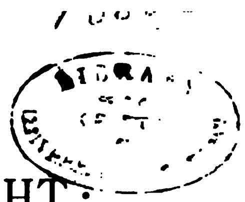

GOD IN HUMAN THOUGHT;

OR,

NATURAL THEOLOGY TRACED IN LITERATURE, ANCIENT AND MODERN, TO THE TIME OF BISHOP BUTLER.

WITH

A CLOSING CHAPTER ON THE MORAL SYSTEM, AND AN ENGLISH BIBLIOGRAPHY, FROM SPENSER TO BUTLER.

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PREFACE.

THE attempt to prepare a historical and critical introduction to Bishop Butler's "Analogy," to be delivered in the form of lectures to students in the University, has resulted in the production of this work. That class of literature of Butler's age, to which his "Analogy" belongs, is very extensive, and it is very directly connected with the great controversy which Hobbes originated, and in which the "Platonic School" of Cambridge took so conspicuous a part. But the "Platonic School" consisted largely of those who were diligent and admiring students of classic literature and ancient philosophy, while the speculations of the Christian Fathers and of medieval writers are often manifestly, and sometimes avowedly, shaped or modified by the great masters of heathen learning. In order, therefore, to present connectedly the lines of thought to which Butler was either directly or indirectly indebted in what he assumed, or attempted to prove, it was necessary to go back to the earliest periods of which we possess any record, and trace the successive phases of human thought concerning the subjects which Butler has discussed.

On the importance of the topics that are thus brought in review before us, it is unnecessary to dwell. They are those which, in successive ages, have engaged the attention of the most serious and earnest minds. They are those which, from their very nature, and their relation to the fears and hopes of men, have ever possessed, and must continue to possess, an undying interest. It is, indeed, impossible that they should ever become obsolete. Whatever views may be taken of revealed religion, whether those of the sceptic or the believer, there are certain facts of human experience or observation, continually recurring, that challenge attention, and the bearing of which upon human duty and destiny is too obvious to be disputed. They lie at the foundation of all religion, natural and revealed, and they demand of all thoughtful minds calm and deliberate consideration.

How they have been viewed by others — what different phases they have presented to different observers—how the interpretation of one has been confirmed or invalidated by the interpretation of another—on what points there has been

a general or nearly unanimous consent—and how the conclusions thus reached bear upon the prospects of the individual and the race—all this is matter of more than merely curious or scientific interest, although on this ground alone, it would have claims upon our attention. The laws of the moral world are certainly of not less practical importance than those of the physical, and the moral system is not less complex or wonderful, as a subject of investigation, than the material system, which discloses so many marvels to human inquiry. But beyond all this, questions which involve in them the element of duty, by an immeasurable interval, transcend those which deal merely with the elements of order or knowledge. No one can do justice to the character of such ancient philosophers as Socrates and Epictetus, who does not recognize this fact. The most surprising revelations of science, in connection with physical laws, grow tame by the side of those revelations which appeal not merely to the intellect but the conscience, and bring us face to face with the necessarily changeless and eternal relations involved in the moral order of the universe.

The recognition of such an order, traceable through the ages, is a most significant fact. Bunsen has had it in view in his "God in History." I have aimed to traverse some fields to which he barely refers, and bring to the stand the testimony afforded by ancient and modern literature. How inadequately this can be done in such limits as I have been constrained to assign myself, must be obvious to all who consider the field which must necessarily be traversed. I have been compelled to omit much which I would gladly have introduced, and I have frequently touched on incidental topics which tempted to digressions inconsistent with my plan. The theistic views, moreover, of some authors, can be only inadequately presented without a larger exposition of the philosophy which served as their frame-work, than I have been able to give; but I have aimed to present those features of their thought which were most striking and characteristic, and to indicate the fields of investigation in which the students of different periods of history will find a wealth in which their gleanings will surpass what I have reaped.

It is worthy of remark, that within a recent period different portions of the field which I have gone over so summarily, have been explored diligently by some of our ablest scholars. Gladstone's studies on Homer; Prof. Tyler's exposition of the "Theology of the Greek Poets;" the writings of Prof. Taylor Lewis on kindred topics; the contributions from various sources bearing upon the earliest forms of human worship, which Prof. Moffat has embodied in his pre-

sentation of the "Comparative Religions of the Ancient World;" the scholarly articles which have appeared in successive numbers of the *Westminster Review*, on the Greek Tragedians, are among the best known recent contributions to the literature of the History of Theism; and to all these, as well as others referred to in the course of my work, I confess my indebtedness. There have been other periods, however, where such helps failed me, and where I had none to pioneer my way. A large number of the works which I have used in tracing English and Continental literature during the century that preceded Butler, were not to be found in American libraries, and I have been under the necessity of importing them from abroad. But even thus, there are some few which I regard as important, which I have been unable to procure, and for my knowledge of them I have had to depend on second-hand sources of information.

The half century which preceded the publication of Butler's "Analogy," was a most remarkable period in the history of English theological literature. It was a controversial period, which brought to the front such thinkers as Locke and Stillingfleet, Leibnitz and Dr. Samuel Clarke, Collins and Bentley, Tindal and Conybeare, Archbishop King and Bishop Browne, Pope and Berkeley, Waterland and Sykes, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, and Balguy, Grove, Addison, and William and Edmund Law, not to mention others like Whitby, Sherlock, Colliber, Halyburton, Duncan Forbes, Lardner, and Chandler, who, if of inferior fame, were scarcely inferior in learning or ability. By such men as these the most important questions of natural religion and moral obligation, were earnestly and exhaustively discussed. The youth of Bishop Butler was contemporaneous with the production of some of the most memorable works in the Deistic controversy, and we can trace in his "Analogy" the lines of thought and argument which this controversy had made familiar.

Second only in interest to this period, is the preceding one of the "Platonic School," of Cambridge, a biographical and critical sketch of which has recently been given to the world by Principal Tulloch. Its connection with the thought of the next generation, as well as its relation to Hobbes, I have endeavored to trace. There is so much of the literature of this period that has fallen into neglect and almost oblivion, that we are in danger of forgetting what questions it discussed, and the extent to which it pushed its investigations, especially in the sphere of Natural Law and the Providential Government of the world.

But it is with special interest and admiration that we retrace some of the speculations of heathen philosophy. These

furnished rich material for the elaboration of the Cambridge Platonists, nor is their value, as testimony to the moral order of the world, obsolete to-day. I am well aware that there are darker and more questionable phases of that philosophy than I have exhibited, but as these are distinctly reflected, if not sometimes exaggerated in the writings of Gale, Whitby, Halyburton and others, of which I have given an analysis, I think the reader will have before him abundant materials for forming a fair and candid judgment in regard to them. Our admiration of what they asserted, is ever qualified by the impression made by the doubts and uncertainty which they often candidly, though sometimes reluctantly, confessed.

The problems of the past which have challenged such prolonged and patient investigation, are coming back to us still with an ever fresh interest. It is unnecessary to point out the extent to which they are now inviting the attention of thoughtful minds. But it is well for us to know how their solution has been essayed by those who preceded us, and how far the reason of man has gone in establishing conclusions in which we can acquiesce. If the testimony given to a moral order of the world, to the doctrine of a providence, to the immortality of the soul, to the present life as one of probation, and to a future as one of retribution, be found entitled to our respect, it may serve as a strong presumption, at least, that convictions, or more properly, perhaps, persuasions which have survived long ages of controversy and doubt, are really indestructible, and will continue to find a place in the history of humanity so long as the race endures. At times feebly held or dimly seen, perhaps even formally disavowed, they have yet re-asserted themselves, and resumed their place in the human consciousness. Their history, then, may serve at once to show the weakness of human reason, often struggling vigorously or despairingly with its own doubts, and the instinctive demands of our moral nature, that will rest fully satisfied with nothing short of a divinely assured certainty as to the relations, destiny and duty of the human soul.

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THE

MORAL SYSTEM IN LITERATURE.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY MONOTHEISM.

It is a remarkable fact that in the early history of some of the most ancient nations we meet with evidences of the prevalence among them of a religion closely approximating, at least, to Monotheism. In some cases, the conclusiveness of this evidence has been disputed, or even its existence has been called in question, but there are some instances, at least, in which it is freely conceded that the relatively purer worship of an earlier, was overlaid or superseded by the corruptions of a later age. To what, then, was this earlier, if not primitive purity, due? Was it reached by human reason, when alike unaided and unbiased by tradition, it essayed, at different points, to solve the one great problem of the moral system, and at these different points did reason arrive at substantially the same conclusion? or, on the other hand, was the result attributable to an original tradition, which was the common inheritance of the race?

The latter view is the one which has been most widely and generally accepted. It was strongly asserted by several of the most eminent of the Christian fathers. It was firmly held by some of the most learned of the English divines of the seventeenth century. No ancient writer, perhaps, has gone further in this direction than Theophilus Gale, in his "Court of the Gentiles." Its imposing array of testimony, some of which at the present day must be set aside as worthless, was

marshalled ostensibly to prove the indebtedness of Greek philosophy to Hebrew learning—an indebtedness so complete, that without the last the first would never have existed.

A reaction from such excessive claims was natural. But it did not go so far as to deny the indebtedness of ancient nations to a traditional revelation. This, for a long period, and until recently, was the generally accepted opinion. It was left for a modern French philosopher, M. Comte, roundly to assert that the primitive religious state of man was Feticism, from which he advanced by successive steps to Monotheism, with virtual Atheism as the goal of his progress. A mere hypothesis, unsupported by facts, and somewhat incongruous in a System of "Positive Philosophy," it has, with many minds, derived to itself a measure of plausibility from association with the Darwinian theory of development, and without securing any general recognition, has so far leavened much of the speculation of our day, that it has been tacitly assumed in some quarters, that the religious systems of ancient nations were of indigenous growth, disconnected from any supposed primitive religion, the common heritage of the race, handed down by tradition.

But such an assumption—in its full breadth—is unwarranted and unphilosophical. There has been no such uniform progress of thought or belief as to warrant the assertion of the Comtean law. Moreover, no generation or series of generations, succeeding the original one, stands isolated and alone. Subtle influences, by a thousand channels, coming down from the past, reach and modify the intellectual and ethical development of each successive age. The wisest teachers, like Plato and Socrates, the most gifted poets, like Æschylus and Sophocles, have recourse to the fountains of inherited wisdom, and, by citing, confess their respect for the authority of what had come down to them from the olden time. In regard to some of the most essential features of the moral system, the wisest of the Greeks supports his own opinions by appealing to what had been asserted by those who had preceded him, as though they were nearer to the fountain-head of knowledge, enjoying possibly instructive communion with the gods.

A fact like this is of special significance when it comes out in connection with what may be considered a reforming protest against religious degeneracy. It summons an earlier witness to a truth once better known, but obscured or corrupted by popular mythology or depraved tastes. It assumes the reasonableness of supposing, if not a primitive revelation, at least a clearer knowledge, anterior to the intrusion of mythologic fancy into the religious sphere.

Moreover, there is no sufficient ground for assuming that a nation's growth and culture will necessarily raise it from a lower to a higher religious condition. It may retrograde as well as advance. At certain periods of the world's history, retrogression has been the law rather than the exception. Great reformers have appeared, avowing it their purpose to stem the tide of religious corruption, and pointing back to an earlier and purer standard of belief and practice. Nor is this peculiar to Jewish history, where prophets like Moses, and kings like Josiah, attempt to arrest that downward tendency of things which is continually asserting itself. Zoroaster (Zarathustra) acts a similar part as a reformer of the national religion, reviving its primitive purity. Buddhism was a protest against religious corruptions that had changed for the worse a system, at its earlier stage of development, comparatively pure. The mission of Mahomet owed its success, perhaps, as largely to the fact that it recalled men from a corrupt religion, to a simpler and Monotheistic faith, assumed to be primitive, as it did to the more palpable argument of the sword. The history of Christianity is marked by eras of reform, in which popular tendencies to evil were arrested by individual or associated protest. It is with nations as with men. Left to themselves, and borne on by the current of indulgence or usage, upon which they are afloat, they go from bad to worse, till some sharp admonition or impending calamity impels them to wrestle with their fate. History reveals no law of progress inconsistent with the liability of a people to corrupt its faith, or of a nation to lose its virtue.

Upon this point, some, whose investigations have best qualified them to form a sound judgment, have expressed themselves in strong language. But we content ourselves with

citing only two witnesses: Mr. Hallam, whose historical and literary studies led him to compare different periods, and their relative progress; and Ritter, whose "History of Ancient Philosophy" attests his judicious discrimination as well as his profound learning. The latter asserts: "Those who labor to exhibit the history of humanity as a progress advancing steadily in a right line, trouble themselves in vain. Such an unbroken line is nowhere discoverable."* Hallam says: "There is, in fact, no security, as far as the past history of mankind assures us, that any nation will be uniformly progressive in science and arts and letters;"† and what is thus asserted of nations, is said to be alike applicable to the whole civilized world. But a fair statement of the problem will reveal a presumption that in some cases, instead of progress, there will be retrogression.

It is a just remark of the late Mr. Mill, that there is in society a constantly operative tendency to degenerate, and that only by the persistent efforts of all good men can this tendency be arrested, and the social order be kept from sinking into anarchy. But this asserted tendency cannot operate upon society, without operating upon its beliefs, religious as well as ethical or intellectual. We are confronted, then, with a fact which harmonizes with a retrogression from Monotheism toward polytheism, Feticism, or utter unbelief, and which forbids us to assume a law of progress toward loftier ethics and a simpler and purer faith, save through the introduction of some exceptional reforming element.

There is nothing, therefore, inadmissible in the assumption that if an original revelation had been made to the first ancestors of our race, the light which they possessed and transmitted *may*, at length, have become obscure or lost. Such a result would be in keeping with indisputable historical facts. Our inquiry, therefore, is simply, what is the evidence that the ancient nations inherited the better or Monotheistic elements, which we find commingled with their faith? Is there any such family likeness in their several religions, as to indicate a common source? Is there any purer fountain discoverable, back of their own turbid streams, or can we trace in

* His. of Anc. Phil., I. 174. † Lit. of Europe, I. 84.

these streams, translucent lines of current that indicate an indebtedness to something beside the pools and marshes from which they have been mostly supplied?

The proper answer to these questions is an appeal to facts. Perhaps the most significant of these is that presented in early Jewish history. Here we find a Monotheism, and a theory of Divine providence and human duty, which at certain points are in striking contrast with the faith of nations that follow them after an interval of centuries. It is enough to state, without urging the fact. Inferior in intellectual and artistic culture to other nations who, at a later date in the world's history, enjoyed or inherited peculiar advantages, the Jewish people, under the instruction of their prophets, cherished those views of the unity and spirituality, the providence, justness and goodness of God, which, after an interval of from five hundred to one thousand years, rise above the highest level of Greek thought, like a mountain-top in the clear sun-light over the mists that envelop its base. Their early anthropomorphite conceptions of the Deity, suited to a crude or childish apprehehension, were but the scaffolding by which their thought was educated to construct or entertain that sublime conception of a Deity, which gives such grandeur to Hebrew poetry, and finds no proper parallel in all heathen literature.

The history of the connection of the Hebrew patriarchs with the neighboring nations brings out the fact that in their age, the polytheistic and idolatrous tendencies which subsequently prevailed among them, had attained as yet but a limited development. The evil was in progress, but it had not risen to its height. The Canaan of Abraham is not the Canaan of Joshua. In the interval between these two representative men, Phenicia seems to have exchanged the Hebrew *El* for Baal, and to have plunged deep into idolatry. There are grounds for believing that a corresponding change had taken place among other nations. This, at least, may be said, that inasmuch as the Indo-European languages are now conceded to be a family, traceable to a common source, retaining in themselves elements which they have inherited in common, it is no more than what analogy would warrant us in inferring

as probable, that, on the supposition of an original and comparatively pure faith, traces of it might be anticipated among those to whom, as more or less modified, it was a common inheritance, and these traces would be most clear and distinct at the earliest date at which they can be detected. Bishop Leng, more than a century ago, in his Boyle Lectures, remarked, "We may indeed trace particular kinds of idolatry to their first original; but to a time when men believed no God at all, we cannot come: we may go back to the deification of imaginary deities, but the higher we go, the nearer we shall come to the original notion of the true God."

He then quotes the observations of Aristotle to this effect: "That there are these gods, and that the Deity contains all nature, are notions that have been delivered down by primitive and ancient men, and left to posterity wrapped up in the dress of fable; but that other things have been fabulously added, to persuade the multitude, and for the benefit of law and public utility. Further, say they, that these gods are of human shape, and are like some other animals, etc., from which if a man should separate, and take only that which was first or original, namely, that they thought gods were the first beings, he might well think it divinely spoken, and thus, perhaps, every art or science, being often found out, as far as possible, and lost again, these their opinions have been preserved as *reliques* to this time."

But, for the object which we have in view, it matters little whether an original purer faith antedates ancient polytheism, or whether even this polytheism was an advance upon an earlier Feticism. It would indeed be a more than merely curious discovery, to find satisfactory evidence that back of all the old mythologies and superstitions, the different branches of the human race had inherited clear and rational views of the Divine Being, Providence and Worship, and that these, overlaid with myth and fable, so far asserted their identity through the lapse of centuries, as to convict those who held them of having abused and neglected the light which they possessed. But again, on the other hand, if we assume that man's primeval condition was one of ignorance, and lack of all religious culture; that his starting-point was indeed what

M. Comte has defined it in theory, we shall then be confronted by the singular fact, that notwithstanding all diversities of country, race, usage and occupation, the reason of man, in different nations, has led him to accept and embrace everywhere, the same view, substantially, of the moral system, animating him with kindred hopes, or oppressing him with kindred fears. Difference of locality, of culture, of taste, of education, of employment, of social sympathies, have not sufficed to introduce any material diversity in those apprehensions of the order of the moral world, which have been laid down by the most eminent teachers of heathen nations. In spite of polytheism and a corrupting mythology, in spite of popular depravity and perverted practical ethics, man's reason, when honestly and intelligently followed, has led him to the conviction of the existence of a Supreme Intelligence, whose universal providence has subjected man to the law of duty, and in the interests of an eternal and incorruptible justice, presides over all the issues of human life. An attestation like this, to the intrinsic probability of the truths of the moral system, is, to those who calmly consider it, deeply impressive, and to many it will carry more weight than any assertion, however plausible, of any original revelation to which the different nations alike were indebted.

CHAPTER II.

ANCIENT RELIGION—EGYPTIANS, HINDOOS, PERSIANS.

Till within a recent period, our knowledge of the early religious systems of most of the ancient nations of the world has been exceedingly limited. The discoveries of our own times, remarkable as they have been, have only partially removed from them the veil of obscurity. There is so much that remains to be explored or elucidated, that on many important points we are warranted to speak only in terms quali-

fied by varying degrees of probability. The nations to which our attention is to be directed, are the Egyptians, the Hindoos, the Persians, the Chinese, the Babylonians and Assyrians, the Hebrews, and the Greeks. In some cases it is difficult, if not impossible, to arrive at satisfactory conclusions concerning their actual views of the moral system. They are so involved in a fanciful mythology, so obscured by legend or ritual observances, that it is no easy task to present them in clear and distinct outline. Indeed, we must admit that in many cases they were but dimly apprehended, and produced but a feeble impression on the minds of those who held them. Sometimes, moreover, they were exceedingly indefinite, and combined in themselves inconsistent or incongruous elements. And yet on this very account the testimony which they bear becomes, in some instances, the more significant and impressive. When we eliminate, as far as possible, whatever is non-essential—the mythological, the idolatrous, the fanciful or poetical elements with which they have been commingled or overlaid—we shall find a surprising residuum of moral conviction attesting the fundamental truths of the moral system. We shall find those "without law" becoming "a law to themselves, their consciences meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." We shall find a mass of sentiment, variously expressed and popularly entertained, and that, too, among nations in many respects diverse, which shows how deeply and widely rooted, in spite of gross anthropomorphite conceptions, was the belief of a moral order of the world. Egypt has been called the monumental land of the earth. The memorable events of her history for centuries; the usages of the people; their employments; their worship and amusements, have been preserved to us in sculptures and paintings, which, for thousands of years, have survived the ravages of time. Only within the present century has the key been found to the interpretation of their countless inscriptions. The result already reached, however, confirms the statement of Herodotus, made more than two thousand years ago, who says of the Egyptians, "they are of all men most attentive to the worship of the gods."

They had a sacred canon, described by Clement, of Alexandria, extending to forty-two books. Their "Ritual of the

Dead," of which nearly one hundred and fifty chapters have been translated, is very minute, and was carefully studied. Everything was in some way associated with religion, or subjected to its control. The living were bound by its sanctions, and the dead must pass its ordeal. All known science was connected with its teachings, and there was nothing counted worthy of being taught that was not included in its sacred books.

The Osiris worship of the Egyptians is accounted the most ancient as well as sacred portion of their religion. It antedates by centuries their worship of animals, which evidently had a local origin, and sprang originally out of ideas of public utility connected with the preservation of certain animals. "Osiris is the LORD, the God and Father of each individual soul, the Judge of men, who passes sentence strictly according to right and wrong, rewarding goodness and punishing crime. As he reigns in the spirit world, so does Helios, the God of the skies, from his sunny path watch over the doings of the living." * We find, for instance, on a tomb, the date of which is supposed to be nearly 1300 B. C., this inscription, which describes the lot of the good:

> "This great God speaks to them, and they to him,
> The radiance of his disc illumines them,
> Standing above their path."

On the contrary, we are told of the wretched state of the world:

> "They behold not the face of this great God;
> Their eyes are not blessed with the rays of his disc;
> Their souls are not enlightened in the world;
> They do not hear the voice of the great God,
> Who travels on high above their path."

The Egyptian view of the future life bears evidence, also, of being derived more from an ethical than a speculative source. It assumes the inequalities of earthly awards. It recognizes the mystery of a justice, real and authoritative, but imperfectly executed on earth. It implies the necessity of a future state, where the anomalies of the present shall be cor-

* Bunsen's God in History, I. 226.

rected, and the merit or demerit of each individual soul be determined by an unerring standard. All guilt, moreover, must be expiated, and the final triumph of righteousness, even though after a delay of uncounted ages, is assured.

The elaborate art with which the bodies of the dead were embalmed for preservation until they should be again re-occupied, had a moral significance. No ancient nation invested the departure from life with such solemn associations as the old Egyptians. All the dead must pass through the same severe ordeal before admission to their "eternal habitation," as the priests called the tomb. Even the priests were not exempt from it, and royalty itself enjoyed no immunity. There were forty-two assessors, before whom the funeral train passed. It belonged to them to pronounce judgment. Any one who chose might accuse the departed of any immorality, and if the accusation was proved, the train was not allowed to pass. The rejected dead must be either buried on the spot, or the cases which held their embalmed bodies must be taken back to the dwelling of their friends, to be there a perpetual spectacle of grief and shame.

But in the spirit world there were judges also. The life of the dead was there to be subjected to the severest scrutiny. All mankind must be tried before Osiris, by one and the same standard. The souls of all are immortal, but "those only which have been tried and purified are made blessed; for they alone have attained the goal of their career, which is the life of blessedness in God." *

Recent discoveries have revealed to us a surprising amount of ethical literature among the old Egyptians, in harmony with these features of their theology. "There is a papyrus in the Imperial library at Paris, which M. Chabas considers the oldest book in the world. It is an autograph manuscript, written B. C. 2200, or four thousand years ago, by one who calls himself the son of a king." It contains practical philosophy like that of Solomon in his Proverbs. Like the Proverbs, it glorifies wisdom. It says that "man's heart rules the man," that "the bad man's life is what the wise know to be death," that "what we say in secret is known to him who made our

* Bunsen's God in History, I. 228.

interior nature," that "he who made us is present with us though we are alone."

Notwithstanding the debasing conceptions and usages of religious worship which at length became prevalent, it seems evident that in the "mysteries" of which Herodotus speaks, the knowledge of the one Supreme God was still retained. This is indeed expressly asserted by Iamblicus, and the assertion is confirmed by other evidence. With such original monotheism the doctrines of immortality and future retribution are in harmony. The assertion has been made by one who has given the subject no little attention,* that "the great old Egyptian doctrine, extending back, as the book of Genesis shows us, as far as the Egyptian traditions reached — the great doctrine of a divine moral government, was the soul alike of the practical legislation of Moses, and the speculative philosophy of Plato." The same writer, descanting upon the scenes of Egyptian life revealed by the monuments and records, adds: "Here they were, nearly two thousand years before the birth of Abraham, worshiping our Supreme God, and owning Him for their king, appointing for his agent and chief servant as their ruler, a priest whom they called his son. *They recognized his moral government*—always strictly a moral government, through how many hands soever it might be administered—whether those of his personified attributes, or those of his human instruments. The highest objects set before these people were purity of life and rectitude of conduct. Their highest aspirations were directed to the glory and favor of God in this life, and acceptance by Him hereafter. Their conceptions of death were that it was a passage to an eternal existence, where a divine benefactor sent to dispense the mercies of the Supreme had gone before them, having submitted to death in order to overcome the power of evil, and who had therefore been raised from among the dead, when his probation in Hades was ended, and made the eternal judge of the living and the dead. Those whom he judged favorably had their names written in the Book of Life, and were brought to taste the Tree of Life, which would make them to

* Martineau's Eastern Life, p. 102.

be as gods, after which they were to enjoy such bliss as it has not entered into men's hearts to conceive. The wicked were meanwhile to undergo shame and anguish till they had expiated the very last sin, or were to be destroyed." However their theology might be incumbered by absurdities or corruptions, it did not suffice wholly to conceal the definite outlines of impressive, and in the main, just conceptions of the moral order of the world.*

The oldest books of the Hindoos, dating, according to the best authorities, not later than from 1200 to 1500, B. C., are known by the name of Vedas. These Vedas—four in number, the Rig-Veda, Sâma-Veda, Yajur-Veda, Atharva-Veda —are designated by the Hindoos as *mantra*, or "worship," to distinguish them from a later class of writings, known as *brâhmana*, or "theology." Their general form is that of lyric poetry. They contain the national and religious songs which were transmitted from an ancestral source, and some of these must have been almost co-eval with Hindoo national existence. They display a predominant religious spirit, pervading all spheres of human activity. They are, for the most part, simple invocations or glorifications of the divinity to which each is addressed. The attributes of the deity are recounted, the devotion of the worshipper is professed; blessings of all kinds are besought, and confidence is expressed that the righteous will not be left to suffer.

The great antiquity of the Rig-Veda is obvious from the fact that it knows nothing of caste. This is indeed of ancient date, but was introduced with the Brahmanic phase of Hindoo religion. The Brahmanas—ostensibly explaining the sacred meaning of the Vedic hymns, and constituting commentaries upon them—are of far more recent date, no reference whatever being made to them in the hymns, while the purer doctrine of the original Vedic text is submitted to interpretations that to some extent tend to pervert and cor-

* In "Prolegomena to Ancient History," by John P. Mahaffy, 1871, the statement is made (p. 241): "The simpler and higher religion appears to have been preached in the Solar Hymns, which are not difficult and not intended for the select few, but published and in popular use, whereas the greatest profusion of distinct duties is brought forward in the so-called Funeral Ritual.

rupt the earlier faith. Although the vast mass of literature, which goes under the name of *Veda*, has as yet been inadequately explored, enough is known of it to enable us to define with approximate accuracy, the early religious belief of the inhabitants of India. In the more ancient portions of the Vedas, physical religion prevails. The powers of nature most calculated to impress the mind with wonder and awe are invoked and adored. The divine power or energy is recognized in the heavenly bodies, but of the embodying of the divine in the human figure there is, as Colebrooke has pointed out, no mention till we reach the fourth Veda, which is of a comparatively late date. Idolatry is alien to the spirit of the Vedas. Ritter has anticipated Max Müller, not only in conceding the probability of the opinion of commentators, who have reduced all the several deities mentioned in the Vedas to three—air, fire and the sun—but in admitting that these three probably represent only a single deity, called in the index to the Rig-Veda, the Great Soul. This opinion, he adds, "is further supported by the vague and indeterminate shapes and attributes given by the Vedas to the several deities; so that, through all their different names and forms of invocation, a certain fusion and identification is apparent, whereby a sense of the unity of the Godhead may still be recognized. But still, it must be confessed, this monotheism is combined with the grossest multiplicity of polytheistic forms."*

In discussing Indian philosophy, Ritter takes it for granted "that the earliest philosophemes of India embraced the view by which all individual things and the forces of nature are looked upon as so many expressions of the universal creative force." He considers the evidence of the Vedas conclusive, that Indian philosophy, proceeding from the worship of the several powers of nature, arrived ultimately at a perception that only the intellectual substance which pervades all substances—the universal soul—is the origin of things.

One of the passages which are referred to as affording this evidence, is that in which an assembly of sages are puzzled by the question, what the soul is, and what Brahma (the

* Ritter's His. of Phil., I. 91, 92.

ground of all things, or the universal soul) is. On this point, the sages are instructed by a king, who in turn asks them what they each worship as the universal soul. Each answer given indicates some object of nature: one says the heaven, another the sun, a third the air, and others still the water and the earth. With these answers the king is dissatisfied; for heaven is only the head, the sun the eye, the air the breath, ether the trunk, water the abdomen, and earth the feet of the soul. He then shows the sages that they only worship special objects, and can therefore hope only to partake of special and partial pleasures; and that the only proper object of worship is that which is manifested in all parts of the universe, which whosoever worships will be susceptible of universal pleasures and sustenance in all worlds, in all substances, and all souls. Here was an evident effort to impress the doctrine of the unity, under diverse phenomena, of the universal soul. Notwithstanding the modified polytheism inseparable from nature-worship, we find traces in the Vedas of a class of moral conceptions which indicate the relation in which human actions stand to a superintending providence. To the twelve Adityas, or sun-gods, representing that luminary in the phases of the twelve months, is ascribed unapproachability by anything that can harm or disturb.* "In them can be distinguished neither right hand nor left, form nor limit; they are elevated above all imperfections; they do not sleep nor wink; their character is all truth; they hate and punish guilt; to preserve mortals from sin is their highest office."

The central figure of this group of Adityas is Varuna—the name identical with the Greek οὐρανός. "He is the orderer and ruler of the universe. He established the eternal laws which govern the movements of the world, and which neither immortal nor mortal may break. He regulated the seasons, He appointed sun, moon, and stars their courses. He gave to each creature that which is its peculiar characteristic. In a no less degree is he a moral governor; to the Adityas, and to him in particular, attach themselves very remarkable, almost Christian, ideas respecting moral right and wrong,

* Whitney's Oriental and Linguistic Studies, p. 40.

transgression and its punishment. . . . Of the Adityas is craved purity, forgiveness of sin, freedom from its further commission. To them are offered humble confessions of guilt and repentance. It is a sore grief to the poets to know that man daily transgresses Varuna's commands. They acknowledge that without his aid they are not masters of a single moment; they fly to him for refuge from evil, expressing at the same time all confidence that their prayers will be heard and granted. From his station in the heavens, Varuna sees and hears everything; nothing can remain hidden from him. He is surrounded, too, by a train of ministers—"spies"—who, restless, unerring, watch heaven and earth to note iniquity, or go about bearing in their hands Varuna's bonds, sickness and death, with which to bind the guilty. These spies are a very ancient feature in the Aryan religion; they appear again in the Avesta, being there assigned to Mithra."*

The Indian doctrine of transmigration has a profound moral significance. In the experience of this, each change is determined by moral antecedents. The character of each new birth is supposed to depend on the sum of merit or demerit resulting from actions past. A life specially marked by folly and wickedness will insure a horrible doom—to exist for myriads of years in the shape of abhorred and groveling animals, or among the depraved, the ignorant and the outcast among men. A life, on the other hand, eminent for wisdom and virtue, is attended by exemption from all the pains and anxieties of existence, or the intermediate period after death may be crowned with heavenly delights.

In Max Müller's "History of Ancient Sanscrit Literature," we meet with Hymns from the Rig-Veda which indicate, in his view, notwithstanding the multiplicity of objects of nature-worship which had already gained popular acceptance, an original monotheism, in which the relations of the human race to the supreme ruler may be distinctly apprehended. There is One, after whom the soul inquires, who is "the source of golden light," "whose blessing all the bright gods desire," "who governs all, man and beast," whose power the "snowy mountains, the sea and the distant river pro-

* Whitney, p. 43.

claim," who is "the creator of the earth," "the righteous," "through whom the heaven was established." To him is our sacrifice to be offered.

To this being, under the name of Varuna, are laws ascribed which men are to obey. The violation of these laws exposes the soul to loss and wretchedness, and deliverance may be obtained only through mercy or expiation. Varuna is "the upholder of order," and is to be "propitiated" by the guilty. To him the transgressor addresses himself; "However we break thy laws from day to day, men as we are, O God, Varuna, do not deliver us unto death, nor to the blow of the furious," etc.

From other hymns extracts might be taken of a kindred sentiment, which recognize a moral providence over men, and that constitution of things which insures retribution; nor are there wanting in Vedic literature passages quite numerous which reflect very vividly popular conceptions of diverse features of the moral system.

It is true that Nature-worship at length overshadows the original Monotheism, but the ethical relations grounded upon the latter are by no means obliterated. Passing by the Brahmanas, with their stories and legends, we find in the "Laws of Manu" evidence of the permanent impression, which, in spite of the introduction of caste and the culminating authority of the Brahmans, had been made by the earlier theology. These laws are the text-books of Brahmanism. In them, although we find caste introduced, and the person of the Brahman accounted sacred, we miss some of the more obnoxious features of later Hindoo theology. Brahma is the Supreme Deity. Vishnu is but once named, and Siva is not known. Sacrifice, known and practiced in the Vedic ages, is still the method of approach to and communion with Heaven.

Here we meet with "the self-existing power." He "whom the mind alone can perceive," who "exists from eternity, the Soul of all beings," who "made the world discernible, dispelling the gloom." Even while the Brahman is glorified as more than human, as "born above the world," and in his birth the incarnation of the God of Justice, we have, on other points, a scheme of creation which associates the world with an

intelligent author. Duties are enjoined, which, though often puerile, are enforced by a Divine sanction, and sentiments are expressed which admit of being embodied in a coherent moral system. For instance: "The soul itself is its own witness; the soul itself is its own refuge; offend not thy conscious soul, the supreme internal witness of men. The fruit of every virtuous act which thou hast done, O good man, since thy birth, shall depart from thee to the dogs, if thou deviate from the truth. O friend to virtue, the Supreme Spirit, which is the same with thyself, resides in thy bosom perpetually, and is an all-knowing inspector of thy goodness or wickedness." By falsehood the sacrifice becomes vain, and by pride the merit of devotion is lost. To a man contaminated with sensuality, neither the Vedas, nor liberality, nor sacrifices, nor strict observances, nor pious austerities, ever procure felicity. The highest of all virtues is disinterested goodness, performed from the love of God, and based on the knowledge of the Veda. The Brahmin is to consider the supreme Omnipresent Intelligence as the Sovereign Lord of the Universe, by whom alone it exists, an incomprehensible spirit.

Notwithstanding the mass of Hindoo or rather Brahmanic casuistry, which reminds us sometimes of the Talmud, and sometimes of the great casuists of the Roman Catholic Church, we meet with many moral precepts which imply a discriminating sense of obligation. In the last book of Manu, where the destinies of the soul released from its mortal body are discussed, the principle is laid down that every human action, word, and thought, bears its appropriate fruit, good or evil.

He who controls all these is called a triple commander.* According to the soul's attainment of different virtues, is its future destiny. It may rise after death to the glory of a deity. It may pass into the bodies of other men, or into beasts and vegetables. For great sins there must be transmigrations through the bodies of dogs, spiders and reptiles, while good deeds have varying heavenly rewards.

Casting aside what has been introduced in Brahmanic self-glorification, or for interested ends, we have still a residuum

* Clarke's Ten Great Religions, p. 112.

in which we find, however incoherent or disconnected the leading features of a moral system, evidently transmitted from a date anterior to the Vedic age, and surviving the introduction of nature-worship, as well as a subtle Pantheism which sometimes identifies God with the soul of man. Brahmanic ritualism does not supersede or entirely obscure it, and century after century it claimed recognition.

But Brahmanism multiplied its deities, increased its asceticism, made its ritual observances more burdensome and superstitious, and provoked a re-action. This re-action was seen in the reform that took the name of Buddhism, and rapidly spread among the people of India and neighboring nations. As related to Brahmanism, it was the Protestantism of Asia. It originated with Sâkya-muni, the son of an Indian king, in the seventh century before the Christian era. Scorning the honors of royalty to which he was heir, he exchanged the prospects of a prince for the lot of a mendicant. In search of wisdom, he listened to the Brahmins, but found no satisfaction. They could not point him to the true peace, Nirvâna. At last, after years of austerity, the secret was revealed to him. In beatific visions, after a week of holy meditation, the long sought truth was discovered. Some writers have represented the system of Buddhism as teaching atheism and materialism. They have found in it that which seemed to them to imply "that there is absolutely nothing but non-existence; therefore in no sense a God." Identifying Nirvâna with the annihilation, not of the restless longings and passions of the soul, but of the soul itself, they have inferred, as the teaching of Buddhism, that non-existence constituted the highest blessedness, and that the soul's loss of personality was the consummation of its highest aspiration.

But this view neither accords with the scope of Buddhism as a reform movement in protest against Brahmanic corruptions, nor with any proper theory of its moral power over hundreds of millions of human beings through successive generations. The moral teachings of Buddhism, moreover, harmonize with, and sometimes imply, those features of the moral system which we regard as most characteristic and essential. One of its principal metaphysical doctrines is that

which is called (Dharma) Karma.* This means the law of consequences, by which every act committed in this life entails consequences in another. This law operates till one reaches Nirvâna. As expounded by the founder of the system, "it is the cause of all good and evil," and is inseparable from the conditions of human existence. It assures an exact recompense to all beings in the life which follows that in which the act is committed. We may almost identify Karma with certain significations of the classic term, Fate, and define it as the moral order of the world.

