the legal sanction of conduct.²

¹ Middle Comedy: Antiphanes; *ὡς δυστυχεῖς, ὅσοις τοῦ κέρδους χάριν, | ἐπίπροσθε ταισυχρὰ φαίνεται εἶναι τῶν καλῶν* | ἐπισκοτεῖ γὰρ τῷ φρονεῖν τὸ λαμβάνειν (M. iii. p. 148); *τὰ πονηρὰ κέρδη τὰς μὲν ἡδονὰς ἔχει | μικρὰς, ἔπειτα δ' ὕστερον λύπας μακρὰς* (*ibid.* cf. *fab. inc.* xlii. b, p. 149). New Comedy: Philemon; (Plauti *Trinummus*, Act. ii. Sc. 1); Menander, *Ἰπποβόλ.* vii. (M. iv. p. 214), *fab. inc.* xxxi. (*ibid.* 243), li. (*ibid.* 249), lxiii. (*ibid.* 252), lxxviii. (*ibid.* 255), lxxx. (255: *μὴ πάντοθεν κέρδαινε . . . τὸ μὴ δικαίως εὐτυχεῖν ἔχει φόβον*, Epicurean?), cclxx. (292): contrast *δνειδος αἰσχυρὸς βίος ὅμως, κὰν ἡδὺς ἦ*, ccxvii. (282); Diphilus, *fab. inc.* xiii, xiv (M. iv. p. 421).

² Philemon: *ἀνὴρ δικαίος ἐστὶν οὐχ ὁ μὴ ἀδικῶν, | ἀλλ' ὅστις ἀδικεῖν δυνάμενος μὴ βούλεται* | οὐδ' ὅς τὰ μικρὰ λαμβάνειν ἀπέσχετο, | ἀλλ' ὅς τὰ μεγάλα καρτερεῖ μὴ λαμβάνων, | ἔχειν δυνάμενος καὶ κρατεῖν ἀζημίως | οὐδ' ὅς γε ταῦτα πάντα διατηρεῖ μόνον, | ἀλλ' ὅστις ἄδολον γνησίαν τ' ἔχων φύσιν | εἶναι δίκαιος κού δοκεῖν εἶναι θέλει (M. iv. p. 37): cf. Dem. (?) *Or.* xxv. § 107 (distinguishes conduct, 1. due to a good and willing nature, 2. due to shame, 3. due to legal penalties); cf. Theodectes, tragedian, pupil of Isocrates (distinguishes the motives of fear and of a pious disposition), *fr.* 8 Nauck. Menander: *ὅστις ὑπέχει χρυσίῳ | τὴν χεῖρα, κὰν μὴ φῆ, πονηρὰ βούλεται* (M. iv. 159); *ἀτύχημα κἀδίκημα διαφορὰν ἔχει* | τὸ μὲν διὰ τύχην γίγνεται, τὸ δ' αἰρέσει (*ibid.* 198, cf. Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1135 b, 17-25, which, however, distinguishes *ἀδίκημα* from *ἀδικία*): intellectual

B. Ethics of the individual. The Middle Comedy differs from the Old in two important respects. There is in both the same strain of positive pleasure and social gaiety, with much striking similarity of expression. But the Middle Comedy lacks that virile spirit of patriotism which is so obvious in Aristophanes; at the same time it has an occasional element of prudence and a certain caution against excess, which is wholly alien to the wild mirth of the fifth century. These differences are intensified in the New. Hegesippus and Bato reiterate the praises of self-indulgence; but among the fragments of Menander, Philemon, Diphilus, and Euphron, there is hardly one passage to this effect. What these poets advocate is *not* positive enjoyment, but a comfortable indifference to pain and misfortune. It is possible to trace in Menander and Philemon some such argument as the following. Success has its cares as well as failure. Therefore positive pleasure cannot be synonymous with happiness. A man should be content with something of a more negative description. He should aim at the least possible amount of pain. And this end can be achieved, only if he retires within himself and assumes an attitude of philosophic indifference. All sorrow is from within. He who communes with his own

basis, ἀρ' ἐστὶν ἀγαθῶν πᾶσι πλειστων αἰτία | ἢ σύνεσις, ἀν' ἣ πρὸς τὰ βελτίω σοφή (*ibid.*), cf. μέγιστον ἀγαθὸν ἐστὶ μετὰ νοῦ χρηστότης (*ibid.* iv. 288, cf. Diphilus *fab. inc.* xxxii., M. iv. 425: Menander does not appear to use *σύνεσις* in the strict Peripatetic sense as κριτικὴ μόνον, Ar. *Eth. Nic.* 1143 a, 9, but like φρόνησις; οὐχ οὐδὲν τε ἀγαθὸν εἶναι κυρίως ἀνευ φρονήσεως, οὐδὲ φρόνιμον ἀνευ τῆς ἠθικῆς ἀρετῆς, Ar. *Eth. Nic.* 1144 b, 31), cf. θεὸς ἐστὶ τοῖς χρηστοῖς ἀεὶ | ὁ νοῦς κ. τ. λ. (M. iv. 72, cf. *ibid.* 90, πάντ' ἐστὶ τῷ καλῷ λόγῳ κ. τ. λ.), cf. Chaeremon (tragedian, fl. 380 B.C., ἔφη, πάντα τὰ ἀγαθὰ ἐν μόνῳ τῷ φρονεῖν ἐστὶν, Nauck *fr.* 40): law and morality, τὸ καλῶς ἔχον πον κρείττον ἐστὶ καὶ νόμου (M. iv. 146; cf. Antiphanes, ὁ μὴδὲν ἀδικῶν οὐδενὸς δεῖται νόμου, M. iii. 148, not so definite).

Philemon abandons the old idea that intelligence is a natural gift, unaffected by education: ἤκουσα τούτων αὐτὸς, οὐδὲ φύεται | αὐτόματον ἀνθρώποισιν, ὦ βέλτιστε, νοῦς | ὥσπερ ἐν ἀγρῷ θύμος· ἐκ δὲ τοῦ λέγειν τε καὶ | ἐτέρων ἀκούειν, καὶ θεωρῆσαι <τί πον> | κατὰ μικρὸν αἰεὶ, φασὶ, φύονται φρένες, M. iv. 34, obvious trace of philosophy.

spirit and considers well the conditions of human fortune, will attain unto peace.¹ The same line of argument is used in discussing the advantages of wealth. The plaint of the poor runs through Middle and New Comedy; but the plaint of the rich is heard as often. Riches do not satisfy; they make men care-worn and morally blind. Passages in praise of great wealth are exceptional. Menander blesses the man who has property and sufficient intelligence to administer it in an enlightened spirit. But more significant are those passages scattered throughout the New Comedy, which lay stress on the unimportance of external prosperity as compared with peace of mind. Here too there is a movement in favour of self-sufficiency. The things of this world are unsatisfactory and insecure; therefore let us use them with wisdom, and in the last resort remember

¹ (1) Middle Comedy: *τί δεῖ γάρ ὄντα θνητῶν, ἵκετεύω, ποιεῖν | πλὴν ἡδέως ζῆν τὸν βίον καθ' ἡμέραν* κ. τ. λ. Philetairus (M. iii. 295, cf. 297; Antiphanes *fab. inc.* 3, M. iii. 133, and 51, *ibid.* 150; Amphipolis, *Γυναικοκ. ibid.* iii. 303, *Ἰαλεμ.* ii, *ibid.* iii. 309; cf. Old Comedy; Aristophanes *διαπλέκειν ζῶν ἡδέως τὸ λοιπὸν*, *Aves* 754, cf. *Pax* 438 sqq., *fr.* 899 a, cf. Plato *Comicus fr.* 106); sober views, *ὡς ἡδὺ πᾶν τὸ μέτριον* κ. τ. λ. Alexis (M. iii. 481), *ἀλλ' ἔγωγε τοῦ τὰ δέοντ' ἔχειν | τὰ περιττὰ μισῶ· τοῖς ὑπερβάλλουσι γὰρ | τέρψις μὲν οὐκ ἔνεστι πολυτέλεια δέ Alexis (ibid. 500, cf. 502), φεῦγ' ἡδονὴν φέρουσαν ὕστερον βλάβην Alexis (ibid. 522). (2) New Comedy: Diphilus, life is unhappy, do not make it worse by stupidity (M. iv. 376), man must expect every fate (*ibid.* 397, 424); Euphron, ὦ Ζεῦ, τί ποθ' ἡμῖν δοὺς χρόνον τοῦ ζῆν βραχύν | πλέκειν ἀλύπως τοῦτον ἡμᾶς οὐκ ἔφς; (*ibid.* 490, N. B. ἀλύπως instead of ἡδέως, see above Philetairus M. iii. 295, and Aristophanes *Av.* 754); Philemon, ὁ δὲ τῷ λογισμῷ πάντα παρ' ἑαυτῷ σκοπῶν | τὸ κακὸν ἀφαιρεῖ τὰ γαθὸν δὲ λαμβάνει (M. iv. 34), μὴ λύπει σεαυτὸν κ. τ. λ. (*ibid.* 39), φεῦγε τὰς λύπας μόνον (*ibid.* 41 sq.), πῶλλ' ἔστιν ἐν πολλαῖσιν οἰκταῖς κακά, | ἃ καλῶς ὅταν ἐνέγκῃς ἀγαθὰ γενήσεται (*ibid.* 56, cf. *fab. inc.* 23, *ibid.* 42); Menander, man must expect every fate (M. iv. 85, 194, 195, 203, 227, 247, etc.), παρέχει δὲ φροντίδας καὶ τὰ γαθὰ (*ibid.* iv. 234), man should endure (*Ἦνιοχ.* 4, M. iv. 127; *ἄνθρωπος ὢν μηδέποτε τὴν ἀλυπτίαν | αἰτοῦ παρὰ θεῶν, ἀλλὰ τὴν μακροθυμίαν, ibid.* iv. 238), man makes troubles for himself, ἀγωνίαί δόξαι φιλοτιμίαί νόμοι, | ἅπαντα ταῦτ' ἐπίθετα τῇ φύσει κακά (*ibid.* iv. 230), καὶ πάντα τὰ λυμανθῆμεν' ἔστιν ἐνδοθεν (*ibid.* iv. 235); cf. passages of Euripides quoted by Thomson (*Euripides and Att. Or.* pp. 76 sq.); Hegesippus (M. iv. 481) and Bato (M. iv. 500) ordinary view of positive pleasure.*

that peace belongeth to the patient and strong of heart.¹

C. Social Ethics. This general tendency to transvalue all conventional values, and to look beneath outward appearances, could not fail to display itself in the treatment of social ethics. The distinction between character and rank, and the relative unimportance of the latter, were apparently a stock theme with the fourth-century tragedians. These ideas were taken up by Menander and Philemon, and applied to the social problems involved in the Greek treatment of barbarian and slave. There is at least one fragment of Menander in which it is argued that foreign birth brings no discredit; and there are others which convey the same truth.² Philemon claims for a slave the common rights of mankind; for everyone is free by nature. Let a slave do his work like a freeman, says Menander, and he will thereby cease to be a slave. These utterances are remarkable.³