The aim of the founder of Buddhism was to attain stable peace and repose for the soul in a world full of change and restless anxieties and insubordinate passions. He found it in his ideal Nirvâna, and Max Müller, as well as others, seem to have shown conclusively that this was by no means identical with extinction or absorption of conscious being. It is only attained when the soul has conquered all its desires, when through wisdom it has come to know and contentedly to submit to the laws of its being, which are the laws of reason and virtue. To this end its precepts and rules are given, and when viewed with reference to this end, the precepts justify themselves to the reason. They are eminently practical. They enjoin all that is virtuous, and condemn all that is vicious. They make it a man's duty to know himself and to govern his passions. In the *Dhamapadam*, or "Footsteps of the Law," we have the lesson that to obey is better than sacrifice, expanded in almost every variety of application. We are told—

> "Whatever sacrifices the whole world might offer in a year,
> Whatever sacrifice any might offer in the hope of reward,
> That all is not worth one quarter so much as
> He who cherishes reverence for the virtuous."

Again:

> "He who should conquer in battle ten times a hundred thousand were indeed a hero,
> But truly a greater hero is he who has but once conquered himself."

* Clarke's Ten Great Religions, 161.

The sum of duty is thus stated:

> "Not to do evil, to leave nothing good undone,
> To keep the course of our thoughts ever pure,
> This is commanded to Buddhas."

Benevolence toward all is likewise emphatically and repeatedly enjoined. An almost Puritanic abstinence from all that is morally polluting is insisted on. In all this we discern the recognition of the laws of a moral system which cannot be set aside, and only in compliance with and willing submission to which, is the coveted Nirvâna attainable. Thus habits of chastity, temperance and self-control are necessary, and in the attainment of these the way is opened for man to attain the end of his being. If transgression has been committed, it must be confessed and repented of. Every desire or passion of the soul which would disquiet and agitate it must be subdued, and this must extend to the complete triumph of the soul over evil, till it is perfect in patience, humility and forgiveness of injuries.

Omitting any critical examination of the defects or excesses of the Buddhist system, as well as of its theological relations, we find in it the recognition of law, of man's moral nature, of the conditions of its normal development and proper blessedness, of the evils of transgression, the excellence of virtuous disposition, action and habit, as well as inevitable retribution. The vanity of the world and the restlessness of human desires, constitute those conditions of existence, out of which the Buddhist theory of the moral order of the world springs.*

* Theistic views and very decided expressions concerning the moral order of the world, are found in the Bhagavad-Gita, a dialogue on divine matters, constituting an episode in the great Sanscrit epic, "Mahâbhârata," the Iliad of India. It bears date somewhere between the first and the fourth century before Christ. J. Cockburn Thomson, who has translated it (1855), endeavors to trace its peculiar features largely to the influence of the Hindoo philosopher, Kapila, who, with others, prepared the way for Buddh. He says (xxxiii.): "The Supreme Being of early Philosophy was the necessary result of Kapila's system." He holds that the Theistic Sankhya placed the philosophical doctrines, already uttered by Kapila, on a more certain and tangible footing, by introducing and uniting with them, the notion of the Supreme Being. In the Bhagavad-Gita, the individual soul is a portion of the Supreme Being which emanates from him, and unites with the material body (xciv.). The Supreme Being of the poem is Omnipresent and Omnipotent, but he is without tenderness; he is not the Father of

Among all the ancient religions there is none in which the line of distinction and contrast between good and evil is more sharply drawn than in that with which the name of Zoroaster is associated. Appearing in the character of a Reformer, he came in conflict with a debased nature-worship which he could but in part accept. Compromising, where compromise seemed admissible or essential to the success of his own ideal of reform, he divided the objects of popular worship into two classes, but all of these subordinate to Ormazd, or Ahura-Mazda, with whom the prince of evil, Ahriman, is in eternal conflict. It may be that back of these two great representatives of dominion for good and evil, a higher power was dimly supposed to exist; and that in its interposition the final triumph of good over evil was to be assured. But so prominently are the two hostile and irreconcilable powers or principles presented before us, that we lose sight of all else, and note, with special and absorbing interest, the bitter and irreconcilable conflict in which they are forever engaged.

Evidently Zoroaster was oppressed with the sight of evil. He saw that it must be met and vanquished. But this could be only by stern and long protracted conflict. Nature itself owned but a divided allegiance. If there was light on one side, there was darkness on the other. If there was spirit, there was also the material body, in which sin was intrenched incarnate. The conflict was one in which the human race was involved, and in which each being must take part. The good must necessarily be on the side of Ahura-Mazda, while the evil would fight under the banner of Ahriman.

In the Avesta (Zend Avesta), which embodies the teachings of Zoroaster and his disciples, we find no system of theology or philosophy, but liturgical hymns and prayers, which reflect

humanity. He is the One, simple and indivisible. "Under my superintendence, nature produces movable and immovable things" (p. 63). "I am the fire; I am the incense; I am the father, the mother, the sustainer . . . of this universe. . . . I am the same to all beings. I have neither foe nor friend. But those who worship me with devotion, dwell in me, and I also in them" (p. 66). "He who worships me never perishes." The great lessons of wisdom are taught, how to secure emancipation from the flesh, and how to attain the future beatitude.

A testimony to Monotheism and the moral system like this is memorable, whether it be traced back to the Vedic teachers, or be deduced from Kapila's philosophemes.

the moral views as well as religious spirit of the worshiper. Here we find that though Zoroaster, in his compromise with the prevalent nature-worship, had conceded the existence of subordinate deities and allowed them to be addressed in worship, yet he apprehended Ahura-Mazda as supreme. He is a purely spiritual existence, clothed with no visible form, invested with no attributes of human weakness, but asserting his position as creator and ruler of the universe, the author and giver of all good, approving and sustaining the righteous, but repressing and punishing the evil. To him prayer is addressed and worship offered. "I worship and adore," says Zoroaster, "the Creator of all things, Ahura-Mazda, full of light." Elsewhere Ahura-Mazda is spoken of as "the greatest ruler, mighty, wise, creator, supporter, refuge, defender, completer of good works," "who always was, always is, and always will be," whose "wisdom of wisdoms," communicated to men, effects "freedom from hell for the soul at the bridge, and leads it over to that Paradise," etc. We meet also in this connection with language which implies the existence and sanctity of law, the fact of human transgression, the duty of confession, and the necessity of repentance. For instance, in address to the Deity, we find the following language employed: "All good do I accept at thy command, O God, and think, speak and do it. I believe in the pure laws; by every good work seek I forgiveness for all sins." And again, "I praise all good thoughts, words, and works; I curse all evil," etc. "I repent of the sins which can lay hold on the character of men, or which have laid hold of my character, small and great . . . pardon, O Lord."

Appeal for help to the good Being, implies his readiness to interfere in human interests. "O Mazda, when on earth our spirit is hardly pressed in the fight, come thou to our aid. The pious hearts dost thou give to inherit the earth, and dost punish those who are void of truth and false to their promise."

Evil throughout is a reality, as well as good. It pervades the moral system, and is primordial. But it is an essential element of probation to spirits originally created by Ahura-Mazda, who must come from heaven to be united with a

human body, and to go on a path of probation in this world, significantly called the "Way of the Two Destinies." When probation is complete, retribution must follow. The destiny of the soul is distinct from that of the body. The demons might obtain possession of the mortal form, but the powers of evil could have no hold of the soul, if, during life, it had been a sincere worshiper of Mazda, abhorring evil and striving after truth and purity. Its privilege was to pass away beyond the eastern mountains to the paradise of the holy and benevolent gods; unworthy of such blessedness, the souls of the wicked were uncared for, and perhaps supposed to perish with the body.

In the later development of the system in the Bundchesch, the details of retribution are more definitely given. Those who have chosen good in this world are received after death by good spirits, and guided, under the protection of the dog Sura, to the bridge Chinevat. The wicked are dragged thither by the Daêvas. Here Ormazd holds a tribunal, and decides the doom of souls. The good pass the bridge to the mansions of the blessed, where they are welcomed with rejoicing; the wicked fall over into the gulf Duzahk, where they are tormented by the Daêvas. The duration of their punishment is fixed by Ormazd, and some earlier than others are redeemed by the prayers and intercessions of their friends, while many must remain till the resurrection of the dead. The consummation itself will be hastened by the miscalculated malice of Ahriman, who, in sending a blazing comet to ignite the earth, will kindle the fire that shall serve to purify the wicked and consume all evil.

Thus good is destined finally to prevail. But it can triumph only through long and sore conflict. Truth and purity are essential to him that would overcome, and he can succeed only by resisting evil to the end.

Here, omitting much that belongs to a traditional mythology, which Zoroaster tolerated rather than approved, we have nearly all the most important elements for the construction of a comprehensive and consistent theory of a moral system. There were the justice, goodness and providence of God; the law of duty imposing its obligations upon all; the fact of

transgression coupled with the recognition of the terrible forces of evil; the diverse destinies and allotments of the good and evil wrought out by their own act; the relation of the present life to the future, as that of probation to retribution, and the final vindication and triumph of justice. Much of this doubtless had come down by tradition from earlier ages, and its definite apprehension was obstructed by the corruptions that came in with nature-worship; but with all this, it bore most impressive testimony to the strength of human convictions as to the moral order of the world.

Most pertinent here is the testimony of Rawlinson in his "Ancient Monarchies." The Median or Persian system, which is described as "a revolt from the sensuous and superficial nature-worship" that preceded it, "begins with a distinct recognition of spiritual intelligences — real persons — with whom alone, and not with powers, religion is concerned. . . It proceeds to assert, in a certain sense, monotheism against polytheism. It boldly declares that at the head of the good intelligences, is a single great intelligence. Ahurô-Mazdâo, the highest object of adoration, the true Creator, Preserver and Governor of the Universe." He is "the creator of life, the earthly and the spiritual," He is "good," "holy," "pure," "true," "the Holy God." "From him comes all good to man; on the pious and righteous He bestows not only earthly advantages, but precious spiritual gifts, truth, devotion, 'the good mind,' and everlasting happiness; and, as he rewards the good, so he punishes the bad, though this is an aspect in which He is but seldom represented."*

Moreover, "the religion of Ormazd was anti-idolatrous. No images profaned the severe simplicity of an Iranic temple." The "angels" of the system were some of them scarcely distinguishable from the attributes of the Deity. Some of them, however, were personified as the ministers of a universal Providence. Sraosha or Serosh delivers revelations, and is a messenger to men. When life is over, he conducts the souls of the faithful to celestial scenes. Armaiti is at once the genius of the earth and the goddess of piety; she gives fertility to the earth; in a certain sense, pervades the whole

* Rawlinson's Monarchies, II. 325.

material creation; "tells men the everlasting laws which no one may abolish," laws which have been learned from Ormazd himself. Kindred to Armaiti is the *geûs urvâ*, or "Soul of the Earth," analogous to the Stoic's *anima mundi*, or the plastic nature of Cudworth. This spirit dwells in the earth; animates it as the soul does the body. Other powers were recognized, among thèm the old divinities transformed to *Devas*, "fiends," or "devils." No account was given of their creation or their fall. Original Zoroastrianism knew no such belief as the later Dualism, or a belief in two uncreated and independent principles, one of good and the other of evil. The contrast between good and evil is indeed strongly marked in the Gâthâs, but the "light" and "dark" spirits may be resolved into figures of speech, poetic imagery, abstract notions apparently personified. Here was the germ indeed that was afterward developed in dualism. The good and the evil principles come into sharp antagonism; the world becomes the battle-ground between them. Each has his council; each his army. The universe is full of invisible combatants. The spiritual world is composed of all their various orders. Truth, purity, piety and industry are, however, chiefly to be valued and inculcated. Evil is traced to its root in the heart of man. Good includes the thought of the heart, as well as word and deed. Industry is a religious duty. Piety acknowledges the One true God and His holy angels.*

"The Zoroastrians were devout believers in the immortality of the soul, and a conscious future existence. They taught that immediately after death, the souls of men, both good and bad, proceeded together along an appointed path to the bridge of the gatherer."†

* Rawlinson, II. 326-38. † Ib., 339.

CHAPTER III.

ANCIENT RELIGIONS—CHINESE, ASSYRIAN, JEWS.

In Chinese history the most conspicuous historic name is that of Confucius. He left a permanent impression upon the ethical and religious philosophy of his country. Yet before taking note of his teachings, we may inquire into the nature of the views entertained by those who preceded him. Decisive evidence—or what appears such—has been adduced to show that while Chinese civilization struggled upward from feeble beginnings, the history of Chinese religion is one of retrogression and corruption. As we go backward toward "that primeval enchanted ground which lies between the first man Adam and the first Chinaman Fuh-hi," the evidence of a relatively pure Monotheism seems to come out more clear and distinct. We meet "the remarkable phenomenon of barbarous nomads possessing a higher and truer comprehension of the Supreme Being than remains to their polished and enlightened descendants."* It would seem that the first immigrants must have brought with them something like a Pure Monotheism, with which a corresponding theory of the moral system would be naturally associated. Dr. Legge, the learned editor of the Chinese Classics, points out certain respects in which Confucius would seem to have come short of the faith of the older sages. In regard to the doctrine of God, he says, "This name is common in the (sacred books) She-king and Shu-king. *Te*, or *Shang-te*, appears as a personal being, ruling in heaven and on earth, the author of man's moral nature, the governor among the nations, by whom kings reign and princes decree justice, the rewarder of the good and the punisher of the bad." The worship of departed ancestors, whatever else may be said of it, implied their continued existence, and consequently the doctrine of a

* New Englander, Jan., 1872.

future life. Here we find the appropriate basis of a moral system which must have been identified with the early religion of China.

"The first immigrants," says a recent writer,* "must have brought with them a knowledge of God derived immediately from their forefathers in Western Asia. But this knowledge was not retained in its completeness, and began slowly to fade from the national consciousness. Judging from the native records themselves, it was not till fifteen centuries after the settlement of the country that the Chinese began to worship images. The original conception of the Supreme Being, which is reflected from the pages of the Shu-king, must have suffered a considerable change before any such materialistic representation of the deity could have been thought of. Especially is this moral deterioration apparent from the time of Confucius . . .

"Shin-nong, the successor of Fuh-hi, about 2737 B. C., 'sacrificed,' say the Chinese historians, 'to the Supreme Lord in the temple of light.' Such tokens of monotheistic beliefs are common in the earliest chronicles and the primitive ballads of the Chinese. Along with them are traces of other ideas, which sound strangely familiar to minds that are accustomed to ponder over the Scripture account of redemption." As evidence that the first immigrants to China brought with them a clearer and better knowledge of God than was retained by their descendants, it is asserted that we cannot otherwise explain those frequent allusions which are made in Chinese writings to the Supreme Being. "To the modern Confucian, Buddhistic, ancestor-worshipping Chinaman these traces of a better worship must be unintelligible." We can even trace the process by which the purer primitive belief was gradually obliterated.

"During the time of Confucius, his contemporary, Lao-tse, was dreaming out the system which has since grown into such a farrago of jugglery, necromancy, and devil-worship commingled. And, within five or six centuries more, the introduction of Buddhism from India completed the triad of religions; and these have gone on ever since, demoralizing

* New Englander, Jan., 1872.

the Empire and reducing the theistic beliefs of the people more and more hopelessly to the ordinary pagan level of materialism. At about the time of the Norman Conquest of England there occurred one of those minor eras of the revival of letters and learning, so many of which are chronicled in Chinese history; but the majority of the writers were commentators who explained away most of the few allusions to the Supreme God that had survived from the ancient classics. So often as this process was repeated, the nation settled deeper and deeper into ignorance of the true God. It may be doubted whether any other people in the world have so generally lapsed into atheism as have the modern Chinese. In all that vast empire there is but one temple consecrated to the worship of the Supreme Deity, and but one worshipper, the Emperor, who celebrates the pageant once a year."

Before the time of Confucius, it is asserted, a very different state of things prevailed, and even for some centuries after him, a higher form of worship was common among the people. The earlier conceptions of God have been preserved in the ancient odes and chronicles, like fossil witnesses of an order of things that has long been extinct. These conceptions were so inwrought into the literature which Confucius remoulded and preserved, that he himself, who preferred to speak of Heaven, rather than of God, did not expunge them from his compilations. He left them standing as he found them, to reflect and attest the earlier and purer beliefs. The classics which contain them are reverenced by the Chinese, with an almost superstitious homage, but the Great Name which they preserve has with them become obsolete and meaningless. "Whoever wishes to know," says Dr. Gutzlaff, "what the Chinese retained of the patriarchal creed, has only to read the passages in Yih-She which refer to Shang-te, the Supreme Emperor. . . . The nation would not be in that degraded condition in which we find it now, if these notions had been retained."

Commenting upon this, a writer in the *New Englander* remarks: "The mass of the people can rise no higher now in their vague remembrance of their ancestors' God than to worship heaven and earth; and the highest conception of Him

now recoverable by their acutest philosophers is that of an invisible universal Soul to the visible universal Body. From this conception downward to the grosser forms of materialism is a *descensus facilis*; and here is where the Chinese are to-day. Their knowledge of God is but an infinitesimal fragment of that which they possessed when they first entered the country. By sheer neglect of it, and sometimes doubtless by willful abuse, that divine knowledge has slowly melted away. They 'did not like to retain God in their knowledge.'"

Commenting upon this state of things, the same writer remarks: "A more painful spectacle could hardly be presented to the Christian philanthropist than this, of an infant people, destined to grow into the most populous of empires, starting on its long career equipped with the knowledge of God, and through all the forty and perhaps fifty centuries of its history thus far steadily improving its material condition with arts, inventions and education, but as steadily letting go of those great moral forces by which alone it could successfully grapple with the spiritual emergencies which must arise in all human life. Thus century by century the great empire has risen materially, and sunk morally. The result is civilization on the one hand, and paganism on the other; a life chained to a body of death; an artificial glow which illumines the physical side of this life, but throws no gleam of hope into the future world; a society whose thrift is godless, and whose conscience is dead."

As to Confucius himself, we must beware of making him responsible for the religious degeneracy which had really commenced long before his own age, although it continued afterward. We may reasonably suppose that he regarded the corruptions and perversions of the ancestral religion with repugnance, and we may perhaps thus explain the reserve which he manifested in his teachings and language, employing, for instance, the term "Heaven," in place of any Divine title expressive of personal attributes. Born in 551 B. C., he was contemporary with Pythagoras and Cyrus, and his ethical system, which he inculcated by precept and example, will bear comparison with anything at that time discoverable in the heathen world. He is peculiar, however, in this, that he

stands almost alone in dissociating morality from religion. A Supreme Intelligence *may* have been recognized by him in his inmost convictions, but he never confesses it in words; of *Spiritual beings*, it is noted that he never spoke, and yet some of his moral conceptions are worthy of the adherents of the purest Monotheism. He laid down a system of moral duties, or rather classes of moral duties, which carried their authority in themselves, and found their sanction and enforcement in the natural results of obedience or transgression.

In the teachings of Lao-tse—for many years a contemporary of Confucius, and even dividing with him the adherence and reverence of the nation—we meet with what wears, among its other aspects, that of a system of utilitarian morality, resolving duty into prudence. There is no absolute denial of the gods, any more than in the teachings of Confucius, but they are for the most part ignored. The gods may be existent or non-existent, without materially impairing the character of a system in which the highest conception of blessedness is that condition of the wise man, in which he has nothing to desire. His best and highest knowledge is to know that he knows nothing, and his highest wisdom is to rise above selfish prudence, or the wisdom of the world.

"If we sum up the whole," says Bunsen,* "we find one thought continually recurring in the works of all these sages, as the root-idea of the ancient system, and we may express it thus: There is a law which governs the All, in nature and in man, and this one law is reasonable. Thus, indeed, it had been said by Meng-zö, the renowned successor of Confucius in the fourth century before our era: "He who knows his own nature and that of all things, knows what heaven is; for heaven is indeed the inward essence and the vital energy of all things." This thought is the dowry of the Chinese intellect in the general history of man, the conception of a Kosmos *in*, and *above* the various objects; which, however, attains personality only in the human mind. In passing from Chinese to Assyrian history, we may not inappropriately cite the testimony of Mr. Layard, as quoted by the writer of the *New Englander*, to confirm his views of Chinese

* God in History, I. 288.

degeneracy. "It is found," says the English explorer, summing up certain results reached in his investigation of the buried places of Assyria, "contrary to the general impression, that idolatry was introduced when men had a better knowledge of the true God than afterward prevailed; that it did not grow up as a religion of nature, by the ineffectual attempts of men to find the true God. But it was introduced as an expedient of men, in order to observe what knowledge of God they possessed, because they did not like to retain God in their knowledge. This is shown in the fact that the earliest representations of God found in those sculptures are the best, and immeasurably exceed everything of the kind existing in after ages; especially in their approach to the true idea of God."

Not a little ingenuity has been expended in tracing back the supreme deities of several of the ancient oriental nations to a common source. But without lingering over matters which are yet subjects of dispute, we find at a very early date evidence of the wide prevalence of monotheistic views. They even survived the introduction of idolatry, and did not altogether vanish upon the adoption of new divinities, to whom was assigned a local sphere and a subordinate station. In some instances a conquering people recognized the gods of the conquered as spiritual powers, sufficiently important to be taken account of when the question of national conflict is discussed, but by no means to be accepted as substitutes for this native divinity. In Babylon and Assyria we find a supreme God. "At the head of the Assyrian Pantheon stood the 'great God,' Asshur. His usual titles are 'the great Lord,' 'the king of all the Gods,' 'he who rules supreme over the Gods.' Sometimes he is called 'the Father of the Gods,' though that is a title which is more properly assigned to Belus. His place is always first in invocations. He is regarded throughout all the Assyrian inscriptions as the special tutelary Deity, both of the kings and of the country. He places the monarchs upon their thrones, firmly establishes them in the government, lengthens the years of their reigns, preserves their power, protects their forts and armies, etc. To him they look to give them the victory over their enemies,

to grant them all the wishes of their heart. They represent themselves as passing their lives in his service. It is to spread his worship that they carry on their wars."* "Unlike the other gods, Asshur had no notorious temple or shrine in any particular city of Assyria, a sign that his worship was spread equally throughout the whole land, and not to any extent localized. . . . In the inscriptions, the Assyrians are described as 'the servants of Asshur,' and their enemies as 'the enemies of Asshur.' The Assyrian religion is 'the worship of Asshur.' No similar phrases are used with respect to any of the other gods of the Pantheon." "It is indicative of the (comparatively speaking) elevated character of Assyrian Polytheism that this exalted and awful Deity continued from first to last the main object of worship, and was not superseded in the thoughts of men by the lower and more intelligible divinities."†

Tiglath Pileser (B. C. 1130) was one of the most powerful of the Assyrian monarchs, and the documents connected with his reign, which have been recovered, indicate his habitual and marked recognition of a divine providence. "His wars are religious wars, at least as much as wars of conquest; his buildings, or, at any rate, those on whose construction he dwells with most complacency, are religious buildings; the whole tone of his mind is deeply and sincerely religious; besides formal acknowledgments, he is continually letting drop expressions that show that his gods are 'in all his thoughts,' and represent to him real powers governing and directing all the various circumstances of human life. The religious spirit displayed is, as might have been expected, in the highest degree exclusive and intolerant; but it is earnest, constant, and all-pervading."‡

We lack as yet the information which is necessary in order to define the precise moral bearings of the Assyrian faith. Whatever ethical system prevailed—and to some extent it must have corresponded to the features of the prevalent religion—the unmitigated despotism of absolute monarchy could have only affected it for the worse. In the Hebrew Scriptures, Monotheism is represented as the primitive wor-

* Rawlinson's Anc. Monarchies, II, 2. † Ib. 3. ‡ Ib. 73.

ship. A constant tendency to depart from it is exhibited, and at the same time rebuked. The progenitors of the human race are at once placed in a state of trial, with the sanctions of the promised reward or threatened penalty to secure their obedience to a specific command. Their disobedience results in a depravation of their nature, which is transmitted to their descendants. Thenceforth the drift of social and national development is toward idolatry and polytheism. It is arrested in a single branch of the human family, by a special providential training, and in connection with this "chosen people," we have a practical exposition of the moral government of the world.

The character of God is presented in various phases in his varied relations to men, and is illustrated by repeated and special interpositions. His name is Jehovah, the "I AM," self-existent and eternal. He is "the judge of the whole earth," and cannot but do right. His guardian care is extended to those who worship Him and observe His laws, so that in famine, or in prison, no calamity can overwhelm them, and no hostility crush them. If they call upon Him, He will hear and answer. Sacrifice is one of His approved forms of worship, yet "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." His law requires purity of heart, abstinence from all injustice, the control of every passion and lust. Truth, justice, humanity, kindness are enjoined. Individuals and nations that, without prophet or revelation, violate the unwritten law, are rebuked and punished. Marked calamities have a providential significance. The culminating wickedness of the world calls down upon it an annihilating universal deluge, and the way is prepared to renew the experiment of human probation under new conditions and with special promises. Sodom, with its kindred cities of "the plain," for sins that cried to heaven, is whelmed in a fiery destruction. The guilt of good men is not overlooked in the general excellence of their virtues. In connection with Lot, Isaac and Jacob, we meet with what may be called family retribution. The impatience of Moses, hurrying him into a criminal forgetfulness of his absolute dependence as an instrument of Omnipotence, leads to his exclusion from the promised land.

A whole generation of Hebrews perishes in the wilderness, when the miracles of food in the desert and the lessons of Sinai, impressively delivered, as well as their strange deliverance from bondage, had failed to suppress their murmurings or confirm their obedience.

Every disposition toward idolatry, or the adoption of foreign gods, is sternly repressed. For "the chosen people," the hostile nations around them are a rod of chastisement. With each departure from their law, they are visited with rebuke, captivity following captivity as the mercy of each successive deliverance is abused. War and pestilence are let loose upon them to force upon them at once a sense of dependence and of guilt. In their perversity, like the nations they had been the appointed instruments to exterminate for their gross idolatry and abominable vices, they are subjected to a kindred scourge, and almost exterminated themselves. Inspired by national ambition and pride, they ask for a king, and one is given them in wrath. Though designed to be a theocracy, ruled by the great unseen Sovereign of nations and men, they blindly prefer visible human sovereignty, and experience the result of their folly, the violence or the lust of their kings.

Never are they quite abandoned, however. A sleepless Providence watches over their destiny, rebukes them in their iniquity, but shields them in their peril. A special channel of communication with them is kept open through the institution of inspired prophets. They are addressed in the varied tones of invitation, rebuke, and warning. All that can inspire hope and confidence, or excite fear and terror, is alternately presented before them. The character of their Supreme Ruler, handed down through the sacred traditions of his law and memories of his interpositions, is illustrated by new interpretations of a Providence that, like lightnings blazing through sombre masses of cloud, light it up with almost insufferable splendors. Zeus on Olympus, as idealized by Greek fancy, sinks before the prophetic vision, to a prosaic monstrosity. Human imagination feels itself powerless to transcend the mighty conception pictured before it. An invisible presence that pervades all nature, that comprehends at a glance all creatures and events, that turn all the forces of

the universe, from the stars in their courses to the worm that gnaws a gourd into the channel of its designs, that "weighs the mountains in scales," or makes the mightiest conquerors and nations "the rod of its anger," is characterized as "the High and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity," and yet regards the cry of the humble, nor will despise the broken and contrite heart—such is the supernatural, inexpressible personality that has been invested, by the poetry of Hebrew prophets, with a grandeur and sublimity of attribute without a parallel in the literature of the world.

Before His face wickedness cannot stand. The secret iniquity cannot be veiled from His all-beholding eye. The curse of transgression will follow its victim to famine, exile, bereavement, agony, death. It may be visited upon his descendants to the third and fourth generation. It may be like a buried seed, to ripen in harvests of judgment. But die, it cannot. A sleepless eye follows it. A resistless power grasps it, and in a sudden strange moment, all its suspended activities may be re-awakened, to torture or to crush.

Thus the moral system of the Hebrew Scriptures is presented in features intensely and impressively distinct. The Supreme Ruler communicates with men through dreams, visions, providences, inspired predictions, prohibitions and warnings, and even by the personal mission of "the Angel of the Lord." There is something of anthropomorphism, without the taint of idolatry. God is represented—as He must be to the childhood of the race, in order to be apprehended—under human analogies, capable of perversion. But these analogies only serve the more closely to connect Him with human interests and relations, to infuse into the moral system the element of personal supervision, to give to all its co-operating provisions the unity of a designing and controlling will.

If space would allow, it might be profitable to pass under review separate portions of the Hebrew Scriptures, and compare them one with another, and thus note the views presented or entertained of the moral system in their progressive or relative development. But this is a theme broad enough for a separate treatise. We can only here advert to the deep significance of the book of Job, as illustrative of ancient

opinions of the mysteries of Providence, and the problems of the moral system. Into the origin of this unique production of ancient literature, whether with or without a historical basis, we need not linger to inquire. In either case it answers the purpose of illustrating certain features of the moral system, as it was apprehended by reflecting minds of the East, long centuries before the Christian era. The whole frame of things, natural and moral, is regulated by one controlling mind. The power and majesty, the wisdom and the justice of this supreme ruler and disposer, are most impressively presented to view. The sublimity of the writer's conceptions has no parallel in classic literature.

But the Providence of this Supreme Ruler is both minute and all-comprehensive. Evil, which finds its representative embodiment in Satan, is yet subject to Him, and is forced to co-operate in the accomplishment of His designs. It is not allowed to maintain any separate or independent dominion. It can effect nothing against the good man, not even against his worldly honors or possessions, much less may it assail his integrity by the infliction of social bereavement or personal calamity, except by the divine permission. In doing this, moreover, it works out its own defeat. It shows that virtue may be disinterested, that Job's integrity is not based upon his prosperity, that with every worldly prospect blasted, the soul under trial may retain its faith in God's justice, and confidently anticipate the vindication of its innocence.

The Providence of God is universal. With the limitless resources of Omnipotence, it takes note of the individual, and of all the circumstances of his condition and trials. Its methods are mysterious, above human comprehension, but their wisdom and justice are vindicated in the issue. The good man is the special object of its favor, and under his severest calamity, he is never absolutely deserted.

His condition on earth is one of probation. He may suffer, he may be reduced almost to a state of desperation, but his sufferings are not necessarily those of exact retribution. They may be simply a severe but chastening and salutary discipline. Under them his virtue and his faith in God may be strengthened and developed. He may be brought to a better knowl-

edge of himself, to a more profound adoration of that wisdom which so mysteriously, and, in spite of all adverse appearances, kindly orders his lot.

On this point, Job is at issue with his friends. They insist that where there is such severe suffering, such signal and sore affliction, there must be sin. They can vindicate the justice of God only on the theory that such marked calamity as had overtaken Job, must be regarded in the light of retributory infliction. Job, while admitting his human infirmities, and his own contrast with infinite purity, will not allow that he is a greater sufferer than others, on the ground of his being a greater sinner. He is conscious of his integrity. Humble before God, he will not humble himself to the ungrounded reproaches of his fellow-men. He is still confident that the mystery of providence can be explained, without impeaching the divine justice on the one hand, or surrendering the consciousness of his relative innocence upon the other.

In this undecided state of the controversy between Job and his three friends, Elihu appears in the character of an umpire. He can side with neither party. Job has justified himself rather than God, while his three friends have condemned him on insufficient grounds. The true view to be taken of the matter is, that "God is greater than man." "He giveth not account of any of His matters." He disciplines and chastens man to bring him to repentance and confession. "Oftentimes" He subjects him to strange vicissitudes "to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living."

On the other hand, and in reply to Job's friends, there are certain principles of God's character and government that are laid down as inviolable. It is impious to say "it profiteth man nothing that he should delight himself in God," for "far be it from God that He should do wickedness." "The work of a man shall He render unto him," "neither will the Almighty pervert judgment." If it is not fitting to charge a king with wickedness, how much less to charge God! with whom no man may enter into judgment. The proper attitude of the afflicted is humility. His prayer is to be—"that which I see not, teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more."

Elihu concludes his argument by dilating upon the greatness of God. He is "mighty." He "giveth right to the poor." "He withdraweth not His eyes from the righteous." How can human wickedness hurt, or human righteousness profit Him, or sway Him from the line of infinite justice? He reveals to men their transgressions, by means of fetters and cords of affliction. Thus "He opens their ear to discipline, and commands that they return from iniquity." If they obey, they prosper; if they obey not, they perish and die without knowledge. Yet the great scheme of Providence must remain enveloped in mystery. The works of God are "wondrous." We must pause adoringly before the indisputable truth that "touching the Almighty, we cannot find Him out; He is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice." The wisdom of man is to fear Him.

This argument of Elihu prepares the way for the decisive utterance in which the Lord answers Job out of the whirlwind, rebuking those who darken counsel by words without knowledge. Human weakness and ignorance are most impressively contrasted with the grandeurs and mysteries of the physical creation, and these are exhibited as only dim reflections—the "hiding"—of that power that has framed and rules the entire universe. It is at the close of this appeal to the contrast which Natural Theology exhibits between man and God, that Job yields himself in adoring submission to the Divine Sovereignty, exclaiming, "I know that Thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from Thee." He confesses that he had uttered what he understood not, and the result to himself is self-abhorrence, and repentance in dust and ashes.

Thus we have an exposition of the moral system, in its relations both to God and man. We have a Sovereign Intelligence that orders this scheme of things, with profound wisdom arranging its complicated frame, and so ordering it, that not only evil shall not triumph, but it shall be made instrumental to moral discipline, and shall vindicate the fact of disinterested integrity. The vastness of this scheme—beyond our comprehension—disarms criticism of it. Exact retributive justice in the present state is not a feature necessary to

its perfection, although final retribution is foreshadowed here. The good man now may be tried, rather than rewarded; yet his lack of reward is neither to his own prejudice, nor to that of the character or providence of God. The weakness and inadequacy of our powers to apprehend an infinite scheme, leave to us only the duty of obeying God's will, so far as known, and trusting to His justice that all things will in the end justify the wisdom of His comprehensive plan.

CHAPTER IV.

EARLY GREEK RELIGION, HOMER, HESIOD.

The early religion of Greece is involved in obscurity. It first comes distinctly into view in the poems of Homer and Hesiod. But it had already undergone material transformations. Herodotus, who roughly estimates the date of these poets as about four centuries previous to his own time, or more than eight centuries before Christ, states* that "in early time, the Pelasgi offered sacrifices of all kinds, and prayed to the gods, but had no distinct names or appellations for them, since they had never heard of any." He supposes these names to have come from abroad, and adds,† "whence the gods severally sprang, whether or no they had all existed from eternity, what forms they bore—these are questions of which the Greeks knew nothing, until the other day, so to speak. For Homer and Hesiod were the first to compose Theogonies, and give the gods their epithets, and allot them their several offices and occupations and describe their forms."

It is significant in this connection that the historian states that the early Greeks "called them gods (*theoi*, disposers) because they had disposed and arranged all things in such a beautiful order." If then the multiplied divinities, under specific and distinguishing names, were at first and long

* His., II. 52. † Ib. 53.

unknown, and the name disposer or disposers, was adopted to set forth the Greek apprehension of the proper explanation of the order of the world, we may infer, especially in the confessed absence of all idolatrous representations of the deity, that the early Greek religion was eminently spiritual and probably Monotheistic. Even in the heroic age, religion bears no taint of idolatry. No mention is made of any visible representation of deity, excepting the statue of Athene in the citadel of Troy. The Homeric deities, earthly and sensual as they are, are a race of beings perfectly distinct from mortals. The latter may be elevated to divine companionship, but they are not deified. In dreams, the gods communicate with men, but there is no revelation through the entrails of victims. Oracles exist, but temples are few. There is no ecclesiastical order. The Patriarch is priest of his household.* But another, yet kindred aspect of this subject is presented in connection with what has been called the Dodonean cultus. "It is universally allowed that the temple (shrine) of Dodona owed its origin to the Pelasgi, at a period much anterior to the Trojan war; since many writers represent it as existing in the time of Deucalion, and even of Inachus." Herodotus represents it as "the most ancient oracle of Greece," and it was dedicated to the *Pelasgic* Jupiter. Here we have what Prof. Tayler Lewis† terms "the earliest traceable link between the Greek Mythology and the primitive Patriarchal Monotheism." At Dodona, on the coast of Epirus, a deity was worshipped at a very early date, of whom Homer seems to speak with awe, as of one belonging to an antiquity, transcending the theology of his day. A hoary sacredness invested his worship; there was associated with it the idea of something separate, holy, unapproachable. It was characterized by two peculiar features. Zeus was alone worshipped; and connected with this worship was the esteemed sacredness of the oaks. The seat of the oracle was originally not a temple, but a grave, and hither, after long wanderings, came "the transformed mysterious Io, that insolvable enigma of the Grecian mythology." Leaning to tradition, Herodotus makes the origin of the oracle of Dodona,

* Browne's Greek Clas. Lit., 93. † In the Presb. Quarterly for July, 1872.

contemporaneous with that Jupiter Hammon of the Lybian desert. Both were dedicated to Jove as the supreme god. When they were established the monotheistic idea was evidently predominant.

The fact that the oracle at Dodona was attributed to a foreign origin is also significant. Grecian feeling, as Rawlinson has remarked, would scarcely have assented to such a theory, unless it had some foundation in truth. The connection of the oracle with the Greek story of the Flood, seems also important as tending to associate it with the early Javanic migrations. The devotion and austere lives of its officiating priests (Selli), seem also to harmonize with the awe inspired by Monotheism alone. These considerations seem fully to justify the conclusions reached by Prof. Lewis, in his discussion of the "Primitive Greek religion." He remarks: "This comparatively pure monotheism, or this almost exclusive Jove-worship, was a characteristic of the Dodonean Cultus. Taken in connection with the two other features, the gloomy austerity, and the reverence for the oak, it furnishes no light proof of a fact which we deem of highest importance. The old Dodonean religion was Druidical, or rather the Druidical religion was Dodonean; if not derived from it, yet coming in the same channel and from the same influences that so early manifested themselves in the extreme Western Greece. The worship and belief which formed so striking a characteristic of the earliest inhabitants of Gaul and Britain, and which continued long after the same territory had been reached by other people's coming by a different route, was essentially the same with this Pelasgian or Javanic Cultus of Dodona, that had been set up as a memorial of one still more pure and primitive. If this view be correct, we may regard both manifestations—the one in Western Greece, the other in Western Europe—as remains of the primitive Monotheism, with its higher religious awe. And thus may it be rationally held, that though very dark in their own views, and surrounded by a darkness still more dense, the Selli and the Druids were witnesses for the holier aspects of ancient truth."*

* Presbyterian Quarterly, 1872, p. 487.

Prof. Lewis also notes the fact that Cæsar, in speaking of the Druids, mentions their doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and its transmigrations, as connected with the idea of retribution, *quo maxime ad virtutem excitare putant*." As to the word *Druid*, Prof. Lewis holds that there can hardly be a doubt of its connection with the Hellenic word for oak. Nor is the fact that the migratory route of the inhabitants of Western Europe lay through the Pelasgic region, unimportant in investigating the origin of their cultus. Among the ante-Homeric Greeks, a theory of the moral order of the world is traceable, although closely associated with, and often obscured by a mythology with which it did not always harmonize. As to the Homeric deities, they are "made in the likeness of men," exhibit the weaknesses and imperfections of men, and yet, like the unjust judge, in virtue of his official position, administering the justice of law, they supervise human interests and relations, and interpose to arrest the triumph of heaven-daring wickedness. The fate of Troy is due to their decision, and is the signal retribution of a crime in which the sacred rights of hospitality—the most obligatory of virtues—had been outraged.

As we listen to the poet of the Iliad and Odyssey, we are made to feel that human conduct is subjected to superhuman influences, and even liable to superhuman retributions. A system of rewards and punishments exists, intelligible and operative, even though at times, or through the influence of subordinate divinities, capriciously administered. It exhibits superior and even irresistible power, arrayed ultimately on the side of truth, justice and humanity.

This system, as exhibited to us, finds a response in the moral convictions of the age, nor is it a mere framework of superstition. It acts directly upon human life. It has terrors for abused power. It prescribes duties more obligatory than written law. It commends mercy to the needy and hospitality to the stranger. The fate of the heaven-daring Ajax, or of the infatuated suitors, is as inevitable as that of the doomed city. No respect of persons, no regard for rank or dignity, tempers the severity of a retribution defiantly challenged.

Notwithstanding many debasing associations, Zeus is the moral ruler of the world. He is the king of gods and men, the arbiter of battle, the sovereign administrator over all human interests. He holds the scales in which the contending fates are weighed. His hand dispenses to mortals, from the two caskets that stand before him, good or evil, the mixed or unmixed lots of men. His purposes may be shaped in the Council of the Gods, but when shaped, they must be executed, and the subordinate deities, among whom Athene and Apollo hold a place exceptionally conspicuous, are the ministers of a providence that extends over all human interests.

Retributive forces, moreover, sometimes impersonated, are recognized as co-operating, in the character of champions or avengers, to maintain the moral order of the world. The Erinnyes are clothed with the terrors of the Divine Judgment, and in their highest character are exhibited as the venerable but resistless ministers of Right. They are invoked to avenge the violated oath. They are the invisible guardians of the injured, too weak to defend himself. They suffer no crime against the sanctities of law or venerable custom to escape with final impunity. No power or dignity can successfully resist them, or ward off the doom they inflict. "They are never subject to the order of any deity.* The gods, indeed, are subject to control, or even punishment by them. Their agency is wholly anterior to, and independent of, all volition whatever. They represent Law in action. But, besides punishing offenders, they actually stop and repair infractions of the moral or settled constitution of the world. They therefore represent not only right as opposed to wrong, but order as opposed to disorder." It is true that they seem sometimes to act as if under a blind impulse to arrest and punish the offender, without regard to equity, as in the case of Œdipus; but even here, as it has been remarked,† "the elements of good greatly preponderate; and there is something noble as well as awful in these beings, watching with so much care over constituted laws, and maintaining or restoring the equilibrium of the moral world."

The Atè of Homer, as impersonated, is a Temptress, ever

* Gladstone's Juventus Mundi, 351. † Ib., 354.

ready to take advantage of human folly, but inviting calamity upon men only through their willing error, or self-surrender to false illusions. Hurled from heaven by Zeus, for the mischief she has done, she roams the earth, watching her opportunity to hurry folly to its false and fatal decision. We seem to have here—if we interpret the allegory—a living power of evil, extraneous to man, but ready to avail itself of his inward weakness, and soliciting him to indulge the propensities that lead him to calamity or ruin.

The Fate of Homer, moreover, is unlike the fate of blind necessity, as conceived in a later age. It seems, at times, to grow into the character of a judicial providence, nor is the will so controlled by it, as to release from responsibility, or palliate crime by the plea of necessity. Indeed, in both the Homeric poems, the Fates work, "not according to the impulsion of a blind and occult force, but rationally towards the fulfillment of a divine or Olympian decree, announced at the outset and steadily pursued to the end."*

The Homeric view of the future state forms an integral part of the moral system inwoven in the poems. The retributions of that state are employed with solemnity and force as a sanction of the moral laws, especially in the case of the more obnoxious crimes. The under world is the abode of the Erinnyes, where Minos administers justice among the dead, as

* Mure, in his "Critical History of Greek Language and Literature," I., 470, remarks: "The doctrine of fatality, while replete with a mystery and terror which render it a fine instrument in the hands of an accomplished poet, is a philosophical rather than a practical doctrine. Hence its full development in the poetry of Greece was reserved for a later period. Although it lies at the root of Homer's fable, it is seldom there put forward in so prominent a form as in the tragic drama. With Homer, naturally weak and wicked men are indeed instigated to folly or crime by the decrees of fate, or the agency of its ministers, but he takes no pleasure in exhibiting just or well-intentioned persons irresistibly impelled to guilt and consequent destruction, as in the case of Œdipus and other heroes of the Attic stage." On the same subject, Bunsen says: "The relation of Zeus to Destiny has been often falsely conceived. Zeus stands in an ordered universe; to this Kosmos it appertains before all, that all beings abide within the law of their own existence. Thus man, the noblest of them all, must die; this is his destiny; but it is part of the order established by Zeus; whose essence is at one with this thought. He who invokes the gods against this order, sets himself up in opposition to the father of the gods, and falls a prey to madness. Zeus is not bound to *mœra* as to a blind destiny; he is, *per se*, the law of the world and of all beings, and maintains that law inviolate."—Bunsen's *God in History*, II., 103.

a king would on earth. The Elysian plain suggests the state of future blessedness. Hades is the gloomy abode, which forms the common receptacle of departed spirits, while Tartarus, as far below Hades as Hades is below the earth, indicates the lowest deep of future and hopeless retribution.

With all the crudities of the Homeric mythology, the doctrine of a superintending and controlling providence is never lost from view. The gods know all that takes place on earth, and nothing can successfully withstand their united counsel. Some of them may be simply selfish in their aims. They may be governed by conflicting sympathies or prejudices. Their moral standard may often be low indeed, and confident of strength or privilege, they may indulge in a license they would scarce approve in men. Of holiness, in the Scriptural sense of the term, they seem to have no conception, and certainly exhibit no example. But to their control, nature and men are subject. Physical forces are obedient to their will, and recognize their mastery. They can assume what form they please, and control the minds and purposes of men at their sovereign pleasure. Strength, wisdom and courage are their gifts. They hear the prayers of mortals and mete out their lot. Life and death, success or defeat, is determined by them or by their Fate. To men they communicate their will, and from them they expect oblations and worship.

Themis, as the goddess of Law and Justice, is sovereign in the ethical sphere. In Pindar and the Homeridan hymns, she sits by the side of Jupiter to give him counsel. Böttiger says: "She is the oldest purely allegorical personification of a virtue." When the gods are invited to the great assembly that is to decide the fate of Troy, it is Themis who summons them. In terrestrial affairs, the name signifies civil right, and is "the basis on which are founded the relations of the whole political and social order." It is by her presence and inspiration that the decisions of assemblies are sanctioned, and her statue before the eyes of the orator suggested the supremacy of the power and right of the principle which it represented.

It is obvious that the Homeric theory of the moral order of the world, however incomplete, and however encumbered

or overlaid with a mythology often repulsive, had certain definite features, and approximated at least to an imposing and impressive conception. It recognized the universal obligation of law, administrative and executive forces, a superintending providence and an inevitable retribution, and its scope extended to the unseen sphere and the future of the disembodied spirit.

This fact is the more important, as Homer was, in some sense, the prophet, as well as the poet of his age and people. Apart from the utterances of the living oracle, he became the highest authority for several succeding generations. "In fact,* Homer was to antiquity not at all unlike what (on very different grounds of authority) the Bible is to us, and you will find through almost all of ancient philosophy the same anxiety to confirm a philosophical dogma by the high traditional evidence of Homer that among us a daring speculatist often evinces to confirm his notions by their supposed consonance with the Scriptures. Homer was the public document of Polytheism, the popular repository of the national beliefs."

In this connection the words of Prof. T. Lewis are pertinent and forcible. He remarks: "Sunken and degraded as was the Greek religion, extravagant as had become its polytheism, greatly as it had declined from some older, purer state, there was still one pervading idea that ever distinguished it from these physical, pantheistic, morally powerless Eastern systems. It was the idea suggested by that dread word *Nemesis*, the inevitableness of justice, slow but sure, the certainty that wrong-doing would be punished, sooner or later, and that too, at the hands of some personal divine power. It may sometimes have the look of a physical fate, and occasionally some of the strong language of the dramatic poets may assume that aspect, but it never wholly loses the personal retributive character. God hates iniquity. 'He is of purer eyes than to look upon evil;' 'He is the jealous God'—jealous for His own holiness, and for the awe in which this righteousness-loving, wrong-abhorring attribute was to be held by all rational beings. Such is the Scriptural representation. The

* William Archer Butler's Anc. Phil., I. 280.

Greek follows it at a great distance, but in language that reveals its descent from a purer primitive source. There is vast significance in that most ancient of ante-Homeric representations of Diké, Themis, Nomos or Nemesis—sometimes the one, sometimes the other, but ever the same idea of Justice or Retribution—as sitting at the right hand of Zeus, or being the partners, the *sunedroi*, the consessors, or judicial associates of his high judgment seat. These personifications are all older than the Homeric Heré or Juno; the mere physical conception that afterward takes their place, and deforms the later mythology."*

In the interval between Homer and Hesiod, whether more or less than a century, we find that the Greek religion has undergone change. Hero-worship has made its appearance. The spirits of the mighty dead have been translated into tutelary deities, or guardian angels, watching over the conduct and destinies of men. In the Theogony—it matters little, so long as its age is conceded, whether it is a genuine work of Hesiod or not—we have an elaborately expanded mythology, and in the catalogue of the unions and offsprings of the deities of Jupiter's race, we have what has been plausibly held to be an exposition under physical forms, of the moral development of the order of the world. Jupiter marries Metis—counsel; and when she becomes pregnant, devours her, and brings forth himself Minerva—practical wisdom. He marries Themis—justice, and from her spring Eunomia (good order), Dice (right), and Irene (peace). One familiar with Spenser's "Faery Queene," will scarce admit that in one case we have allegory, and not in the other.

But of Hesiod's age we can only determine that it is a generation or more subsequent to Homer. An Ionian by descent, he was a Bœotian by adoption, and his father's family had to struggle with a rough climate, if not an ungenial soil, for bread. Hesiod was evidently a practical agriculturist. He was acquainted with the stern realities of common life and the daily duty of the farm. Such experience, combined with a keen sense of personal wrong—if he was indeed robbed by his own brother of a share of the paternal inheritance—fitted

* Pres. Quarterly, 1872. P. 448.

him to combine with agricultural instruction, that richness of "wise saws" and blunt proverbs, which contribute a peculiar element to that mosaic poem, the "Works and Days."

The invocation declares in reverential language the omnipotence and universal providence of God in the moral government of the world. The fables of Prometheus and Pandora suggest mysterious traditions. The four successive ages, gold, silver, brass, iron, indorse the notion of a gradual degeneracy of the race, from a primitive state of blessedness. The fable of the Hawk and Nightingale expresses the poet's conviction of the actual tendencies of human nature in a degenerate age, the tendencies of excessive power to become unjust and tyrannic. As he proceeds, he lays down what has been denominated "a very exalted code of ethics," in which the rewards of justice and fidelity are especially urged upon the attention of the brother by whom he had been wronged, yet to whom the poem is addressed. Over and over again, in different passages, he insists upon fair dealing, and a sacred observance of oaths. He charges kings and judges to be just and merciful; reminds them that myriads of ministering spirits watch their actions.

"Invisible, the gods are ever nigh,
Pass through the midst, and bend the all-seeing eye;
Who on each other prey, who wrest the right,
Aweless of Heaven's revenge, are open to their sight.
For thrice ten thousand holy demons rove
The nurturing earth; commissioned from above,
Hovering they glide to earth's extremest bound,
A cloud aerial veils their forms around;
Guardians of man, their glance alike surveys
The upright judgments, and the unrighteous ways,
A virgin pure is Justice; from the King
Of Heaven her birth; a venerable thing
And glorious, to the deities on high,
Whose mansion is yon everlasting sky,
Driv'n by despiteful wrong, she takes her seat
In lowly grief at Zeus' eternal feet;
There, of the soul unjust her plaints ascend,
So rue the nations when their kings offend."

No wrong-doing can escape with impunity. The man that smites another will find his blow recoil upon himself.

"He wounds himself that aims another's wound,
His evil counsels on himself rebound,
Zeus, at his awful pleasure looks from high
With all-discerning and all-knowing eye;
Nor hidden from its ken what injurèd right
Within the city walls eludes the sight."

The allotments of the good and evil will be as their deeds. Riches cannot shield the transgressor. A brief prosperity may be conceded him, but final triumph belongs to the righteous alone.

"Wrong weighs the rich man's conscience to the dust
When his foot stumbles on the way unjust;
Far different is the path, a path of light,
That guides the feet to equitable right,
The end of righteousness enduring long,
Exceeds the short prosperity of wrong."

The conclusion of what may be called Hesiod's sermon on the sacred duty of justice, is one of the most famous passages in the ancient classics. Plato, Xenophon, Aristotle, Cicero, Livy, and many others, allude to, or quote it. Lucian speaks of it as "those popular verses of Hesiod, about virtue and labor, and the ascent to the summit." Familiar as the thought is which these lines express, they have peculiar importance as illustrative of the sentiments of Hesiod's time.

"To vice, with ease, may all mankind resort;
Hard by her dwelling, and the way is short;
But virtue have the Gods immortal fenced
With labor, and a long steep road dispensed,
Whereby to seek her; but, the summit won,
Right easy seems what wearily begun."

Of Hesiod's frugal, almost niggardly maxims, of his injunctions, sometimes both superstitious and minute, of his directions as to lucky and unlucky days, and of the mythological extravagances, for which Xenophanes and Plato censured him, and for which Pythagoras declared that he had seen the unfortunate poet bound to a brazen pillar in Hades—of all these, we need not speak; their presence in the Hesiodic writings, only renders the contrast of those moral sentiments with

which they are connected, the more striking. They are a testimony at once to the degradation of which the intellect is capable, and that force of religious and moral conviction, which such degradation cannot wholly stifle or suppress.

There are some ideas common alike to Homer and Hesiod, and among these the most important is that expressed by the Greek word, *Nemesis*, to which, as it occurs again in the tragedians, we shall hereafter have occasion to refer. With respect to it, Bunsen remarks,* "the fundamental idea of this word—in all periods so current among the Hellenes, so untranslatable to the Romans, because possessing no interpreter in the popular consciousness—*is the act of moral judgment regarded as the award of what is due*. . . . The word signifies primarily *moral indignation*, the (holy or impure) anger felt at the infringement of what is right and fitting; therefore, above all, at the presumptuous transgressor, who not only does evil, but does it in arrogance, recklessly and impiously casting away all holy awe before God or his fellow-men, as though he stood above the eternal laws and outside the limits of humanity."

To him who recognizes the moral law as binding upon himself, "Nemesis appears as the order of the universe, as a divine safeguard against the encroachments of the powerful, and the outrages of the wicked, as consolation under heavy affliction, as the stay of his faith in the deity. . . Nemesis is to Hesiod, also, the keystone of the universal order; if that be removed, all will be dissolved and go to wreck. . . The Homeric use of the term is alone sufficient to prove its purely moral origin. Neither in the Iliad nor in the Odyssey is Nemesis a deity, nor even a personified moral quality. . . It signifies the moral indignation which we feel at the sight of sinful presumption setting itself up against gods and men; the shrinking or awe associated with shame; in other words, the verdict of the inward judge, and the recognition that the universal conscience is . . the veritable oracle of God."

* Bunsen's God in History, II. 61-3.

CHAPTER V.

GREEK PHILOSOPHY.

The germs of Greek philosophy have been traced, perhaps, more curiously than correctly to the earlier poets. To the old traditions of the mythologists many philosophemes of a later date have been referred. The famous doctrine that nothing *is*, but that all is in a continual flux, a state of becoming, has been attributed an original in a verse of Homer, and Aristotle thought he could discover in the opening of the Hesiodic theogony—where chaos and love are celebrated as the first causes of organic existence—the germ of the doctrine which separates and distinguishes the creative principle from the material.

But before the time of Thales, the conceptions which gave rise to Greek mythology must have become well-nigh antiquated. They no longer exercised a living energy in the development of the Greek mind. Whatever their original elevation or significance, they had degenerated, before the commencement of historical times, into the grossest anthropomorphism. What respect they still commanded was mainly traditional or ceremonial. A vague sentiment of awe still invested what had been transmitted from the olden time, and a heroic ancestry, reputedly sprung from the gods, invited an almost equal reverence for both. "The moral order of things, to which these religious conceptions were well calculated to direct attention, might, and probably did, awaken philosophical reflection, to which end tended also the ideas which invariably arise from out of the moral view, however weak, of an after-state of the dead in Hades, and of a retribution for the deeds done in the present life. But it was principally the physical aspect of the popular religion, which recognized in every phenomenon the presence of a divine living energy, and by which all was made obedient to the laws of nature,

that was most fitted to awaken among the Greeks the philosophical spirit."*

Of the three early schools, the Ionian, Pythagorean and Eleatic, the Pythagorean alone gave special prominence to religious ideas. The earlier philosophers of the other two, either stood aloof in contemptuous indifference from the popular religion, or derided the superstitions of the multitude and the fables of the gods. They preferred the sphere of physical speculation, and, while they were divided between the dynamical and mechanical theories of the origin of the universe, their attention was alike directed to the explanation of physical facts. Nearly all were subject to a strong pantheistic tendency. The dynamicists posited in matter a vital and self-developing force, so that with them the main question to be resolved was—what is that original substance or being, out of which all that exists has evolved itself, or been evolved? while those who leaned to the mechanical theory for the most part attained only to a *Deus ex machina*, a moving force which gave law and order to creative development. Sometimes the elements of the two theories, were so far combined, as to make the exclusive application of the terms, mechanical or dynamical, impossible. The two theories were almost contemporaneous, although the earliest philosophers of the Ionic school were, for the most part, dynamicists.

At the head of this school stands Thales, a native of Miletus, born about 636 B.C. Of an illustrious family, and conspicuous for the political part which he took in the affairs of his country, he is best known to us by tradition, as one of the seven wise men of Greece. His fundamental principle, in the light of modern science, seems an absurdity. It was in effect that there was but one original substance, water. The entire world was regarded in the light of a living being, gradually maturing, and taking force and development from an imperfect seed state. The simple primary substance was the seed of things, the principle of life, itself a potentially living entity, evolving itself into actual existences. The great significance of Thales' philosophy, as pointed out by

* Ritter's His. of Anc. Philosophy, I. 135.

Aristotle, was that it swept away at once the whole mass of myths as to the origin of things.

Anaximenes, whom Ritter, Lewes and others make Thales' successor—though usually classed as the third of the Ionian philosophers—was also a native of Miletus, born about 548 B.C.* He differed from Thales in making air, instead of water, the original substance. The air seemed universal. When one breathed, he drew in a part of the universal life. Air was the life of man—the life of that vitalized organism, the universe, of which man was part. The cause of change was discovered in the eternal motion of the air, and the evolution of the world was one continuous process of life.

The proper successor of Anaximenes is Diogenes of Apollonia, in Crete, where he flourished about 400 B. C. He also adopted the tenet which made air instead of water the origin of things, tracing specially its analogy with the soul. There is no life without air. Even the fish live on the air found in the water. This primary substance, moreover, is not only animated or ensouled, as Anaximenes taught, but it either is, or possesses, intelligence. All that exists is arranged in the most beautiful order by intelligence and design. The primary being, therefore, is the source of all rational intelligence. As all is derived from it, it is necessarily an eternal and imperishable substance in possession of all powers; but as soul, it is also a being endued with consciousness—"it knows much."† From the order of the mundane system, Diogenes inferred that it must originate with an intelligent being, a soul which vivifies all, and knows all, because it is the first. Although his leading idea is that of intellectual development in connection with the universe, and though in all probability the original and all-embracing air would scarcely by him have been defined simply as our atmosphere, he recognizes no difference between the mental and the physical, deriving both alike—and alike animated—from the same source. He even attributed to the world respiratory organs, and he fancied that he found them in the stars. To brutes, he consistently attributed thought, and he credited to dead things a latent vital force.

* According to Prichard at least twenty years earlier. † Ritter, I. 213.

Here was progress. The principle of Thales was purely physical, a mere vital energy. Anaximenes substituted another original substance, less gross, and assimilated it to the human soul. Diogenes went further. He identified it with reason, design, knowledge.

In Heracleitus of Ephesus, we meet with a modification of the Ionian system. He was born about 503 B.C., and is most popularly known as "the weeping philosopher." A stern censor of the vices of his fellow-citizens, and contemning their offer to him of the magistracy, the world was discolored to his eye by the morbid glooms of his own soul. It is not surprising that he should have expressed unqualified contempt for the poets and philosophers that had preceded him. They had sought erudition, he said, and not wisdom. At the same time, by his open reprobation of idolatry, Heraclitus discredited himself with the multitude.

His style is obscure—perhaps intentionally so. We gather from what has been preserved and interpreted through others, that he held that the end of all wisdom, was alike difficult and desirable. It was the discovery of the principle, which as a living unity pervades, and is inherent in, all the phenomena of the universe. "There is," he said, "but one object of wisdom—the name of Zeus—which wills, and wills not to be named . . . there is but one thing wise, to understand the reason which guides all and each." Rejecting water and air, he designated fire as the original substance. "All is convertible into fire, and fire into All." Like Diogenes, he identified this primary substance with soul, or the force of life. He would not allow that his "fire" was simply flame. From his expressions, it is evident that his principle of all things was the wise and rational intelligence that guides and maintains the development of the whole mundane system. "His mind formed the notion of an illimitable and perfect living substance endued with irresistible force—a force whose greatest manifestation is in the manner in which it surpasses every conception attempted to be formed of it."* This force is consubstantial with that universal and absolute life which is the cause of all the phenomena of nature. It manifests itself

* Ritter, I. 236.

in the vitality of fire and in the rational soul. The freedom of its operation is indicated by the bold figure of Heraclitus, "to make worlds is Jove's pastime."

The soul of man is a migrated portion of the original and universal fire. Yet its harmony, like that of the world, is born of conflict. Diverse impulses, as in the case of the lyre and bow, must conspire to produce it. Homer was wrong in wishing for perpetual peace between gods as well as men. All would then sink to decay. The universe is the result of law and order. All is determined by fate. Yet "all is ordered by reason and intelligence." The spontaneous transformation, self-lighting or self-extinguishing, follows a definite order. Yet man, though so related to, if not identified with the All, has no certain knowledge. "Vain man learns from God just as the boy from the man." He is "by nature irrational, and only rational through the all-embracing heaven."

Here we note the gloomy cast of Heraclitus' philosophy. "The very birth of man is a calamity—a birth unto death." "Death is our life, and life is our death." What the ape is to man, man is to God. "Men's opinions are but children's play." The cause of the imperfection of the human soul is traced to its union with the earthly body. All perception is not deceptive; the universal force of life is in each individual, and yet it is merely an imperfect ray of the eternal fire. The universal life is mirrored in the human soul when this does not separate itself from it, but with open senses receives and pictures it within itself.

The divine energy of life is most palpably and clearly revealed in the life of reason. All human laws are supported by the divine law; for its power is equal to its will, and it is all-sufficient and all-prevailing. The moral law is to be obedient to the counsels of the One. Pride and insolence are hurtful, and contentment is the supreme good. It is not for man's welfare that his wishes should be fulfilled. He must hunger to eat, and labor to rest. To be wise is the consummation of virtue, and wisdom is to speak and practice truth.

A religious sadness pervades Heraclitus' philosophy, and he is ever on the border of Pantheism. But this Pantheism is Greek, not Oriental. It thinks rather than dreams. It

toils rather than rests. It weeps rather than courts insensibility. It dispenses with all sensible symbols. His notion of the ultimate aim of the philosophical effort is purer than that of his predecessors. He has an ideal of the perfect life.

Anaximander, of Miletus, belongs to the class of mechanical philosophers. Born about 610 B.C., he flourished earlier than the philosophers last mentioned, and has sometimes been called the friend, and, at others, disciple of Thales. His reputation for political and scientific knowledge was great, and to him is ascribed the invention of the sun-dial. He was fond of mathematics, and framed a series of geometrical problems. His leading tenet is that the primary substance is infinite, a kind of original chaos. It constitutes a unity, but with a multiplicity of elements. From its commixture of earth and water fermentous bubbles, under the sun's increasing heat, were produced, converted by the solar warmth into living creatures. This first animal birth was imperfect, and was followed by others. Man was the last of living productions, first possessing a fish-shape, but when grown to be capable of helping himself, ejected upon the dry land.

But as "the infinite was the cause of all generation," so it was of corruption. The different elements of the infinite must be brought back again ultimately to their original state. Here a moral condition of things is reached. "Things must all return whence they came, according to destiny; for they must all, in order of time, undergo due penalties and expiations of wrong-doing."

In this scheme the idea of entirety, as well as reciprocal connection of elements, is maintained. The infinite appears in some measure as a living being. Here Anaximander parts company with the Atomists, who are of a later date. He makes something of a distinction between the moving force and the moved matter.

In some respects, he may be said to have prepared the way for Anaxagoras, a native of Clazomene, in Ionia, but early impelled by his youthful ambition to seek the stirring scenes of literary activity which Athens afforded. He was born in the seventieth Olympiad, and his fame belongs to the age of Pericles, of whom he is said to have been the instructor. The

Athenian drama was already culminating in the youthful triumphs of Sophocles, but the tastes of Anaxagoras led him toward philosophy. "The mysteries of the universe tempted him. He yielded to the fascination, and declared that the aim and purpose of his life was to contemplate the heavens. All care for his affairs was given up. His estates ran to waste while he was solving problems. But the day he found himself a beggar, he exclaimed, 'To philosophy I owe my worldly ruin, and my soul's prosperity!'" He commenced teaching, and, beside Pericles, is said to have had Euripides and Socrates as his pupils.*

His doctrines attracted attention, and, at length, brought upon him the charge of impiety. He was tried and condemned to death, but by the exertions of his pupil, Pericles, his sentence was changed to exile. At his residence in Lampsacus, he consoled himself by saying, "It is not I who have lost the Athenians, but the Athenians who have lost me." With tranquility of mind he pursued his studies till death closed the scene.

The contemplation of nature's wonderful order and harmony absorbed his attention. He was thus led to adopt the views for which he was accused of impiety. With the popular notions of religion, he was on some points avowedly at issue. Instead of allowing the sun and moon to be deities, or possessed of vitality, he held them simply to be earth and stone. The miraculous indications of sacrifices, he accounted no more than natural phenomena. To the myths of Homer he gave a moral exposition, and explained by allegory the names of the gods. His fame and success drew down upon him the vengeance of jealous rivals and bigots, and the teacher of Socrates was condemned to death.

Anaxagoras rebuked the wild speculations of some of his predecessors as to the genesis of things. "Wrongly," said he, "do the Greeks suppose that aught begins or ceases to be; for nothing comes into being or is destroyed: but all is an aggregation or secretion of pre-existent things." It is impossible that anything should come from *non-being*, or that there should be more than *the all*. In his treatise on nature, he

* Lewes' Biog. His. of Phil., p. 72.

adopts a physical theory substantially the same with that of Anaximander. The whole mass of original commingled elements were a unity. In all things there is a part of the all, yet every individual thing possesses a nature of its own. But beside the primary component particles of things, there is, also, a first moving force. This force is (νοῦς) intellect. Thus he rejected necessity on the one hand, and chance on the other. "Fate," he is reported to have said, "is a mere empty name." The order of mundane things must have its cause in a rational being. The intellect is the cause of the beautiful and the just. Orderly disposing of things is the proper business of mind.

A dualism of the corporeal and mental is thus implied. Anaxagoras admitted it. It was a step in advance of his predecessors. "Mind," he said, "is infinite, and rules by its own power, and is mixed up with naught, but is alone, in and for itself." Yet this self-sufficient power of mind or intellect was limited. Its infinity could not be understood in the strictest sense. It had not under its control the unalterable qualities of the primary seeds, but was bounded by them in its construction of the universe. The work of intellect was to shape and arrange the primary elements; it was not the sole cause of being, but merely inspired the machinery of the world-structure. The process of its operations, moreover, was progressive. Not all was set in motion at first, but the undulations of the moved and separated things originated other motions. Intellect is the first cause of motion, but it does not move all with unlimited power. It is the "awakener," moving and disposing, not the past only, but the present also and the future.

The human mind or soul, for Anaxagoras makes no distinction between them, is a portion of the universal mind. It has a force dependent on the bodily organization. It is set in motion by external impressions, and is by no means free from all passivity. It belongs, in connection with the order of creation, to the latest stage of it. The sun and moon are first; plants follow, and animal life succeeds them. Intellectual beings exist not on the earth alone, but in other bodies of the mundane system.

It is by reason only that we become cognizant of truth. The senses are too weak to discover the real component particles of things. The sensual impression was not absolutely valueless, however, for the cognition of truth. Appearances afford a standard for the cognition of the non-apparent. The human mind, however, is involved in the greatest uncertainty on points lucid to the universal intelligence. The limitations of man's powers are such as to afford ground for the complaint. "Nothing can be known; nothing can be learned; nothing can be certain; sense is limited; intellect is weak; life is short." This is uttered, however, in no sceptical tone. It would be opposed to the whole theory of Anaxagoras.

His name marks an era in the history of philosophy. He anticipates, on some points, Socrates and Plato, although the latter, in his *Phædo*, represents Socrates as sadly disappointed at the inconsistency of Anaxagoras. He introduces a mind that knows and designs, and then makes the things produced operate by their own energies. Aristotle makes a similar criticism. But of the mind (νοῦς) of Anaxagoras, Lewes remarks, it "both *knows* and *acts*; this is its duplicate existence. A grand conception! one seldom rivalled in ancient speculation; one so far in advance of the epoch, as to be a puzzle to all critics."*

Our attention is now called to one of the most eminent names in ancient philosophy. Pythagoras, nearly a century earlier than Anaxagoras, born about 586 B. C., was the founder of the school that bears his name. His history is hopelessly obscured by fables. His very birth was marvellous; he wrought miracles, and taught with more than human wisdom. Thus myth and tradition paid tribute to his real greatness. That he visited Egypt is admitted. That he was indebted to Egyptian priests for his philosophy, is more questionable. To him, the invention of the word *philosopher* is ascribed. "I have no art," he said, in reply to a question of Leontius; "I am a philosopher." He professed to devote himself to wisdom, not for ulterior ends, but for its own sake. After completing his travels, he fixed his residence at Croton, a city of southern Italy, colonized by Greeks of the

* Lewes, 81.

Achæan tribe. Here he became a teacher of youth, and at length rose from the position of preceptor to that of legislator. But averse alike to tyranny and democracy, and aiming rather to consolidate aristocracies, he refused power and office, and established a secret society, a kind of Order of Philosophy. His disciples underwent examination and probation. The novice was enjoined five years' silence. By degrees he passed to higher honors, and was admitted to deeper secrets. Through his pupils, embracing three hundred from the noblest families of Croton, his influence became almost unbounded. It extended to other cities. It amended or overturned political constitutions. But he chose to be the sage rather than the hero. He declined power. Still, his predominating influence at last excited such suspicion and alarm, that his schools were violently broken up. His doctrine, however, was not suppressed. His pupils were scattered, but in other lands, especially in Greece, they disseminated the views of their master.

It is difficult to trace these views to any who may be considered the predecessors of Pythagoras, unless the immortality of the soul, and its transmigration, were derived from Pherecides, who, on better grounds than some others, is said to have been a teacher of Pythagoras. An Egyptian original of his doctrines is possible, but scarcely probable. If we may judge from what we know of such Pythagoreans as Philolaus, Clinius and Eurytus, the chief aim of their action and thoughts was to attain to a perfect blamelessness of life. Their example exerted an important influence upon morals and science. Not all that bore the name of their school were equally worthy of respect. Some indulged in superstitious practices, and pretended to magical powers. A natural germ of superstition may have existed in the mystical Pythagorean rites, and these may have been corrupted at an early date. Very opposite tendencies, it must be admitted, existed originally in the Pythagorean philosophy, yet referable to the same fundamental position. This position was "the number is the essence (*ousia*), or the first principle (*arche*) of all things." Of course it is to be taken symbolically.* What was meant

* So says Ritter. Lewes disputes it.

by "number?" What was the deep mystery of this philosophical starting-point? It would seem that the philosophical element in the Pythagorean doctrine was originally the result of observation of the constant recurrence in nature of certain numerical relations. Number comprises two species, the odd and the even. It unites these two contraries. The result is that one, or the unit, is the essence of number, or number absolutely. As such, it is the ground of all numbers. The significance of this is seen in the statement that "all is from the original one," or, in the words of Philolaus, "God embraces and actuates all, and is but one."*

Again, we are told that "Number is the eternal, self-originated bond of the eternal continuance of mundane things." Much was made of the decade, the sum of the first four numbers, and under ten heads were arranged the contrasted notions of primary elements, Limit and the Limitless; Right and Left; Light and Darkness; Good and Evil, etc. The triad was the number for the whole; it had beginning, middle, end. Thus number was exhaustless in its symbols. As the unit is the original of numbers, and enters into all numbers, so perhaps it was intimated that the ground and principle of all things—The One—enters itself into all the contrariety of phenomena derived from it, and the true essence and perfections of things have their persistency in it. For this essence of things is eternal; it admits of divine, but not of human cognition. Yet "the nature and energy of number may be traced everywhere, in works human as well as divine; in art, in music." Evidently, to the Pythagoreans, the divine, or the first principle of all things, was a something in itself unknowable, but universally diffused, revealing itself in mundane things, adapting them to each other, and rendering

* It was Pythagoras, the contemporary of the last of the Roman kings, therefore also the younger contemporary of Cyrus, who was the first of all historical men to utter the great word KOSMOS in the sense which we attach to the word. He called the universe "Order;" the ornamentally ordered; regarding it not merely a physical, but also a moral and spiritual whole, whose parts are harmoniously linked together, acting and re-acting on each other. We shall perhaps be justified in asserting that Pythagoras was the first to conceive the idea of a progressive order of the world, and moreover, an order in which the spiritual Kosmos is prior to the physical in idea, though by no means in actuality.—See BUNSEN'S *God in History*.

them knowable. It is the source of all being and all truth. Cicero gives the interpretation, more comprehensible to modern thought, that God is the soul diffused through, and governing in all things, from which also our souls derive their origin.

Why number should have been pronounced the essence of things by Pythagoras, has been variously explained. But we know too little of what he taught, to pronounce in favor of any explanation. We may surmise, with Lewes, that he regarded all else but number in things as unessential. They might be transformed; they might lose all else, but they were still numerical; the one was still one. We may add that in all combinations, growths, harmonies, definite numbers, with their proportions, are introduced. Numbers define the constitution of things, and all are evolved from the one—the one that is all-embracing, and as such, the ground of all things.

Thus, says Ritter,* "the one is celebrated as God, ruling and guiding all, one only and eternal, persisting and unmoved, without change, life itself, and different from all else. All issues from one, and is ruled by one Supreme God, for the primary principles are united in the original unity of God, the primary number."† There can be no question that one aim of the Pythagorean philosophy was to prove that all the relations of the world were ordered on some harmonical, or symmetrical principle. Its notion of harmony appears to have comprehended all relations ordered by a determinate law. Opposite elements were everywhere harmonized; the whole universe was number or harmony, for the two words were often employed in the same sense. Contraries were not merely combined, but made to accord. Abstract ideas, justice, the soul, opportunity, were defined by numbers. Everything was formed upon a certain orderly system of relations.

We may pass over the Pythagorean doctrine of the elements, the chief of which was fire, sometimes represented as the principle of life in the world; nor need we linger over the astronomical speculations of the system, where harmony holds a conspicuous place. The progress of the creation from a more rude to a perfect development, was held in common

* Ritter, I. 387. † Lewes denies the Theism of Pythagoras.

with others; but among Greek philosophers, transmigration was peculiar to the Pythagoreans. They referred the phenomena of individual soul-life to the Universal ensouling energy of the world. With them, all souls were merely an efflux of the universal soul. Souls might exist—as was the case with demons—without an organic body, although their existence might be merely an imperfect dream-life, like that of the shades in Hades. But in their separate state, they might enter into other bodies and form with them a befiting harmony. Their migration, however, was limited to the sphere of animal life. The plant had life, but not a soul.

With this metempsychosis, involving the soul's immortality, was intimately connected the doctrine of retribution after death. Personality was not destroyed. To the evil a residence was assigned in Tartarus, where they are terrified by thunders. From the society of the good they are excluded, and by the Erinnyes they are held in indissoluble chains. The highest place, on the contrary, is allotted to the good, and their life is social.

Even in this life there was an element of retribution, where the soul is divinely disposed of, by being assigned a body into which it is to enter, and in which, in punishment of some crime or other, it is to continue, as in a tomb. None was at liberty to quit the post thus assigned him. Suicide was revolt against the order of the Divine Disposer.