¹ New Comedy: Philemon, δικαιότατον κτήμ' ἐστὶν ἀνθρώποις ἀγρός | . . . τὰ δ' ἀργυρώματ' ἐστὶν ἢ τε πορφύρα | εἰς τοὺς τραγωδοὺς εὖθετ', οὐκ ἐς τὸν βλον (M. iv. 44), the rich man who does not use his wealth nobly, is not blessed (*ibid.* 49); Menander, μακάριος ὅστις οὐσίαν καὶ νοῦν ἔχει | χρηταὶ γὰρ οὗτος εἰς ἃ δεῖ ταῦτη καλῶς (M. iv. 103, cf. Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1103 b, 26), πλούσιος | καλοῦμ' ὑπὸ πάντων, μακάριος δ' ὑπ' οὐδενός (*ibid.* 266), ἔξωθέν εἰσω οἱ δοκοῦντες εὐτυχεῖν | λαμπροί, τὰ δ' ἔνδον πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ἴσοι (*ibid.* 263), ψυχὴν ἔχειν δεῖ πλουσίαν | τὰ δὲ κτήματα | ταῦτ' ἐστὶν ὄψις, παραπέτασμα τοῦ βλου (*ibid.* 273; also ascribed to Middle Comedians, Alexis, M. iii. 521, and Antiphanes, *ibid.* 154), Apollodorus, οὐ δεῖ λέγειν γὰρ μακάριον τὸν χρήματα | ἔχοντα πλείστα, τὸν δὲ μὴ λυπούμενον (M. iv. 453), cf. passages of Euripides, Thomson, *Euripides and Att. Or.* p. 86.

² Fourth-century tragedians: character and rank, Astydamas *fr.* 8, Theodectes *fr.* 15 (Nauck). New Comedy: Menander, ὅς ἂν εὖ γεγονὼς ἦ τῆ φύσει πρὸς τάγαθά, | κἂν Αἰθιοψῆ ἢ, μητέρ, ἐστὶν εὐγενής. | Σκύθης τις; ὄλεθρος. ὁ δ' Ἀνάχαρσις οὐ Σκύθης; (M. iv. 229), cf. οὐδὲν γένους γένος γὰρ οἶμαι διαφέρειν, | ἀλλ' εἰ δικαίως ἐξετάσεις, καὶ γνήσιος | ὁ χρηστός ἐστίν, ὁ δὲ πονηρὸς καὶ νόθος (*ibid.* 151, cf. Philemon *fab. inc.* 67), οὐδεὶς ἐστὶ μοι | ἀλλότριος ἂν ἦ χρηστός | ἢ φύσις μία | πάντων, τὸ δ' οἰκεῖον συνίστησι τρόπος (*ibid.* 185); Philemon, οὐχ ἢ πόλις σοῦ τὸ γένος εὐγενές ποιεῖ | σύ δ' εὐγενίζεις τὴν πόλιν πράσων καλῶς (*fab. inc.* 89); cf. passages of Euripides, Thomson, p. 90, and *fr.* 1047.

³ Middle Comedy: Anaxandrides, a man is a slave one day, a citizen the next (M. iii. 162 sq.; perhaps, as Newman suggests, such vicissitudes—which

The superiority of Middle and New Comedy to the Old Comedy in point of manners is well known. The improvement was not merely superficial. Xenophon and Isocrates had advocated a control of temper. Antiphanes went yet deeper: the well-bred man, he said, will not insist on his "pound of flesh." The same thought is developed by Menander: the well-bred man will be polite even under severe provocation; he will submit to injury with self-restraint; to do no evil to one's neighbour is the mark of a gentleman.¹

It was in the same spirit that Menander sanctioned the law of sympathy. "This is life, to live not for oneself alone." "From suffering learn sympathy, for another who has suffered will sympathize with thee."² Sympathy was demanded especially for the poor man and the outcast. The

were common enough in this distressful period—helped to destroy the old idea of the "slave-by-nature"; Alexis, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὸ πλῆθος ἐμφερεῖς τοὺς οἰκέτας | ἔχοντας ὄψει τοὺς τρόπους τοῖς δεσπόταις (M. iii. 407, δουλικὴ φύσις denied?): New Comedy; Philemon, κὰν δούλος ἦ τις, οὐδὲν ἦττον, δέσποτα, | ἀνθρωπος οὗτός ἐστιν, ἂν ἀνθρωπος ἦ (M. iv. 9, cf. Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1161 b, 5), κὰν δούλος ἦ τις, σάρκα τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχει· | φύσει γὰρ οὐδεὶς δούλος ἐγενήθη ποτε κ. τ. λ. (*ibid.* 47, see Eur. *Orest.* 1522 sqq.; but there is nothing quite like it in Euripides); Menander, ἐλευθέρως δούλευε· δούλος οὐκ ἔσει (*ibid.* 293, cf. Bion *ap.* Stob. *Flor.* ii. 39, οἱ ἀγαθοὶ οἰκέται ἐλευθεροὶ κ. τ. λ.), ἅπαντα δουλεύειν ὁ δούλος μανθάνει, | πονηρὸς ἔσται· μεταδίδου παρρησίας, | βέλτιστον αὐτὸν τοῦτο ποιήσει πολὺ (*ibid.* 181).

¹ Manners: Philemon, οὐκ ἂν λαλῆ τις μικρὸν, ἐστὶ κόσμιος· | οὐδ' ἂν πορευήται τις εἰς τὴν γῆν βλέπων· | ὁ δ' ἠλικὸν μὲν ἢ φύσις φέρει λαλῶν, | μηδὲν ποιῶν δ' ἄσχημον, οὗτος κόσμιος (M. iv. 5). Vengeance, etc.: Xenophon on οἱ δύσκολοι (*Cyrop.* ii. 2, 1 sq.; v. 2, 18), on disadvantages of blind vengeance (*ibid.* iii. 1, 15-30); Isocrates ἐὰν . . . τῇ ὀργῇ παραπλησίως ἔχης πρὸς τοὺς ἁμαρτάνοντας, ὥσπερ ἂν πρὸς σεαυτὸν ἁμαρτάνοντα καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ἔχειν ἀξιώσεις (*Or.* i. 6 c); Antiphanes, τὸ γὰρ πεπαιδευθῆναι, μόνον ἂν τις τοῦτ' ἔχη, | ἀληθές ἐστι καὶ τὸ τῶν ἀδικημάτων | μὴ λαμβάνειν τὰς ἀξίας τιμωρίας (M. iii. 156); Menander, τοὺς εἴ γεγονότας καὶ τεθραμμένους καλῶς | κὰν τοῖς κακοῖς δεῖ λόγον ἔχειν εὐφημίας (M. iv. 262), οὗτος κράτιστός ἐστ' ἀνήρ, ὦ Γοργία, | ὅστις ἀδικεῖσθαι πλείστ' ἐπίστατ' ἐγκρατῶς κ. τ. λ. (*ibid.* 96, cf. Eur. *Bacch.* 641, πρὸς σοφοῦ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ἀσκεῖν σῶφρον' εὐοργησίαν), τὸ μηδὲν ἀδικεῖν ἐκμαθεῖν γὰρ, ὦ Λάχης, | ἀστείον ἐπιτήδευμα κρῖνω τῷ βίῳ (*ibid.* 150).

² τοῦτ' ἐστὶ τὸ ζῆν, οὐχ ἑαυτῷ ζῆν μόνον (M. iv. 290), ἐκ τοῦ παθεῖν γίνωσκε καὶ τὸ συμπαθεῖν, | καὶ σοὶ γὰρ ἄλλος συμπαθήσεται παθῶν (*ibid.* 52, cf. *fab. inc.* 74).

cause of the poor figured large in popular literature from the time of Euripides. The complaint of Xenophon, that poverty is a reproach and even an object of incrimination, occurs again in the Orators. Demosthenes admits that poverty is the root of many "low and slavish" deeds, but proceeds to urge that its victims should be pitied. Demades denies that a pauper need be morally depraved.¹ In the comedy of the period this topic comes prominently to the fore. Aristophanes in the *Plutus*, dealing with the question of poverty, maintains the same burlesque tone in which he satirized the political transactions of Cleon. His successors conform more and more to the spirit of Euripides. There is something peculiarly sad and pensive in their extant fragments. The poor man is an established character on the stage. His misfortunes and destitution, his inability to obtain a friend or to gain credence for his words, and the ruinous effects of town-life, are dwelt upon with considerable pathos. The appeal for sympathy is backed up by reflections on the mutability of fortune. There is no essential difference here between Middle and New Comedy, except perhaps that Menander and Philemon lay especial stress on the spirit in which an act of charity should be performed.²

D. Women and marriage. The late Mr. E. F. Benecke, in an essay on "The Position of Women in Greek Poetry," has worked out the following conclusions: "The Middle Comedy treatment of women and love for women, has four main characteristics—

- (1) The glorification of the courtesan, and of love for the courtesan.
- (2) The purely sensual nature of the love thus extolled.
- (3) The ridicule of all love that is not sensual.
- (4) The ridicule of family life."