The Pythagoreans called virtue a harmony. It was the peculiar property of the moral life. Justice was "a similarly similar number," a form of saying it is right that each should have what he deserves. Their practical rules of life were numerous. They took the form of maxims, and attested adherence to that earlier religious sentiment which ere long fell into disrepute. It was a Pythagorean into whose mouth Plutarch put the adage, We become better when we go to the gods. It was Archytas, a Pythagorean, who said, We stand amid intelligences superior to our own. Man's whole life was considered as under the guidance of the gods, as a work which by divine destiny we are born to fulfill. The duty of moderating the desires and affections was enjoined. Anger was to be restrained; faith was to be observed; and Damon and

Pythias, models of friendship, were Pythagoreans. The sufferer was patiently to endure, be it cold or heat, hunger or thirst, poverty or pain. Justice will prevail at last. The moral order of the universe is ultimately inviolable.

"Pythagoras considered man to be placed between virtue and vice, like the stalk between the two branches in the letter Y. As none, he thought, can be called happy before their death, so none were to be esteemed unhappy so long as they were in life: '*We must wait for the last day of a man.*' If he departed this life burdened with vices, then his misery truly commenced. This misery after death he divided into two kinds, one purgatorial, and the other everlasting punishment. He supposed that there were two mansions in Hades, a place of departed spirits—Elysium, possessed by those who were to be finally blessed, and Tartarus, or the place of infinite torments, from which there is no prospect of deliverance. But if any one died who had lived justly on earth, his soul would ascend to the pure etherial regions, and dwell, as a divinity with the gods, in the happy Ævum, or mansions of felicity, with the blessed."*

The explanation of Pythagoras' symbolical letter is given by Lactantius:

"The Pythagoric letter, two ways spread,
Shows the two paths in which man's life is led,
The right-hand track to sacred virtue tends,
Though steep and rough at first, in rest it ends;
The other broad and smooth, but from its crown,
On rocks the traveler is tumbled down.
He who to virtue by harsh toils aspires,
Subduing pains, worth and renown acquires;
But who seeks slothful luxury, and flies
The labor of great acts, dishonored dies."

Nor is the practical bearing of his moral teachings to be overlooked. We should not allow ourselves, he says, to retire to rest till we have seriously revolved the actions of the day, and asked ourselves, What have I done amiss? What good have I done, or neglected to do? That so we may reprove ourselves for what has been wrong, and take the comfort of what has been right.

* Ross' Man in Relation to Present and Future, p. 90.

The Eleatic School is pre-eminently distinguished, says Ritter, from the Pythagorean and Ionian schools by the recklessness with which it strove to attain to an exclusive knowledge of the supra-sensible. Anaxagoras and others had felt themselves constrained to have recourse to the supra-sensible to explain the sensible; the Eleatics, on the other hand, depreciated the sensible, and maintained that the service of all true knowledge was independent of and superior to sense.

The name of the school was derived from Elea, a Greek colony of Lower Italy. It had grown up from a settlement of the brave and free Phocœans, who abandoned their Ionian home, rather than submit to Persian rule. It rose to prosperity and splendor, and was eminent for enterprise and learning. Hither, after many wanderings and much observation, came Xenophanes, a native of Colephon, an Ionian city of Asia Minor, from which, for unknown reasons, he was driven into exile. Born about 618 B. C., he was contemporary during the latter portion of his life, which was prolonged to nearly a century, with Pythagoras. From early years he devoted himself to elegiac and gnomic poetry. It was the joy of his youth, the consolation of his manhood, and the support of his old age. In his exile, he wandered over Sicily as a rhapsodist, seeking no wealth but the treasures of the mind. Absorbed in contemplation, and giving poetic expression to his thoughts, he was at once philosopher and poet—Lewes adds, fanatic. His moral principles were in keeping with the bitterness with which he inveighed against the Greek Polytheism, with its manifold immoralities that disgraced Olympus. He was unsparing in his criticism of Hesiod, Homer, and the priestly Epimenides. Thales he attacked on different grounds. Pythagoras he ridiculed for his opinions. Every fantastic and polytheistic representation of the Deity he rejected. If not an original thinker—and Plato says the Eleatic doctrine was in existence before Xenophanes—we cannot name his teachers. No Greek before him had manifested such radical and uncompromising hostility to prevalent polytheistic notions.

His system was simple, if far from well-digested. Two of its fundamental positions were, God's omnipotence and the

denial of all beginning of being. A plurality of gods was inconceivable, for it destroyed the very notion of God as all-wise and almighty. All coheres in one sole being, but this being was identified with heaven or the world. Polytheistic representations of the Godhead were old and antiquated prejudices, from which man, only in time and after reflection, could free himself.

"Only in time and by long search can man find out the better."

Homer and Hesiod related of the gods what Xenophanes accounted impious and accursed. Such

"As would be shame and abiding disgrace to any of mankind;
Promises broken, and thefts, and the one deceiving the other."

Anthropomorphic conceptions were also obnoxious to him:

"Men foolishly think that gods are born like as men are,
And have, too, a dress like their own and their voice and their
figure."

The Ethiopian gods with their flat noses, and the Thracian with their blue eyes, were varying human conceptions, but

"There's but One God alone, the greatest of Gods and of mortals."

He is without parts, yet throughout alike:

"Without trouble He ruleth the All by reason and insight."

But a few abstract formulas could not express the essence of the Deity in whom the truth and power of the All was recognized:

"Certainly no man was nor knew, nor ever shall there be any,
Knowing well both the gods and the A[illegible] whose nature we treat
of."

In fact "[illegible] is spread over all things." The aged philosopher distrusts the decisions of his own knowledge. It was no violation of character when the [illegible] Timon put into his mouth the [illegible]:

"Whereso[illegible]
[illegible]"

Thus the curtain falls over a life remarkably prolonged, but ever anxious as well as earnest, with convictions clear and strong, but rather in what they denied than what they asserted.

The successor of Xenophanes, whom he could have heard only in his youth, and the second in the series of the Eleatic philosophers, was Parmenides, a native of Elea, and born about 536 B.C. This would make him a younger contemporary of Pythagoras, while tradition reports that in his sixty-fifth year he visited Athens, and there met with Socrates, then a youth.

A disciple of Pythagoras, Diochætes, is named among his teachers, and is perhaps better entitled to the honor than Xenophanes. Parmenides is even said to have belonged to the Pythagorean school. Nobly born and an heir to wealth, he took an active part in the political affairs of his native city, and is said to have given it a code of laws. By Plato and Aristotle, he is ranked as the chief of the Eleatic philosophers. His views are best known through his poem entitled "Nature." It opens with an allegory, designed to exhibit the soul's longing after truth. The soul is seen drawn by steeds, and led by virgins along a road untrodden by men, and brought to the residence of Dikè (Justice), who promises to reveal to it all absolute truth, and weak mortal opinions which the soul must beware of following, arming itself with courage. Opinion follows "the rash eye," the confused ears and tongue, but the judgment of reason is to be preferred. Opinion depends upon the senses, but true knowledge is the knowledge of the reason grounded upon sufficient and certain proof.

Xenophanes had proceeded from the notion of God. Parmenides sets out from the notion of being. Being is uncreated and unchangeable. There is

"One from Eternity ; what would you make its origin and whence
Its increase ? not from what was not . . .
Nothing but being
From being can arise."

The All is thought and intelligence.

"Like is thought to its cause, for whose sake it existeth;
For without that which is, thought, which predicates being,
Would be wholly impossible."

So "the fullness of all being is thought." But by being, we are to understaud that eternal essence which is the sole cause and ground of all things. This fills all space, is one throughout, and perfectly indivisible. Our senses do not enable us to apprehend it. It belongs to the reason to discern that in all that appears to us as manifold and changeable—the particular thoughts evolved in the human mind included—the god-like is present, to the sense imperceptible, indistinguishable, and beneath a veil.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the physical theory of Parmenides, which approximates to the mechanical physiology of his predecessor. He made the perfection of creation progressive, reaching its highest point in man, who is yet a mixture of light and darkness, varying in difierent individuals. Opinions, in the unattainableness of true knowledge, man must have, however unsatisfactory. Indeed, he is subject to a stern necessity. The demon drives the soul, now from light to darkness, and again from darkness to light. This evil destiny is common to man, with all things generable and destructible in the world. Such is the sad view of humanity presented by Parmenides, who designates birth as mournful, and pronounces it better to remain ever buried in the bosom of the One. In his system, Scepticism was incipient. Only his theory of Reason repressed its development. The pantheistic element is throughout conspicuous.

The successor of Parmenides—some say his adopted son—was Zeno, a native of Elea, born about 500 B.C. The first period of his life was devoted to retired and studious pursuits. From his master, he learned to appreciate the superiority of intellectual pleasures. He sought to benefit his fellow-man, but declined emoluments and honors as the recompense of his toil. Alike sensitive, brave and ambitious, his life was a battle—a battle for what he believed to be truth. He was in full sympathy with the Greek spirit of his time, which exulted in the overthrow of Darius, and his native Elea experienced the benefit of his bold defiance of a tyrant.

Athens, luxurious, restless, frivolous, did not attract him, but he visited it, and gave lessons to Pericles. He is reputed, perhaps on insufficient grounds, the inventor of the logic known as *Dialectics*, the powerful weapon which Socrates and Plato knew so well how to wield. Zeno used it to vindicate and establish the system of Parmenides. To that system he made no material additions, but he put around it the bulwarks of polemical exposition. Unlike his two predecessors, he discarded poetry. Prose was the fittest channel for his argumentative subtility. His works were treatises. Doubtless his contact with the quick-witted Athenians, putting him on the defence of his doctrines, had something to do with his plan of composition.

He planted himself firmly upon the position of Parmenides, that sense does not represent to us the truth of that which is. On his speculations concerning the one and the many, we need not linger. We may pass over, also, his subtle refutation of the possibility of motion. Some of his arguments were evidently *ad hominem*, and gave premonition of the advent of the Sophists. He denied, with the Eleatics, the reality of the sensible, and naturally assailed the very forms of sensation. Here was the germ of scepticism. He held, however, that there is but one Being existing, necessarily indivisible and infinite. To suppose the One divisible, was to suppose it infinite. If divisible, it must be infinitely so. But between divided things there must be an interval that separates and limits them. What is that something? Is it some *other* thing? If so, it too may be separated, and so on *ad infinitum*. Thus only one thing can exist as the *substratum* for all manifold appearances. Of the soul, Zeno taught that it is compounded of the four elements, but in different proportions. One might preponderate, but none could be altogether wanting. The predominance of the pure elements over the opposite, afforded to his mind an explanation of the soul's purity and divinity. But, beside the four elements, Zeno assumed a moving force which regulates all—necessity—to which he made love and strife subordinate species. It is very evident that his polemic attitude advanced him in the direction of Pantheism and scepti-

cism. He was, in fact, logically the precursor of the Sophists. Nor does he occupy a subordinate or inferior position. By him Plato has been essentially influenced. His philosophy has been pronounced by Schwegler, both the completion of the Eleatic principle, and the beginning of its end.

Of the successors of Zeno, we must speak briefly. Melissus, of Samos, follows him at the interval of more than half a century. Receding from Xenophanes, and representing the advancing tendency of the Eleatic school toward nescience, he expressly declared, "men must not speak of the gods, for of them we have absolutely no knowledge." He asserted the unity, immutability, and indivisibility of being; denied the possibility of all motion and all change; gave just occasion for Aristotle to say that his conception of the One was purely material; in fact, carried the negative of the Eleatic school well-nigh to its climax, and prepared it to give birth and nurture to a destructive and annihilating sophistry. Like Zeno, he held that necessity rules the world, and its opposite motive powers are love and strife. He also admitted the four elements.*

Empedocles, a native of Agrigentum, in Sicily (about 444 B.C.), was his contemporary. Illustrious by birth, his personal history has been embellished by fable, and he was regarded as a worker of miracles. He evidently laid claim to a knowledge transcending unaided human capacity. He was, doubtless, possessed of remarkable gifts, but he asserted the title and honors of a god. His pride, however, scorned worldly greatness. Perhaps his real aim, in accordance with the spirit of the Pythagorean philosophy, with which he was early acquainted, was to be, and to be accounted, a divine man. He adopted in his writings, which were poetic, the epic form. We trace his sense of human weakness, as well as his scorn for the pride of opinion, in his prayer,

> "Restrain, O ye gods, the mad tongues of these babblers,
> And pour from holier mouths the pure fountains of wisdom;
> Grant me to know whate'er befits the creature of a day."

* L. Schmidt (Smith's Dict.) says: "He made the first, though weak attempt, which was afterward carried out by Zeno with far more acuteness and sagacity, to prove that the foundations of all knowledge derived from experience, are in themselves contradictory, and that the actual world is inconceivable."

Carrying out the views of Parmenides and Zeno, he asserted that not by the senses can the truth be known, but only by the right reason, which, however, is partly human, partly divine. Here life is compared to the "wind-driven smoke." Man is distracted, and seeks in vain to find out the whole truth, which neither eye nor ear can perceive, nor can be grasped by the mind. Sad, indeed, is the lot of man. Like his predecessors, Empedocles keeps stern necessity, as the unity of the moving forces of love and hate, in view. Retribution hereafter is an element of his moral system.

> "This is the law of fate, of the gods an olden enactment,
> If with guilt or murder a demon polluteth his members,
> Thrice ten thousand years must he wander apart from the blessed;
> Hence doomed, I stray, a fugitive from the gods, and an outcast,
> To raging strife submissive."

His view of the elements represented fire as the most excellent ingredient in the composition of things. To this, the degree of their vitality was due. It constituted the divine essence, and into it all is resolved.

The pantheistic tendency of the Eleatics, denying production and multiplicity, and asserting a single enduring essence under all phenomena, becomes more manifest in Empedocles than in his predecessors, and yet none of them had gone so far as to assert with him for the pious soul a god-like existence after death. He assumed that the blissful sphere continues to coexist alongside the world, and that

> "When, leaving this body, to the free ether, thou comest,
> A god undying thou shalt be, no longer a mortal."

The gloomy aspect of his system is also somewhat lighted up by his theory of the power of love, as well as hate. Love, like the good deity of the Magi, formed the sun, the air, the sea, etc., and the mundane system is a progression from the imperfect to the perfect. The *quasi*-Pythagorean element of his philosophy (for it is no more) comes out in his doctrine of the migration of the soul into different bodies. The blissful life of "the sphere" stands in contrast with the present exist-

ence of men and things, explicable on the grounds of an anterior guilt incurred, which is to be expiated here. Like other Eleatics, he held that all is full of reason, and participates in knowledge. He regarded all in the world as demoniacal and spiritual, the elements themselves being the sources of knowledge, and influenced by hate and love. The sombre aspect of his philosophy, however, is constantly recurring. His elementary particles, with hate engendered in them, are disorderly, and even Aristotle criticises a world-making, in which too much is left to chance. The soul may migrate through all forms, without finding rest. The race of mortals, in fact, is the issue of discord and groans. It is doomed to endless exile, unless delivered by a burdensome conformity to ascetic rules, while even here, the mind cannot rest, or enjoy any certitude of thought, unless we withdraw from the life of sense, and seek for the truth in the depth of our own bosoms. This indeed is enjoined. Man's duty is to contemplate in his own mind the God, not visibly, but spiritually apprehensible. With this exception, the moral system of Empedocles was simply negative.

According to Empedocles, the immortality of the soul was an inference from one of his fundamental positions—that coming into existence from non-existence on the one hand, and death and annihilation on the other, are alike impossible. The first is mixture merely of different elements; the second is their separation, after having been mixed. The original and unalterable substances were "the roots of things," and to Empedocles is due the phrase of "the four elements." He interchanges with these the names of Zeus, Hera, etc. These substances are combined by love and dissolved by hate, again to be united by love. In their perpetual revolution of form, they constitute the "sphere," the embodiment of pure existence, as also of the Deity, concerning whose mode of activity we are left in the dark. "Not provided with limbs, He, a holy infinite spirit, passes through the world with rapid thoughts," is the sublime expression of Empedocles. Yet there is an eternal power of necessity, an ancient decree of the gods, the idea of which is left obscure.

These views of Empedocles mark the point now reached

by the Eleatic school, which at first attempted to correct the conceptions and representations of sense, by the pure notions of reason, or at least to reduce them to their true value. The course of this attempt has been noted, and its results have been already foreshadowed. Depreciating the sensible, and intent on discovering the absolute all-embracing unity, for which sense was incompetent, it was ever on the brink of a pantheistic scepticism, from which there was no proper escape, but by the *reductio ad absurdum* method, which the Sophists were ready and eager to apply.

But other causes were at work. The old philosophies had weakened one another by mutual collision, and the development of internal incongruities. The Eleatic school, superseding its rivals, had reached a point of development, where the mind recoiled from further progress in the same direction. The incertitude of human knowledge was asserted, and prepared the way for that daring, and ostentatious, and even shameless scepticism, which the Sophist sometimes exulted to avow. Indeed, "scepticism, which has been justly called the vilest dogmatism, had entire possession of the minds of the Sophists." They not only confessed that they had not attained knowledge, but denied to men in general the capability of arriving at truth. Unlike the later Sceptics, they did not veil their arrogance under the mask of modesty. Truth itself was denied, and this was the wisdom which they had to communicate. Prodicus of Coos, and Democritus, extolled death, while others are described as making the end of life to be the unrestrained enjoyment of all kinds of pleasure, and the gratification of every lust.

Leucippus, who belongs to the generation that immediately preceded Socrates, and who flourished about 428 B. C., is said to have been a disciple of Zeno, and is held to be the founder of the Greek atomic theory. It remained, however, for Democritus to lift it into notice.

But it is on other accounts that our attention is directed toward him. He was a native of Abdera, in Thrace, and born about 460 B. C. Inheriting large wealth, he spent it in visiting foreign lands, extending his travels, according to some writers, to India and Ethiopia, as well as Persia, Chaldæa and

Egypt. On his return he devoted himself to contemplation and study. Possessing high genius and penetrative judgment, he was eminently conversant with the physical and speculative science of his age. He has commonly been described as the laughing philosopher—an epithet supposed to have originated in his humorous exposure of the absurdities of his countrymen, who were proverbially stupid.

The tenets ascribed to him are not merely the atomic theory, or the eternity of matter which never begun and will never cease to be. He held motion to be eternal, and limited his attention to its secondary causes. Like other Atomists, he derived motion from necessity, understanding thereby the absence of design in motion, as traced infinitely backwards. The worlds, infinitely diverse, were aggregations of atoms, composed of compound bodies, into which atoms originally combined. The soul was regarded in no other light than a peculiar species of body within the body. It was indeed a finer species, like the particles in the sunbeam, but still material and atomic in its origin. For its mobility and motive energy, Democritus compared it to fire, and held the moving soul to be the occasion of warmth in the living body. He also allotted a soul to beasts and plants, and every compound organism.

Already we see the conclusion—no created world, no creating God. But Democritus did not pause here. He assumed two species of knowledge, the intellectual knowledge of the true; the apprehension of the qualities of things by the senses. The latter is obscure and uncertain. Aristotle reports Democritus as saying, either nothing is true, or what is true, is not evident to us. Lewes claims that his grand problem was—how do we perceive external things?—and he answered it by his theory of effluxes from the objects perceived. These may appear quite different to the senses from what they really are. On other grounds he attacked the truthfulness of sensuous presentation, and laid down, if he did not originate, the formula, that when an object appears in one way to one, and in another to another, neither is nearer the truth. The intellectually cognizable was alone true.

Thus, the reliableness of sensual knowledge, along with the unity of the world, of the soul and consciousness, was denied; all was resolved into multiplicity of atoms and immensity of void. There was an aspect of the phenomenal, but that was all. The possibility of a knowledge of the super-sensible was absolutely denied.

But Democritus was the Hobbes of his age in morals, as well as speculation. His ethics commended contentment, wisdom, obedience to law, control of the passions, etc. But the motive of these virtues is thoroughly utilitarian. Violent emotion disturbs and injures the soul. Mental improvement affords higher pleasure than bodily strength. There is nothing moral in the strongest moral ties; only a more subtle and sagacious selfishness. Prudent egoism and pursuit of pleasure, are the corner-stone of his ethics; man's character even is formed as if by material forces. It is formed by the effluxes of objects apprehended in perception. Such a system as this was on the verge of the sceptical vortex. It formed at least the outer circle of the māelstrom.

We should do injustice, however, to the views of Democritus, if we failed to present them in the more favorable light in which they have been regarded by some writers. His thirst for knowledge was insatiable, and his diligence incredible, and his disinterestedness, modesty and simplicity are strongly attested. His mind was enriched by the observations made in his extensive travels, and the information derived from the most eminent men of different nations. With abundant wealth, he employed it largely for others, and to supply himself the means of knowledge. A contemporary of Socrates and Plato, it seems singular that the latter never mentions him, although some of his views are reflected in Plato's writings.

Democritus made the discovery of causes, the highest object of scientific investigation. Censured by Aristotle for his disregard of teleological relations, he yet called the common notion of chance a cover of human ignorance, and an invention of those who were too idle to think. While he held knowledge derived from reason, like that acquired through the senses, imperfect and unreliable, and indeed

failed to distinguish mind from soul, or sensuous perception, thus making all our views and opinions subjective; his ethical philosophy reflects his vivid perception of important laws of the moral system. Peace of mind he made the end and ultimate object of our actions. This peace, freedom from fear and passion, is the last and fairest fruit of philosophical inquiry. In discussing that point, Democritus manifests genuine practical wisdom. Among his precepts were those which commended abstinence from too many occupations, a fair estimate of our powers, and moderation in prosperity and adversity. But happiness has a moral basis. Truly pious and beloved by the Gods, are those only who hate that which is wrong. The purest joy, and the truest happiness, are only the fruit of the higher mental activity, exerted in the endeavor to understand the nature of things, of the peace of mind arising from good actions, and of a clear conscience.*

If Democritus, as a victim of the logical force of his theory, and as it were in spite of himself, reached results fatal to science and morals, Protagoras may be said to have studiously invented what appeared designed to extinguish all serious reflection, and all earnest purpose. Only a few years the junior of Democritus—some even make him his senior—he can scarce have been his disciple. As the most accomplished of the Sophists, he was the first to assume the title. In Athens and Sicily he appeared as a teacher of rhetoric, and acquired large wealth. He boasted that by his eloquence, he could make the worse cause appear the better. He did not limit his instructions to a single branch of knowledge, but professed the comprehensive ability to instruct youth in the duties of the State. One of his treatises began thus: "Of the Gods, I cannot tell what they are or not, for much hinders us from knowing this, both the obscurity of the [illegible]t, and the short life of man." It is scarcely surprising [illegible]thens, which could not bear the rational Theism of [illegible]agoras or Socrates, should repel the actual impiety of [illegible]tagoras. He was accused, fled, and perished, it is said, by [illegible]hipw[illegible]

* Prof. Stahr. Smith's Dic. Democritus.

The doctrine of Protagoras makes all representations of objective truth unreliable. The field was thus swept clear for the introduction of his rhetorical art. Nothing actually is: all is relative—such seems to have been the foundation of his theory. He can scarcely himself have been unaware of the destructive bearing of his position, especially when he attacked the verity of geometrical propositions. Every thought was true, simply for him who entertained it, and thought itself was nothing more than the relation of thinking subject to the thing thought of, while "the thinking subject, the Soul, is nothing more than the sum of the different moments of thinking."*

Thus all conception was resolved into sensation, and all philosophy was reduced to an elaborate Nihilism. Gorgias trod in the steps of Protagoras. He laughed openly at those who professed to teach virtue. He employed the arguments of Melissus and Zeno to prove that nothing is or can be. He turned reason in fact against itself, and argued to prove that argument could prove nothing. Into a lower deep it was scarcely possible to descend. The triumph of the Sophists insured their overthrow. To avenge reason, defend virtue, and vindicate religion, was the task imposed upon those who would not see the cause of man and society involved in a common ruin.†

* Ritter, I. 577.

† Mr. Grote, in his History of Greece, has proved himself an able advocate of the Sophists. He has properly vindicated the real service which they performed for Greek culture. He has shown that some among them were unexceptionable, if not estimable, and that this is admitted by Plato. But plausible as his argument is, and conclusive also at some points, it does not disprove the radical antagonism that has been held to exist between the Sophists and Socrates, while the views and position of the latter are only explicable on the supposition that the imputations against the Sophists were substantially true.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SEVEN WISE MEN. PINDAR, HERODOTUS.

Of the "Seven Wise Men" of Greece, to whom our attention is called during the period which intervened between Hesiod and Pindar, we have scant means of information. The date assigned them is between the years B.C. 665, and B.C. 540. In their time no complete separation had taken place between philosophy and poetry, and the wisdom of Solon was exhibited in his poems as well as his laws. That wisdom, in his case, and probably in the case of the entire seven, was the wisdom of practical experience, combined with moral sagacity. Some of them were eminent in the political sphere, and in high repute for statesmanship, and thus became famous. But we are only interested here in noting the views which they entertained of the moral system.

Periander, ruler of Corinth (625 B.C.), who at first favored free and popular institutions, was also the friend of wise men, the promoter of learning, and distinguished by his reputation for wisdom and virtue. Pittacus, of Mitylene (652–569 B.C.), is said to have lived in consistency with two of his remarkable sayings: "A victory should be gained without bloodshed," and, "Speak not evil of friends, or even of enemies." Other maxims ascribed to him are, "It is hard to be good," and, "Know thy opportunity."

Thales (born about 635 B.C.), elsewhere mentioned, disputes with Pherecydes the merit of having first asserted the immortality of the soul, though Cicero claims that many before them were of the same belief. He asserted an eternal mind which formed all things, and knew not only the actions, but the thoughts of men. He seems, however, to have gone to the pantheistic extreme of making all things "full of God." Of Bias, of Priene (550 B.C.), we know little beyond his repute for maxims of poetical wisdom and proverbial sayings. The

fame of Cleobulus, of Lindus, rests upon his moral apothegms. Chilon, of Sparta, is the reputed author of the maxim, "Know thyself." Solon, who was the contemporary of Cleobulus, and flourished about 600 B. C., is the most noted of the seven; and his wisdom also was of a practical and moral cast. His fame as the great reforming Athenian legislator, extended beyond Greece, and commanded the respect of Crœsus. In his poems we have what may be accounted moral essays, expressed in the form of the then current literature. In these Solon inculcates a spirit of gentleness toward others, and moderation of the desires. He teaches the resistless power of the gods, who favor the good and punish the bad, though sometimes tardily. He says, for instance:

> "Who plans a goodly work, he oft doth fall
> Unwitting into great and grievous woe;
> While to the foolish worker Heaven accords
> A prosperous chance, fair issue of fond quest."

But this must be read and interpreted in the light of the truth that

> "At last comes Justice, though with halting tread,
> The wealth that Heaven bestows is firm and strong." *

Pindar, the Theban (522–442 B. C.), the first and most famous of the Greek lyrists, whose opening manhood was contemporary with the conquests of Darius, gave expression to that sense of a superintending Providence which was excited in the minds of many of his countrymen by the surprising events which they were permitted to witness—the humiliation of arrogant greatness, and the vindication of the independence of a brave people. In him we meet with much which we may credit to the wisdom of preceding thinkers, but which has been more carefully digested in his own thoughts. His name, though by the interval of nearly a century, follows properly those of Solon and the other wise men. Naturally, he taught a retribution of good and evil; taught that "the bitterest end awaits the pleasure that is contrary to right;" taught moderation in all fortunes; and that "a man should always keep in view the bounds and limits of things."

* Bunsen's God in History, II. 130.

He declared that "Law was the ruler of gods and men," thus giving us the key possibly to the mutual relation of Fate and Zeus. Contrasting the lot of mortals hereafter, he indicates the separate destiny of the good and evil, more distinctly than any other, perhaps, of the early Greek authors. He says:

"Far other lot befalls the good,
A life from trouble free,
Nor with laborious hands
To vex the stubborn lands,
Nor beat the billowy sea
For a scant livelihood;
But with the honored of the gods
Who love the faithful, their abode;
By day and night, the sun quits not their sphere,
Living a dateless age without a tear.
The others urge meanwhile,
Loathsome to sight, their endless toil."

We find in Pindar, who represents the priestly, as Homer did the popular creed, much of that sententious wisdom, of a moral cast, which is ascribed to the Seven Wise Men. We may accept the testimony of a recent writer and competent critic,* who shows himself capable at once of appreciating the classic beauty and the high ethical as well as religious tone of the poet. He remarks: "The whole of his poetry is impregnated with a lively sense of the divine in the world. Accepting the religious traditions of his ancestors with simple faith, he adds more of spiritual severity and of mystical morality than we find in Homer. Yet he is not superstitious or credulous. He can afford to criticise the myths, like Xenophanes and Plato, refusing to believe that a blessed God could be a glutton. In Pindar, indeed, we see the fine flower of Hellenic religion, free from slavish subservience to creeds and ceremonies, capable of extracting sublime morality from mythical legends, and adding to the old glad joyousness of the Homeric faith, a deeper and more awful perception of superhuman mysteries."

The same writer adds: "The mystical element of Pindar's creed, whether we call it Orphic or Pythagorean, is remark-

* Westminster Review, October, 1872.

able for a definite belief in the future life, including a system of rewards and punishments, for the assertion of the supreme tribunal of conscience, and finally for reliance on rites of purification." And again: "No Greek writer expresses himself, in reference to the certainty of final and exact retribution, more confidently than Pindar. He says: 'Among the dead, sinful souls at once pay penalty, and the crimes done in this realm of Zeus are judged beneath the earth by one who gives sentence under dire necessity.'"

The testimony of Browne,* so far as it goes, is co-incident: "In the odes of Pindar are visible the true majesty and grandeur of religious poetry, and the religious character of his mind, as well as his firm belief of a superintending Providence, which would not permit him to connect success with mere human causes. He always represents the gods as the givers of victory, and speaks of piety and the fulfillment of relative duties as the causes which recommended the conqueror to their favor. Nor did he neglect to warn the victor of the dangers of success, and the temptations which it offers to overwhelming pride. Humility, gratitude, and moderation in victory, are to him subjects of praise, and of the moral lessons which he teaches to those whose victories he is at the same time celebrating."

In the next generation after Pindar, we meet with Herodotus, nearly the first prose writer in Greek literature. In him we recognize—manifestly conspicuous—primitive habits of thought. A strange and restless curiosity and tireless enterprise, had carried him abroad to study the character and usages of other peoples; but he brought back with him all that reverent and religious spirit, inherited from the traditions of the fathers, with which he set forth on his travels. He came in contact with strange mythologies, with forms of worship difficult to be harmonized with his own; but his moral convictions were strengthened, rather than weakened, by the results of his observations. The views of Herodotus (about 450 B.C.) are of special interest to us, from the position which he occupies as the "Father of History." Notwithstanding the charge of superstitious credulity which has been

* Hist. of Greek Class. Lit., Phil. Ed., p. 151.

brought against him, and to which he repeatedly exposes himself, we have no reason to believe that in this respect he was an unfair representative of the age in which he wrote. Indeed, he frequently indicates his rejection of popularly accepted myths, and manifests a disposition to subject the marvels he narrates to the test of reason.

We may accept the estimate of Mr. Grote,* when he comments on Herodotus' account of the expedition of Xerxes, as, on the whole, fair and just. He says: "The speech which Herodotus puts into the mouth of Artabanus is that of a thoughtful and religious Greek," in which prudential suggestions are "further strengthened by adverting to the jealous aversion of the godhead towards overgrown human power." "The gods having determined—as in the instance of Astyages, Polycrates, and others—that the Persian Empire shall undergo signal humiliation and repulse at the hand of the Greeks, constrain the Persian monarch into a ruinous enterprise against his own better judgment. Such religious imagination is not to be regarded as peculiar to Herodotus, but as common to him with his contemporaries generally. . . . Throughout the political career of the Greeks and Persians, nothing less than a special interposition of the gods would have satisfied the feelings either of one nation or the other.... How much this religious conception of the sequence of events belongs to the age, appears by the fact that it not only appears in Pindar and the Attic tragedians generally, but pervades especially the Persæ of Æschylus, exhibited seven years after the battle of Salamis."

If we find then a marked contrast between Herodotus and Thucydides, we may ascribe it to the intellectual advance which intervened during the generation that separated the two historians. Herodotus, if not greatly in advance of his age in rationalistic views of oracles, providences, and mythological beliefs, at least did not lag behind it. If he sometimes —as has been charged—took liberty to modify his narrative, to make the "moral" more impressive, it only serves to evince the strength of his own conviction that the moral order of the world was subject to a superintending Providence.

* His. of Greece, Vol. v., 8.

On this point, indeed, he does not allow his reader to remain long in doubt. Again and again we are called upon to note Divine chastisements, or manifest and notable interpositions of a Providence that presides over the destiny of men and nations. He has evidently entire faith in the sanctity of oracles, and in elucidating their obscurity, as well as narrating the fulfillment of their predictions, he is ever disposed to recognize as beyond question the superhuman control to which all things on earth are subject.

His belief in regard to dreams, as sometimes prophetic, forms another feature of his history. The visions of the Ethiopian king,* of Xerxes and Artabanus, of the daughter of Polycrates,† and others, have as exact a fulfillment as the doom of Mycerinus, pronounced by the oracle.‡ As to the case of the Ethiopian king, he is represented as impressed with the idea, so repeatedly presented and emphasized by Herodotus himself, that he was under a temptation, sent by the gods, to commit an unholy deed which would be sure to bring down upon him the vengeance of gods or men. The great and powerful are often subjected to similar temptations. For their own security, they must resist the flattering prospect that lures them to ruin.

The vision of Cyrus intimates his conviction of a Divine guardianship over him. In interpreting it, he says, "The Gods watch over my safety, and warn me beforehand of every danger."§ The vision of Cambyses was exactly fulfilled, though in a manner contrary to his expectations. As he despairingly contemplates the predicted doom, now become inevitable, he exclaims: "Ah! truly; do what they may, it is impossible for men to turn aside the coming fate."‖ This thought is still more impressively set forth by the Pythoness of Delphi, who is said to have replied to the Lydians, sent by Crœsus, "It is not possible even for a God to escape the decree of destiny."¶

The noted conference of Crœsus and Solon brings out a theory of human life, on which Herodotus seems fond of dwelling. Wealth cannot confer happiness. In the very height of his prosperity, a man is not to be envied. Even

* II. 139 † III. 125. ‡ II. 133. § I. 209. ‖ III. 65. ¶ I. 91.

then, his doom, the more terrible for the contrast which preceded it, may be close at hand. The disappointment of Crœsus, that Solon did not place him on the list of "happy," is met by the latter with the remark—that the question of the king, who was the happiest of men, was asked of one "who knows that the power above us is full of jealousy, and fond of troubling our lot."* No man, Solon maintained, can be called happy before his death, and in the sequel of the history, Crœsus, taught by his own adversity, is not only ready to confess it himself, but to inculcate it upon others. Cyrus learns the lesson from his captive, and orders him to be rescued from the funeral pile, "afraid of retribution, and full of the thought, that whatever is human is insecure."†

Again, Crœsus is brought forward to rehearse in the ears of Cyrus, the wisdom of Solon. At the critical moment, when the Persian monarch is coming into collision with the Massagetæ, the captive, to "avert impending danger" from the house of Cyrus, reminds him, "if thou feelest thyself to be a man, and a ruler of men (instead of immortals), lay this first to heart, that there is a wheel on which the affairs of men revolve, and that its movement forbids the same man to be always fortunate."‡

This thought is made conspicuous in the account of "the exceeding good fortune" of Polycrates, of Samos. It did not escape the notice of Amasis, King of Egypt, "who was much disturbed thereat," and who wrote to him: "It is a pleasure to hear of a friend and ally prospering, but thy exceeding prosperity does not cause me joy, forasmuch as I know that the Gods are envious. My wish for myself, and for those I love, is, to be now successful, and now to meet with a check; . . for never yet did I hear tell of any one succeeding in all his undertakings, who did not meet with calamity at last, and come to utter ruin."§ When another noted favor visited Polycrates, and he informed Amasis of it, the latter "perceived that it does not belong to man to save his fellow-man from the fate which is in store for him; likewise he felt certain that Polycrates would end ill, as he prospered in everything,"‖ even when he unsuccessfully attempted

* I. 32. † I. 86. ‡ I. 207. § III. 40. ‖ III. 43.

to mar his own fortune, and escape the fate of the uniformly fortunate. In fear of the issue, Amasis sent a herald to Samos, and dissolved his league with Polycrates.

This insecurity of greatness and prosperity is attributed to the "jealousy" of the Gods, and the fate which they decree is inevitable. Neither Polynius, Miltiades, Cambyses, or Xerxes, can escape it. The Pythoness will not allow Timo to be punished for the false counsel she gave to Miltiades, but said: "Timo is not in fault; 'twas decreed that Miltiades should come to an unhappy end, and she was sent to lure him to destruction."* In his advice to Xerxes, bent on his ambitious projects, Artabanus says, in language which Horace has reproduced: "Seest thou, how God with His lightning smites alway the biggest animals, and will not suffer them to wax insolent, while those of a lesser bulk chafe Him not? How likewise His bolts fall ever on the highest houses, and the tallest trees? So plainly does He love to bring down everything that exalts itself. . . For God allows no one to have high thoughts but Himself."†

Herodotus is predisposed, in marked cases of calamity, to trace the infliction to a guilt, which madly challenges retribution. The madness of Cleomenes, and his miserable fate, are presented in their judicial aspects.‡ The mighty Xerxes is a signal illustration of this theory of Nemesis. The violation of the sacred rights of ambassadors is sure to call down in some way a divine vengeance. Neither Greek nor Barbarian, Athens§ or Persia, can escape it. The fate of Troy, and of the house of Priam, are made to teach the certainty of a retribution, that becomes signal somewhat in proportion to the crime. "Divine Providence, as I think," adds Herodotus, "so willing, that by their utter destruction, it might be made evident to all men, that when great wrongs are done, the Gods will surely visit them with great punishments."‖ The fate of Orestes, once almost a rival of the Persian monarch, is also cited in conjunction with that of Polycrates, to illustrate the terrible retribution that the Gods inflict—a retribution that may indeed linger, or even be deferred for long years, but as in the case of Crœsus, the descendant of

* VI. 125. † VII. 10, §5. ‡ VI. 75. § VII. 133. ‖ II. 120.

Gyges, may be expiated, not by the second or third, but by the fifth generation, to which the curse, without losing any of its original force, is transmitted.