¹ Xen. *Oec.* xi. 5; Demosth. *Or.* lviii. § 56; Demades (?) *Or.* § 8.

² Philemon, ἅπαν διδόμενον δῶρον, ἂν καὶ μικρὸν ἦ, | μέγιστόν ἐστι μετ' εὐνοίας διδόμενον (*fab. inc.* 75), εἰάν ὄρων πένητα γυμνὸν ἐνδύσης, | μᾶλλον ἀπέδυσας αὐτὸν ἂν ὀνειδίσης (*fab. inc.* 83, cf. Menander, *fab. inc.* 160).

"The New Comedy flatly contradicts every one of these principles. The love of which it treats is love for a *virgin*, and the consummation of this love is *marriage*. Such love is by no means purely sensual; indeed, at times it is almost of a Platonic character. And lastly, the sanctity of marriage is strictly insisted upon, and the advantages of marriage as a system strongly maintained." In spite of the conventional reproaches which hen-pecked husbands hurl at the wives, lawful wedlock is the consummation that usually ends a play. Later on, Mr. Benecke adds a stricture. "There seems," he says, "every reason to believe that this introduction of the romantic element was due to Menander rather than to Philemon . . . Indeed the whole study of Philemon's treatment of women leaves one with the impression, not only that he was at heart a follower of the old school, but that even when he did for any reason adopt the romantic principle, he developed this principle from a more sensual point of view than Menander." He dismisses Diphilus with the remark that "in his fragments there is no suggestion of any romantic treatment of women."¹

Of the other poets belonging to this period he singles out Antimachus and Asclepiades as having contributed most to the pure romance of the New Comedy.² We may add that of the tragedians Chaeremon, who flourished in the earlier part of the fourth century, paid considerable attention to female beauty, without apparently having much good to say of marriage; while Hippothoon, a younger contemporary, expressed his preference of a good to a wealthy bride, after the manner of Xenophon.³

¹ Benecke, *Position of Women in Greek Poetry*, pp. 163 sq., 188 (with note).

² *Ibid.* p. 108 sqq.

³ Hippothoon *fr.* 6 (Nauck); to Chaeremon, cf. Lycophronides *ap.* Ath. 564 A. B. It is unfortunate we do not know the date of Apollonides, who praises women and marriage in quite unusual terms (*fr.* 1 and 2 Nauck). Isocrates speaks with romantic feeling of the beauty of Helen; but he at once goes off into the masculine, as if habit were too strong for him (Isoc. *Or.* x. 216 c sqq.).

Mr. Benecke's general contention with regard to the relation of Middle and New Comedy may be accepted with the following reservations. Although it is true that in the remains of New Comedy we get the first direct protest against the old unromantic view of marriage, yet Middle Comedy does not always ridicule marriage as a system. There are fragments of Antiphanes and Diodorus, which appear to take it seriously, rating the wife's character above dowry, or even good looks.¹ Again, Menander does not stand alone in giving a romantic turn to the New Comedy. The *Phormio* of Terence, which is taken from a play of Apollodorus, satisfies the conditions laid down by Mr. Benecke to the full. The only question is whether the discovery of fresh material would not lead us to modify his results still further.

To sum up. In Middle (Antiphanes) and New (Menander, Philemon, Diphilus) Comedy the ethical basis is mainly utilitarian. In New Comedy there is an attempt to analyse the moral disposition (Philemon); importance is attached to deliberate and intelligent choice, as the condition and test of right conduct (Menander, Diphilus); morality is distinguished from law (Menander). This "inward" movement is carried on in the search for a *Summum Bonum*. The watchword of Middle Comedy is pleasure, the watchword of New Comedy is contentment (Menander, Philemon, Diphilus); while both Middle (? Antiphanes or Alexis)

¹ μή χρώμασιν τὸ σῶμα λαμπρύνειν θέλει, | ἔργοις δὲ καθαροῖς καὶ τρόποις τὴν καρδίαν, Antiphanes (M. iii. 151, addressed, I presume, to a wife, cf. Xenophon, *Oec.*); κρείττον γὰρ ἔστιν εὖ τεθραμμένην λαβεῖν | γυναῖκ' ἄπρικοιν ἢ κακῶς μετὰ χρημάτων, Diodorus (M. iii. 546): Menander οἰκείον οὕτως οὐδέν ἔστιν, ὦ Λάχης, | ἐὰν σκοπῇ τις, ὡς ἀνὴρ τε καὶ γυνή (M. iv. 259), vigorous protest against the conventional match which is arranged without the couple seeing each other (*fab. inc.* 3, M. iv. 228); the rights of love are strongly emphasized in most of the Latin adaptations of Menander, and in the *Cistellaria* (Plautus) together with a protest against parental interference.

and New Comedy (Menander, Philemon, Apollodorus) are inclined to depreciate the pomp and show of material prosperity. The same tendency governs the development of their social ethics. Distinctions of birth and rank yield place in New Comedy (Menander, Philemon) to distinctions of character. The idea of a natural barrier subsisting between race and race, or between bond and free, is sometimes openly challenged. The law of sympathy and unselfishness is stated in uncompromising terms by Menander. The old law of vengeance is modified on grounds of good breeding by Menander and Antiphanes. Pity for the poor is a commonplace in Middle and New Comedy alike; although Menander and Philemon go somewhat deeper than the other poets in declaring that the spirit in which charity is dispensed is of more consequence than the mere act. Finally, Menander and Apollodorus (New Comedy) introduce a higher conception of women and of marriage than had been usual hitherto.

At almost every turn there is a marked difference between Middle and New Comedy. The
Relation of
Comedy to
Philosophy in
general ethics, poets of the latter, especially Menander and Philemon—with their ideal of a human sympathy which is irrespective of race, rank, or circumstance, and their attempt to work beneath appearances to the essential elements of happiness and moral judgment—were following out certain tendencies in the philosophy of their age which culminated in Epicureanism. It is noteworthy that, whereas the Middle Comedy doctrine of happiness bears a distinct resemblance to Cyrenaic teaching, the doctrine of the New conforms more and more to the spirit of Epicurus. But a resemblance of this kind need not imply direct influence. It is quite possible that Menander and Philemon, living under the social conditions which produced Epicureanism, imbibed some of its tenets. In the case of Menander it is probable, owing to his personal connexion with the

Master's circle of friends. The evidence, however, is not conclusive. As we do not know the chronological order of the plays, it is impossible to decide whether certain of the expressions used did not really anticipate the Epicurean formulæ which they seem to reproduce. And, however much contemporary philosophy may have assisted the spiritual progress of these poets, there was one channel of influence which certainly did affect them, and which helped them to interpret their own experience. This can be found by tracing back the general development of drama in the fourth century. The tragedians who have left any remains were, for the most part, prior to the New Comedy. These remains, scanty as they are, show traces of ethical analysis and, above all, of the distinction between character and rank.¹ Their natural antecedent and example was Euripides. The light now begins to dawn. The esteem in which Euripides was held by the New Comedy poets, and especially by Menander, has been pointed out elsewhere. It is also obvious that his tragedies contain in embryo most of those ideas which have been noted in New Comedy as characteristic of its philosophic tendency. It is remarkable too that Antiphanes, who seems by far the most advanced poet of the Middle Comedy, was also one of the latest, and must have written many of his plays at a time when the fame of Euripides was generally acknowledged. Thus the evidence points to Euripides as the principal source from which these poets drew their inspiration; and Euripides was a philosopher.

The New Comedy idea of marriage calls for special consideration. It contains two elements:
 and in the ethics of Marriage. (1) interest in, and respect for, women;
 (2) the intimate connexion of marriage with love. It would be easy to illustrate the first from the pages of philosophy; there are traces of the second in

¹ See examples quoted in previous foot-notes.

Plato. Plato, like Menander, contends that the young couple should be allowed to meet each other before the match is settled ;¹ and, in an exceptional passage of the *Laws*,² he seeks to encourage sexual purity by attaching to marriage those romantic aspirations which he had associated hitherto only with the ideal union of friend and friend. Xenophon's story of Panthea and Abradatas is to the same effect. In trying to account for the romance of New Comedy, Mr. Benecke pays no attention to the philosophers ; with what justification it is impossible to say. He is right in so far that a poet would more probably be influenced by poets than by prose-writers in the pursuit of his art. He suggests Antimachus, of whose elegy to a dead wife he makes great capital. He believes that this poet's tradition was brought to bear on Menander by a contemporary, Asclepiades. He scouts Euripides on the ground that no love-story in the accepted sense is to be found among his tragedies. We have remarked that Menander was not the only comic poet who developed this aspect of marriage ; so that, on Mr. Benecke's hypothesis, Antimachus must have had quite a school of admirers. This may be ; but going along the line of least resistance, we come to Euripides, whose influence is admitted. Now, granted that he drew no picture of a man passionately in love with his wife, yet he drew pictures of wives who were obviously lovable. A modern reader of the *Alcestis* arrives at the conclusion that Admetus was an insensible brute not to answer his wife's tenderness and self-sacrifice with a devotion of the highest order. The moral is too palpable to be missed. To deny a similar power of intuition to Menander and his fellow-poets seems gratuitous. How far they drew from real life is another question, and one which must be considered in due course.

¹ To some extent at least this is so ; Plato, *Rep.* 458 D, cf. Menander, *fab. inc.* 3 (M. iv. 228).

² Plato, *Legg.* 841 C, D.

(III) *Real Life.*

The Orators were conservative in moral sentiment.

The Contrast
between Orators
and New Comedy
due to altered
state of Athens.

Their rule of life was in all essentials that which had been recognized before the rise of philosophic ethics. In the New Comedy, which began, roughly speaking, where the Orators left off, there are traces of a morality at once more negative, deeper, and broader than had been accepted hitherto. There are expressions of general sympathy with mankind, which defy the old barriers of race and social status; and happiness is made to depend on quietism or self-surrender.

The contrast is startling, but accountable; for the audience was not quite the same in both cases. The Orators spoke to an Athens which still cherished some sparks of political enthusiasm and corporate energy. The speech of Lysurgus *against Leocrates*, and the speech of Demosthenes *for the Crown*, delivered in 330 B.C., read like an epilogue, recapitulating the glories and ideals of a past age. Three years afterwards, Philemon gained his first victory; and it was to a people already resigning itself to the inevitable, that the New Comedy appealed.

During this later period, from the death of Alexander onwards, the conditions affecting Greek life and thought altered in various directions. The change was not sudden. Tendencies which had long been secretly at work, came to the surface.

There seems reason to believe that the old opposition

Decay of Greek
Exclusiveness.

between Greek and barbarian was somewhat relaxed in the earlier half of the fourth century. The races saw more of each other. Greek mercenaries flocked to the Persian standard. Greek adventurers danced attendance on Persian and Thracian

grandees. Such meetings were not always calculated to give the Greek a higher opinion of his neighbours. In many cases familiarity would only breed greater contempt. But there were conspicuous cases of fraternizing and inter-marriage, which find few parallels in the fifth century. Meanwhile the Athenian patriots noted, as an ominous sign of the times, the lavish bestowal of honour and privilege on foreigners.¹ Still more significant was the successful fusion of the Greek and Phoenician populations in Cyprus, which proceeded under the auspices of Evagoras. A definite impulse was given to this movement by Alexander. Uniting East and West under his sway, he attracted a host of Greek soldiers and civilians to garrison and administer his Oriental domains, and did all in his power to amalgamate the races. He even meditated vast schemes of transplantation, which were luckily never carried into effect. The old exclusive attitude of the Greeks was no longer possible. In the last years of Philip, the Macedonians had forced their way into the shrine of Hellenism. After the death of Alexander, the Macedonian princes who governed the Hellenistic world looked back to Greece as the source of their own spurious culture. They sent offerings to crowd the precincts of Olympia, and adorn the streets of Athens; and were rewarded with flattering testimonials.² Finally, in 227 B.C., Romans were admitted to the Isthmian games and to the Athenian

¹ For Greeks at barbarian courts, see Xen. *Anab.* ii. 1, 7; 4, 24; vii. 3, 16 sqq. Plut. *Artax.* cc. 21, 22; *Ael. V. H.* i. 21. Fraternizing of Greek and barbarian, see Plut. *Ages.* cc. 11, 13. Marriage alliances, Grote viii. 359, Rouse, *Gk. Votive Off.* p. 141; cf. Thuc. ii. 29. For public laxity in bestowing the citizenship and other privileges, Dem. *Or.* xxiii. §§ 234-258 (cf. *Or.* ix. § 40 sqq.), Isoc. *Or.* viii. p. 169 c (for extreme instances, Ath. 19 A, 596).

² Olympia also contained barbarian offerings, probably of early date, Paus. v. 12, 3; x. 16, 1; 17, 1; the practice was not uncommon from the earliest times. For further information, see Rouse, *Gk. Votive Offerings*; Harrison and Verrall, *Monuments and Mythology of Athens*.

franchise, and were granted the right of initiation in the Eleusinian Mysteries.¹

Treatment of
Slaves. The New Comedy utterances concerning the barbarian and the slave harmonize, superficially at least, with these new conditions. They represent what cultivated and well-disposed men might be expected to think under the circumstances. How far such men did really agree with Menander that foreign birth is no prejudice, and with Philemon that no man is a slave by nature, cannot be decided. But the tendency of thought must have been in that direction; and it was espoused by the two great schools of the third century. For while cosmopolitanism implied to the Stoic a brotherhood of mankind irrespective of birth and social status, the Epicurean made his law of friendship and kindness equally valid against the conventions of society and the prejudices of race. The philosophers did their best, no less by example than by precept, to encourage such views. From the middle of the fourth century onwards they attracted foreigners to school at Athens; so that the people grew familiar with the strange portent of an intellectual and cultured barbarian. Again, carrying on and extending an ancient Athenian custom, they often gave a liberal education to their slaves; many of whom acquired a reputation for learning.² The slave's lot at Athens was seldom intolerable. It may well have

¹ Thirlwall, viii. 140, see also Polyb. xvi. 25; not altogether unprecedented, cf. *Anacharsis*, D. L. i. 102, Lucian *Scyth.* tom. i. p. 20; Suid. s. v.: Sadocus, son of Sitalces the Thracian king, was granted Athenian citizenship apparently with exceptional honour, Thuc. ii. 29, Arist. *Acharn.* 145 sq. (Merry's note).

² Hermippus (third century B.C.) wrote a work about slaves who excelled in culture, Suidas s. v. Ἴστροπος: Monimus the Cynic (D. L. vi. 82), Persaeus the Stoic (Ath. 162 E), and Demetrius Phalereus (Ael. V. H. xii. 43) are said to have been of servile origin: Sibyrtius, slave and reader to Theodectes, pupil of Isocrates, was the first slave-sophist, who wrote *Arts*, etc. (Sanneq, l. c. p. 36 n): cf. Aristogenes, slave to Chrysippus of Cnidos, perhaps the same as Antigones of Thasos, a learned scientist (*conjectit* Olear.), Suid. s. v.

improved, as social life became smoother and more refined; and under such favourable conditions the comment of philosophy, and especially the tolerant gospel of Epicurus, can hardly have failed to bear fruit.

In this matter, a relaxation of old prejudices would be almost equivalent to the adoption of new **Cosmopolitanism.** and higher principles. In the case of cosmopolitanism, the two processes are not necessarily combined. If you cease to behave with arrogance or cruelty towards your servant, it is because your feelings towards him have altered for the better. You have parted with an old vice, and acquired a new merit. But cosmopolitanism is a more ambiguous affair altogether. In its highest form it implies the merging of national enthusiasm in a genuine and higher enthusiasm of humanity. In its lowest manifestations it implies simply the loss of an anchor. The higher form, that is to say, the adoption in substance of the Stoic principle, was realized by the great statesmen of the Roman Empire. It is the more negative form that was most conspicuous among the Greeks of this period. The number of Greek mercenaries who owned no country, and of Greek merchants who spent their lives in foreign travel, multiplied. In either case the old sense of nationality was lost, without being replaced by any passion of a higher nature. A character in Menander complains that wealth can cloak inferiority of birth. A young Ionian came to Athens and, being asked to what city he belonged, replied that he was wealthy. It was a good epigram and highly significant. Men were yielding to that lax spirit of irresponsibility, against which Euripides and the great orators of the previous century had contended with righteous scorn.¹ The merchant or the man of fashion

¹ Cf. *Lys. Or.* xxxi. § 6, a sneer at οἱ φύσει μὲν πολιταὶ εἰσι, γνῶμη δὲ χρώνται ὡς πᾶσα γῆ πατρὸς αὐτοῖς ἐστίν, ἐν ἣ ἂν τὰ ἐπιτήδεια ἔχωσι κ.τ.λ., which perhaps refers to some Sophists or Cynics, or merely to lazy, unpatriotic folk (cf. *Arist. Plut.* 1151). For the young Ionian, see Chrysippus and Alexis; *ap. Ath.* 159 D. The passage of Menander is, Ἵτροβόλ. v. (M. iv. 214).

who affected to be a citizen of the world, was in no sense better than his ancestors who had devoted time and trouble to the affairs of their city, though they cursed the barbarian as an outsider. Nor were the unscrupulous adventurers, who boasted of their service under foreign kings, controlled by a principle in any way higher than the patriotism which had inspired the old citizen armies of Hellas to drive back the barbarian invader at Marathon and Plataea. Professor Mahaffy says that the "Aetolians, who organized mercenary service for the Hellenistic World, . . . must have shown considerable cosmopolitanism at Thermus. . . . There must have been Indian, Persian, and Egyptian luxuries among their spoils and rewards." To which we may compare the cosmopolitanism of downright villainy, displayed in the mercenary force of Nabis, tyrant of Sparta, who collected "murderers, housebreakers, footpads, and burglars from all parts of the earth!"¹

In various passages of the New Comedy there breathes a spirit of general benevolence and kindness. The cause of the poor is eloquently pleaded. There is no trace of the old contempt for artisans. Women and marriage are estimated at something like their proper value.

To take these points in order. (I) It is futile, on the scanty evidence which is at our disposal, to discuss the general question as to how far the Greeks became kinder to one another, and whether the rich man acknowledged his responsibility to the poor. Let the humane utterances of the New Comedy stand for what they are worth. It has been pointed out in the preceding chapter that, as time went by, the pauper-problem grew more formidable than ever

¹ Mahaffy, *Greek Life, etc.*, p. 393; Polyb. xiii. 6. Lys. (?) *Or.* ii. § 66, *πατριδα τὴν ἀρετὴν ἠγροσάμενοι* (of soldiers), is probably the work of a Sophist, and cannot prove that the Orators favoured the denationalization of military service.

in the Peloponnese and other parts of Greece; while the political troubles of the time were not calculated to encourage a gospel of kindness and mercy. At Athens better conditions prevailed. During the third century, the city was quiet and prosperous. The ease and refinement of social life may well have disposed the upper classes to accept the Epicurean doctrine of kindness, even if they were unprepared for the Stoic doctrine of responsibility. Light-hearted and comfortable men do not nerve themselves to resentment and hatred. The old proverb declared that satiety breeds insolence; but it is at least as true to say with Menander that prosperity can make men philanthropic. The sequence of thought suggested here is practically Epicurean. The evil of pauperism still existed; but then the Epicurean did not seek to eradicate poverty, but only to alleviate it so far as a man of generous nature might—in his leisure hours. It was an easy gospel, well suited to an easy-going people.