The structure of the world appears to Herodotus to give clear evidence of an intelligent author. In noting some special provisions, essential to human welfare, he remarks: "Of a truth, Divine Providence does appear to be, as one might expect beforehand, a wise contriver."* His description of the integrity of Deioces, and the respect and power it commanded, might have served Bishop Butler as an illustration of the native power of virtue.† Indeed, the very features and colors with which he portrays the character of the different personages that he passes in review, exhibit the excellency of wisdom and virtue, and the odiousness of vice, and it is evident that, in studying them, the moral impression had first been produced upon his own mind. It is when he puts the theory of happiness as the chief end of man into the mouth of a Persian counsellor,‡ that he admits that lying may be sometimes expedient.

But the moral of his history, as a whole, is what he intended it should be, and avowed that he designed to make it. No uninterrupted worldly prosperity fails to suggest the inevitable sequel, a more signal reverse. No position is so eminent or so cautiously guarded, as to be secure from the "jealousy" of the gods, who will tolerate no mortal competition. Whatever takes place comes to pass in accordance with fate or the decrees of the gods. None can hope for impunity in wrong, since retribution will come at last, even though whole generations may first pass away.

If we combine the views presented by Herodotus on different occasions, omitting his partial adherence to the accepted mythology and his strong faith in oracles, we shall see that he rests firmly in the conviction of an established moral order, which no polytheistic policy or dissension disturbs, and which extends over the entire sphere of human actions and interests.

* Mure calls attention to the fact that the expression for deity, where ordinary allusions are made to the controlling power of Providence, is in the singular number.

† I. 96. ‡ III. 72.

If he makes barbarians often speak and reason like Greeks, the very fact shows how deep and ineradicable were his convictions, and those of his age, as to the moral order of the world and an overruling Providence.

Inwoven with the entire narrative of Herodotus, we meet his clear conviction of what may well be called a superintending Providence. Undoubtedly his wonderful story, in its theistic philosophy, was in some respects a reflection of the views widely entertained by his countrymen, while it tended to educate them to the standard of that philosophy. He has been described as "a Homer, without his hexameters, his divine agents and his similes,"* but it might have been added, *not* without his faith, held under certain qualifying conditions, for his history of the Persian wars, and indeed his whole history, is a great prose drama, written to illustrate the same moral as that of the book of Esther and the history of the Old Testament generally. That moral, stated generally, is Providence, and specifically it is the doctrine of a divine Nemesis in human affairs.†

CHAPTER VII.

THE GREEK TRAGEDIANS—ÆSCHYLUS, SOPHOCLES, EURIPIDES.

While philosophy, in the Ionian and Eleatic schools, was illustrating the vagaries and weakness, as well as the subtility and strength of human reason, and was, moreover, leading to no harmonious or practical conclusions, a far different result was achieved by Greek genius in another sphere. There is something exceedingly remarkable, not merely in the sudden rise and splendid triumph of Greek Tragedy, but in the moral and religious element with which it was thoroughly interpene-

* Butler's Anc. Philosophy, I. 262.

† Tyler's Theology of the Greek Poets, 313.

trated, and which formed such a contrast to the contemporaneous development of the materialistic, or, at best, pantheistic speculations of the schools.

At Athens, the theatre was no private speculation, but an institution recognized and supported by the state. Its expenses were paid from the public treasury, and it numbered among its patrons the most cultured and refined of Athens, and of other cities of Greece. It was, for a brief period, while the triumphant vindication of Greek liberty against the Persian tyrant was a fresh and inspiring memory, a school of morals and religion. In it the national consciousness and aspirations found fitting and eloquent expression. The tragedian was the teacher, the philosopher, and the poet in one. His genius accepted the wisdom of the past, and combining with it the new elements of the moral life of his own age, he fused all together, and moulded it into forms of beauty, as finished as those which the artist sculptured in marble, and more enduring than they. The theatre was the school of philosophy, before the great philosophers whom it helped to educate appeared. It has, not altogether unwarrantably, been compared to the pulpit, for it dealt loftily with the gravest questions of divine Providence and of human destiny. It seized upon whatever the old mythology or sacred traditions furnished, to illustrate—what gave its intensest interest to the drama—the principles ascendant in the moral order of the world, and the inevitable retribution that seals the doom of the transgressor.

"The strength and variety of ethical sentiment infused into the Grecian tragedy," says Mr. Grote,* "is among the most remarkable characteristics which distinguish it from the anterior forms of poetry. 'To do or suffer terrible things,' is pronounced by Aristotle to be its proper subject matter; and the internal mind and motives of the doer or sufferer, on which the ethical interest fastens, are laid open by the Greek tragedians with an impressive minuteness which neither the epic nor the lyric could possibly parallel. Moreover, the appropriate subject matter of tragedy is pregnant not only with ethical sympathy, but also with ethical debate and specu-

* His. of Greece, VIII. [illegible]

lation. Characters of mixed good and evil; distinct rules of duty, one conflicting with the other; wrong done, and justified to the conscience of the doer, if not to that of the spectator, by previous wrong suffered,—all these are the favorite themes of Æschylus and his two great successors."

Among the three great masters of Greek tragedy, Æschylus stands pre-eminent, as the theological poet.* His nearest modern parallel is Milton. In loftiness of religious conception, in sublimity of thought, in aspirations that reached toward the invisible, and were rather attracted than repulsed by its unutterable grandeurs, the Greek was not unworthy a place by the side of his more favored English brother. He is at home in the grand, the terrible, and the sublime, and he finds these where the human sphere is overshadowed by supernatural agencies, and the omnipotence of an invisible justice stands confronted with a defiant will.

But we have to deal here, not with his mythology or his theology, except so far as these are the framework to which his theory of the moral order of the world is adjusted. Zeus is no longer merely the presiding deity of Olympus.† He comes forth more distinct from the shadows of the early mythology. He is the universal father, father of gods and men. He is the supreme executive of the universe, most high and perfect, ruling and controlling all. Other deities are subordinate to him, each in his sphere a minister of his universal providence. The moral qualities are no longer abstractions. Dikè, Themis, Nemesis, the Eumenides, the Mœræ are personified, and take an active part in dealing with the interests and destinies of men.

In the tragedies of Æschylus (525–456 B.C.) we find the nearest approach that Grecian genius ever made to the terrible sublimity of certain of the Hebrew prophets. A Pythagorean in his philosophy; too enlightened to accept the fictions of

* Tyler's Theology of the Greek Poets, 206.

† Speaking of the Greek dramatic poetry, Prof. T. Lewis remarks: "Nothing is more remarkable than the manner in which the monotheistic feeling comes out in association with every lofty idea and deep emotion. Other deities are forgotten, and Zeus, or some name representative of the one Numen who reigns supreme in the realm of law and providence, alone appears."—*Presb. Quar.*, July, 1872.

the popular mythology, and even suspected of impiety with reference to the Eleusinian mysteries—as we learn from Aristotle—it is not surprising that while content to refine upon the Homeric myths, he touched them only to transform them, using often the same religious terms, but infusing into them a loftier meaning and a grander significance.

Only in his first tragedy, the Prometheus, are the discordant elements of the Homeric Olympus brought into view. Here Jove is at once a usurper and a despot, and our sympathies are arrayed on the side of his victim. We admire the conscious integrity, the indomitable will, and the generous love of humanity which, even on the bleak rocks of Caucasus, and under the terrible inflictions and more terrible threats of the angry monarch of Olympus, give to the character of Prometheus a moral elevation that stands in marked contrast to that of his oppressor. The suspicion of impiety might well be excited by such representations, and possibly the best solution of the incongruity between this and the other plays of Æschylus, in which the character of Jove no longer appears depraved and basely revengeful, is found in the supposition that his Prometheus was intended by him as an exposure of some of the gross features of the popular mythology. By a kind of *reductio ad absurdum*, he renders manifest the conflict between these and those instincts of justice which challenge sympathy for Prometheus, and contempt for his vindictive persecutor.

In the Prometheus no one is free but Jupiter,* and "the son of Saturn has manners that supplication cannot reach, and an inexorable heart."† "The might of Necessity cannot be resisted,"‡ and at the Fate which "brings events to their consummation,"§ the chorus, shuddering, exclaim, "Alas! alas! O Fate! Fate!"‖ There is no evading "the counsel of Jove." It would be "a war without a conflict, accomplishing things impossible."¶ In contrast with this impenetrable darkness of despair that invests the throne of the supreme usurper, jealous of men's happiness, and wreaking vengeance on the one who befriends them, stands the character of Prometheus, the patron, and in a certain sense the redeemer of men, who

* Line 50. † Ib., 184, 5. ‡ Ib., 105. § Ib., 511. ‖ Ib., 700. ¶ Ib., 914.

singly opposed the tyranny of Jove, that made woe-begone mortals of no account, and proposed to annihilate the race, and who, for his efforts in ransoming "mortals from being utterly destroyed and going down to Hades," as well as for teaching them inventions and how to subdue nature, is visited by terrible wrath. A kindred victim with himself is Ino, and the two in conjunction, suffering from the same vindictive caprice, rise before us like two witnesses to testify against the unscrupulous and lustful monarch of Olympus. Whatever may have been the intent of Æschylus in his drama, we feel, as we read, that he would teach men another faith than that which a Prometheus would abhor. We accept the tragedy as a terrible impeachment of the grossest element of the popular mythology.

Through the *Persians*, we seem best able to define the relations which Æschylus sustained to the religious belief and the great events of his time. He had come personally in collision with the forces of the mightiest monarch on the globe. He had fought at Marathon. He had shared the exultation of the victors, and in common with them he ascribed the wonderful deliverance to a divine power. "'Twas some divinity that thus depressed the balance with a counterpoise of fortune."* So wonderful was the event that "one who aforetime had believed not in the gods, then made prayer in orisons, doing reverence to earth and heaven."† The impression was strengthened by the sacrilege of the Persians against the Grecian temples,‡ and especially when coupled with that arrogance against heaven which characterized the proud exultations of the Persian despot; since, "when presumption has bloomed, it is wont to produce a crop of Ate, whence it reaps an all-mournful harvest."§ In such a case Jove proves himself to be "a chastiser of thoughts too overbearing, a stern censor."‖ Man, moreover, leads the way to his own doom. He challenges retribution, and "when man is speeding onward, God also lends a hand."¶ Then swift will come "the accomplishment of the oracles."** So Darius himself, witnessing against the folly and impiety of his son, testifies.

* Persians, l. 345, 6. † Ib., 497–9. ‡ Ib., 809. § Ib., 821, 2.
‖ Ib., 827, 8. ¶ Ib., 742. ** Ib., 739.

The dream of Atossa, filling her with torturing foreboding of the great disaster to her son Xerxes, serves to give expression to that instinct of justice in the human soul, which shrinks with shuddering awe from confronting the results of criminal deeds.* Here we have the link which connects the idea of the *Persians* with that of the Orestean legend, in which the dream of Clytemnestra is so marked a feature. With her guilty paramour, Ægisthus, she slays her husband, Agamemnon, and "the mighty demon of the household, dreadful in wrath,"† thenceforth waits greedy for what is decreed of heaven, and what Jove will accomplish. She assumes a tone of confidence, but trembles with inward terror. No more than Ægisthus, who prates, sentimentally but hypocritically, of justice, can Clytemnestra shake off the terrible consciousness of guilt, that a breath may inflame to torturing fears or dreams.

The wicked deed is done, and its retribution is sure. Orestes himself, at the risk of his own destruction, must become the minister of justice, and thus crime begets crime. "Where then," ask the chorus, "is the violence of calamity, when lulled, to find an end; or where is it to reach a termination?"‡ Orestes himself, in turn, is pursued by the Furies, and after resorting to Delphi for purification, is only saved from vengeance by the tie vote of the Areopagus, the protection of Apollo, and the mediation of Minerva.

We may now note the leading ideas of the tragedies of Æschylus, so far as they bear upon the providential government, and the moral order of the world. Jove, or "whoever he be,"§ for the name is nothing unless well pleasing to him who is invoked, is the Supreme ruler, who has a just regard for all human interests. If one is wicked or impious, "the treacherous deceit of the deity" will prove too much for mortal man to elude. "Who is he that with an agile foot, of easy spring, can bound over it? It may favor him at first, but it lures him on at length "within the densest toils, whence it is not possible for mortal to struggle out and make his escape."‖ It is vain to rebel, for "it is necessary for

* Ib., 176-214. † Agamemnon, 1483-7. ‡ Choephori, 1076.
§ Agamemnon, 161. ‖ Persians, 97-9.

mortals to endure afflictions, when the Gods award them."*
"Some one said the Gods did not deign to care for mortals, by whom the honor of holy things might be trampled on; not holy was he."†

All success must come from heaven. In the *Seven against Thebes*, the chorus declare, "'Tis by the blessing of the Gods that we inhabit a city unconquered, and that our fortification is proof against the multitude of our enemies. What Nemesis can feel offended at this?"‡ Eteocles admits, notwithstanding his jealousy of those who would substitute prayers for arms, that "for mortals to succeed is a boon from heaven."§ The man who defies the Gods is regarded as a weak adversary, and his exultation is vain who sends "loud swelling words into heaven to the ears of Jove."‖ The fire-bearing thunderbolt will justly come upon him, while "a dread adversary is he that reveres the Gods."¶

Yet the contamination of evil fellowship will involve the good with the bad in the same fate. They must perish together. "Alas! for the omen that associates the righteous man with the impious! Nothing can be worse. The field of infatuation has death for its fruits."** The Gods are jealous of their honor, and Agamemnon, returning victorious from war, trembles lest by pride he provoke their vengeance. When Clytemnestra would tempt him to walk proudly on rich carpeting, he refuses, "lest the envy of the Gods smite me afar as I trample . . . by spoiling with my feet my wealth."†† The most terrible unseen powers wait to execute the judicial dispensations of Jove. It is he that "sends up Ate, the late avenger, on the hardy band of mortals that dares all deeds."‡‡ Stern retribution is no accident. "It is a law," that blood calls for blood, "for murder cries aloud to Erinnyes, who bring on from those that perished before, another woe upon woe."§§

Thus the Furies occupy a conspicuous feature in other tragedies of Æschylus, as well as that which bears their name. If they dog the steps of Orestes, and clamor for vengeance

* Ib. 293,4. † Agamemnon, 369–72. ‡ Seven, etc., 235. § Ib. 627.
‖ Ib. 445. ¶ Ib. 598. ** Ib. 601–3.
†† Agamemnon, 496,7. ‡‡ Choeph., 382–4. §§ Ib. 402–4.

upon him, and are appeased only by divine interposition, much more will they dog the steps of those who cannot plead his justification. "The black Erinnyes in time, reduce to obscurity, the man that is fortunate without righteousness, by a reverse of fortune."* But their vengeance is directed only against the guilty. Him they pursue, as Apollo assures Orestes; they would follow him through the earth. But, speaking themselves as a chorus, they say, "on him indeed who possesses pure hands, no wrath from us steals."† They are, moreover, in perfect harmony with all the other unseen and resistless forces, that execute the will and dispense the justice of Jove. Indeed, they address them to this effect: "Ye supreme ruling goddesses and fates, born of the same mother as we, deities of strict laws, common to every house."‡

But their work is most signally illustrated in the unsleeping and inevitable retribution that follows a father's curse. That curse itself is invested sometimes almost with personality. Eteocles, appalled by its consummation, sees it "sitting hard beside him, with dry tearless eyes, telling him that profit comes before his after-doom.§ At length "the imprecation of the father hath taken full effect, and hath not failed."‖ The doom which this curse brings with it is described as terrible. It is like the mediæval excommunication, putting the ban of Christendom on one outlawed of Gods and men. "A father's unseen wrath excludes him from altars,¶ and no one will receive or dwell with him; but that, unhonored and abhorred of all, he should at length die, horribly wasted away, by a doom of utter destruction."** It is the business of the Furies, who know no scruple, and can feel no compassion, to

* Agamemnon, 462-6. † Eumenides, 313-'5. ‡ Ib. 961-4.

§ The Seven, 697. ‖ Ib. 812, 3.

¶ Prof. T. Lewis notices the "powerful illustrations" of the idea of the hereditary taint of crime furnished by the Greek drama. It is "an evil in the blood, commencing in some atrocious deed, and thus going down, generation after generation, as though it could never be got out, until some supernatural expiation, or some overwhelming catastrophe, burying all beneath it, finally terminates its long career of death and crime. . . . The sins of the fathers involve the destinies of the children, even to the third and fourth generation."—*Pres. Quar.*, July, 1872.

** Choeph., 293, 4.

see this doom sternly inflicted. In the fate of Eteocles, the chorus sees that "too truly hath awful Erinnyes brought (the curses) of (his) father Œdipus, to a consummation."*

The Furies themselves are represented as feeling that on their fidelity to their trust, the stability of social order depends. Let them be obstructed in their office, and then "neither will any wrath of us, men-regarding mœnads, creep on because of evil deeds,"† and "who keeping no fear in his blithesome heart, either city or mortal alike, would any longer reverence justice?"‡

Thus, sooner or later, wickedness must meet retribution. If justice is retarded, the sin goes on accumulating, and no mortal can see its limit. "The impious deed begets more, like to its own race."§ Such is its nature. But guilt does not waste away by decay. Of some kinds of pollution—when fraternal blood is shed—"there is no decay."‖ The ancient transgression has a long-lingering curse. "It abides unto the third generation."¶ The guilt of one member of a household involves all its members in calamity, as the crime of Paris "mowed down to the very earth, in utter destruction, the house of his father."**

Nor may the guilty evade, by ceremonial observances, what is due for his impiety. "Neither by weeping or pouring libations . . . will he soothe away the intense wrath of fireless rites."†† Indeed, "there is no bulwark in wealth against destruction to the man who, in the wantonness of his heart, has spurned the great altar of justice."‡‡ "Guilt is not concealed, but is conspicuous, a light of lurid glare; . . . and not one of the gods lends an ear to his orisons, but sweeps away the unrighteous that hath concerned himself with these doings."§§ It is quoted as an old saying, "The doer must suffer."‖‖ Again: "Though one were to make every libation in atonement for a single murder, the labor would be in vain."¶¶

This certainty of penalty is asserted in the strongest terms. "For the lawless conduct of him that hath lawlessly tres-

* The Seven, 888, 9. † Eumenides, 499, 500. ‡ Ib. 521, 2.
§ Agamemnon, 757, 8. ‖ The Seven, 684. ¶ Ib. 746.
** Agamem., 535, 6. †† Ib. 69–71. ‡‡ Ib. 381–3.
§§ Ib. 388–94. ‖‖ Choepl., 313, '4. ¶¶ Ib. 520, 1.

passed against every awful attribute of Jupiter, is not trampled under foot on the ground. But the base of Justice is planted firm; and Fate that forges the sword, prepares it for the deed . . . and time-honored Erinnys avenges the stain."* Moreover, "in appointed time and day, every one of mortals who despises the gods shall pay the penalty."†

Evermore, in this representation of the fearful doom constantly overhanging the guilty, there is a dark background beyond the present scene; a lingering lurking vengeance that will pursue the departing criminal to the gloomy mansions of the dead. From that realm of conscious, though cheerless spirits, the ghost of Darius is figured as rising up, to speak words of wisdom on the overthrow of Xerxes, and setting forth the wisdom that was peculiarly his own, as well as that which belongs to the dead. Hades is a stern reality. "Interpreters of these dreams, bound to veracity, declared on the part of the gods, that those beneath the earth are complaining full angrily, and are wroth against their murderers."‡ There is a sensibility which can suffer as well as resent. For "Pluto is judge of mortals below the earth, and he looks upon all things with a recording eye."§ It is this feature of the moral system which enables Æschylus to present it in all its sublimity and terror. The impression which it makes is more appalling than consolatory, except to those who suffer under ills which human laws or forces alone cannot reach. Everywhere we are met by an unyielding sternness, an irresistible force, an inexorable will. The rocky peaks of Caucasus are ever in view, but no flowers wreathe, and no genial sunbeam lights up their rugged grandeur. Only now and then is there a softening of the deep shadow, a gleam of beauty which relieves the intensity of an impression that at length becomes torturing. We seem to feel some warm throbbings of a human sympathy, when we are reminded that in such a state as this, "it is good to grow wise under sorrow."‖ Conscience responds to the summons to "reverence the altar of Justice."¶ We approve the verdict that "the lot of families swayed by unbending justice is ever fair in progeny,"** and we admire

* Ib. 643-51. † Suppliants, 226. ‡ Choeph., 36-41. § Eumen., 271-3.
‖ Ib. 520. ¶ Ib. 339-49. ** Agamem., 760.

the beauty as well as the sublimity of the thought that "Justice beams in smoky cottages, and honors the holy life; and leaving with averted eyes, gilded prosperity with impurity of hands, she is wont to draw nigh to holiness, not honoring the power of wealth when falsely stamped with praise, and she directs everything toward the issue."*

Still, with all the emphasis that Æschylus gives to the unseen forces of the moral world, he never allows us in his own exaggerations or overawing conceptions, to lose the sense of a reality in which mortals are alike concerned. There is a presiding Intelligence, wise, just, resistless, determining all by His counsel—there are unseen ministries of His will, working out varied retribution—there are laws which no wealth or wit or sacrificial device can evade—there is a justice which must work out its end, though that end be reached by a pathway of pestilence or blood. There is nothing accidental. It is not for man by his conventionalisms to modify or remould the moral system. It stands and must stand forever, on a basis as firm as the throne of the Eternal Ruler.

"The leading ideas of the tragedies of Æschylus," remarks a recent writer, "were the supremacy of Zeus, and the moral order of the universe. By chains, not always of gold, the world is bound about the throne of Zeus. Vice leads to punishment in this generation, and the next, and the third. Yet no voluntary pure man can come to ruin. The contest of Destiny and Free-Will finds its solution only in this moral order. . . . No one is punished by the Divine hand without fault of his own. But sin, once committed, is followed by a judicial blindness which leads to other and greater guilt. . . Yet the individual is free. If he belongs to a doomed race, then it is true there is an hereditary tendency which shall lead him to guilt and ruin, but the decision rests with himself. . . . In much of this ethical system, Æschylus has taken and arranged prevailing popular beliefs."†

Of Sophocles (495—406 B.C.), it has been justly remarked,‡ that as he "received from the hands of Æschylus the drama already formed, so, too, he accepted from him a body of re-

* Ib. 774–81. † Westmin. Rev., Jan., 1873. *Sophocles.*
‡ Westmin. Rev., Jan., 1873.

ligious doctrines already in advance of popular belief." It is not, however, in blind trust, or as a mere imitator, that he accepts them. He presents them in new phases. He brings them into closer harmony with human life. His characters are nearer the level of our sympathies, and he gives to his scenes, if less of the weird and appalling, an impression of intense reality. If Æschylus had more lyrical power, Sophocles has more of harmony and sweetness. Truthfulness, purity, and a lofty ethical as well as devoutly religious tone pervade his writings.

It is unnecessary to the object in view, to take up separately the seven tragedies of his which alone have been preserved, or to unfold the plot of each. Indeed, in each of them, the interest of the plot is but a small part of its merit. The "Antigone" and the "Electra" are in some respects, the most important, in the exposition of the relations of men to the scheme of Providence. Of the former, the two leading ideas are the sacredness of family affection, and the supremacy of the eternal "unwritten law." Beautiful as is the exhibition of the first, in the character of the two sisters, our highest admiration is reserved for Antigone, in whom both are illustrated. Her portraiture is something more than a literary gem. Her womanly feebleness only makes her unbending moral heroism and loyalty to the "unwritten laws," more impressive by contrast. As we gaze upon her, we can appreciate the phrase of our great English poet—"how awful goodness is."

In the "Electra" a feeble woman is again the heroine. With an indignation against iniquity which threats cannot awe, nor time soften, she hopes on, and wrestles on, as it were against destiny, till lingering justice overtakes the guilty, and the murderous conspiracy, which had seemed exultingly to triumph, is overwhemed by a terrible vengeance. The character of Neoptolemus in the "Philoctetes," is admirably drawn. It is full of human interest and deeply significant. The most powerful motives that can be imagined are brought to bear against the keenest sensitiveness to right. All the craft of Ulysses is employed to overcome the integrity of his youthful associate, and the veteran Mephistopheles cites

his own chilling experience of a mocking world to cool the moral fervor of one who says, "The words which I grieve to hear, I also abhor to practice. My nature is to do nothing with evil treachery." "I, too," Ulysses replies, "formerly, in youth, possessed a slow tongue and an active hand, but now, having gone forth to the test, I see among mankind, the tongue and not the deeds bearing rule in everything."* But the contrast of character, which manifests the native beauty and superiority of virtue, is reached when Neoptolemus asks: "And dost thou not then hold it base to utter falsehood?" and Ulysses answers: "No; at least if the lie bring safety."† The pliant victim of the tempter finds, however, as he yields, that "everything is inconvenient, where one having abandoned his own nature, does what befits him not."‡ He recoils at the vivid apprehension of the base nature of the course, in pursuing which, he says, "I shall show myself a villain," and rises with new strength and in noble self-vindication from his temporary fall. When he surrenders the stolen arms of Philoctetes to their owner, he confesses that he procured and held them "basely and not with justice," and when Ulysses taunts him with speaking this in mockery, he replies with calm dignity: "Yes; if it be mockery to speak the truth."§ The suggestion that he acts foolishly in restoring the arms, is nobly repelled: "If this be just, 'tis better than wisdom,"‖ and when he is threatened by Ulysses with the resentment of the Greek army, he promptly replies: "With justice on my side, I fear not thy terrors."¶

Such a portrait, so true to nature, and so admirably executed, is a striking illustration of the subjective elements of the moral system. Virtue is seen to be noble and vice base. Probation, triumphantly endured, reveals and develops the true greatness of the soul that endures the trial.

No writer, among the ancients at least, has invested the "eternal unwritten laws" of God with such awful majesty as Sophocles. The feeble Antigone, in the presence of the tyrant Kreon, whose threat of death she has defied in burying her brother, seems to speak with more than mortal might, as

* Philoctetes, 98, 9. † Ib. 108, 9. ‡ Ib. 902, 3.
§ Ib. 1235. ‖ Ib. 1246. ¶ Ib. 1251.

she fearlessly avows the deed. She confesses she had dared to transgress, "for it was not Jove who heralded these commands, nor Justice, that dwells with the Gods below, established these laws among men: nor did I think your proclamations had such power, as that you, a mortal, could override the unwritten and immovable laws of the Gods. For these are not of to-day or yesterday, but they ever live, and no one knows from what time they were revealed. For these reasons, I would not, out of the fear of any man's thought, subject myself to the justice of the Gods."*

Elsewhere, Sophocles recurs to these eternal laws. In connection with "all-sainted purity of every word and action," he introduces those "laws of state sublime, engendered within the firmament of heaven, whose only father is Olympus; nor did the perishable nature of man give them being; no, nor shall oblivion over drown them in sleep. Great is the divinity in these, nor groweth old."† Even Menelaus, overawed by the terrible fate of Ajax, seems to quail with fear as he exclaims, "Let me ever be fixed in a wholesome awe, and let me not think that after doing what I please, I shall not pay back in turn what pains me."‡ Temporary success may be gained by wrong, but more careful and prolonged observation shows that the unwritten laws will finally be vindicated. Even here, as Agamemnon says, "'Tis not the stout nor the broad-backed men that are most safe; no, the men of good counsel everywhere prevail."§

Over these laws and their vindication a sleepless and resistless Providence presides. The blind prophet Tiresias declares boldly his own confidence, and gives fearless utterance, so long as "there is any might in truth."‖ Œdipus produces a deep impression on his hearers, while he calls upon them to reverence the Gods, and "believe that they look on the mortal who is pious, and that they no less look on the impious, but that *never yet has there been escape of any man among men irreligious.*"¶ Antigone is not less confident: "Thou couldst not, wert thou to search, discover the mortal, who, if a higher power led him on, could escape."** Theseus ac-

* Antigone, 453–60. † Œdipus Tyrannus, 865–870. ‡ Ajax, 1085–6.
§ Ajax, 1251–2. ‖ Œdipus Tyrannus, 369. ¶ Œdipus Col., 278–81.
** Ib. 252–3.

knowledges that prosperous wickedness has no security, "for possessions acquired by unjust trick are not preserved."* Power can find no shelter for itself when the curse of guilt has been incurred; "but when any God shall afflict him, not even the strong man shall escape."† And again, "The swift-footed vengeance of heaven cuts short those who are of wicked minds."‡ Present prospects may not be trusted, nor present impunity be a ground of confidence, since "fortune always raises, and fortune casts down the prosperous and unprosperous, and no one is prescient of what is decreed for mortals."§ Still, "to be wise is the first part of happiness; and it behooves us not to be guilty of irreverence in those things at least that concern the Gods: for the haughty words of the vaunting, paying the penalty of severe afflictions, have taught wisdom to old age."‖

The folly, or rather madness of coming willfully in conflict with the unwritten laws of the moral system, is seen in the array of resistless forces by which that system is maintained. Sometimes they are represented by fate, sometimes by the Furies, sometimes by the Gods beneath, sometimes by a divine Justice, and sometimes by "all-seeing, all-ruling Jove,"¶ in whose sovereign will they all harmonize. As to Fate, its power "is a marvellous one. Neither tempest, nor war, nor tower, nor black sea-beaten ships escape its control."** And yet it comes not in conflict with him to whom the suppliant chorus address their prayer: "O Jove! what daring pride of mortals can control thy power? . . . Through unwasting time, enthroned in might, thou dwellest in the glittering blaze of heaven."†† The faith of Electra in her almost despairing anguish, is sustained by the cheering counsel of the chorus; "There is a mighty Jove in heaven, who overlooketh and swayeth all things."‡‡

But, as if the more composed and dignified justice of Jove was too slow to punish the daring and defiant wickedness of men, it is supplemented by those who are its allies, and move in harmony indeed, with it, but with a startling rapidity, and

* Ib. 1027. † Electra, 696, 7. ‡ Antigone, 1103, 4. § Ib. 1158–60.
‖ Ib. 1348–53. ¶ Œdipus Col., 1085, 6. ** Antigone, 951–4. †† Ib. 604–10.
‡‡ Electra, 174–8.

signal vengeance. Tiresias, in denouncing Kreon to his face, says, "These things are done with violent injustice by you; for this, the Furies of Hades and the Gods lie in ambush."* Electra, with almost exhausted patience, and with irrepressible indignation at triumphant wrong, exclaims: "O abode of Pluto and Proserpine, O nether Mercury and awful Curse, and ye venerable children of the Gods, ye Furies, who regard them that unjustly perish, . . . Come ye, lend aid, avenge the murder of our father, etc."† In sympathy with this prayer, the chorus express confidence in a retributive providence. "If I be not born a foolish prophet, and wanting in wise judgment, there will come Justice the prophetic, bearing in her hands righteous mastery. She will pursue them. . . . Also shall come the many-footed and many-handed Erinnyes of brazen tread, that is concealed in dreadful ambush."‡

Boastful impiety challenges terrible retribution. When Ajax went forth to war, his father charged him, while wishing to conquer with the spear, ever also, to conquer through the Gods. His arrogant vaunt in reply is one of insult to the Gods. In concert with them, he said, "Even one that was nothing might obtain the victory; but I, even without them, am assured I shall snatch to me this glory."§ Such pride cannot elude its doom. His deeds of valor leave him still accursed, and his heaven-sent phrenzy and suicidal doom, make him a memorable example of a justice that is sure though slow. Man is nothing, when the wrath of the Gods confronts him. "If a God fail him, even a coward may elude a brave man."‖ Yet no "fate" saves a man from working out his own retribution. "Ajax, wretched man, obstinately bent at some time, to accomplish thine evil lot of woes."¶ Even in the fierceness of his wrath against an chiefs, he is foiled by a power above; for when ek human victims, "a God has wrought (through the change that his violence should fall on the oks,"** so that instead of being terrible, he becomes and withers under the shame of his own misdeeds.

† Electra, 112–18. ‡ Ib. 472–91.
‖ Ib. 455, 6. ¶ Ib. 925–9. ** Ib. 1060, 1.

The picture of the guilty man, chased by his own fears and the terrors of retribution, is forcibly drawn. In order to escape, he should "employ in flight a foot more vigorous than coursers swift as the storm; for the offspring of Jove, all armed with fire and lightnings, is springing upon him, and together are following the dread inevitable fates." *

But the gods are merciful as well as just. "The modest the gods love, while they abhor the wicked." Seeming injustice must not be allowed to warrant the impeachment of Supreme Providence. The unjustly depressed shall yet be lifted up. In the depths of his misery, Œdipus is not to permit himself to despair. The chorus says to him, "Many sufferings, and these undeservedly, having come upon you, may the just divinity again exalt you." † It is asserted as undeniable, "The gods do not love injustice." ‡ The chorus counsels Deianira to cherish hope, "since who hath seen Jove devoid of care for his children?" § Whatever he sends should be unmurmuringly accepted, for "it is fitting to bear well what comes from God." ‖

Repeated reference is made to the language attributed—although by a gross anachronism—to Solon: Count no man happy till he dies; since till then he is subject to all life's changes.¶ No one can tell what the gods have in store for him. Œdipus, not through any conscious criminality of his own, suffers, and says, "Into such evils I also have entered, the gods impelling me." ** Hence the necessity of a submission to a mysterious providence, especially in connection with that future where the judges of the dead shall award righteous sentence. Of that future, Sophocles speaks confidently, although Hades is still the dim shadowy realm, of which one may speak as Electra does, doubtfully, since while wishing, by honors paid to the dead, to afford them pleasure, she adds, "if in the other world there be any pleasure." †† Still, anguish may be keen there, and Œdipus, overwhelmed with the horror of his misfortunes, trembles at the thought of beholding there his father and his hapless mother.‡‡ The duration of that future, however, invests it

* Œdip. Tyr., 471, etc. † Œdip. Col. ‡ Trachin. 280. § Ib. 138–40.
‖ Œdip. Col., 694, 5. ¶ Œdip. Tyr., 1528–30, Trachin, 1–3.
** Œdip. Col., 998. †† Electra, 356. ‡‡ Œdip. Tyr., 1371, 2.

with a vast significance. It will endure forever. Antigone, in weighing deliberately the choice to be made between pleasing the living on the earth, or the dead below, exclaims, "The time is longer which it behooves me to please those below than those here, for there I shall forever lie." * The effect of time as an element in the processes of retribution is not overlooked. It soothes anguish, while it discovers guilt. In one case, "Time is a lenient God;" in the other, "Time, the long, the countless, brings to light all that is unseen, and when disclosed, conceals, nor is aught hopeless; no, both the terrible oath and the hardened spirit are his prize." †

Nor is the judicial nature of the processes of sin within the soul overlooked. The scene in which Kreon is presented, trembling before the denunciations of the weak, blind, old prophet, is somewhat parallel to that of the king of Babylon, appalled by the mysterious hand-writing on the wall of his palace; and when conscience sleeps, and all forebodings are hushed, a Clytemnestra is an object of terror, in the very composure of a guilt to be disturbed only by its sudden doom. "So hardened is she, that she lives with that pollution, in fear of no avenging Fury." ‡

We have adduced testimony more than sufficient to establish the doctrinal position of Sophocles as to an overruling and retributive Providence, and to justify the language of a recent writer, who remarks: "If we gather up the teachings of Sophocles upon this point, we find that the gods have a great progressive plan of the universe which they carry out in spite of, or sometimes by means of individual suffering. That every man who seeks to do right is, notwithstanding his misfortunes, under their protection, and will finally be rewarded according to his merit; that voluntary guilt tends to worse, and lastly to ruin. This advance from the religious position of Æschylus is great, but it leads to results no less important. It leads, firstly, to the possibility of making a consciousness of right and justice an acting moral power. . . . Secondly, and here we must touch upon the mystic side of the religion of Sophocles, it imbues his dramas with a lofty spiritualism. It stands in opposition to the religion of rite

* Antig., 74–5. † Ajax, 646–9. ‡ Electra, 275–6.

and profession. It calls for the spirit, and not the letter. Œdipus declares that the sacrifice of one pure soul rightly offered, avails more than ten thousand which are not so given. It adds a significance to the sincere unspoken prayer, for the God hears it before it is said. . . . And the voice of the God speaks within the breast of man to guide and direct him. . . . And thirdly, it finds a place in the religion of Sophocles for the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. This doctrine was only dimly present to the popular mind; it was no active moral power. The motive to justice and righteousness lay in the fear of punishment in this life—of punishment at the hands of the civil magistrate or the offended Deity. True, in Hades the unholy were unholy still, and suffered a shadowy retribution for their crimes, but the real punishment was in this life. Sophocles recognized a purer motive for human action, the love of right for its own sake, and for the sake of the divine approval. . . . The highest duty is the duty of living in accordance with the will of the gods, careless of praise or blame, reward or punishment from any but their hands, and with eyes directed to that other life where wrongs are righted and where justice is done. . . . Æschylus has exemplified the terrors of conscience with appalling power in the persons of Clytemnestra and Orestes, but the passion which he represents is rather that of remorse than that of penitence. The fear of punishment is the moving cause of terror. In the ethics of Sophocles, conscience leads to a penitent recognition of personal guilt and a desire of amendment. Thus, in the hands of Sophocles, religion passed from a negative to a positive place. It was no longer sufficient, as in the time of Æschylus, to live a quiet life with no overweening self-exaltation, or insolent rivalry of the gods, but heart and hand must be alike pure, and both devoted to the service of the Gods." *

Euripides (480–405 B.C.) sustains, towards his two great predecessors, a relation not altogether unlike that of the Sophists to the philosophers who preceded them. Like the Sophists, he reflected the spirit of the new age. The religious impressions of the terrible crisis of the Persian war had worn away.

* West. Rev., Jan., 1878, *Sophocles.*

Theology had to some extent shared the fate of an obsolete mythology. Euripides was almost as much the wit, the rhetorician, or even the sophist, as the poet. If Socrates, Anaxagoras, and Prodicus were his teachers, as we are told, the moral lessons of the first must have been well-nigh obliterated by the naturalism or scepticism of the others. With the mythological absurdities of the popular creed, it is evident that Euripides owned no sympathy.