“ Not only the pleasure oneself of good living,
But also the pleasure of now and then giving;
So pleasant it is to have money, Heigh-ho!
So pleasant it is to have money!”

(2) The social importance of arts and crafts undoubtedly increased during the fourth century. Sculptors, painters, and musicians, who would have been regarded as “honourable tradesmen” in the days of Pericles, now became objects of flattery. Actors received a meed of honour which would have been reserved to the play-wright in former years. Absurd attention was paid to conjurors and showmen. Manufacturers advertised themselves; and engineers acquired a world-wide reputation. The change was facilitated by the example of princes, who patronized these celebrities and invited them to court; but it was part of a natural reaction from the aristocratic tone which had pervaded Greek society in the Great Age. It cannot be connected with any serious ethical principle,

still less with any philosophic doctrine. In so far as great artists and artificers came more and more into prominence, it was a sign of social progress; but it had its trivial side, and, like the pseudo-cosmopolitanism of the day, it was also a sign of laxity and decadence.¹

(3) The same relaxation of principle appears in the treatment of women. The results varied. At and to Women. Sparta the change was an unmitigated evil: at Athens it had perhaps a redeeming feature. At Sparta, as at other Dorian centres, in the great days matrons occupied a position of dignity and freedom. When towards the close of the fourth century the state became corrupt and disordered, their liberty degenerated into licence. Some fifty years later they were the mainstay of opposition to the reform-movement. They had become tyrannical, avaricious, and altogether unworthy of their ancient rights. The problem was grappled by Cleomenes, whose drastic measures may be ascribed in some degree to Stoic influence. He forced the women to abandon their luxury, and subjected them to the moral discipline of earlier times. No doubt the example of

¹ Mahaffy, *Greek Life, etc.*, pp. 414 sq. (1) The old aristocratic view is implied as still existing, Dem. *Or.* xxiii. § 171; Aesch. *Or.* i. § 27; cf. Philostratus *vit. Isoc.*—αὐτὸς δὲ (Isocrates) οὐτ' αὐλοῦς ἐγίνωσκεν οὐτ' ἄλλο τι τῶν ἐν βαναύσοις· οὐ γὰρ ἂν οὐδὲ τῆς ἐν Ὀλυμπίᾳ εἰκόνας ἔτυχευεν, εἴ τι τῶν εὐτελῶν εἰργάζετο (he is contrasted with his father, who was a manufacturer on a large scale, cf. Dion. Hal. *vit. Isoc. α'*, ps. Plut. *Isoc. α'*). (2) Early in fourth century actors rise to prominence (Xen. *Symp.* iii. 11; Curtius, *Hist. of Greece*, vol. v. p. 186 sq.; cf. Paus. i. 37, 3 with Fraser's note). (3) τὰς γὰρ βαναύσας τέχνας Ἕλληνες ὑστερον περὶ πλείστου . . . ἐποιούντο, Ath. 19 A; the examples given (19 A-22 D) of honours showered on variety-entertainers bear this out. (4) Famous musicians; Stratonicus, Ath. 347 F sqq.; Telephanes, Paus. i. 44, 9; etc. (5) Engineers and builders; Timaeus, and Hieronymus, Ath. 206 E, Archias, Archimedes, Phileas, Ath. 206 F sqq.; cf. 497 D. (6) Turners, Ath. 782 B (dates?). (7) Ath. 470 F-486 E contains an interesting disquisition on pots and potters; apparently the mode of advertisement changed; in old days a pot was called after the place of its manufacture, now it is called after the manufacturer; very significant! (8) The new interest taken in painters, etc., might be illustrated from Athenaeus and Aelian (*passim*).

heroines such as Chelonis, Agiatis, and Cratesiclea, who abetted his scheme, had a salutary effect on the tone of female society. Unfortunately his work did not survive him.

At Athens the case was somewhat different. In the old days, the intellectual and social development of women had been restricted ; therefore laxity might bring good in its train. The Orators divide women roughly into two classes : those who, as wives or daughters, are respectable members of a family ; and the courtesans, who are social parasites. The former are treated with honour and polite reserve ; the latter are described alternately as pleasant and scandalous. The New Comedy dissents in some measure from this view. It introduces a more romantic ideal of marriage ; and the courtesan is often shown capable of devotion and self-sacrifice.¹ Dr. Gardner boldly asserts that the courtesans raised the prestige of womanhood ;² and the more this assertion is considered, the more plausible it sounds. They were a class always prominent in Greek life, and especially so from the beginning of the fourth century. Serious men wrote books about them. They held an influential position as court-favourites. They studied literature, and perhaps even philosophy, sometimes with a genuine interest in culture, sometimes simply to improve their powers of fascination.³ The mere

¹ Passages condemning courtesans are frequent in Comedy : for the contrast of courtesan and virgin, see Plautus, *Cistellaria*, Act i, sc. 1 : Terence, *Heautontimorumenus* (Bacchis and Antiphila), etc. ; but there are instances of good courtesans : e.g. Plautus, *Mostellaria* (Philematium, true and grateful, Act i, sc. 3) ; Terence, *Eunuchus* (Thais), *Hecyra* (Philotis, Act i, sc. 1, and Bacchis, Act v, sc. 3) : cf. *Mid. Com. fragments* ; *ap.* Ath. 571 F-572 B.

² Gardner, *New Chapters in Greek History*, pp. 454 sqq.

³ ἡ δὲ ἡ Λαμία σφόδρα εὐθικτος καὶ ἀστικὴ πρὸς τὰς ἀποκρίσεις Ath. 577 D sqq. (a number of examples quoted, which occasionally show a knowledge of literature) : καὶ ἄλλαι δὲ ἑταῖραι μέγα ἐφρόνου ἐφ' αὐταῖς, παιδείας ἀντεχομένα καὶ τοῖς μαθήμασι χρόνον ἀπομερίζουσαι, Ath. 583 F. Our author is essentially scandalous, and these utterances are almost admissions. The true culture of Aspasia herself is often hidden beneath a mass of frothy scandal.

fact that they were constantly sneered at and held up to reproach is not conclusive evidence of their depravity. Aspasia of Miletus, who was obviously a cultured and enlightened woman, suffered the same indictment; and it is legitimate to assume that her successors were, in many cases, as much misrepresented as she had been. The favourable portraits which crop up again and again in the Middle, and still more in the New Comedy, go to prove that the general opinion was frequently modified. Dr. Gardner's theory is tempting, although no direct and conclusive evidence is available. Aspasia may be said to have introduced the idea of woman as a social and intellectual being into democratic Athens. She was an unpopular fact, but a fact all the same. The famous courtesans of the next century, we have suggested, often resembled her in grace and attainments. If so, a new idea of female talent was forcing itself on the popular mind. There are many frivolous anecdotes of these women falling foul of the philosophers. But considering the intimacy of Socrates with Aspasia, or of Epicurus with Leontion, considering also Plato's doctrine of woman's place in the social fabric, it is conceivable that the schools encouraged this movement on principle, in so far as it made for female emancipation.

It is possible also that the courtesans introduced an element of pure romance into the Greek view of marriage. Isaeus complained that young men had sometimes been so carried away with passion for loose women as to marry them.¹ His version is coloured, and may be treated with some measure of critical suspicion. Were these women referred to as loose and heartless as his orthodox mind imagined? The Thracian courtesan, who bare Timotheus to Conon, was a respectable as well as an attractive woman, worthy of her illustrious son.² The courtesans of Middle and New Comedy are often kind and forbearing

¹ Isaeus *Or.* iii. § 19.

² Ath. 577 A, B.

in the eyes of their lovers. The Greek word for courtesan is "companion": and for a thousand companions in frivolity there may have been some few, at least, who had souls capable of turning the male soul to better things.¹ The New Comedy love-stories are of two kinds. Sometimes the hero loves a virgin, and from the first contemplates marriage as the goal of his ambition. More often he loves, with a purity which none but the cynic can doubt, a young girl who comes upon the scene as a courtesan. Then she turns out to be freeborn, and he marries her; but the devotion is the same all through. Now these poets, in spite of the contrast which they often drew between the two types, did not believe that the courtesan differed in nature from the free-born daughter of an Athenian citizen. They drew good and bad courtesans, as Euripides had drawn good and bad wives. Therefore there can be no suggestion that the virtue of love for a courtesan depends on her metamorphosis into a respectable girl in the last act. Their argument (if the term be pardoned) is that love for the courtesan may be in itself a thing as pure as love for a virgin, that the one may lead to the other, and that marriage without love is no marriage at all. The successive steps are: love for the courtesan, love for the virgin, marriage as the result of love. Is this a subtle picture of an actual development in Athenian life? Did love for the courtesan react on men's view of marriage? It is hardly possible to read certain exquisite and tender fragments of the later comedians, or certain of the Latin adaptations by Plautus and Terence, without feeling that a new spirit was leavening the cold orthodoxy of the Great Age; and that these parasites raised the Athenian soul to paradise, almost as much as they dragged it downwards to the abyss.

¹ *ἑταίρας εἰς ἔρωτ' ἀφίκετο, | ἀστῆς, ἐρήμου δ' ἐπιτρόπου καὶ συγγενῶν, | ἡθὸς
τι χρυσοῦν πρὸς ἀρετὴν κεκτημένης, | ὄντως ἑταίρας' αἱ μὲν ἄλλαι τοῦνομα | βλάπτουσι
τοῖς τρόποις γὰρ, ὄντως ὄν καλόν:* Antiphanes (ii. 103 K).