This is seen in his plays. He has little of the reverence of his predecessors. He depresses gods and heroes to the level of men. He can, if his plot calls for it, make them objects of pity or contempt. The Deity of Euripides has not that supernatural awfulness nor is he such an object of solemn veneration as the Deity of Æschylus or Sophocles. His eye is directed earthward rather than heavenward. He studies the striking, the sensational, deals in sophistical arguments, sententious epigrams, philosophical explanations, strained situations; uses, indeed, the popular mythology, but handles it with the art of a showman rather than the reverence of a priest. With him human destiny has no visible relation to Divine law. The gods interpose arbitrarily. Life is a scene of chance and change, a stormy sea, billowy with calamity, sorrow and caprice. The men of Euripides are men of the actual world, conform to the manners of the time, illustrate commonplace passions, or, on occasion, settle moral questions by quibbles. We have, in Euripides, with all his rich fancy and picturesque descriptions, the prosaic background of what is so brightly and impressively conspicuous in Æschylus and Sophocles. If the world is not a vale of tears, it is a moral labyrinth, a puzzling maze, a confused scene, from which mere reason in vain strives to educe order and justice.

We close this summary sketch in the words of a recent writer,* who, criticising Schlegel's definition of the idea of Greek tragedy, viz., that it was the sense of an oppressive destiny, a fate against which the will of man blindly and vainly dashes, remarks: "It is impossible to suppose that a Greek would have been satisfied with the bold fate-theory of Schlegel. Not Fate, but Nemesis, was the ruling notion in

* Westminster Review, Jan., 1872.

Greek tragedy. A profound sense of the Divine government of the world, of a righteous power punishing pride and vice, pursuing the children of the guilty to the tenth generation—in short, a mysterious and almost Jewish idea of holiness pervades the whole work of the tragedians. This religious conception had gradually defined itself in the consciousness of the Greek race. Homer, in both his epics, presents us with the spectacle of crime punished. It is the sin of Paris and the obstinacy of the Trojan princes which leads to the fall of Troy. It is the insolence of the suitors in the Odyssey which brings them to their death. The cyclical poets seem to have dwelt upon the same theme. The storm which fell upon the Achaian fleet, dispersing and drowning the heroes, was a punishment for their impiety and pride during the sack of Troy. The madness of Ajax followed his violence upon Cassandra. When conscious morality begins in Greece, the idea is at once made prominent. Hesiod continually insists on justice, whose law no man can violate unpunished. The Gnomic poets show how guilt, if unavenged at the moment, brings calamity upon the offspring of the evildoer. This notion of an inheritance of crime is particularly noticeable; since it tinged the whole tragedy of the Greeks. Solon, again, in his dialogue with Crœsus, develops another aspect of the same idea. With him, the Deity is jealous of all towering greatness, of all insolent prosperity; his Nemesis punishes the pride of wealth and the lust of life. Some of the most prominent personages of Greek tragedy—Kreon, Œdipus, Theseus, Agamemnon—illustrate this phase of the idea. In the sayings of the Seven Sages, we trace another shade of the conception. All of them insist on moderation, modesty, the right proportion, the due mean. The lyrists take up a somewhat different position. The vicissitudes of life, both independent of, and connected with, personal guilt, fascinate their imagination. They have a deep and awful sense of sudden catastrophes. Pindar rises to a loftier level; his odes are pervaded by reverence for a holy power, before whom the insolent are forced to bow, by whom the humble are protected, and the good rewarded.

"Such are the traces of a doctrine of Nemesis to be found

in all the literature of the pre-dramatic period. That very event which determined the sudden splendor of the drama, gave a sublime and terrific sanction to the already existing morality. The Persian war exhibited the downfall of a haughty and insolent race, cut off in all its pomp and power. Before the eyes of the men who witnessed the calamities of Œdipus and Agamemnon on the stage, the glory of godless Asia had vanished like a dream. Thus the idea of Nemesis quelling the insolent and smiting the unholy, was realized in actual history; and to add to the impression produced on Greek imagination by the destruction of the Persian hosts, Phidias carved his statue of Nemesis to be a monument in enduring marble of the national morality. Æschylus erected an even more majestic monument to the same principle in his tragedies.

"Nemesis is the fundamental idea of the Greek drama. It appears strongest in Æschylus, as a prophetic and awful law, mysteriously felt and terribly revealed. Sophocles uses it to point the deep moralities which govern human life. In Euripides it degenerates into something more akin to a sense of vicissitudes; it becomes more sentimental—less a religious or moral principle than a phenomenon inspiring fear and pity."*

CHAPTER VIII.

SOCRATES.

In passing from the Sophists to Socrates (468–399 B.C.), we seem to emerge from the stifling air of a cavern into the fresh and bracing atmosphere of the living world. It is not merely a sense of contrast which we experience. There is a

* The idea most prominent in the Greek tragedies, "most vivid and most pervasive, is that of the eternal and inevitable justice. There is hardly a drama in which it does not in some form appear and constitute an important, if not the central element. Justice slow but sure."—PROF. LEWIS, *Presb. Quar.*, 1872, p. 463.

satisfaction, akin to that of witnessing a just retribution, when we behold the unpretending but triumphant vindication of truth and virtue combined with the exposure and reprobation of the false principles of corrupting pretenders to knowledge. In the clearness and simplicity of his doctrines, in the moral consistency of his life, in his transparent purity of soul and elevated aims, Socrates stands alone, the conspicuous teacher and prophet of his age. With good reason does one who has studied his character and teachings with admiration,* speak of him as "THAT MAN whom the simplest and most hurried narrative cannot approach without emotion—the man whom all ages have united to acknowledge as almost the ideal of humanity itself."

Till he had attained to ripe manhood, Socrates seems to have been simply an obscure Athenian citizen. His keen observation, just discrimination, shrewd common sense, incorruptible morality and perfect self-control, must ere long, however, have forced him into notice. Doubtless the Sophists helped him into favor. He studied them; saw through them; attacked them; vanquished them; sometimes, doubtless, with their own weapons. This was the more noticeable from his own lack of all pretension. The Oracle at Delphi pronounced him the wisest of men. He did not dispute the oracle, but modestly explained it by saying it must be because he knew his own ignorance. He felt that he had a mission. He devoutly believed it his duty to expose shams and pretence, and defend and inculcate truth and virtue. Externally, he gave no promise of what was in him. He was rude and ungainly in his movements. He went abroad coarsely, if not shabbily dressed. In person he was a Silenus—so Alcibiades described him—but a Silenus like those of the sculptor's shop, that when opened, revealed within the images of the gods. The eloquence of Pericles—so the same witness is made by Plato to testify—made no such impression as the reported sayings, the casual remarks, of Socrates. Walking barefooted through the streets of Athens, sometimes absorbed in thought, sometimes followed by a crowd eager to catch his words; now strolling into the market-place and routing the Sophists by a

* William Archer Butler. Lect. on Anc. Phil., I. 349.

few simple questions, now visiting those in repute for wisdom and exposing their shallowness, his appearance invited ridicule, but the ridicule, when he spoke, recoiled on the mockers. His flattened nose, his wide and upturned nostrils, his projecting eyeballs, his thick and sensual lips, his squab figure and unwieldy belly, all were noted, and all seemed an incarnate defiance of Greek taste. He was no orator. He was averse to politics. He scorned wealth and all pomp. And yet, under his forbidding exterior, with no heritage of riches, without the teaching of any noted philosopher, with no patronage from men in power, this man marks an era in the history of Philosophy; he rises above all his predecessors and contemporaries, almost like the oak over the weeds it shades.

Nor was he a mere Attic Coleridge. He practiced the virtue he taught. He performed all the duties of a good citizen, in the camp, on the battle-field, and in the dikastery. In the latter he dared to brave popular rage, in fidelity to justice, and his own convictions. He was not ostentatiously défiant, but he was calmly fearless, and shunned no danger when duty called. His passions, naturally strong, were under severe control. He was always self-possessed. No Sophist came into collision with him without meeting a repulse. He drew the young men to him, that he might infuse into them thoughts and aims worthy of themselves and the State. He made many enemies. Those whose self-conceit was wounded by his exposures, hated him. His caustic words burned and stung. More than twenty years before his death, the comic poet, Aristophanes, who knew the popular taste, ridiculed him on the stage. But he was a law-abiding citizen. Many knew his real worth, and it was only when he was on the verge of his three-score years and ten that the accumulating resentments of a generation were brought into the form of a legal accusation. He was accused of denying the gods and corrupting the youth.

On his trial, we need not dwell. In all profane history, there is nothing grander or more impressive than his attitude before his judges. Conscious of innocence, he scorned to bespeak their favor, and calmly accepted—or rather, conscientiously provoked—the doom that he might have averted.

His address to the court that decreed his death reveals the man. He looked them and death at once in the face, and never quailed. His friends provided the means of his escape from prison, but he declined to evade the sentence of the law. He discoursed with them calmly of the soul and its immortality, and then drank the fatal hemlock.

What such a man thought of God and the moral system, is of more account than the speculations of a whole school, like the Eleatic, or Ionian. He left no written memorial, no poem, no treatise. But his friends honored his memory. His image is before us, distinct enough for recognition, in almost every Platonic dialogue. But we must not interpret the peculiar position and views of Socrates, as simply a re-action against the extravagance of the Sophists, or the conflicting as well as unprofitable speculations of the physical philosophers. The better ethical spirit of earlier Greek history was not extinct. Its "wisdom," transmitted by tradition, still commanded respect. It antedated the physical philosophy, and though overshadowed by it, retained its vitality. With this, Socrates must have been acquainted. He must have been strongly attracted toward it, and it must have supplied him much material for thought. It had, moreover, re-appeared in the great tragedians, transfigured and illustrated by their genius, and the reference which the Platonic Socrates makes to the eternal *unwritten laws*, is but one of the proofs of his susceptibility and indebtedness to that genius of tragedy, which, for ethical strength and grandeur, has been unprecedented, if not unparalleled among men. But the repugnance which Socrates felt toward the subtilties and refinements of the Sophists, as well as the futile physical speculations of the earlier philosophers, seems to have been combined with his own practical turn of mind, to direct his attention and teachings to what he so repeatedly emphasized, *the useful*. This brought about two kindred results in his philosophy, if we may call that philosophy, which was imparted with little regard to any formal system, and in off-hand conversations on every variety of subject and occasion. He saw little profit in those physical theories of the schools, whith were content with reducing the universe to certain primary elements, and

explaining the phenomenal by its relation to the original substance. They were simply barren speculations, morally fruitless, and ending, as they begun, in logomachies. He respected, too, the mystery in which the secrets of science were enfolded, and believed that they were thus enfolded by the author of nature, that men might not, in their presumptuous invasion of the unknown and unknowable, neglect the practical knowledge of moral truth, which lay directly in their path.

Nor was this all. He not merely distrusted, but despised the shallow wisdom imparted by professed teachers, instructing men to seem rather than to be, to captivate their hearers with idle rhetoric or sophistical arts, rather than arrive at truth by honest reason and plain common sense. In this case, as well as the other, *the useful* constituted a test by which the mistake or folly was exposed, and it was with direct reference to *the useful*, that he studiously discarded all rhetorical phrases and "glittering generalities," and called attention to relations and analogies of the most common-place kind. To such an extent did he carry this method, that it was sometimes made his reproach. He found in the market-place, on shipboard, in the carpenter's shop, the materials of abundant and familiar illustration, and high-sounding epithets or abstruse terms would have been as foreign to his speech, as the rich robes of a model Alcibiades to his own ungainly person.

It resulted, moreover, that in giving his exposition of virtue, or enforcing its claims, *the useful* was made specially conspicuous. Indeed, if we took Xenophon alone as our guide in the study of Socrates, we might pronounce him a utilitarian philosopher—a teacher of utilitarian ethics. But Xenophon was capable only of appreciating the more obvious features of Socrates' teachings, and it is Plato, who seems at times to be delineating another Socrates, who enables us to understand in what qualified sense Socrates was a utilitarian. Without aiming at anything recondite, but rather the reverse, his reasonings took the shape usually of the *argumentum ad hominem*. The eternal obligations or the sublime beauty of virtue were left in the background, not through any lack of faith in them, but in order to present those practical considerations, to which the minds and the tastes of his country-

men were most susceptible. Hence, he appears often to reason as a mere utilitarian, while a mere utilitarian, in the modern sense of the word, he was not. Like Bishop Butler, he held that the proper end of everything was to be studied in its nature, and what was peculiar to that nature. Man was unlike all other animals, in possessing reason; and his happiness, or highest end, consisted in so developing and employing his reason as to answer the design for which reason was bestowed. Accepting the *utility* of virtue, and effectively applying it, Socrates thus also held that the foundations of ethical science can only be laid in a diligent investigation of the actual phenomena of the moral constitution, or at least warranted Plato to draw this inference. Moreover, there is a standard of justice external to the soul, and with which utility is only remotely and indirectly connected. "Right is conformity to the laws." When Hippias asks, "Do you literally mean to say that Right and Law are identical?" Socrates replies, "I do." But before the discussion is concluded, he asks, "Tell me, O Hippias, did you ever hear of what we might call UNWRITTEN LAWS?" To the affirmative reply of Hippias, Socrates responds, "Who, then, do you think laid down these laws?" Here the theology of Sophocles comes into view. We see the Great Divine Legislator enthroned above all human statutes, and imposing those obligations, obedience to which constitutes right or duty.

Here, then, is a three-fold basis of ethics, in which utilitarianism, as a ground of practical appeal to those who might scorn higher motives as transcendental, harmonizes with the voice of man's constitution and the eternal unwritten laws of justice. These laws are divine, and in recognizing them as such, Socrates assumes the fundamental truth of Theology, the being of a God, and unites ethics with it.

But the useful is identified by Socrates with the good and the beautiful. Wisdom leads to it, and wisdom is so far identical with virtue, that all wickedness is ascribed to ignorance. This idea is repeatedly presented, culminating in the paradox, by no means accordant with experience, or consistent with what is taught elsewhere, that no one is voluntarily and intelligently wicked. We must presume that in the

mind of Socrates there was some qualification of this assertion, in the full breadth of it. Whether virtue can be taught, is repeatedly discussed by the Platonic Socrates, and the conclusions reached are not always harmonious. He professes to call virtue a science; and yet, as he repeatedly insists, a science that cannot be taught, evidently, by men, for, in some instances, the scope of his argument is to show that it must be imparted as a gracious gift from heaven.

We are told expressly that Socrates adopted with approbation the doctrine of Anaxagoras, that all nature is ordered and governed by intelligence, and that he only found fault with the inadequate development of the idea.* He applied, however, to every notion that came in his way, his famous method of induction and definition, with which Aristotle credits him. There could be no science without truth, and to arrive at the truth was the aim of his reasonings. True, the Platonic Socrates often pauses just at that point where we are eagerly anxious for a decision that is withheld; but this is explicable by his own caution against absolute assertions, which he felt it more wise, as well as modest, to avoid; and by the fact that to train the mind to discriminate and to master the progress by which it may reach truth for itself, seemed preferable to any ready-made decision based on mere authority. "Know thyself," was a motto of Delphic wisdom, which Socrates honored; nor did he consider that it was least obeyed when men came to a knowledge of the limits of their capacity, and the consciousness of their own ignorance.

This self-knowledge, however, "was regarded by Socrates, not merely as a knowledge of one's own ability or inability to know certainly, but he also referred it to the cognition of man's moral value, and in this he not merely "called philosophy down from heaven," as Cicero asserted, but he connected together ethics and religion." He sought to trace out in man not only the operation of the baser, but the higher elements of his nature, the divinity within. It was by his moral inquiries, as Xenophon asserts, that Socrates was the first to instruct his disciples as to the true nature of the gods. Evidently, in view of his real sentiments, we might here more

* Ritter, II. 47.

pertinently substitute in place of "the gods," that Divine Power which pervades and rules the world. The study, therefore, of this being, and of the constitution of things to which he had subjected men, was a part of wisdom, and an essential part.

In accordance with this, Socrates is ever observant of what manifests the design or purpose of God, in the sphere of creation and providence. He is careful not to copy the example of the Sophists, and tear down what he cannot build up. He knew the tendencies of human nature and of his own age too well, to assault in the popular religion what was associated with important and salutary beliefs, and what would vanish away when the truth was apprehended. On this ground probably, he avoided the course of Xenophanes and others, in inveighing loudly against mythological absurdities, or the license of the poets, and for the most part, quite ignoring these, he constructed his refutations of the sceptical atheism of his time, and his arguments for the divine existence and order of the world, in the use of the simplest logic and of indisputable facts. He seems to us to stand above Plato in his clear apprehension of a Spiritual Intelligence, and his perfect freedom from theorizings as to his mode of existence or relations to the material creation.

In Xenophon's "Memorabilia," we have a distinct statement of the views of Socrates on many points, theological and moral, and from these we are not under the necessity of eliminating the Platonic element, in order to determine what the philosopher really held. The fact that such a witness as Xenophon testifies that "his whole life served as an example of the most unblemished integrity," and that, instead of denying the gods, as was charged on his trial, he was ever reverent and devout, serves to show that strength of conviction with which his speculative views were held, and how thoroughly he reduced them to practice.

"He was persuaded," we are told, that "the gods watched over the actions and the affairs of men in a way altogether different to what the vulgar imagined; for while these limited their knowledge to some particulars only, Socrates, on the contrary, extended it to all, firmly persuaded that every

word, every action, nay, even our most retired deliberations, were open to their view; that they were everywhere present, and communicated to mankind all such knowledge as related to the conduct of human life."*

Although Socrates conformed to popular usage in frequently speaking of the *Gods*, he indicates repeatedly that the expression was not employed in a sense inconsistent with Monotheism. He speaks expressly of Him "who raised this whole universe, and still upholds the mighty frame, who perfected every part of it in beauty and in goodness, suffering none of these parts to decay through age, but renewing them daily with unfading vigor, whereby they are able to execute whatever He ordains with that readiness and precision which surpass man's imagination," and this being Socrates denominates "the Supreme God."†

The argument from design to prove his existence is lucidly and forcibly presented. As a chapter in Natural Theology, it has rarely been equalled.‡ In his discourse with Aristodemus, quoted by Xenophon, Socrates convincingly argues that the things of the world were not the production of chance, but the work of intellect and design. He also endeavored to show that our intellectual being was derived from a vastly superior and transcendant mind, existing somewhere in the universe, and although this was invisible, nevertheless, it must in all reason be accepted. The objection that God is invisible, is variously met. The soul of man is invisible, and yet it governs his body. "Why then may not the soul of the universe, which pervades and animates every part of it, govern it in like manner?"§ The moral government of God, as indicated by His Providence, is asserted and vindicated.

Specially noteworthy is the language attributed to Socrates in the "Banquet" of Xenophon. "There is one thing," he says, "universally received among barbarians and Greeks; and that is, that the Gods know both the present and what is to come; and for that reason, they are consulted and applied to by all mankind with sacrifices, to know of them what we ought to do. This supposes that they have the power to do us good or evil; otherwise, why should we pray to them to be

* Memorabilia, B. 1. † Ib., B. 4. ‡ Ib., B. 1. § Ib.

delivered from evils that threaten us, or to grant us the good we stand in need of? Now these very Gods, who are both omniscient and omnipotent, they are so much my friends, and have so peculiar a care of me, that be it night or day, whether I go anywhere, or take anything in hand, they have me ever in their view, and under their protection, and never lose me out of their sight. They foreknow all the events, and all the thoughts and actions of us poor mortals; they forewarn us by some secret prescience impressed on our minds, or by some good angel or dream, what we ought to avoid, and what we ought to do. For my part, I have never had occasion yet to repent these secret impulses given me by the Gods, but have been often punished for neglecting them." . . "Truly," said Socrates, addressing Hermogenes, "if such men as you, have the Gods for their friends, and I am sure they have, it is certain these Gods take pleasure in good actions, and the practice of virtue."

Socrates, we are told, held that the human soul was allied to the Divinity, not by a participation of essence, but a similarity of nature; that man's peculiar superiority consists in his possession of reason, and that good men will exist hereafter in a state where they will be rewarded for their virtue. On the other hand, he says: "It is frequently possible for men to screen themselves from the penalty of human laws, but no man can be unjust or ungrateful without suffering for his crime; hence I conclude that these laws must have proceeded from a more excellent legislator than man." True happiness, he maintained, was not to be derived from material possessions, but from wisdom and virtue, which were necessarily attended with pleasure and advantage. Indeed, virtue and happiness could not be disjoined, and the good man alone could be considered happy. "Socrates laid down as the corner-stone of practical morality, the proposition that virtue and happiness were inseparably united. Two auditors heard the maxim, but they left their instructor with opposite conclusions. The one held that virtue was happiness; the other contended that happiness was virtue; and both urged their respective opinions to an extravagant length. These auditors were the founders of the Cynic and Cyreniac schools."*

* Butler's Ancient Philosophy, I. 414.

Plato and Xenophon alike report very fully Socrates' views as to the excellence of virtue, its immutable nature, and its legitimate and sure rewards, as well as with reference to the baseness and the self-punitive nature of vice. "Virtue alone," he says, "places both the body and the mind in their utmost degree of perfection." The consciousness of performing duty "must yield perpetual complacency and satisfaction."*

A pure life, according to Socrates, is the best sacrifice. To worship God is a duty, the highest duty. We may discern him in or through his works, nor are we to "despise what we cannot see." "Judge of the greatness of the power by the effects which are produced, and reverence the Deity."† But the worship neither consists in, nor is commended by ceremonies. The poor and rich are equal before the Supreme. "It would not be agreeable to the nature of the Gods, to respect the costly offerings of the rich and the great, while the poor man's gift was altogether disregarded."‡ Prayer is a duty, enforced by Socrates, both by precept and example. But to be acceptable, it must be the prayer of humility. "When he prayed, his petition was only this, 'that the Gods would give to him those things that were good.' And this he did, forasmuch as they alone knew what was good for man."§ Gold and silver, so far from being the best things, might be the worst, rather to be withheld than bestowed.

But the proper work of life was to do good. He was to be accounted an idler, who did not strive to do good to mankind, to make those around him wiser, happier and better. This was his professed aim, and he omitted no fitting occasion to impress its importance upon others. The faith of Socrates in the immortality of the soul, wears its most triumphant aspect in his speech on his trial. Elsewhere it is expressed with a subdued confidence, and if it does not illuminate the unseen future, it repels its gloom, and invests it with mysterious and solemn attractions, not inconsistent with a cheering hope. To him the idea of that future was not novel, but he had elaborated it in his own thought. He had confirmed it by his own meditations.

* Memorab. Soc., B. 4. † Ib. ‡ Ib., B. 1. § Ib., B. 1.

The relation in which Socrates, in his views of the future life, stood to his predecessors, is noted by Prof. F. D. Maurice, in his "Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy," I., 131: "His faith in a future state, is often put forward as a characteristic which distinguished him from the rest of his countrymen, and of the Pagan world. Now, no one refers more frequently, than Socrates himself, to the old stories which express this faith; to Æacus and Rhadamanthus, the functions that were attributed to them, the souls upon which they passed judgment. Evidently he believed that the essence of these stories was true; that they did set forth the fact of a correspondence between the condition of men hereafter and their condition here. As in other cases, he received the teaching of those who had gone before him; but he asked himself what that teaching meant, and how it concerned him. His countrymen believed that, somehow or other, they should be judged hereafter by what they had done here; that some particle of themselves would suffer a vague punishment or enjoy a vague happiness. . . Socrates did not tell his disciples that his future life was to be separated from his life here; it was the continuation and unfolding of that life which he looked for. . . He should still, and always be, a seeker of wisdom; but that wisdom would meet him and embrace him, and ever reveal to him new treasures, which would awaken in him ever fresh longings, and would continually satisfy them. The seeker for wisdom, who passed here for a pursuer of shadows, would grasp substance; the seeker of wealth and power, who passed here for a pursuer of substance, would grasp a shadow."

William Archer Butler thus sums up the views which, as transmitted by Socrates, were accepted by his professed followers. "With him they held that God exists, and through His works reveals Himself, as an author in his volume; that He is the Providential Cause and Governor of the world, and (above all portions of His creation) the special guardian of *man;* that He is, moreover, the legislator of rational beings, having given them laws, whose evident universality forbids the supposition of a partial or accidental origin; and that these laws are accompanied with sanctions of reward or pun-

ishment to which the fact of conscience bears perpetual attestation."*

CHAPTER IX.

PLATO.

PLATO (430–350 B.C.) was a disciple of Socrates, but yet far more than a mere disciple. He possessed an intellect most richly and variously endowed, and furnished with all the extant learning of his time. His writings are his imperishable monument, and his influence has been felt through all succeeding centuries. Eulogiums have been lavished upon him by Christian and heathen alike—eulogiums that can be appreciated only by those who have studied him. "None whom wise men would wish to follow"—it has been said—"have ever approached the name of Plato without reverence and gratitude." Some of the most noted of the Christian Fathers invoked him as an ally. At the dawn of modern learning, his thoughts inspired the classic student and moulded his philosophy, and any history of English literature would be fatally incomplete which gave no account of the "Platonic Schools" in Italy and England.† Ackermann sinks the philosopher in the poet, when out of the confused order of Plato's works he attempts, not without the aid of fancy, to reconstruct the ideal in which they were originally embodied in their author's mind: "The *Phaedrus*, *Gorgias*, and *Protagoras* make their appearance, like steady workmen, provided with the necessary apparatus, to demolish the apparitions of the Sophists, to clear the ground and dig the foundations; the *Phaedrus* allows us, at the same time, to cast a glance, though but a fleeting one, at the beautiful draught of the whole; in the *Theatetus*, *Parmenides*, and *Sophist*, rise the firm buttresses and arches; the *Cratylus* provides for the acoustic relations; by the *Philebus* and *Banquet* the inner spaces are properly divided and ornamented; the *Phaedo* arranges the sacrificial services; the *Republic* collects the

* Ancient Philosophy, I. 370. † The Christian Element in P ato, p 123.

community into the sanctuary; in the *Timæus* and *Critias*, the whole rises, finished and concluded, heavenwards—and not till then does the beholder perceive the true meaning and idea of the whole, and see that it is, and is intended to be, nothing but a copy in miniature of the great edifice of the universe."

With no less enthusiasm, and with an equal taste for sanctuary metaphor, has another writer asserted: "Whoever studies Plato is treading on holy ground. So heathens always felt it. So even Christianity confessed. And we may stand among his venerable works, as in a vast and consecrated fabric; vistas and aisles of thought opening on every side; high thoughts that raise the mind to heaven, pillars and niches and cells within cells, mixing in seeming confusion, and a veil of tracery, and foliage, and grotesque imagery thrown over all, but all rich with a light streaming through 'dim religious forms,' all leading up to God; all blessed with an effluence from Him, though an effluence dimmed and half lost in the contaminated reason of man."*

Schleiermacher, in his "Introductions to the Dialogues of Plato," has shown great sagacity and ingenuity, as well as learning, in his arrangement and classification of the dialogues, and his exposition of their scope and their mutual relations. We admire his ingenuity, even while we distrust some of his conclusions. Yet he shows how, out of the materials which are indisputably genuine, it is possible to construct something like a symmetrical system, and how, in some instances, apparent incongruities or inconsistencies may be plausibly harmonized. His elaborate exposition of Plato's views, is itself a most significant tribute to the vast intellectual resources and moral eminence of the Greek philosopher.

From about his twentieth to his thirtieth year, Plato enjoyed the almost daily companionship of Socrates. He stood by him on his trial. He contrived plans for his escape from prison, and listened to his parting words. On his death he left Athens, lingering at Megara with Euclid, visiting the Pythagoreans in Italy, crossing over to Africa, as an oil-merchant, exploring the wisdom and mysteries of Egypt, and

* British Critic, No. 47.

after a varied experience, returning to Athens to make his Academy famous to after ages. Here he taught, as Socrates did, gratuitously; gathered many followers, perfected his writings, and left behind him a memory that the world will "not willingly let die."

His philosophy is so closely connected with his theology and his ethics, that it should properly be presented in connection with them. It is impossible, however, within our limits, to do justice to it. Fundamental to it, is his doctrine of *ideas*, the only real *being* as distinguished from *becoming*. The idea is the archetype of the class. It exists antecedently to the individuals of the class that participate in it. It is the eternal *noumenon* as distinguished from *phainomenon*. We see in this view an advance on the Socratic method of defining, and its results, as reached by Socrates himself. Here Plato is a Realist, and separates himself from his master. "Socrates," says Aristotle, "gave neither to general terms nor to definitions a distinct existence." "Those who followed him," he adds, "did so, and called them *ideas*." These ideas constitute the essence that underlies all phenomena, and to apprehend these is to attain truth. This will be the aim of wisdom.

But how shall the mind apprehend real existence; not the just man, but justice; not the individual thing, but the eternal unchangeable essence that underlies all the phenomenal? Here comes in Plato's theory of pre-existence. In its previous state of being, the soul has had visions of real existences, of ideas, and the phenomenal that it imperfectly apprehends now awakes reminiscences of what it had known before. If the soul has resisted earthward gravitation, and with unflagging wing has soared upward to what we may call the beatific vision, it will here readily recall what has been made familiar to it before. It will become independent, as it were, of the frailties and errors of sense. Thus it attains the knowledge here of that world of eternal truth which lies outside of the sensual sphere. It arrives at knowledge that is supra-sensual. It becomes possessed of what is equivalent to some senses of the phrase *innate ideas*.

To our object this method of reaching the result is im-

material. But the result itself is important. The universe is dual. There is the celestial region of ideas, and the mundane region of material phenomena. The soul also has a double nature, or, we might say, there are two souls in one, the Rational and the Sensual. They are connected as the two regions of ideas and phenomena are connected. The Sensitive soul awakens the reminiscences of the Rational soul, while the Rational, by its power to apprehend reality, corrects the errors of sense-knowledge.

Thus did Plato emancipate himself from the scepticisms of preceding philosophers, and lay the basis of a Philosophy of the Real, at the same time conceding its just place and importance to sense-knowledge. Here his Dialectics came in, that discriminating logical process by which *the* science, the Science of Being, was apprehended. Its task is to detect the One amid the multiplicity of material phenomena, and not only this, but the One amid the multiplicity of ideas. The last is God. He represents the supreme idea of all existence. He is the Great Intelligence, the source of all other intelligences. He is perfect, ever the same; the good, and only good. He reduced chaos to beauty. He *persuaded* Necessity to become stable, harmonious, pliable to what is excellent. But as there is no beauty without intelligence, He placed a soul in the body of the world, and made it a living thing.

Matter seems to imply, if not constitute, the Necessity which Intelligence persuaded or fashioned. Hence imperfection, antagonism, natural evil. Here is a shade of Manicheism. It is inherent in the dualism of intelligence and necessity. Matter is uncreated, but its formlessness is reduced to order, and the result is good.

But here comes in the argument from design. The universe is fashioned according to ideas. It manifests the perfection of beauty. There is an established order and harmony, so that no rational man can come to any other conclusion, than that an intelligent spirit, a sovereign reason, moves and regulates the universe.

If now we recall the position in which Plato stood to preceding philosophers, we shall be able to define his stand-point, and do justice to his views. He had diligently studied the

doctrines of Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Anaxagoras, and others, as well as mastered those of Socrates. He had sifted out of them what he could accept, and sought a basis for the result, in combination with his own views, upon which seeming differences and conflicting tendencies might be harmonized. His aim was truth, truth self-consistent, and calculated to satisfy the cravings of the soul for real knowledge. "He did not look on life," says Lewes,* "with the temporary interest of a passing inhabitant of the world. He looked on it as an immortal soul longing to be released from its earthly prison, and striving to catch by anticipation some faint glimpses of that region of eternal truth where it would some day rest. The fleeting phenomena of this world he knew were nothing more; but he was too wise to overlook them. Fleeting and imperfect as they were, they were the indications of that eternal truth for which he longed, foot-marks on the perilous journey, and guides unto the wished-for goal."

Schleiermacher holds not only that Plato had a system, but that more than perhaps any other it was the development of one idea. The key-stone of his creed was, that the human soul has the power of motion residing in itself; that therefore it neither comes into existence nor ceases to exist; that all spiritual essence is the same, including even Deity; that the soul has already known that which really is; and although it has lost the knowledge, it recovers it by recollection.† But Plato did not rest content with merely speculative aims. Wonderfully as poet and philosopher were blended in him, we discern throughout his writings their practical scope. He would elevate the aims and rebuke the vices of men. He would place before them a high ideal of excellence, and teach them to love wisdom and practice virtue. If he is not always consistent with himself, if he utters in one place what we believe larger experience led him to recall in another, if he sometimes seems to waver and fails to reach a conclusion, none the less we can discern his aim—to incite to thought, to encourage the pursuit of truth, to expose whatever tends to blind or debase the human soul.‡

* His. 210. † Brown's Greek Lit., *Plato.*

‡ Among the incongruities in Plato's teachings, special attention has been di-

His extensive learning and the wide range of his own investigation enable him to conduct us over an immense field, and direct our attention to a great diversity of topics. Some of these topics frequently recur. They lie nearer to the heart of his system. We have the same thought repeatedly presented, till we can no longer doubt what Plato held and taught. His religious and ethical views meet us in his political or scientific discussions, and there also they must be sought, but for obvious reasons we must pass over what is only remotely connected—as his political theories—with the subject before us. In bringing together from the Platonic dialogues the various passages which contain the views of the author with respect to the moral system, we have to be on our guard against doing him injustice. Our selection can only approximate to the one that he would himself have made, while it is evident that in the expression of his views, he was subject to a measure of constraint. The experience of Anaxagoras and Socrates was before him, and admonished him to be cautious. As a matter of prudence, it is evident that he adopted to some extent the forms of speech prevalent around him. With a firm and unwavering belief in the unity of God, he sometimes speaks as a polytheist, but this, to a certain extent, was allowable in consistency with his conviction of the

rected to his theory of the communicability of virtue. Sometimes it is identified with wisdom or true knowledge, and at others the idea that it can be taught—as the Sophists professed to teach—is summarily rejected, if not sharply ridiculed. Schleiermacher, whose ingenuity plausibly reconciles some apparent inconsistencies, has taken notice of this. We do not feel ourselves necessitated to adopt his explanations, and can afford to leave Plato a broad margin for variation in views entertained through the course of a long and thoughtful life. The following extracts are from Schleiermacher:

"What Laches, in his innocence, says of the nature of moral wisdom, as being harmony of the mind, and coincidence of knowledge and of life, this is the right key to the Platonic theory of virtue, and to the meaning of his opinion that it is knowledge, or a *knowing*." —*Schleiermacher's Introductions*, p. 101.

"By the assumption that virtue can only be communicable, when and in so far as it is identified with knowledge, the question becomes a part of the original one, what virtue is or is not in itself."—*Ib.*, p. 216.

"The Panegyrists are themselves involved in a learned dispute as to what may really be the opinion of Plato upon the communicability of virtue. Whether he is indeed in earnest with the whole question, and whether the decision come to, that it is attainable only by divine inspiration, coincides with other expressed sentiments of the philosopher."—*Ib.*, p. 218. See p. 228. As to the apparent frivolousness of some of the discussions in the Dialogues, see p. 232.

existence of spiritual agents subordinate to the one Supreme Intellect. Holding to a soul of the world, to vital forces harmonizing in their operation with the One Will, he could evade the charge of atheism by speaking of "the Gods," while the general scope of his argument uniformly shows that he was a decided Monotheist.

Nor must we be surprised if he is not always consistent with himself. He accepted from Socrates the doctrine that knowledge or wisdom is inconsistent with wickedness, or that no one is willingly and knowingly wicked, and this he distinctly asserts; yet again we find him ascribing human depravity to other causes than ignorance, explaining it by immoral habits or propensities. This is no more than what we might expect. The writings of Plato are of various dates, and belong to different periods of mental progress and of the development of his system. They are spread over nearly or quite half a century. During such a period of intense mental activity, his views on various points must have undergone modification. Obviously, we have no right, in order to harmonize him with himself, to reject summarily, as some of his critics have done, large portions of the works that were originally credited to him. Bearing these things in mind, we may yet be confident of ascertaining substantially what he believed and taught.

He insists then at the outset, that the universe is a *Kosmos* pervaded by mind. In the *Sophist*,* it is conceded that "the things which are said to be made by nature, are made by Divine art." In the *Philebus*,† Socrates is introduced as asserting that there is in the universe "a cause not inconsiderable which puts in order and arranges the years, and seasons and months—a cause which may be most justly called Wisdom and Mind." "In the nature of Zeus, there is a kingly soul in a kingly mind," and the course of discussion is said to "fight on the side of those persons of the olden time, who show that Mind is ever the ruler of the universe."

As soul, or souls, are represented as the "causes" of things, and the acceptance of this view enabled Plato to use the plural epithet of gods, who, subordinate to the Supreme, put

* § 110. † § 56, 7.

in order and rule the universe, he combats the Epicurean doctrine with the assertion,* that "all things are full of gods," and that he who cannot lay down anything better, should "live for the remainder of his life in the notion that gods do exist." Moreover, the Divine Providence extends to all things, small as well as great, otherwise there must be somewhere a "neglect," and we must assert "either a God wanting in power, or some trifling person unable to take care."†

Plato, says W. A. Butler, "accounted for the existence of things, by affirming that a nature beyond all natures, called the universe into being . . . that in so doing this Being held in view as the sole end of His acts absolute and unclouded goodness, to be exhibited in the language of sensible objects, and that the nature of goodness being co-eternal with Himself, not caused by Him, nor dependent upon Him, but nevertheless the voluntary rule of His acts, He referred, in all which He did, to these eternal relations of things, and made His work, as far as the mysteriously opposing principle would allow, the copy of their perfection. . . . Plato has seen that the Eternal Laws of Right are, in some mysterious bond (altogether beyond our conception) entwined with the Divine nature, and he accordingly represents them as contained by Him in His own Divine reason. . . . They are co-existent, they may even be pronounced co-incident, but they are not consequential, resultant, inferior. . . . If the Deity operates, He operates rightly; if rightly, according to a rule; if according to a rule, that rule is logically antecedent to the operation."‡

In the *Gorgias*, we find Plato appealing to the "sages" in support of the theory of the Kosmos, and appending their reasons for the use of the word. "The sages (the Pythagoreans, especially Empedocles) say that heaven and earth, gods and men, are held together by communion, friendship, order, temperance and justice, and for this reason they call this universe Kosmos (or order) and not disorder."§

Here we have set forth not only the order of the physical creation, but that of the moral system. In consistency with this we find Plato advocating those views of Divine Providence which bring all human interests and deeds under the

* Laws, § 9. † Ib., § 10. ‡ His. of Anc. Phil., II. 147. § Gorgias, § 136.

eye of the infinitely Just and Wise. The good are approved and favored, and the evil are visited with judicial rebuke, if in no other way, at least by the curse of their own wickedness cleaving to their nature, or by those future retributions of Hades, from which there is no escape. "To the man who is beloved of the Gods, whatever comes to him from the Gods will all be the best possible."* With this accords what Plato has to say of the moral constitution of the world. He exposes, in elaborate and convincing argument, the groundless assumption that prosperous wickedness is to be envied, or even that impunity in sin is anything else than a curse worse than detection and penalty following upon the sin itself. States are strengthened and made more secure by mutual justice.† Injustice in the individual, or in the community, is an element of weakness. "The immoderate," that is, those who are not controlled by reason and justice, "are neither friendly to each other, nor to the moderate."‡ The nature of vice is therefore such, that it destroys itself, in fact exposing its isolated weakness to the shafts both of friend and foe.