In this progress, if indeed there was a progress, philosophy played no discernible part. It was the prerogative of the Greek philosophers to treat woman as an hypothesis, and marriage as a system. The Stoics encouraged the latter; the Epicureans decried it. Well for Greece, had the Stoics gained their point, even to the extent of inculcating domestic responsibility! But Epicurus had the current with him. Whether he had influence in these matters or not, his teaching was with certain uncouth modifications put into practice. With reference to the depopulation of Greece in his own day, Polybius writes as follows: "The evil grew upon us rapidly, by our men becoming perverted to a passion for show and money, and the pleasures of an idle life, and accordingly either not marrying at all, or, if they did marry, refusing to rear the children that were born, or at most saving one or two out of a great number, with a view to leaving them well off, or bringing them up in extravagant luxury."¹ The statement is a general one, and applies to the first half of the second century B.C. "The evil," he says, "grew rapidly"; but its seed must have been sown at a somewhat earlier date.

When Cyrus the elder captured Babylon, he celebrated the event with a banquet, at which the Assyrian Gobryas was chief guest. It was a sober and orderly affair; and caused Gobryas some astonishment. "Formerly," he said, "I saw these warriors enduring labour with a stout heart; now I see them enjoying their good things with moderation, and I think, O Cyrus, that it is more difficult to find examples of the latter conduct than of the former." This was a problem which presented itself to the Greeks more and more as the days of their strenuous life drew to a

The art of
enjoying good
things.

¹ Polyb. xxxvii. 9 (Shuckburgh, slightly altered).

close ; the problem of enjoying good things aright, and indeed of finding out what good things are.

The philosophers were always warning their countrymen against luxury and idleness. Protests against exquisite dishes, Attic confectionery, pigments, myrrh, perfumed dresses, and frivolous chatter, are a commonplace in their writings. Their own banquets, with a few notorious exceptions, were models of high thinking and plain living. Dinners at the Academy and the Lyceum were seasoned with good discourse and directed with a view to "tomorrow's pleasure." Select and favoured men of the world were admitted as guests, and went away, we may hope, with a new conception of gastronomy. We hear of eccentric feasts given by Menedemus of Eretria, whereat one or two guests were regaled off vegetables, dried fish, and a little meat, while others came in later for dessert and conversation. We hear also of philosophers criticising the rich fare set before them by munificent patrons. Menedemus sits grim and demure at a well-garnished board, eating olives. Callisthenes is morose at Alexander's table. Pyrrho tells his host bluntly that he will not come again ; for he objects to seeing a man waste his substance and ruin his digestion : "entertainment," he adds, "is no matter of dishes."¹

But the most highly organized campaign in favour of the simple life could not have made much headway under the circumstances. All through Greek history there were certain communities with a sinister reputation for riot and frivolous living. In the fourth century, the complaint of serious men made itself heard in greater volume than

¹ Philosophic banquets and protests ; Socrates, Ath. 158 F, Xen. *Symp.* vii. 3-5 ; Academy and Lyceum (συμπотικοί νόμοι), Ath. 186 A B ; Polemo, Ath. 419 C ; Pyrrho, Ath. 419 D, E ; Menedemus, Ath. 419 E sqq., 55 D, D. L. ii. 129 sq ; Callisthenes, Plut. *Alex.* 53, Ath. 434 D ; Arcesilas, Ath. 186 C, D ; Zeno, *ibid.* cf. 435 D ; Bion, 421 E sq. Evil exceptions ; Lycon, Ath. 547 D sqq., Demetrius Phalereus, Ath. 542 C sqq., Persaeus, Ath. 607 B sqq.

hitherto. To Theopompus, the least reliable of all critics, the whole earth seemed wallowing in a mire of sottish extravagance. "Everyone," he wrote, "who is at all well off dines to excess, spending more on cooks and the like in one day than our ancestors spent on their festivals and sacrifices."¹ In the third century there was every possible temptation to such excess. The foreign courts set an evil example. Wealth came in from the East. The hopeless condition of political affairs made a strenuous life of public service unattractive. It was a time of weariness and moral reaction, such as came upon Rome in the years of opulence which followed the tumultuous activity of the Punic Wars.

"Our men were perverted to a passion for show and money and the pleasures of an idle life," wrote Polybius. Let Boeotia, Corinth, Byzantium, and Sparta stand as types of this degradation. The robber-hordes of Aetolia, Acarnania, and Epirus went with brutal ferocity to the other extreme, and "showed the bold spirit of Greeks divorced from the finer faculties of the race."² But this is not the whole truth. Rhodes was wealthy and prosperous, but remained faithful in some measure to the old Dorian ideal.³ The sequestered land of Arcadia was inhabited by a hardy race of men, who were renowned throughout Greece for their hospitality, kindness, and scrupulous piety.⁴ And what of Athens?

The Athenians at all times prided themselves on their culture and intelligence. "We are strong to eat and work and endure," says a Boeotian in the Middle Comedy, "but the Athenians are good at eating little and talking." There was feasting and idleness at Athens as elsewhere; but she had not lost her heritage of intellectual greatness.

¹ Ath. 275 B (F. H. G. i. 284).

² Gardner, *New Chapters, etc.*, p. 426.

³ *Ibid.* 438.

⁴ Polyb. iv. 20.

And there are those precious fragments of Menander and Philemon, which point dimly in serio-comic fashion to something altogether transcending the diabolical view of life.

“All things that wound and waste us rise within.”

“Thou art a man. Ask then no careless bliss
Of Heaven’s good pleasure, but a mighty soul.”

“Look inwards ! and with reason scan thy lot :
Lo ! the ill vanishes, the good remains.”

The New Comedy, if we read it with chastened imagination, is no phantasmagoria of artificial types, but an apologue of Athenian life. At first nothing can be seen or heard except riotous intrigue, falsehood, immorality decked out in carnival vesture, wicked old men, wily slaves, and young blackguards of the amiable sort. Then suddenly a discordant note jars on the ear. A father weeps for his son. A son submits to his father. A poor man airs his grievances. A pleasure-seeker stops short in his career to reflect on the vanity of things in general. There is a deep undertone of pathos, almost of remorse, swelling ever and anon above the smooth conventionality of the main theme. The Latin versions hardly reproduce it in its full intensity : but in the Greek fragments it is there, unmistakable. We get the idea of a people who amid all their gaiety are careworn and reflective, and who have realized that riches and pleasure bring their burden no less than poverty and pain.

Strip off the Comic mask, and the actors in this drama of life reveal themselves in their true character. There are good men and bad among them, as in every age and clime. But the good men here are often discontented at heart, groping wearily amid the shadows of material fortune for something which may yield them permanent satisfaction, moral freedom, and peace of soul. It was to such men that the Stoic and the Epicurean addressed

their appeal; with what success, we have no means of determining.

So the Greek people moved onward in their decline, to be merged a few years later in the World-
The
Fin-de-siècle. Empire of the Romans. It is, on the whole, a sad spectacle. A fatal rift had opened in the Greek soul. Manliness and refinement were divorced from one another; so that the ancient virtues, which had resulted from their combination, faded off the scene. There were still men who united culture with zeal for the public welfare; but they stood alone against overwhelming odds, and the fruits of their activity went with them to the grave. The old spirit which had defied the world at Marathon, flashed up in momentary splendour during the career of Philopoemen. For when he marched his chosen band before the spectators at Nemea, Pylades, the harpist, struck up and sang of liberty and renown to Hellas; and all the people grew young again for a breathing-space, and clapped their hands. But this hero was called "the last of the Greeks." In his brusque, practical way he studied philosophy; let that be remembered.

Of actual work done by the philosophers there is little trace. To reconstitute Greek society was beyond their powers, in this short period at any rate. Perhaps (it may be suggested) their criticisms helped to pull down what they could not build anew; but forces stronger than abstract criticisms were in motion. The race was growing old. Religious beliefs were outworn; and, as religion died, guile and frivolity, which had always been besetting sins, developed apace. The Macedonian conquerors swept over the land, demoralizing the people under the yoke of subjection, and aggravating their internal disorders; and Greece became a charnel-house, a province, and a playground of a decrepit and luxurious Empire. It was an age of decadence; and if the philosophers themselves

share this reproach, the age was not so much the victim, as the cause, of their doctrines.

Age of decadence! Has not this stigma been branded fancifully on all periods of inward struggle and distress, even on the most sacred crises of human development when the death of an old civilization is but the symptom of a new birth? To end this tale with a flourish of wrath would be unseemly, with the example of Greek literature before us. The tragedians of the Great Age dismissed their audience with words of quiet. It is fitting that we should conclude with a word of hope.

“It is not always at a man’s crowning moment that his destiny and his duty close.” The same is true of a nation; and for this reason we are not disposed to look with contempt on the Greeks of this latter period. If the fifth century was a time of youth and splendour, it was also a time of imperfection. The Greeks had hardly begun to take their place in the world. They were an isolated, select people, with much to learn from their neighbours. Their views of life were robust and healthy, but unchastened. The iron of experience had not yet entered into their souls. Then came the sudden upbreking of national life. The horizon broadened, and new fields of action opened in the East. New men dictated the course of politics. New pleasures came in to tempt, or refine, society. At first sight the change is hideous; we see nothing but a universal chaos and turmoil, and a relaxation of ancient standards. And yet there are those precious fragments of New Comedy. The Athens which produced Menander cannot have been wholly despicable. Believe it, there were others of the same stamp; men who for all their frivolity were chastened, compassionate, and kind, who may have been deficient in moral vigour, but excelled in sympathy, politeness, and forbearance. Among them the word might work in

secret; the Epicurean word of kindness, perhaps also the Stoic word of duty. Though the philosophers did not save a nation, they at least educated a remnant. And if we follow this remnant through the twilight of two more centuries, there breaks upon us the dawning of a new era, when the word of kindness and the word of duty blended together in the higher Word of Love.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A (page 46).

THE HOMO-MENSURA DOCTRINE OF PROTAGORAS.

Πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον ἄνθρωπος, τῶν μὲν ὄντων ὡς ἔστι, τῶν δὲ οὐκ ὄντων ὡς οὐκ ἔστι (D.L. ix. 51) is the only extant sentence of his treatise on Being and Cognition. What is its precise meaning?

In the *Theaetetus* Plato credits Protagoras with the view: ὡς οἷα μὲν ἕκαστα ἐμοὶ φαίνεται, τοιαῦτα μὲν ἔστιν ἐμοί, οἷα δὲ σοί, τοιαῦτα δὲ αὖ σοί (152 A). Things are to an individual as they appear to him. Objects of perception appear different to different individuals at the same time, and to the same individual at different times. All perceptions are subjective phenomena. What appears to a man is true to him; and this is all that can be said. There is then no absolute standard of truth in perception: later on in the dialogue Plato implies¹ that Protagoras extended his doctrine to the realm of ethical ideas. This is nothing short of an unqualified statement of individual relativism. There is no absolute standard of truth and falsehood, of right and wrong. (It is only when Protagoras quits the sphere of sensation that Plato refuses his adherence.)

Gomperz accuses Plato of misrepresenting the Sophist's doctrine. He argues that so far from maintaining a relativist creed, which was in effect an assertion of scepticism, Protagoras was reinstating the senses in that position of authority from which the philosophers had degraded them; that he was, in fact, directly criticising the saying of Democritus νόμῳ γλυκὸν καὶ νόμῳ πικρὸν . . . ἐτεῆ δὲ ἄτομα καὶ κενόν. Democritus had rejected the evidence of the senses, asserting that reality belonged

¹ Pl. *Theaet.* 157 D, cf. Ar. *Eth. Nic.* 1176 a. 16, which seems to me to be a correction of Protagoras.

only to ἄτομα καὶ κενόν, of which the senses had no cognizance. Protagoras replied that, even if the senses were untrustworthy, there was no means of getting behind them. The evidence of the senses must be the starting-point of all knowledge. Speaking generally, man must be the measure of all things, and the human faculties of sensible perception are our ultimate authorities in the discovery of physical truth. Viewed in this light, the fundamental doctrine of Protagoras is nothing more than a naïve assertion of the reality for us of the external world of sense.¹ In support of this view, Gomperz quotes the treatise on the *Art*, recently discovered and assigned to the school of Hippocrates, in which a similar attitude is adopted towards the Eleatics. He also points to an apparent difference between the portraits of Protagoras in the *Theaetetus* and in the dialogue which bears his name. The homely pedant who loses his temper with Socrates at the house of Callias, can hardly, he thinks, be the same man as the subtle logician of the *Theaetetus*.

The arguments of Gomperz are far from conclusive. (1) His reference to the *Art* is of no consequence. The treatise belongs to another school; and there is no reason to suppose that it represents the views of Protagoras. (2) Gorgias and Protagoras alike are represented by Plato as given to long-winded harangues rather than to subtle disputations. Yet we know that Gorgias was the author of a closely-reasoned treatise on the problems of Being and Knowledge, to which Gomperz himself has done considerable justice. May we not assume that, in like manner, Protagoras was capable of turning his attention at times to subtler reasoning than is implied in his discourse on Simonides (*Prot.* 339 A sq.)?² A glance at the history of previous specula-

¹ The statement of Philostratus (*Vit. Prot.* ed. Kayser, p. 209) Δημοκρίτου μὲν ἀκροατῆς οἶκοι ἐγένετο, if trustworthy, is no evidence either way. The view of Gomperz finds an echo in Hermias, *Irris. gentil. phil.* cap. iv, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ θάτερα Πρωταγόρας ἐστηκώς ἀνθέλκει με φάσκων "ὄρος καὶ κρίσις τῶν πραγμάτων ὁ ἄνθρωπος, καὶ τὰ μὲν ὑποπίπτοντα ταῖς αἰσθήσεσιν ἔστι πράγματα, τὰ δὲ μὴ ὑποπίπτοντα οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν τοῖς εἰδεσι τῆς οὐσίας." But is this authority, taken alone, of much weight?

² νῦν δὲ τίς οὕτως ὀψιμαθῆς ἔστιν, ὅστις οὐκ οἶδε Πρωταγόραν καὶ τοὺς κατ' ἐκείνον τὸν χρόνον γενομένους σοφιστάς, ὅτι καὶ τοιαῦτα καὶ πολλὰ τούτων πραγματωδέστερα συγγραμμάτα κατέλιπον ἡμῖν; Isoc. *Hel. Enc.* 208 c: referring to ethical and logical treatises.

tion will make it plain that no great originality was required to lead him to a position of scepticism as to the possibility of attaining absolute truth. The seeds of scepticism were latent in the teaching of Heraclitus. His theory of flux, which represented our individual selves and the external world as constantly changing, seemed to his successors to dispose for ever of the possibility of any knowledge of the phenomena of nature. How could a perpetually changing subject know an object which never remained the same for two moments in succession? It is true that Heracliteanism contained hints for the future reconstruction of philosophy, postulating, as it did, an eternal law of change underlying sensible phenomena (*λόγος αἰεὶ ἕών*) and an absolute unerring faculty of reason in which men participate. But these hints were not utilized till Plato's time. Till then philosophers were mainly conscious of the blow which the doctrine of flux had dealt to the reliability of the senses. The deceptive character of sensations was illustrated *ad nauseam* by all schools. Even the Atomists, who might be expected to rely most on the testimony of sense, declared that sense-perceptions were merely subjective affections, and that reality belonged only to ultra-sensual objects. Now it seems to me that at this point Protagoras might equally well take either of two alternative courses. He might call upon philosophy to stop her headlong career against the senses, by pointing out that no physical science can exist without a supposition of the reality of the phenomena of nature as we see them; or he might, with equal ease, invite philosophy to be consistent and to cease dogmatizing about the laws of the sensible world, if she felt constrained to admit that all powers of observation were worthless. In the latter case he would be merely bringing to light the scepticism which underlay the physical systems of his time. The senses, he would argue, are our ultimate guides in such matters; but, as Heraclitus has pointed out, the objects of sense are continually changing, and we are continually changing: thus our perceptions are various and conflicting; what appears to each man is true to him, and this is all that can be said; there is no absolute standard of truth. In deciding which of these positions Protagoras actually adopted, we are entirely dependent on the testimony of antiquity. We find that Plato,¹

¹ See above.

Aristotle,¹ and Plutarch² are unanimously in favour of what I have called the orthodox view, that his dogma amounted to an assertion of individual relativism. Now arises a question which most intimately concerns us. Did Protagoras extend his relativism to ethics? Plato is our only authority in this matter, and he certainly assumes not only in the *Theaetetus* (157 D), but also in the *Cratylus* (386 A sqq.), that the doctrine did apply to moral ideas. His statement in the latter dialogue is so definite that I feel justified in taking it as a provisional solution of the question. But although even in the realm of ethics there might be no absolute standards of truth and falsehood, yet this did not destroy the necessity of certain workable rules of conduct, or stay the tide of praise and blame; and hence the orthodox and homely precepts of Protagoras in the dialogue called by his name.

A somewhat different view of the problem has been taken by George Grote.³ He does not attack Plato's interpretation: *ὡς οἷα μὲν ἕκαστα ἐμοὶ φαίνεται, τοιαῦτα μὲν ἔστιν ἐμοί, οἷα δὲ σοί, τοιαῦτα δὲ αὐ σοί.* He objects, however, to the association of the *ἄνθρωπος μέτρον* dictum with *αἴσθησις ἐπιστήμη*; he understands *ἄνθρωπος μέτρον* as an assertion of individual relativism, but denies that it has any special reference to the world of sense; and he would, I imagine, impugn my account of the doctrine as a deduction from the previous course of Greek philosophy. According to his interpretation, Protagoras used his words in a very general sense, implying that all beliefs of any sort are essentially relative to the believing subject. This view, that the words had a general significance, is not contradicted by Plato, the earliest of our ancient authorities. Throughout the argument in the *Theaetetus* the alleged Protagorean doctrine, that there is no absolute and objective standard of truth, is taken to apply to matters outside the range of the senses, and, indeed, is challenged only when it passes beyond their realm. Now I am not concerned to defend my connexion of the doctrine with

¹ *Met.* Γ. 5, K. 6, cf. 1007 b 22, 1047 a b. Dr. Adam pointed out to me the high probability that, if Plato had so completely misstated Protagoras as is suggested, Aristotle would have had something to say, as usual, about his master's inaccuracy.

² *Adv. Col.* c. 4.

³ Grote, *Plato*, vol. ii. pp. 319 sqq.

the Heraclitean theory of flux, since I only assumed a connexion of the doctrine with previous philosophy in order to meet Gomperz on his own ground; and if there is no such connexion, his contention loses its force; for his whole argument aims at proving that Protagoras was answering the Atomists. But I think Grote somewhat understates the doctrine, when he interprets it merely as a contention that belief is relative to the believer, and perception to the percipient. Our ancient authorities indict Protagoras on the ground that, whether by implication or by express statement, he made truth relative to the believer; which is a very different thing.

John Grote, after provisionally interpreting the *ἄνθρωπος μέτρον* doctrine as a statement of individual relativism, justly remarks, "There is a more important truth in such a phrase as *πάντων μέτρον* (not *ἑαυτῷ* only, but) *πᾶσιν ἄνθρωπος αἰσθανόμενος ἀνόσως*."¹ Aristotle, who attacks Protagoras in the *Metaphysics*, introduces precisely this doctrine in the tenth book of the *Ethics*. The good man, he says, that is *ὁ αἰσθανόμενος ἀνόσως*, is the measure of ethical truth (*Eth. Nic.* 1176, a. 16).

¹ *Exploratio Philosophica*, Part ii. p. 270.

APPENDIX B (page 62).

PLATO AND THE SOPHISTS.

IT must be remembered that the *Gorgias* represents only one side of a bitter controversy. In the early years of the fourth century the Sophist Polycrates had written an exceedingly foolish discourse, which purported to be an accusation of Socrates.¹ It has been suggested that this squib induced Plato to write the *Gorgias* as a counter-attack on the race of rhetoricians. But the matter did not rest there. Plato's radical onslaught was a direct challenge to the profession; and several years later (353 B.C.) came a vigorous reply from the pen of Isocrates, known as the *Antidosis*. His main arguments are as follows:—(1) it is absurd to suppose that respectable and orderly teachers will foster immorality in their pupils (*Antid.* pp. 106, 110); and if their instruction is turned to bad account, that is not their fault (*ibid.* p. 113 sq.); (2) it would not in the long run pay the Sophists to instil bad morality (*ibid.* pp. 103–105); (3) history proves that the most cultivated speakers are of most service to the State (*ibid.* p. 107); moreover, the man who sets out to obtain reputation in public speaking must choose noble themes, and these will exercise a good reflex influence on his mind and character; and that his discourse may carry weight, his life must correspond to the generous sentiments he expresses (*ibid.* pp. 120, 121). The first two arguments are in defence of the rhetorical Sophists; the third is a general recommendation of political rhetoric, and a special recommendation of Isocrates' own curriculum, as a sound moral discipline and a source of good to the community. Now this defence may be frankly accepted so far as concerns the higher grade of rhetorical Sophists, represented by Gorgias in the dialogue. Gorgias was

¹ See Isoc. *Or.* xi.

a better and more responsible teacher than Plato is willing to admit. Even the extant fragments of his speeches show him to have set before his pupils not merely the art of speaking, but the art of speaking nobly; and it is beyond all reasonable doubt that his pupils went out from his presence better men. If he had black sheep among his flock, so had Plato.¹

But it is noteworthy that there is a class of Sophist which Isocrates apparently refuses to champion in the *Antidosis*.² And in a former treatise, he definitely censured certain forensic rhetoricians on the score that they encouraged immoral litigation and avarice.³ This is a remarkable admission, and the fact that he keeps this class in the background throughout the *Antidosis* is significant. Granted a respectable teacher who trains his pupils for public life, and sets before them an ideal of duty or of unblemished fame, the argument in that treatise holds good. But in the case of teachers with no moral backbone, the only arguments he can urge are that it will not pay them to be associated with immoral pupils, and that he who imparts powerful attainments is not responsible for their employment. Now the former argument on his own admission proves too much; for he apparently recognizes a class of teachers who were so blind to their true interests as to make their schools a hot-bed

¹ Gorgias probably laid as much emphasis as Isocrates on social and political duties; cf. Antiphon the Sophist, author of ethical essays on concord and statesmanship (Jebb, *Attic Orators*, vol. i. 67 sqq.). A practical and pleasing effect of Gorgias' teaching may be seen in Proxenus, the Boeotian, a generous and open-dealing youth (Xen. *Anab.* ii. 6, 16–20). Grote, in his zeal to defend the Sophists, is brought to insist that they only supplied their pupils with the means to pursue their preconceived ambitions, and did not trouble to set objects and ambitions before them (Grote, *Hist. of Greece*, vol. vii. p. 40 n.), and he quotes Xenophon (*L. c.*) to prove it: but is it likely that Gorgias failed to inquire after his pupils' aims, and to stimulate and advise them?

² τῶν φασκόντων μὲν εἶναι σοφιστῶν ἄλλο δὲ τι πραττόντων, *Antid.* p. 103.

³ οἱ πρὸ ἡμῶν γενόμενοι καὶ τὰς καλουμένας τέχνας γράψαι τολμήσαντες, οὓς οὐκ ἀφετέον ἀνεπιτιμήτους κ.τ.λ. Isoc. *Or.* xiii. p. 295. Jebb thinks he refers chiefly to Tisias and Corax: "The complaint of Isocrates is perfectly just. It is repeated by Aristotle (*Rhet.* i. I, § 10), who remarks that the earlier writers of *Arts* almost confined themselves to forensic rhetoric just because they had not a really scientific method, and therefore preferred that field in which chicanery (τὸ κακοῦργον) had the freest scope."

of pernicious orators. The latter argument is a mere quibble. There is abundant reason for censuring the rhetorician who equips ambitious youths for success in the law-courts or the assembly, without attempting to set before them the just limits within which their newly-acquired skill may be exercised.¹ It is against this class of irresponsible or morally unqualified teachers that Plato aims his direct attack. He does not accuse Polus or even Thrasymachus of pressing home immoral doctrines. The lax principles of the former, and the pronounced licentiousness of the latter, are only elicited by the direct reproof and challenge which represent Plato's attempt to read the heart. When he brings Callicles on to the scene, he seems to say, "Here is the man of the world, with whom you, Polus, have to deal; a man who probably despises you as a Sophist, but who will make full use of your teaching, and is aware of the recently formulated distinction between nature and convention; a man who is courageous as you are contemptibly weak. This is the problem which confronts you. Is there anything to justify your choice of a profession?"

¹ τί δ' εἰ τινες . . . πυκτάζειν καὶ παγκρατιάζειν ὡς οἶόν τ' ἄριστα παιδευθέντες τῶν μὲν ἀγῶνων ἀμελοῖεν, τοὺς δ' ἀπαντῶντας τύπτοιεν, τίς οὐκ ἀντούτων τοὺς μὲν διδασκάλους ἐπαινέσειεν, τοὺς δὲ κακῶς χρωμένους οἷς ἔμαθον ἀποκτείνειεν, Isoc. *Antid.* p. 114. I find myself unable to agree with Grote's argument in his elaborate answer to F. D. Maurice (*Hist. of Greece*, vol. vii. p. 40 sq. note). Grote argues that the Sophists did not hold themselves responsible for the objects of their pupils, but merely equipped them with the means of attaining whatever objects they had in view. This was not the ideal of Isocrates: and I consider that a teacher, who at the outburst of an unprecedented movement imparted a new weapon to young men, without taking sufficient interest in their welfare to mark out a noble sphere for the exercise of their newly-acquired skill, deserved most of the unpleasant remarks that Plato made on the subject. Grote further argues that rhetoric brings with it a check to its bad employment: teach men to speak skilfully without regard to their aims, and the good men will expose the bad. But the question is whether this actual teaching, with which we are concerned, tended to swell the ranks of the good or of the bad.

APPENDIX C (page 165).

THE GREEK THEORY OF CONSCIENCE.

THE maxim γνῶθι σεαυτόν (cf. Heraclitus *ap.* Plut. *Col.* p 172 ἐδιζησάμην ἐμειωντόν, see Stob. *Flor.* v. 119), which is intimately connected with σωφροσύνη, seems not necessarily to contain the idea of self-reproof which is implied in conscience. The phrase συνειδέναι ἑαυτῷ κ. τ. λ. is used in various senses by the orators: (1) simple consciousness of crime, implying fear of punishment; Antiphon *Or.* ii. α § 6, *Or.* v. § 93, *Or.* vi. § 4; Dem. *Or.* xviii. § 327; (2) "a clear conscience," implying absence of self-reproof; τοῦτο γοῦν ὑπάρχειν . . . αὐτὸν ἑαυτῷ συνειδέναι μηδὲν ἐξημαρτηκότι, ἀλλ', εἴ τις καὶ συμφορὰ γίγνοιτο, ἄνευ κακότητος καὶ αἰσχύνης γίγνεσθαι, Antiphon *Or.* vi. § 1, cf. Bias *ap.* Diog. *Laert.* i. 87, ἐρωτηθεῖς τί ἂν εἴη ἐν τῷ βίῳ ἄφοβον, εἶπεν, ὀρθὴ συνείδησις, cf. Xen. *Ap. Soc.* 5, ὅπερ γὰρ ἡδιστόν ἐστιν, ἧδειν ὁσίως μοι καὶ δικαίως ἅπαντα τὸν βίον βεβιωμένον, cf. Isoc. *Nicocl.* 39 A.B. So, too, the torment of a bad conscience is indicated; τοὺς μὲν γὰρ ὅ τε φόβος ἢ τε ἀδικία οὐχ ἱκανὴ ἦν παῦσαι τῆς προθυμίας, Antiphon *Or.* ii. γ § 3 (MSS. ἱκανή, "immo vero οὐχ ἱκανή," Reisk; "ἢ τε ἀδικία, bene si habet, significat h. l. cogitationem pectus ferientem, quod tu patres, id scelus esse, tametsi occultum maneat poenasque effugiat," Reisk): cf. οὐκ ἔαν οὖν ἀπολύσητε ἡμᾶς, ἀλλ' ἔαν καταλάβητε, ἐνθύμιον ὑπολείψεσθε, Antiphon *Or.* iii. δ, § 9. ("scrupulum conscientiae vestrae injeceritis," Reisk): cf. Isoc. *ad Dem.* 5 B, μηδέποτε μηδὲν αἰσχροὺν ποιήσας ἔλπιζε λήσειν· καὶ γὰρ ἂν τοὺς ἄλλους λήσεις, σεαυτῷ γε συνειδήσεις (sc. τὸ αἰσχροὺν), cf. Eur. *Hipp.* 317, *Orest.* 396. The religious idea which is associated with conscience is found in such phrases as μάλιστα μὲν τῶν θεῶν ἕνεκα καὶ τοῦ εὖσεβοῦς, Antiphon *Or.* vi. § 3, συνοίσειν . . . πρὸς εὐσέβειαν ἐκάστῳ, Dem. *Or.* xviii. § 9 ("It will conduce . . . to the good conscience of each," Kennedy). These passages contain the materials for a theory of conscience.

GENERAL INDEX.

[ABBREVIATIONS—pop. = popular views ; phil. = philosophic views ; soph. = sophistic views ; l. p. = later popular views, after 400 B.C. ; Eur. = Euripides ; p. i. = pupils and influence.]

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