The doctrine that justice is a matter to be determined by convention or usage is repudiated by Plato.§ The just, like the beautiful, is "by nature," and cannot be changed by man. To deny this, leads to impiety and sedition. True excellence is that of the soul. It carries its commendation and its reward in itself. "If I were a legislator," says the Athenian in the *Laws*,‖ "I would endeavor to compel both the poets and all persons in the State to speak in this manner, and I would impose nearly the greatest of all punishments should any one in the land assert that there are certain wicked men that lead a pleasant life, or that some things are more advantageous and lucrative, and others more just." It is such considerations as these that, uniting the pleasant and the just, the good and the beautiful, will be "persuasive, if towards nothing else, yet at least towards the wish to live a holy and a just life."¶

We are thus prepared to see that this present life is sub-

* Republic, B. 10, c. 12.
† Ib., B. 1, c. 23.
‡ The Laws, B. 4, c. 8.
§ The Laws, B. 10, c. 4.
‖ B. 2, c. 7.
¶ The Laws, B. 2, c. 8.

jected to the conditions of probation. "Neither a state nor a man can ever be happy, unless by leading a life with prudence, in subjection to justice."* The path of duty is made severe by trial, while its end is blessedness. On the other hand, "the road of wickedness is smooth, and offers itself to be passed through without sweat." On this point, the language of Hesiod is quoted with approval:

> "Th' Immortal Gods have before virtue placed
> The sweat of labor, and the road is long
> And steep, that to it leads. At first 'tis rough,
> But when you reach the top 'tis easy all;
> Although it was all difficult before."†

But the full view of the significance of the present life as a period of probation is more distinctly presented in connection with Plato's belief of the future retribution. The deeds of the present are visited with appropriate rewards and penalties, as we shall see hereafter. But the severity of the present state of trial is seen when brought into connection with Plato's views of the depraved state of human nature. He accepts the tradition of a Golden Age, and the degeneracy of human nature, as well as the confusion of the Kosmos that succeeded it; so that in the new state of things it has become "requisite for men to have the conduct and care of themselves."‡ Before, "the deity himself tended them, and was their protector;"§ "there was nothing of a wild nature, no eating of each other, no war, nor sedition of any kind." But now, as the result of the change, man brings upon himself by his depravity, countless ills.

The illustration which Plato gives of the mismatched endowments of nature, instructs us as to his view of the gravitating power of human depravity. "Our ruling power drives a pair of steeds," one of which is "beautiful and noble," while "the other is of opposite extraction and opposite character." The wings of the soul which may bear it aloft to the feast of the gods and the beatific vision, by what is "beautiful, wise and good," are chiefly nourished and increased; but "by

* Epis. VII.
† The Laws, B. 4, c. 9.
‡ The Statesman, § 16.
§ Ib., § 15.

what is base and vile," the soul "falls to decay and perishes."* The perverse disposition has become such as Hesiod represents :†

> "How vice at once and easily we choose
> The way so smooth, its dwelling too so nigh,"

while, by the purpose of the gods, "toil before virtue" is the inexorable law, and the path of virtue is both long and steep.

Among the duties which belong to the present state, the pursuit of wisdom, including knowledge, temperance and prudence, is repeatedly enjoined. The proper good for human effort to attain is that of the soul, and this is often described in language which reminds us of the Scriptural phraseology—"not meat or drink, but righteousness, peace," etc. Retaliation is forbidden. "On no account ought we to act unjustly." "Neither ought one who is injured to return the injury, as the multitude think, since it is on no account right to act unjustly."‡ Indeed, "injustice is the greatest of evils to him that commits it,"§ while it consists "in governing and being governed contrary to nature." But to live according to nature, a nature endowed with powers to discern and practice the good and the just, is the proper aim of our being, and this is attained for the soul when "its parts shall mutually govern and be governed according to nature."

Nor, amid the difficulties with which the path of the good man in pursuit of wisdom is beset, is the privilege and duty of prayer overlooked. In his letter to Laodamas,‖ Plato reminds him of the need of instructors, and that in the lack of them, "it remains then to pray to the Gods." In another place, advising the friends of Dion in a case where it was "neither easy to see, nor for a person seeing to accomplish," he adds,¶ "the consultation of such a kind, and the attempt to speak, look like a prayer. Let it then be in every respect a prayer. For it is meet to begin from the Gods in everything, both in speaking and thinking."

* Phaedrus, § 56. † The Republic, B. 2, c. 7.
‡ Crito, § 10. § Gorgias, § 138.
‖ Epis. XI. We need not enter here into the question of its genuineness. It is Platonic, if not Plato's.
¶ Sec. 68.

But the aim of the soul is to be directed to practical virtue as well as speculative attainments. Writing to Archytas,* Plato says, "you ought also to consider this, that each of us is not born for himself alone." The claims of country, relations and friends, are all to be considered, so that a man, ont of regard to these, must sometimes relinquish his chosen pursuit.

Thus, although Plato makes no attempt to construct an ethical system, he not only lays down the principle on which it must be based, but urges the claims of virtue and wisdom, in precepts characterized by a sublime morality. What is fitting to this present state of things, where life—through what Plato calls "a predisposition to vice"—is necessarily a base surrender or a noble struggle, is presented with a force and beauty unsurpassed among classic writers.

Of the Immortality of the Soul, he speaks with confident assurance. As if the scene of Socrates' last hours was before him, and the sage's eloquent words were still echoing in his ears, he seems to dismiss all doubt in regard to the reality of a future life, or the beatific portion of the good. "Can the soul," Socrates is represented as asking in the *Phaedo*,† "which is invisible, and which goes to another place like itself, excellent, pure and invisible, and therefore truly called the invisible world (*Hades*), to the presence of a good and wise God, can this soul of ours, I ask, being such and of such a nature, when separated from the body, be immediately dispersed and destroyed?" Nature enjoins the body to be subservient and obey the soul, which thus seems to be proclaimed divine. Moreover, "every soul is immortal." "That only which moves itself, since it does not quit itself, never ceases to be moved, but is also the source and beginning of motion to all other things that are moved."‡ It is true that among the arguments for the soul's immortality, we find what we regard as the groundless assumption of its pre-existence, and one of the reasons for its being "indestructible," is that it is also "increate." But on quite other foundations, Plato in his *Republic*, bases his assertion that the proof of immortality "is not at all difficult,"§ and among the arguments adduced

* Epis. VIII.
† Sec. 68, or Lec. 63.
‡ Phaedrus, § 51.
§ B. 10, c. 9.

in various parts of his writings, we meet with some quite independent of any theory of the soul's pre-existence. Fond of citing old sages and poets, and memorable sayings of the wise of past ages, Plato adduces their testimony, as having something of the authority of a sacred tradition, to strengthen the conviction of the soul's immortality. "Pindar, and many other of the poets, such as are divine," are referred to, "and what they say is this:" "that the soul of man is immortal, and at one time it ends, which they call dying, and that at another, it exists again; but is never destroyed; and that for this reason, we ought to live throughout our lives, as holy as possible."* In his most elaborate epistle to the friends of Dion,† he says, "It is ever requisite to trust really to the sacred accounts of the olden time, which inform us that the soul is immortal, and has judges of its conduct, and suffers the greatest punishments, when it is liberated from the body. Hence it is requisite to think it a lesser evil to suffer, than to do, the greatest sins and injuries." The nature of the soul is frequently referred to in connection with the assertion of its high destiny. "All the gold, both on the earth, and under the earth, is of no value against virtue,"‡ and "when any one honors beauty before virtue, is this any other thing than truly and wholly a dishonor to the soul?"—the soul that may find in the unseen (Hades) "the greatest of all good" in what relates to the Gods.

But the immortality of the soul is, of course, implied in what Plato asserts of future retribution. And on this point his language is full and explicit. The whole universe is subject to a just ruler. In the Gorgias,§ Socrates is introduced as relating a very beautiful tale, which is told "as being true." In this it is asserted that the law respecting men in existence in the time of Saturn, and anterior to the division of the government between Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto, "always was, and still is, established among the Gods, that a man who has passed through life justly and piously, when he dies should go to the isles of the blessed, and dwell in all perfect happiness, free from evil; but that he who has lived unjustly and

* Meno., § 14.
† Epis. VII.
‡ The Laws, B. 5, c. 1.
§ Ib., § 166.

impiously should go to a prison of punishment and justice, which they call Tartarus." They who are judged must be divested of all things earthly. The judge with his soul must examine the soul of each immediately after death, "destitute of all his kindred, and leaving all that ornaments on earth, in order that the judgment may be just."

From these things, which Socrates is made to say he has heard, and which he believes to be true, he infers that death, as it appears to him, "is nothing else than the separation of two things, the soul and the body, from each other. But when they are separated, each of them possesses pretty much the same habit that the man had when alive," so that in the day of judgment, the judge pronouncing upon each soul, without knowing whose it is, may see nothing in the soul of the great king, or of some other king and potentate, but its true character, and may find it "thoroughly marked with scourges, and full of scars, through perjuries and injustice, which the actions of each have imprinted on his soul." "On seeing it, he sends it ignominiously to prison, where, on its arrival, it will undergo the punishment it deserves."

In the *Laws*, again, we find the doctrine of exact retribution laid down.* "For a fable, or a story, or whatever else it is meet to call it, has been clearly told by priests of old, that Justice, the avenger and inspector of kindred blood . . . . . has ordained that he who has done any such act (as murder) shall necessarily suffer what he has done."

Plato expresses undoubting confidence that the good man has yet nothing to fear. "You will suffer nothing dreadful if you are, in reality, upright and good, and devoted to the practice of virtue."† Nor does he swerve from this position, although he admits the hardships and afflictions to which the good man may here be subject. He may be charged with injustice, and thus the just himself may "be scourged, tortured, fettered, have his eyes burned out, and lastly suffer all manner of evils and be crucified."‡ Yet he will be far more an object of envy than the unjust man in the very height of his prosperous wickedness. On the other hand, "we shall suffer in Hades the punishment of our misdeeds here, either

* B. 9, c. 12. † Gorgias, § 175. ‡ Republic, B 2, c. 5.

ourselves, or our children's children,"* and the apprehension of this, excited by guilt in the conscience, is recognized by Plato as a fact of human experience, for "after a man begins to think he is soon to die, he becomes inspired with a fear and concern about things that had not entered his head before; for these stories concerning a future state, which tell us that the man who has been unjust here must be punished hereafter, have a tendency, much as he formerly ridiculed them, to trouble his soul at such a time with apprehensions that they may be true. . . . . That man, then, who discovers in his own life much of iniquity, like children constantly starting in sleep, is full of terrors, and lives on with scarce a hope of the future."†

Either here or hereafter the sin, however light, must meet its penalty. "There is for light and winged words a punishment most heavy; for Nemesis, the messenger of Justice, has been appointed an inspector over all persons in matters of this kind."‡ For all of life an account is to be rendered by the soul to the gods, "full of confidence to the good, but very fearful to the bad."§ Nor is there any escape from this; "not though you were so small as to sink into the depths of the earth, nor so lofty as to fly up into heaven; but you will suffer the fitting punishment, whether you abide here or depart to Hades, or are carried away to a place still more wild than these."‖ "The person who has become more wicked, departs to the more wicked souls; but he who has become better, to the better, both in life and in all deaths."¶ "If death were a deliverance from everything, it would be a great gain to the wicked when they die, to be delivered both from their body and their vices." But "the soul goes to Hades, possessing nothing else but its discipline and education, which are said to be of the greatest advantage or detriment to the dead."** Nor is its path "simple nor one." There are various measures and modes of punishment. "The worst of all evils is to go to Hades with a soul full of crimes."†† On some, penalty will have no reforming power. They have be-

* Republic, B. 2, c. 8. † Republic, B. 1, c. 5. ‡ The Laws, B. 4, c. 8.
§ The Laws, B 12, c. 9. ‖ The Laws, B. 10, c. 13. ¶ Ib.
** Phaedo, § 130. †† Gorgias, § 165.

come "incurable,"* and serve as examples to others. Whether they are so or not, Rhadamanthus is to determine, and they are to suffer according to their deserts. "Whoever passes his life justly, afterwards obtains a better lot, but who unjustly, a worse one."† The destiny of all is in the future state to be "suited to the life which they have led in this."‡

In his *Timaeus*, Plato brings the retributions of the future world under those general laws whose final cause is the perfection of the universe, "in much the same manner as has been so admirably done by the author of the *Analogy of Religion and Nature*."§ He says: "Those who have undergone but slight alterations of their present state, remove but slightly, and along the same plane in space; those whose souls are more radically perverted to evil, descend into subterranean dwellings; ..... and when a soul has made a marked advance, whether in evil or good, by a firm purpose and constant habit, if so united to virtue as to share in her divinity of nature, then passes that soul from its present dwelling to one altogether blessed and securely happy; if surrendered to vice, its abode is conformable to its condition."

Plato's writings give evidence that he fully sympathized with his master, Socrates, in the hopes which the latter cherished of communion with gods and good men in the future life. It may be significant, however, of Plato's chastened anticipations, that in the *Phaedo*, we find a tone of more tempered confidence employed than that which appears in the Apology of Socrates. Here there is no absolute assurance of a communion with *good men* hereafter, but more guarded language. "If I did not think that I should go first of all amongst other deities who are both wise and good, and next, among men who have departed this life, better than any here, I should be wrong in not grieving at death; but now, be assured, I hope to go amongst good men, though I would not positively assert it; that, however, I shall go amongst gods who are perfectly good masters, be assured. I can positively assert this, if I can anything of the kind."‖

It is specially noteworthy that Plato, throughout his specu-

* Gorgias, § 171. † Phaedrus, § 61. ‡ Republic, B. 6, c. 11.
§ Butler's Lect. on Anc. Phil., II. 164. ‖ Phaedo, § 19.

lations on the future state and the immortality of the soul, gives them a practical bearing: "We should consider this," he says, for instance, "that if the soul is immortal, it requires our care, not only for the present time, which we call life, but for all time; and the danger would now appear to be dreadful, if one should neglect it."* This practical aim is manifest especially when he discusses man's dependence on probable evidence. Here he is to judge on which side the evidence preponderates, and mould his life in accordance therewith. "For we ought, with respect to these things, either to learn from others, how they stand, or to discover them each for one's self; or, if both these are impossible, then, taking the best of human reasonings and that which is the most difficult to be confuted, and embarking on this, as one who risks himself on a raft, so to sail through life, unless one could be carried more safely, and with less risk, on a surer conveyance, or some divine reason."† Even the shadows of doubt that hang over the future are made to enkindle the spirit to high aspirations. The soul's immortal destiny is "fitting to be believed, and worthy the hazard of one who trusts in its reality; for the hazard is noble, and it is right to allure ourselves with such things as with enchantments."‡ In the same strain, it is also said, "for the sake of these things which we have described, we should use every endeavor so to acquire virtue and wisdom in this life; for the reward is noble and the hope great."§ It is thus that Plato endeavors to fix the eye upon that lofty conception which is so beautifully exhibited in the *Banquet* as the ideal of the most perfect love—"virtue in reality," and not its "shadow"—to behold which will be a blessedness in itself.‖

But one of the most remarkable passages in the writings of Plato, is that which occurs at the close of the *Republic*, where he relates the vision of the brave Erus, the son of Armenius, who had fallen in battle, and on the twelfth day was taken up for dead, but, when laid on the funeral pile, revived. The death-state of this fallen hero was reported by himself as one of trance, in which he had been permitted to behold the secrets of the unseen world. His soul, withdrawn from the

* Phaedo, § 129. † Ib., § 78. ‡ Ib. 145. § Ib. ‖ Sec. 35.

body, went with many others, and came to a certain mysterious hollow place, where there were two chasms in the earth, near to each other, and two other openings in the heavens opposite to them, while the judges sat between these—so that when they gave judgment, they commanded the just to go to the right hand, and upwards through the heavens, but the unjust to the left and downwards, each bearing on his forehead the mark to indicate that he had been judged. When his own turn came, the judges decided that he ought to go back with a message to men, and that he should hear and contemplate everything, so as to make his report. He observed, therefore, the scenes which met his eye—friends meeting with friends, those coming up from the earth inquiring from those who had descended from heaven, their peculiar experience, and narrating their own in turn—the one calling to mind "with wailing and weeping what they had suffered in reaching the judgment scene"—the other setting forth their enjoyments, and the spectacles of amazing beauty which they had witnessed.

Injuries which had been committed on earth were punished ten-fold, while the good and holy were rewarded according to their deserts. The inflictions upon the guilty were terrible, and no king, not even the great tyrant Aridæus, could be exempt; while the path of the just, marked at its first stage by "a pillar, mostly resembling the rainbow, but more splendid and pure," opened up to view "the Distaff of Necessity," and her "daughters the Fates," amid a scene in which human souls are summoned to draw the lot that determines their destiny.

The grand lesson is, that "this, of all things, is most to be attended to, how each of us, omitting other studies, is to become an inquirer and a learner in this study; how to find out what will make him expert and intelligent to discern a good life and a bad; and to choose everywhere and at all times the best of what is possible," shunning all the attractions of riches, and all the temptations to wrong. "For thus man becomes happy."

The conclusion of all is—"But if the company will be persuaded by me; considering the Soul to be immortal, and able

to bear all evil and good, we shall always persevere in the road which leads upwards, and shall by all means pursue justice in unison with prudence, that so we may be friends both to ourselves and the Gods, both whilst we remain here, and when we afterwards receive rewards, like victors assembled together; and so, both here, and in that journey of a thousand years, which we have described, we shall be happy."

Such are the leading features of the moral system, as presented by Plato, gathered from those writings which are generally regarded as genuine. Discrepancies and incongruities may be noted in them, and to some of them we have adverted. But the violation of the spirit of Christian morality by Plato, in those features of his "Republic," by which the most sacred family relations are set aside, and a revolting communism substituted in their place, must not be overlooked. It may be pleaded that his "Republic" was an ideal illustration of the perfect constitution of the soul, and the relations of its powers, and that it is thus subordinate to what it illustrates; still, as Schleiermacher remarks, we have here a clear proof of the incapacity of Hellenic nature to form a satisfactory system of ethical relations. Plato introduced into his state institutions "at which our more moral austerity is with justice shocked and dismayed."* Other faults of the great philosopher might, if the occasion called for it, be noted, humiliating in view of his lofty genius and real attainments, but instructive as showing how difficult it is even for the greatest minds, without Divine aid, to emancipate themselves from bondage to the moral sentiments and traditions of their age. Still, of the stability of the moral order, Plato allows no doubt to escape him. It is established by Necessity, the necessity of which Simonides spoke, when declaring that not even a God will ever at any time be seen contending against necessity,† namely, adds Plato, "such necessities as I conceive are, at least, Divine," since by human necessities it would be most stupid to say that a God could be bound.

It is this view of Plato which renders the Neo-Platonic in-

* Introductions, p. 379, 80. † The Laws, B. 7, c. 20.

terpretation of the old idea of Fate plausible, and undoubtedly Plato himself accepted Necessity, not as a theory of fatalism for men, but as expressive of the inexorable nature and immutable authority of these laws, which establish and secure the moral order of the world. We find scattered through his writings much that is obscure, much that seems extorted as a concession to the popular polytheism of his day, some things also which appear to us utterly impracticable and wildly theoretic, but putting these aside, we may pronounce him as an expositor of the moral order of the world, unrivalled by any writer or thinker of the entire heathen world.*

CHAPTER X.

ARISTOTLE.

THE most distinguished pupil of Plato was Aristotle, born at Stageira, in Chalcidice, 384 B. C. His father was physician to Amyutas II., King of Macedonia, and author of several treatises connected with natural science. The studies and occupation of the father exercised doubtless a powerful influence upon the tastes and inclinations of his son. The latter, on completing his seventeenth year, was attracted to Athens by his thirst for knowledge. With restless zeal, he studied the works of earlier and contemporary philosophers. After

* In Ackermann's "Christian Element in Plato" (Edinburgh, 1861), will be found a striking parallel between language employed by Plato, and texts from the New Testament on kindred topics. He notes among other things, the comparison of life to a race, found both in Paul and Plato; the revelation of God in nature, asserted by both; the fact that Monotheism is the starting-point of Plato's theology; the names and attributes of God with their scripture parallels; the doctrine that virtue consists in likeness to God, etc. For obvious reasons I have not felt at liberty to accept anything at second hand, and have made my selection of passages without reference to Ackermann's work, which did not come under my eye till I had completed my task. My aim has been to exhibit what Plato taught concerning the moral system, rather than to point out the accordance of such teaching with the New Testament Scriptures. Many, however, will be interested in investigating this latter point.

an interval of three years, on Plato's return to Athens, he became his pupil. For seven years he enjoyed his instructions, and during the ten succeeding years, he collected around him a school of his own. After the death of Plato, he left Athens, but the enterprises in which he engaged, whether political or not, proved unfortunate, and in personal danger, he fled to Mitylene. Soon after, he was invited by Philip, of Macedon, to undertake the instruction and education of his son Alexander. A strong attachment united the philosopher and his pupil, and the former remained in Macedonia seven years. In 335 B. C. he returned, by invitation, to Athens. Here, in the shady walks which surrounded the Lyceum assigned him by the state, he gathered around him a group of distinguished scholars. Walking up and down, in these grounds consecrated to learning, he delivered his lectures, and thus earned the title of the "Peripatetic Philosopher."

In 323 B. C., shortly after Alexander's death, Athens ceased to be a safe residence for Aristotle. He was regarded as a friend of Macedonia, and, like Socrates, was accused of impiety. Aware of his danger, Aristotle withdrew before his trial, and escaped to Chalcis, in Eubœa. Here, under the predominance of Macedonian influence, he enjoyed security and protection, although at Athens, in his absence, condemned to death. He survived his flight only a few months.

In passing from Plato to Aristotle, we are impressed by the striking contrast between the genius of the two men, and the light in which they respectively viewed the objects of their thought. Each vindicates his title of Philosopher, but one does it with the glow and fervor of the poet; the other with the cool, sceptical discrimination of the critic. One is disposed to discover more in the universe than sense can discern, or reason assert. The other will admit only the testimony and direct influences of sense, and even these must be sharply scrutinized.

Some doubt has been thrown on the question, whether Aristotle was not rather a Pantheist than a Theist. In a formal way, he accepted the notion of a Deity, as he would have admitted some axiom necessary to establish a mathematical

proposition. It was apparently a logical necessity. He could not get on without it. God is, according to him, the Great First Cause, eternal, moving all, but himself unmoved. He is the governing principle of the universe, whose supremacy makes it a monarchy—the form of government that Aristotle admired and preferred. He is pure intellect; He is the Supreme good; contemplative and yet active. Accepting the Polytheistic phraseology of his time, although his Monotheism must remain unquestioned, he says, "We suppose the Gods to be pre-eminently blessed and happy. . . All suppose that they live, and therefore energize; for they do not sleep like Endymion. . . The energy of the Deity, as it exceeds in blessedness, must be contemplative."* Yet God cannot work impossibilities. There is a nature of things that is inviolable. "What is past has ceased to be contingent; wherefore Agathon rightly says, 'Of this only, God is deprived, the power of making things that are past never to have been.' "†

At the outset, we are impressed with Aristotle's aversion to all that is ideal. He is disposed to accept nothing that will be refuted by the experience of real life. He would not allow all pleasure to be decried in order to deter men from evil pleasures. In a like spirit he ever limits himself to the actual. It is not surprising that he did not appreciate, but rather depreciated much of Plato's speculation. He could not accept the reality of "ideas." He, however, asserted that the first ground or cause of all being is God, and consequently the first philosophy is theology. Plato found the original element of all philosophy in the idea of God; Aristotle in being, distinct, however, from matter.‡ Plato assumed that the soul recognizes the real, through the awakening power of sensations reviving memories of what it knew in a previous state of existence. Aristotle considers it especially absurd to maintain that we knew not that we did once know, or that we have even a latent possession of ideas without knowing it.§ Plato sometimes appears to recommend us to get rid of the Sensible, while Aristotle at times would make sense and understanding to merge into each other.‖ In his view, "the sen-

* Nicom. Ethics, X. 8. † Ib., VI. 2. ‡ Ritter, III. 41-51.
§ Ib. 83. ‖ Ib. 89.

suous presentation is a necessary condition of all rational intelligence, to which it must, moreover, be prior in time."* The sensible element of the soul stands in the same relation to the reason as the body does to the soul. Here, to a certain extent, he agreed with Plato, but the latter held that through reason, by the stimulus of a single idea, a man might arrive at the knowledge of all ideas, while Aristotle maintained that completeness of knowledge is dependent upon completeness of experience.†

In order to a complete understanding of the nature of things, they must be investigated in their causes. Of these causes, Aristotle laid down four species, which must conspire in the case of every physical substance. These are the material, the formal, the moving, the final. Though distinguishable, they are not to be regarded as separately independent, and sometimes the formal and the final are the same, while at others the moving cause and the form, or essence, are considered as identical.

The material, however, stands apart by itself. Aristotle maintains a strict contrariety between matter and the other kind of grounds or principles of being.‡ It is not, as with some philosophers, "the evil," yet it is potential for opposites, for evil as well as for good. Here there is "necessity" and the limitation of good with respect to the end. Yet there are different kinds of necessity, and that of matter is simply conditional. It answers to premises as related to the logical conclusion in the argument.

Applying these views, derived from the analogy of works of art to the theory of the formation of the world, we must discriminate between causes. Here Aristotle refutes the opinion that the world had its origin in chance, or from itself, through the action of any blind force of nature. There must be "a first unmoved cause of motion." A close connection exists between the notion of the first mover, and that of the self-moving living essence. Imperishable motion implies an imperishable substance. Moreover, from eternity of motion we deduce the unity of its cause. For what is permanent is one, and the one motion can only have originated from a

* Ritter, III. 92. † Ib. 97. ‡ Ib. 149.

single cause. If there are several moving causes in any instance, they must yet be comprised in the one which affords to them the ground of their movement.*

But inasmuch as the eternal mover, on Aristotle's general theory of the principles of being, in no wise participates in matter, it cannot dissolve itself into any multiplicity of individual beings. There must, therefore, be a single Kosmos, and a single moving principle.

Thus Aristotle agrees with Plato, in teaching that the last ground of all sensible phenomena must be conceived as perfectly non-sensible; it is free and separate from all matter, and all that is sensible. It is expressed in the *essence* of all things, the *best*, the *end* of all things. It has all the fullness of entity, As the end of all things, it properly possesses felicity; it is perfect and happy, not by the accession of external good, but by its intrinsic nature. "It possesses always, and forever, the perfect pleasure of rational thought, which man enjoys only at times, and also in a higher degree of perfection than man does. Its activity within itself is eminently its life, which is eternal and proceeding forever; it consists in naught else than in pure immortality."†

Averse to Plato's use of figurative language, Aristotle, in the way of strict doctrinal expression, calls God, reason. Even this must be qualified. Just as virtue is human, and cannot be predicated of a being that transcends all virtue, so God is not the practical, but theoretical reason. Here we trench upon the inconceivable, nor are we able to determine precisely what Aristotle meant when he asserted the absolute energy of God to be his self-contemplating reason. We only perceive difficulties in the consistent application of his theory, which must have called forth, to evade them, all his sagacity and ingenuity.

One difficulty which cannot be evaded, is Aristotle's conception of matter, which is meant to explain somewhat of that evil which finds its place in his theory of the world. He is forced to admit that "although design rules the world for the most part, still accident and chance are not without their influence in the formation of things." Many things come to

* Ritter, III. 162. † Ib. 166.

pass through necessity. This follows inevitably from Aristotle's admission of the eternal co-existence of matter with God. He permits and guides, rather than originates, the operation of primitive forces allied to matter or inherent in it. Still, we must do justice to Aristotle's sublime conception of a ground of all things, back of transient experiences and fleeting phenomena. Human science can rest alone upon this energy, activity, life, essence. What before him had been indistinctly apprehended, was by him more exactly defined.

Aristotle adopts, without hesitation, the saying of Heraclitus, that the divine is to be found everywhere, even in objects apparently most unlikely.*

Aristotle evidently looked upon all nature as endued with life; since even the simple bodies, and the apparently lifeless elements, are regarded by him merely as organical parts of the earth.† But in all living things, the final cause is the soul, for all physical bodies are merely the instruments of the soul. The soul is also the moving cause, since local motion, sensation, and growth issue from the soul, which by its will moves the body, over which, as the better principle, it exercises unlimited authority. The soul is divided into the nutritive, sensitive, locomotive, and rational faculties, and Aristotle advances it as at least questionable whether the reason may not be independent of all the other faculties, because separate from the body.‡ It constitutes what is divine and eternal in man. It is his peculiar characteristic. But reason is divided into the practical and theoretic. Not the former, but the latter is divine, and is predicated of God. He can move the world, without being Himself moved.

In his treatise on The Nature of the Gods,§ Cicero quotes from a lost treatise of Aristotle, as follows: "If there were men whose habitations had been always under ground, in great and commodious houses, adorned with statues and pictures, furnished with everything which they who are reputed happy abound with; and if, without stirring from thence, they should be informed of a certain divine power and majesty, and after some time, the earth should open, and they should quit their dark abode to come to us; where they should immediately

* Ritter, III. 168. † Ib. 226. ‡ Ib. 245–7. § B. 2, c. 37.

behold the earth, the seas, the heavens; should consider the vast extent of the clouds and force of the winds; should see the sun and observe his grandeur and beauty, and also his generative power, inasmuch as day is occasioned by the diffusion of his light through the sky; and when night has obscured the earth, they should contemplate the heavens bespangled and adorned with stars; the surprising variety of the moon, in her increase and wane; the rising and setting of all the stars, and the inviolable regularity of all their courses; when, says he, they should see these things, they would undoubtedly conclude that there are Gods, and that these are their mighty works."

Prof. F. D. Maurice* gives the following "results of an argument which Aristotle evidently felt to be the summing up of his metaphysical series. There must be an eternal, immovable Substance, which is at the same time the source of all movement. The primary notion of this substance is that it is an energy. The notion of potentiality is excluded from it, for the highest form of being is incompatible with the mere capacity of being. And seeing matter and potentiality are convertible terms, it must be immaterial. There is no refuge from the notion that all things proceeded from darkness and nothingness, except in this belief. . . We must attribute a continual *negative* existence to this potency, but a continual *operative* existence can only be attributed to the First Cause. We want the one to account for Corruption and Decay; we want the other to account for actual Existence and Life. Matter is in no sense a cause to itself, or to any other thing; and to a first cause we necessarily attribute self-causation. Other things impart motion, having first received it; this must be its own mover. . . Aristotle, having satisfied himself that the *argument* was in favor of a one cause, sweeps away all notions that interfered with it, considers the Gods whom his country worshipped as derived from certain astrological notions, and merely as setting forth the secondary sensible substances which proceed from the first immaterial cause."

Again: "It was a Being to satisfy the wants of *man* which

* Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy, I. 215–8.

Plato sighed for; it was a first cause of *things*, to which Aristotle did homage. The first would part with no indication or symbol of the truth that God has held intercourse with men; has made Himself known to them; the second was content with seeking in nature and logic for demonstrations of His attributes and His unity. When we use personal language to describe the God of whom Plato speaks, we feel that we are using that which suits best with his feelings and his principles, even when, through reverence or ignorance, he forbears to use it himself. When we use personal language to describe the deity of Aristotle, we feel that it is improper and unsuitable, even though . . he resorts to it himself."

Although the treatise "De Mundo" is no longer credited to Aristotle, it comes down to us associated with his name, and in modern times it has been quoted by writers on Natural Theology as containing matter pertinent to their argument.

Aristotle's theory of virtue follows upon his theistic position, that God, the immovably good, by His attribute of being ever worthy of desire, sets in motion the world as capable of desire.* Pleasure is inseparable from a virtuous activity, and is the result of this activity. The practice of, as well as the disposition to, virtue is indispensable, and here is the field in which the other faculties of the soul, as well as the reason, find their place.

But what, we are now led to ask, did Aristotle actually hold as to the main doctrines of the moral system? We have seen the method and spirit in which he advanced toward their investigation, ever on his guard against the admission of anything that rested on an ideal basis, while only too ready to assume his own theories as facts, and make them the premise for further speculation. He reasons forcibly from *being*, which is the primary existence, to the Supreme Reason, to which he applies terms applicable, in their modern significance, only to a personal intelligence, and yet his own materialistic tendencies lend plausibility to the argument that would give them a pantheistic interpretation. The soul, or its reasonable faculty at least, separable from the body, is divine and eternal, does not share the fate of the body, and

* Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy, I. 348.

we are left to infer that it must be immortal. But what kind of immortality can it possess, distinct from body, when its activity and apprehensible energy are dependent on body?

W. A. Butler remarks: "The real opinions of Aristotle as to the immortality of the soul, have in all ages been a subject of discussion. I do not hesitate to pronounce that to me the evidence in favor of his having really held this sublime and consoling doctrine is far from satisfactory. It is impossible that, if he held it, the very importance of the question, and the natural earnestness which such a conviction would bring with it—as well as its certainty of a strong sympathetic support in the hearts of all his auditors—should have led to statements more decisive and unequivocal than any which the most scrupulous research can detect in his extant writings. It is not sufficient to satisfy the demands of human anxiety on this subject, that an eternity should be pronounced essential to an active and intellectual principle, which itself seems described as unable to exercise any *conscious* energies apart from the bodily structure—a quickening essence whose very existence retreats into nothingness when it is left nothing which it can quicken. . . . It is quite evident that Aristotle was (and naturally) perplexed to conceive *the kind of existence* that could belong to a *separate reason*, and has altogether evaded the consideration of it. . . . How the reason, left to itself, was to converse with its own peculiar objects, he nowhere attempts to show, and hence the sort of existence which he allows the active intellect after death, fades into a state of mere being—a state with which our present consciousness can scarcely find anything in any degree common."* "I conceive it to be the safest verdict upon this long disputed point, to conclude that Aristotle held, indeed, the imperishable nature of the supreme rational principle in man, but that he held it in such a sense as was altogether foreign to human and earthly interests—in a sense which leaves the surviving principle scarcely any link of connection with the present form of being, or with any conscious nature of any kind."†

And yet we should do Aristotle injustice if we did not al-

* His. of Anc. Philosophy, II. 388-90. † Ib. 391.

low that he lays down some positions, which but for their incongruity with others, would lead directly to the Divine Personality as the Supreme Reason, and to the immateriality and immortality of the soul. Yet in regard to any discussion of the relation of the immortality of the soul, to present life or duty, Aristotle is profoundly silent. He deals exclusively with the practical. He repels the ideal. He studies man as a compound of soul and body, but exclusively with reference to the wants, acquisitions and experiences of the present. The good of man, the *summum bonum*, is sought within the compass of man's compound nature and this present life. He is not insensible to the charms of truth, magnanimity, self-control, or the perfection of a soul which under the stern discipline he enjoins, may aspire to a blessedness like that of the gods.* But there is no drawing of the veil of the unseen, no Platonic vision of retribution, no hope that lights up the dark pathway of transitory earthly existence, overshadowed by calamity, decay, or death.

And yet this very fact lends new significance to those views of the laws and order of the moral system which are set forth in the Nicomachean Ethics. Here we have the conclusions of one of the coolest and keenest observers of all time, a man who if he never kindles a spark of enthusiasm, makes us feel at every step that he is in earnest to get at the truth, and that no mere semblance of it can hope to escape the scalpel of his searching discrimination.

He commences with an assumption, or rather assertion, that might seem at once to land him on the side of a utilitarianism at war with any ethics entitled to our confidence. Many things are sought, he says, for ulterior ends; but happiness for itself alone. "We choose it always for its own sake, and never for the sake of anything else,"† while other things, as "honor, pleasure, sense," etc., are chosen for the sake of happiness. But already we observe, in this very statement, the distinction drawn between a happiness which is ultimate, and a "pleasure" which is subordinate. A mere animal may experience gratification. But we do not call an ox happy,‡ and Aristotle scruples to apply the epithet to a child, that

* Nicomachean Ethics, X. 8. † Ib., I. 6. ‡ Ib., I. 9.

may yet be pleased. Even in pleasures, distinctions are to be made, and there is a virtue on which happiness is conditioned in the choice of what is allowed to please; "for to be properly or improperly pleased or pained, makes a great difference in our actions."* Happiness must be something peculiar to man, something that cannot be predicated of "the life of sensation."† "We call mental goods the best, and the most emphatically good."‡ So that Aristotle claims that he is justified in saying that the proper "work of man consists of a certain kind of life, and this is of an energy of the soul, and moral actions in obedience to reason," while "the good of man becomes an energy of the soul, according to virtue; but if there are more virtues than one, according to the best and most perfect of them; and besides in a perfect life."§ And again, "with those who say that all virtue, or some one virtue is happiness, our definition coincides."‖ The man cannot be just, who does not find satisfaction in acting justly, and "if this is the case, actions of virtue must be absolutely pleasant."¶ There may be a loss of worldly possessions or blessings by men, which may "spoil their bliss," and some people set down these as equivalent to happiness, as others do virtue. But happiness, arising in us by virtue, "must be common to many; for it is possible that by means of some teaching and care, it should exist in every person who is not marred for virtue."** "Virtuous energies constitute happiness," and this is the most secure of all possessions, "for stability does not exist in any human thing, so much as in virtuous energies."†† He who is thus happy, "will act and study virtuous things, and he will sustain the accidents of fortune most nobly." "But if the energies are the things that constitute the bliss or the misery of life, as we said, no happy man can ever become miserable, for he will never do hateful and worthless actions."‡‡

In respect to the condition of the soul after death, Aristotle says only what seemed requisite from regard to popular belief. "It appears," he says, "that even if anything (through

* Nicomachean Ethics, II. 3. † Ib., I. 7. ‡ Ib., I. 8.
§ Ib., I. 7. ‖ Ib., I. 8. ¶ Ib.
** Ib., I. 9. †† Ib., I. 10. ‡‡ Ib.

events taking place after their death) reaches them (the dead), whether good or evil, it must be dim and small, either absolutely, or to them; or if not this, it must be of that magnitude and description, as not to make those happy, who are not already happy, nor to deprive those who are happy, of their happiness."*

It belongs to the essence of virtue that it be habitual. A single just act does not make a man just. Virtues result from "performing those actions which occur in the intercourse between men."† "The virtue of man must be a habit, by means of which a man becomes good, and performs his work well."‡ But while "a habit with deliberate preference," it aims at a mean between two extremes. This constitutes its difficulty. "It is possible to err in many ways, for evil, as the Pythagoreans conjectured, is of the nature of the vague and infinite, but good of the definite and determined; but to be right is one only; and for this reason, one is easy and the other difficult. It is easy to miss a mark, but difficult to hit it. "We are good in one way only, but bad in a hundred."§ To this point Aristotle returns again. While some acts are positively evil, and allow of no mean between two extremes, many, some of which he classifies, are virtuous by observing the mean. This explains why "it is difficult to be good." "It is difficult to find the middle." It is like finding "the centre of the circle."‖ Men are continually liable to be deceived. "The mistake of the generality of mankind seems to be caused by pleasure; for it appears to be the good, though it is not; and therefore men choose what is pleasant, under the idea that it is good, and avoid pain as evil."¶

This error is one of ignorance. But Aristotle will not accept, without qualification, the paradox of Socrates, that "No person is willingly wicked," and that all sin is through lack of knowledge.** "Vice," he asserts, "is voluntary; or else we must contradict what we have just said, and deny that man is the principal and producer of his actions." There is such a thing as guilty ignorance, "for they punish a person even for ignorance, if he appear to be the cause of his own ignorance;

* Nicomachean Ethics, I. 11. † Ib., II. 1. ‡ Ib., II. 6.
§ Ib. ‖ Ib. II., 9. ¶ Ib. III., 4. ** Ib., III. 5.

just as the punishment is double for drunken people."* No plea of ignorance, if one could offer it, could avail, so long as that ignorance is due to their own vice.

On the subject of human depravity, Aristotle is as outspoken as Plato. Of men, "The greatest part," he says, "seem altogether slavish in their character, deliberately choosing the life of beasts."† "Persons themselves are the cause of their being unjust," "they are themselves the causes of their becoming so, by living dissipatedly," "performing bad actions," etc.‡ A man may voluntarily become unjust, "and yet he will not be able to leave off being unjust, and to become just as he pleases." "In the beginning, it was in the power of the unjust and intemperate man not to become such; wherefore they are so voluntarily; but when they have become so, it is no longer in their own power not to be so."§

If it be said that men will aim at that which their own imaginations present to them as good, this will be no excuse, for "if, as we say, every person is in some sense the cause of his own habit, he will be in some sense the cause of his own imagination."‖

Of the diverse nature and tendency of virtue and vice, Aristotle speaks with clearness and emphasis. The good man has a superior discernment of what is good. "For depravity perverts the vision, and causes it to be deceived on the subject of the principles of action. So that it is clearly impossible for a person who is not good to be prudent."¶ Yet men are "more likely to practice honor and justice, on account of prudence."** Even brutishness "is a less evil than vice." A vicious man has destroyed "the best principle," which the brute never possessed, while he "can do infinitely more than a beast."††

The evils and weaknesses necessarily attendant upon vice, are impressively set forth. The friendship of good men is not based on taste, passion, or the prospect of mutual benefit, which is of a selfish nature, but on virtue. "Their friendship therefore continues, as long as they are good, and virtue is

* Nicomachean Ethics, III. 5. † Ib., I. 5. ‡ Ib., III. 5. § Ib.
‖ Ib. ¶ Ib., VI. 12. ** Ib. †† Ib., VII. 6.

lasting."* But bad men cannot be friends, or enjoy the advantages of real friendship. "Evidently only the good can be friends; for the bad feel no pleasure in the persons themselves, unless there be some advantage."† The good are friends, "inasmuch as they are good. These, therefore, are really and truly friends; the others accidentally."‡

The friendships of the good are not broken off like the simulated friendships of the wicked. "For it is characteristic of the good, neither to commit faults themselves, nor to suffer their friends to contribute to it. But the wicked have no stability; for they do not remain consistent even with themselves; but they become friends for a short time, taking delight in each other's wickedness."§ Moreover, "accusations and complaints arise in the friendship for the useful," while those who are friends for virtue's sake, are anxious to benefit each other, for such is the property of virtue and friendship; and when they are contending for this, there are no complaints or quarrels."‖ Time also is found by experience to be on the side of virtue, as related to friendship. "A wish for friendship is formed quickly, but not friendship." "It requires time and long acquaintance."¶ By means of these it has a solid and enduring basis.

But vice, moreover, is inherently weak, and at war with itself. "For the bad are at variance with themselves; . . Instead of what seems to them to be good, they choose the agreeable, which is detrimental. Others again, from cowardice and idleness, abstain from doing what they think best for themselves. . . Some . . fly from life, and destroy themselves. . . The wicked . . fly from themselves. . . Such men do not partake of their own pleasures and pains; for their soul is divided, and one part from depravity feels pain, because it is restrained from something, while the other part feels pleasure; and one draws him this way, another that, as if they were pulling him asunder."**

Nor is this all, "For bad men are full of repentance. The bad man seems not to have a friendly disposition, even to himself, because he possesses nothing amiable. If then, such

* Nicomachean Ethics, VIII. 3. † Ib., VIII. 4. ‡ Ib. § Ib., VIII. 8.
‖ Ib., VIII. 13. ¶ Ib., VIII. 3. ** Ib. IX., 4.

a condition as this is excessively miserable, he should anxiously fly from wickedness, and strive to be good."* Moreover, "It is impossible for bad men to have unanimity, except in a small degree; as it is impossible for them to be friends, since they are desirous of more than their share in what is profitable, but in labors and public services they take less. . . It happens therefore, that they split into factions, as they use force to one another, and are not willing themselves to do what is just."†

The effect of social education in its bearing on virtue and vice is not overlooked. "The friendship of bad men is depraved. . . They become depraved from assimilating themselves to each other. But that of good men is good, being mutually increased by acquaintance. Besides, men appear to become better by exercising friendship, and correcting one another, for they copy from each other whatever they are pleased with."‡

The conclusion of all is that "the happy life seems to be according to virtue." "Happiness does not consist in amusement." "Serious things are better than those which are ridiculous and full of amusement." "Any person whatsoever, and a slave, may enjoy bodily pleasures no less than the best man; but no one allows a slave to partake of happiness unless he does also of a virtuous life; for happiness does not consist in such modes of passing life, but in energies directed by virtue."§ "That which is peculiarly suited to each by nature, is best and most pleasant to every one; and therefore, to man the life according to intellect is most pleasant."‖

Nor does Aristotle fail to cite the testimony of preceding philosophers to confirm his own opinion. "Solon perhaps gave a good description of happy men, when he said, that in his opinion they were those who were moderately supplied with external goods, who had done the most noble deeds, and lived temperately. . It seems also that Anaxagoras conceived the happy man to be neither the rich nor the powerful, when he said that he should not be surprised if he appeared in an absurd light to the multitude; for these judge by externals, having a perception only of such things." Aristotle adds:

* Nicom. Eth., IX., 4. † Ib., IX. 6. ‡ Ib., IX. 12. § Ib., X. 6. ‖ Ib., X. 7.

"The opinions of wise men also seem to agree with what has been said. . . Also he that energizes according to intellect, and pays attention to that, and has it in the best state, is likely to be most beloved by the Gods; for if any regard is paid to human beings by the Gods, *as there seems to be*, it must be reasonable that they should take pleasure in what is the best and nearest allied to themselves; but this must be intellect; and that they would be kind in return to those who love and honor this most, as to persons who take care of what is dear to them, and who act rightly and nobly. But that all these things exist most in the wise man requires no proof; he is therefore most beloved by the Gods. It is probable also that the same person is most happy. So that in this way also, the wise man must be most happy."*

It is impossible not to respect the cautious belief or honest scepticism of such a reasoner as Aristotle. In tracing certain features of the moral system, he shows the skillful hand of a master. His language is that of calm but firm and unwavering assertion. The baseness of vice and its inconveniences or inherent weaknesses and defects are clearly portrayed. When he passes from the sphere of man's moral relations and the exposition of the moral system, he is careful and guarded in his language. In speaking of the dead, he neither asserts nor denies immortality. His language is "*even if* anything reach them." In reference to a divine providence over human interests, he says that it *seems to be*. If so, there can be no question with him, that the Gods have a special regard and friendliness for the wise and good.

Such testimony, from such a source, is entitled to peculiar weight. It comes from a careful observer and a profound and independent thinker, one indeed, who does not hesitate to call in question the *ipse dixit* of his master Plato, or even of Socrates himself.† And yet no one perhaps of the ancient philosophers, has more significantly confessed the inadequacy of even such precepts as he gave and impressively enforced, than Aristotle himself. Something beside precepts—something which he does not attempt fullv to define—was wanted.

* Nicomachean Ethics, X. 8. † Ib., VII. 2.

They had indeed their use, "but the case is, that they seem to have power to urge on and to excite young men of liberal minds, and to make a character that is generous and truly fond of what is noble, easily led by virtue; but that they have no power to excite the multitude to what is virtuous and noble."*

We may here append the conclusion reached by one of the most eminent modern students of Aristotle. He says: "The chief momentum in the Aristotelian philosophy is, that thought, and the subject of thought, are one; that what is objective and thought (the ἐνὲργεια) are one and the same. God Himself is eternal thought, and His thought is operation, life, action—it is the thought of thought. Objects exist in their truth only in so far as they are the subjects of thought—are thoughts. That is their essence. In nature indeed, the idea exists not as a thought, but as a body; it has, however, a soul, and this is its idea. In saying this, Aristotle stands upon the highest point of speculation; God, as a living God, is the universe.

"In the course of the investigation, Aristotle, with a careful regard to, and examination of, the views of earlier philosophers, points out that neither abstractly universal, nor particular, sensuously perceptible essences can be looked upon as principles of existence. Neither the universal apart from the particular, nor the particular by itself, can be a principle of the natural and spiritual world; but the absolute principle is God—the highest reason, the object of whose thought is himself. Thus the dominion of the Anaxagorean νοῦς was declared in a profounder manner by Aristotle. In the Divine thought, existence is at the same time implied. Thought is the sum and substance of the universe, and realizes itself in the eternal immutable formative principles, which, as the essences indwelling (immanent) in the material, fashion themselves so as to assume an individual existence. In man, the thought of the divine reason completes itself so as to become the self-conscious activity of thinking reason. By it, he recognizes in the objective world his own nature again, and so attains to the cognition of truth."†

* Nicomachean Ethics, X. 8. † Prof. A. Stahr, in Smith's Dict. Aristotle.

CHAPTER XI.

THE STOICS, EPICUREANS, AND SCEPTICS.

THE Stoics professed to be followers of Socrates. They were rather continuators and elaborators of an inherited, than the originators of a new philosophy. But before we reach them, we come in contact with some intervening phases of thought. In this connection the Cyreniac School deserves mention. Its founder was Aristippus (flourished 366 B.C.), in his youth a somewhat indocile disciple of Socrates, who did not cure him of his inclination for pleasure. The starting-point of this school was Socrates; its goal, Epicurus. It depreciated physical science as above human attainment, or deficient in utility. Nor was its method of ethical study unexceptionable. Socrates, in his inquiries into the true ends of life, proceeded on the supposition that happiness is the desire and aim of all men; at least, he used this assumption to show that the votaries of inordinate indulgence committed a grave mistake in the method of attaining their end. With Aristotle, also, the end of human activity, or the highest good for man, is happiness. This, however, depends upon the rational or virtuous activity of the soul throughout the whole of its life. Aristippus taught that good is pleasure, and pain is evil, appealing in proof to the testimony of all living beings. But in true pleasure, the soul must preserve its authority, and must thus be identified with the Socratic temperance. Beyond this, he held that while pleasure was permissible, the desire of it, as rendering man the creature of hope and fear, was not to be allowed. Each should be content with what he has, and not suffer himself to be overcome with any sensual enjoyment. He is to live in the present, neither regretting the past nor caring for the future. Here was a marked secession from Socrates; an equally marked approach toward Epicurus.

Among other views credited to the Cyreniacs, was this, that

every act was in itself morally indifferent, since the only question with them was the result—pleasure or pain. As to virtue, it could not be an ultimate end, but only a mean. But, in justice to them, it must be said, that they made pleasure to rest not on the prosperity of the individual alone, but on the general welfare; nor did they overlook the superiority of mental to bodily pleasure.

Among those who are credited with having been swayed by the tendencies of the Cyreniac school, are Theodorus and Euhemerus, each surnamed the Atheist, but in the case of the latter, without reason. He taught that pleasure and pain are morally indifferent; that joy and sorrow are the objects of desire and aversion, reason leading to the former, and irrationality to the latter. The end of life is thus sought, not in external satisfactions, but the inner constitution of the mind. Theodorus held that man is all-sufficient for himself; his joys depend on his reason alone. Even of friendship he does not stand in need, and as to patriotism, the world is the wise man's country. Moreover, nothing is bad in its own nature, but solely by opinion; so that the wise man, if opportunity offers, will not hesitate to disregard moral obligation. It is not strange that with this effrontery of the Sophist should be coupled the denial of the existence of a God. Only thus could the sage free his mind from all superstition.

The gloomiest phase of this doctrine was accepted by Hegesias, whose doctrine is said to have driven many to suicide. To the Epicurean, as well as other theories, he objected that happiness cannot be the aim of life, because in general it is unattainable. The wise man will be content with freedom from pain and annoyance. Gratitude, friendship, benevolence, should be of no account to him, compared with his regard for himself.

Anniceris, a fellow-disciple of Hegesias, denied that life was given for any general object. Our efforts, therefore, should be directed to the pleasure of the moment. Pain, however—as through an act of benevolence—should be endured for the pleasure that might result. Reason alone is insufficient to preserve the wise man from error. His

right affections must be confirmed, and his evil weakened by the force of habit.

The Cynics claim as their founder a disciple of Socrates, who might almost be said to be a born stoic, Antisthenes (426–371 B.C.). The name of the school was derived from its locality perhaps, or possibly from the Cynical character of its doctrines. Antisthenes held that philosophy consisted rather in act than in speculation. He was poor, and excluded from civil rights at Athens, and he met the exclusion in a spirit of defiance. He strove to render himself independent by making his wants as few as possible. In his bitterness and wit, he came into collision with the luxury and culture of what he accounted a degenerate age.

Both the Cyreniac and Cynic schools started from the same maxim of Socrates, that men are not to yield to circumstances, but be masters of them. Hence, argued the Cyreniac Aristippus, the wise man should not submit to circumstances, but rule them; so arranging them as to produce the maximum of pleasure and the minimum of pain. On the other hand, Antisthenes contended that a man is to be superior to his circumstances, and to this end he is to overcome his sensibility to pleasure and pain, cultivating the nobler part of him, least affected by what is merely external. His doctrines were mainly ethical. He sought to revive the olden simplicity and moral energy. But his really Socratic tendency was carried to excess. He even represented infamy, as well as pain or labor, as a good. "I had rather go mad," he said, "than experience pleasure." Intellectual enjoyment, however, he commends, and he doubtless interpreted labor and pain as discipline to effect the freedom and increase the wealth of the soul. Virtue, coupled with a Socratic energy, he considered sufficient for happiness. "Man," he said, "must have reason or a halter," while the most necessary science is to unlearn evil.

But with what was really Socratic the peculiar Stoic element was combined. Antisthenes denied the moral worth of affection or love of kindred. He contemned all civil institutions in comparison with the wisdom of the sage. Nothing but evil was unlawful to the wise man, nothing unbecoming but

immorality. To some extent he accepted the Socratic theory that the universe is so regulated by a divine intelligence as to benefit the good man, the friend of God. In opposition to the popular Polytheism, he asserted the Divine Unity, and that God cannot be recognized or known in any form or figure, since he is like to nothing on earth. To the vulgar mythology, with its popular deities, he gave an allegorical interpretation, with which he coupled doubts of the demoniacal intimations of Socrates. He also attacked the truth of the higher Platonic ideas.

In the later Cynics there was less favorable disposition toward scientific ends than in Antisthenes. With them, philosophy was merely the art of living. Diogenes of Sinope, famous as the pupil of Antisthenes, restricted philosophy to practice. He made its aim to be, to insure the attainment of a pleasant life. This consisted in dispensing with all, even the most simple and necessary wants. This "mad Socrates," as he was called, was noted for his biting and caustic sarcasm. Our knowledge of his most famous disciple, Crantes, less bitter, and of a more pliant temper, with others of a kindred spirit, enables us to mark the transition from the Cynic to the Stoic school, which on several points was already foreshadowed by it.

The Megaric school, which derives its name from the fact that on the death of Socrates, some of his disciples found a refuge with Eucleides of Megara, has little to detain our attention. It is credited with holding that there is but One unalterable being, which cannot be known by the senses, but by reason alone. Eucleides called it "the good," and it was also denominated God, reason, intelligence, etc. Eubulides and others paid no little attention to forms of fallacy, controverting the definitions of Aristotle and Plato, and asserting the doubtful validity of illative knowledge. Alexinus, of the same school, is said to have opposed the stoic Zeno, contending for the school doctrine of "the unchangeable One" against the tenet of "the living development of the world." The doctrine of Diodorus was connected with the depreciation of the senses, and manifested the disposition of the school to apprehend nothing individually, but all in its systematic coherency.*

* Ritter, II. 132.

The Megareans held that the good alone is the true and the real, which, as the morally perfect, they considered the end and aim of life. Stilpo more precisely taught that the supreme good is a mind free from all passivity. The wise man is sufficient to himself; above pain and suffering, which he conquers till he does not feel them. So far at least as he is good and wise, he will not be affected by pain. Even the faults of another, however near or dear, will not affect his own happiness.

The only pupil of Stilpo who arose to distinction was Zeno of Citium, by whose method the logical investigations and vigorous morality of the Megaric school were transferred to that of the Stoics, by which it was superseded. But before tracing the development of the latter, we must glance at the career of the Peripatetics, after the death of their great master, Aristotle.

The hard, practical view of human life taken by Aristotle, was little calculated to excite moral enthusiasm in his pupils. It was but natural that, under his impulse, they should seek to excel in the intellectual and the elaborately scientific, rather than in the moral and speculative sphere so congenial to the Platonists. The mantle of the master fell upon Theophrastus, a careful scientific observer, and a diligent investigator. Esteeming highly, like Aristotle, the influence of external things upon human happiness, he taught that they were the only means by which it could be acquired, and yet more to depreciate virtuous aspiration, he asserted that the life of man was ruled, not by wisdom, but by fortune.* Here man can only *begin* his study, and no hope of limitless progress hereafter is allowed him, in order to raise him above the depression of the thought. Theophrastus' knowledge of man, in his weakness and perversity, is unrelieved by the inspiring consciousness of a diviner principle within, and finds no compensation but in the meditative quiet of the sage withdrawn from the world. "Even in antiquity, it was a subject of complaint, that Theophrastus had not expressed himself with precision and consistency respecting the Deity, and had understood thereby, at one time, Heaven; at another,

* Ritter, III. 359.

an enlivening *Pneuma*; that he had not been able to comprehend a happiness resting merely upon virtue, or, consequently, to hold fast by the unconditional value of morality."*

Two other disciples of Aristotle deviated in like manner from their master's notion of the soul. Aristoxenus compared the soul to a musical harmony, regarding it as nothing more than a certain tension of the body. Dicœarchus, distinctly asserting that the soul and reason were not entities, denied unconditionally the immortality of the soul. Strato, of Lampsacus, with little regard for Aristotle, whose arguments he unsparingly criticises, taught—in keeping with the epithet, "Naturalist," applied to him—that there does not exist any immutable being which subsists independent of, and extrinsical to the system of nature, and conceivable only by the intellect. Nature, with him, is the ground of all motion, and motion itself is eternal and eternally propagated. Yet nature is soulless; endowed only with potentiality and possessed of the impulse to form and reproduce living beings. "He seems to have denied the existence of any God out of the material universe, and to have held that every particle of matter has a plastic and seminal power, but without sensation or intelligence." Some modern writers have regarded him as a forerunner of Spinoza, and eminent writers have charged him with atheism. It is not strange that Strato's successors, Lycon, Ariston, and Critolaus, should fail to restore the sinking reputation of a school that had reached such a stage of degeneracy.

The downward course of the Aristotelian school was contemporary with the political decline and degradation of Athens, and was accompanied by new evidences of the perversion of Socratic teaching and authority. An age in which a Macedonian garrison held the Munychia, and Xenocrates rejected citizenship as a disgrace, was not the age to resist the corrupting influence already in the ascendant. When Demetrius (Poliorcetes) entered Athens as its ruler, he was greeted by impious adoration. A mocking atheism could scarcely have gone beyond the Ithyphallus, openly sung in

* Prof. Brandis, Smith's Dict.

his praise. "The other Gods are far off, or have not ears; or perhaps they are not, or else they do not trouble themselves in the least about us; but thee we behold present, not a God of wood or of stone, but a true God." Only the erection of temples and altars to the courtezans and parasites of Demetrius was necessary to complete the work of impiety.

It was in such circumstances as these—while the smaller Socratic schools were drifting back to sophistic disputation; while the Cyreniac nourished the doctrine of self-love and the pursuit of pleasure; while the Cynics indulged their contempt not only for the culture but the decencies of life; while the Megarians were absorbed in frivolous and idle disputation, and the followers of Democritus, with his atomistic theory, propagated its atheistic principles, sensualism, and doubt—that the sect of the Sceptics, soon to be followed by Epicurus, had its birth. Its founder, Pyrrho, who had marched to India in the ranks of Alexander's army, returned from his campaign to Athens, not to resume his paint-brush, but to set up as a philosopher. He confessed his indebtedness to Democritus, whose writings, he said, first attracted him to philosophy, and whose scepticism, and whose theory of happiness, he adopted. His disciple, Timon, the "Sillograph," admired his coolness and self-possession, and praised him as invincible in dispute. Possibly exceeding the license of his master, he reviled the earlier and later philosophy, and aimed to refute its dogmas. Much of it, indeed, was vulnerable enough. Its contradictions rendered plausible Pyrrho's assertion, that neither our senses nor our opinions gave assurance of truth. We may, in charity at least, credit him with the modesty becoming one who knew his own liability to mistake, while he is removed out of that classification to which he has been oftenest assigned by his declaration, "that he reckons it as one of the phenomena to which he must adhere, that there is an eternal nature, divine and good, from which human life receives its regularity."*

Others, doubtless, were less conversative. They were more Pyrrhonic than Pyrrho himself. The Sceptics generally failed to reach any stable point from which they could investigate

* Ritter, III. 388.

the supra-sensible. They denied the certainty of everything, and were positive only in their denial, and even in this, only against the Dogmatists. To abstain from all judgment, from all positive opinion, insured freedom from mental disturbance. Scepticism was a tranquil refuge, free from agitation and perplexity. It was characterized by a calm indifference, that counted nothing good or bad, and was free from every impassioned pursuit destructive of happiness. The logical result was an apathy to all human interests, and to life itself, which did violence to natural instinct. This was a state of things which could not continue. Such scepticism was but a middle term between the Stoics and Epicureans, and could not be permanent.

Epicurus (B. C. 342–270) was in some respects the natural successor of Pyrrho. Of humble birth, but well educated, and early familiar with philosophical investigation, he yet claimed to have had no masters, but to have learned philosophy from himself. In his thirty-sixth year, after teaching elsewhere, he opened his school at Athens, in a garden of his own, calling himself a follower of Democritus. At length, rejecting allegiance to alien opinions, he fashioned the scheme that bore his name. His notion of philosophy was an activity which, by means of ideas and arguments, procures the happiness of life. Rigorous investigation was in conflict with this, and utility was the sole standard of the value of science. This was the case with physics, the knowledge of which was necessary to disperse misapprehensions and mythical fancies about death, and superstitious notions which tended to disturb human tranquillity. A happy life was the supreme good; all beings instinctively pursue pleasure and avoid pain. Man should do deliberately, what animals do from impulse. Pleasure, however, was not to be pursued for its own sake, since many pleasures occasion grief and vexation; and are, consequently, to be avoided or despised. Not the enjoyment of the moment, but the happiness of the whole life is to be sought, and there is an intimate connection between this and virtue. Here was the redeeming feature of the Epicurean philosophy. It acknowledged different *kinds* of pleasure, and prudently discriminated in favor of what was

superior and more enduring. Still, when the master or his disciples proceeded to designate the superior pleasures, they went little, if at all, beyond the gratifications of sense, or the tranquil assurance of their continuance. To attain this, the appetites must be restrained. Unnecessary or unnatural desires must be repressed. The sage must be rich, not in large possessions, but in little wants; and friendship, as contributing to the end in view, is not to be rejected. He will conform to the laws of his country, not as a matter of duty, but of prudence, and to be safe from the injuries of his fellowmen. From superstitious apprehensions and the fear of the Gods, his reason must emancipate him, showing him that all depends upon fortune and himself, and that the goods of fortune are of small account. Death, too, must be accepted as a deliverance from all misery, since while we live, death is not, and when death is, we are not.

The theology of Epicurus is in keeping with his ethics. He admitted the existence of Gods with human characteristics, only without solid bodies, and free from human wants and weaknesses. In the void intervals betweeen the infinite worlds, they pass a life that is undisturbed, and enjoy a happiness that cannot be increased. About human affairs they never trouble themselves, nor will they be deprived of their unbroken repose. It is not without reason that Epicurus, rejecting the popular fables of the Gods, and avowedly contemning the national theology, has been credited with the prudent acceptance of that minimum of religious belief, necessary to screen him from the charge of atheism.

Zeno of Citium, in Cyprus, is the well-known founder of the Stoics. It is said that in his youth his attention was attracted to Philosophy by the perusal of the writings of Socrates, which his father, a merchant, had on one occasion brought back with him from Athens. Here, in mature years, having lost his all in a shipwreck, he took refuge in philosophy. His sympathy with the Cynics brought him under the influence of Crates, but his moral sensibility revolted against their habits. In Stilpo, of Megara, he found combined with austere practice, a more liberal knowledge. But even he failed to satisfy him, and he passed successively to the

Megaric school, and to the Academy under Polemo, and Plato's successors. For twenty years he gave himself to philosophical studies. Of his different teachers, he spoke with respect, and instead of combating, endeavored to harmonize their views, and combine them in a system of his own. His school met in the variegated porch, and thence derived its name of Stoics. His temperance and abstinence were proverbial, and his integrity was above impeachment. After presiding over his school for fifty-eight years, at a very advanced age he put an end to his own existence.

A main principle of Zeno's physics was that everything which operates, as well as everything operated upon, is corporeal. The substance or basis of everything existent is that primary matter which neither increases nor diminishes itself. This substance, to which Zeno attributed reason, is the Deity, and to it belongs, not merely a concomitant consciousness, but a foreseeing one, and "the eternal Deity extended throughout the whole universe, must produce everything." Again, Deity is defined as that law of nature which ever accomplishes what is right, and prevents the opposite, as the self-moving energy, the Zeus, the single divine primary power, of which the different chief deities of Greek mythology were different fundamental modes of manifestation; or, again, although without detriment, to the foresight and free self-determination attributed to its unconditioned necessity.

Zeno, in this agreeing with the Cynics, most decidedly recognized the unconditional nature of moral obligations. The moral was the single, sole, simple good, alone to be striven for, and praised for itself, and with it happiness was coincident. But this perfect unanimity or harmony of life was only to be secured through the unrestricted dominion of right reason. The reason must not only rule other energies and circumstances, but it must be coincident with the universal world-governing reason. This last is the source of moral law, which forbids as well as commands.*

Here is the original stern idea of virtue—internal harmony of soul through the supremacy of right reason. Any departure from this is vice, and in one and the same subject they

* Prof. Brandis in Smith's Biog. Dict., Art. Zeno.

cannot consist together. No moral action can be more virtuous than another, each according, as is assumed, with the law of right reason, and admitting neither of increase or diminution. The severity and strictness of Zeno's moral code, and his idea of a happiness that scorned dependence upon external circumstances, was largely due, doubtless, to his intercourse with Cynics, from whom he seems freely to have borrowed.

The main features of the system of the Stoics, to which we shall have frequent occasion to recur, were projected at least by Zeno, but how far they were elaborated is uncertain. The school at first was far from unanimous. Aristo, of Chios, rejected all philosophy but ethics, and even limited its domain to shewing wherein the supreme good consists. It is impossible, he said, to form a conception of the shape or sense of the Gods; it is doubtful whether God is, or is not, a living being. He declared that the true philosopher should hold himself free from all opinions, and Cicero often couples his name with that of Pyrrho. With him, nothing is of worth but virtue, nothing is evil but vice. To all external circumstances, the sage should be indifferent, and like a good actor, be able to perform the part of Thersites as skillfully as that of Agamemnon. On several points the doctrine of Herillus is almost the precise opposite of that of Aristo.

Cleanthes was Zeno's successor, and was noted less for his erudition or sagacity than the sternness and rigor of his character. He was a native of Assus, of Troas, and of humble birth. He was poor, and labored by night, in order to study by day. Slow to learn, he was retentive of his acquisitions. He is best known by his hymn to Zeus, still extant, which has been much admired for its lofty views and philosophic thought as well as poetic conception. Addressing the Deity, he says:

"Greatest of Gods, God with many names, God ever ruling and ruling all things!
Zeus, origin of Nature, governing the universe by law. . . .
Thou rulest in the common reason, which goes through all,
And appears mingled in all things, great and small,
Which filling all Nature, is King of all existences.
Nor without thee, O Deity, does anything happen in the world,

From the divine etherial pole to the great ocean,
Except only the evil preferred by the senseless wicked. . . .
Thus through all Nature is one great law,
Which only the wicked seek to disobey.
. . . Nothing can be better for Gods or men
Than to adore with perpetual hymns the law common to all."

In this hymn, to which the epithet "sublime" has been justly applied, we find that thought expressed, to which Paul refers as uttered by one of the Greek poets, when Cleanthes, addressing Zeus, says, "Thine offspring are we." Another thought is significant—"Unhappy they, who craving the possession of good things, yet have no eyes or ears for the universal law of God, by wise obedience whereunto, they might lead a noble life." Equally admirable is the prayer, "Do Thou, Father, banish fell ignorance from our soul, and grant us wisdom, whereon relying, Thou rulest all things with justice, that being honored, we with honor may requite Thee, as beseemeth mortal man; since neither men nor Gods have any nobler task than duly to praise the universal law forever."

Chrysippus, the successor of Cleanthes, has divided with Zeno the credit of founder of the school. He was the first to set himself against the sceptical tendency of the New Academy, to oppose which he was doubtless led by struggling with his own doubts. Beside the Academy, he attacked the Epicureans, nor did he acquiesce in many of the views of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. From the latter he dissented, by denying that a life of solitude and contemplation is best suited to the sage. The wisdom of philosophy is not to seek ease, but virtue, which is identified with true science.

Omitting here any special reference to the strictly philosophical views of the Stoics, we note only in general that position which they occupied in relation to the truths of the moral system. The peculiar tenets of those who held the most distinguished place in the school, will be developed as we proceed.

The hypothesis of the unity and unbroken coherence of all parts of the world as a unity, and that too a corporeal unity, which excluded any separation of its parts by any interjacent

void space, lay at the foundation of the stoical theory of God. The arguments in proof of the existence of God, or the Gods, are various, some tending to prove the existence of a divine principle simply; others to prove its unity. Two points, however, are generally kept in view—that the world is ruled by a single force, and that this force is intelligent or divine. This intelligence is inferred from the manifold evidences of wise design, but as certain parts of the world are endued with sense and reason, these must have emanated from the whole, which must be supposed vital, with an indwelling and pervading principle of life. This vital force is the universal reason, governing the universe and pervading matter, and this reason is God. He is the good Providence which looks alike to the individual and the All. He is the Wisdom from which natural law, enjoining the good and forbidding the evil, emanates. It belongs to Him to punish and to reward, and He is perfect and endued with the consciousness of felicity.* He is thus the moving force of matter, the universal nature, without which nothing can be produced, the life-giving Soul of the world, its vital heat, its rational breath. He is to be conceived of as distinct from matter, and yet He pervades matter, and as identified with the world, is apprehended as soul and body, for the world of the Stoics is eternal and one with God.

To avoid charging him with imperfection, they represented the parts of the world, simply as parts, imperfect, yet harmonizing with the whole. They compared the world to a comedy, the faulty parts of which, in themselves considered, possessed in connection a certain grace and beauty. The Providence of God willed not war or disease, but they arise from the good, otherwise unattainable, which is designed for men. Some evils are to punish the wicked, others to chasten the good. Even moral evil is good for the whole, and indispensable to the perfection of the world. To explain the introduction of evil was a grave problem, but Chrysippus felt himself constrained to admit that much of necessity is mingled with the order of mundane things, while he adverted also to the supposed power of evil demons over the human race.

* Ritter, III. 523.

The necessity, by which Providence was in a measure counteracted, was inherent in matter, which was eternal. The artificer had no power to change it. Hence evil and imperfection. The very essence or matter of God is, "The seed of the universe," and its development must take its course through certain imperfect conditions of opposition or conflict. The Stoics also held the existence of superior beings, whom they assimilated to Plato's created Gods, thus approximating to the polytheistic opinions of their age and nation. The scepticism of the Epicureans and the New Academy rendered them more disposed to defend these, and thus impress upon their disciples a reverence for the superior powers to which the race is subject. Thus they adhered to what they believed to be the essence of the olden religion, interpreting it in their own new and peculiar sense. Zeno condemned the worship of images, and in the temples of the Gods admitted nothing holier than ornaments of art, but his school contended that the universal belief of mankind in the existence of the Gods and their interpositions should not lightly be esteemed. With superior beings, they also associated the sun, moon, stars, seasons, elements, and men who had acquired immortality by useful inventions or virtuous deeds. These were living forces —in a secondary sense, Gods—destined finally to return into the common origin of all things—the Supreme Zeus, source of all life and all being, alone uncreated and imperishable. With the belief of good and evil demons, was also associated respect for divine revelation through dreams and oracles.

Man, it was held, exists for the sake of the Gods, to contemplate and imitate them. Not even the Gods exist for themselves alone. Each is for all, and all are gradually advancing from imperfection to a higher state. The soul, like all other things, was corporeal. Its union with the body was a combination of two bodies, like that of the [illegible] with the world. The individual soul belonged as part to the universal soul, and immortality could not be [illegible] in the strict sense, yet as forming a peculiar body, it would continue to subsist after death, until in the general conflagration of all things it should be [illegible] in its origin. Cleanthes, however, taught that all souls would [illegible]

but the intensity of their existence would vary according to the firmness or weakness of their souls. Chrysippus denied that any but the stronger spirits of the wise and good would survive.

Unlike some preceding teachers, the Stoics did not make sensuous perception and rational cognition to differ in essence. Even appetites and passions were but a corrupt reason at strife with itself. All kinds of entities in the world were but grades of development of one and the same rational force. Irrational activities, as inferior manifestations of the mundane force or world-life, partook in some imperfect degree of reason. Not that the forces of the soul were not to some extent distinguished by parts. Some distinction they found necessary.

Against the Epicurean "caprice," the Stoics asserted the freedom of the soul. They denied chance or caprice, for chance was but the normal effect of a cause which the intellect failed to trace. Yet a moral necessity, equivalent to a certainty, accordant with the nature of the soul, and the proper motives addressed to it, was allowed. They did not scruple to avow that our nature and our principles are forced upon us by the necessity of an universal fate, so that we will and act agreeably to our natural disposition. Thus the liberty of things is their internal law, but it is encompassed by, and conditioned on, the universal nature.

The fundamental principle of Stoic ethics was—to follow nature. But the question is at once raised, what nature? and to this, diverse answers were given. Cleanthes taught that man must follow universal, and not his special nature, while Chrysippus included both. Perhaps, in the sense of each, the difference was unessential. Both doubtless held that a life agreeable to nature was one in which all the elements of the individual life were in perfect harmony. So Chrysippus defined a virtuous life, as agreement with the innate judgment of man as to good and evil. At different periods, however, the rule was differently interpreted; first, it required conformity to universal nature; then to particular human nature, and finally to the rational nature, which the Stoics professed highly to honor. The precept is necessarily vague. Sometimes it enjoins a free, unimpeded pursuit of the happi-

ness to which we are impelled by the various elements of our being; sometimes it approaches the asceticism of the Cynics, and rules out all that is merely personal. Before it can be drawn out into specific rules or application, the law of *nature* needs to be more exactly defined. Practically, the Stoic insisted that it demanded the rejection of all superfluities, regard only being had to the simplest wants of life, with indifference to external circumstances. All that human choice is most apt to prefer is really worthless. Health, riches, and the like, have no absolute value. Their possession may tend to good or evil. They have no influence on the happiness of the virtuous man, or at least they do not constitute it. But the vigorous application of these principles for any length of time was impossible, and we find them at length, in some instances, confessedly modified.

The fundamental constitution of man, according to the Stoics, is that of a rational being. The rational element should, *naturally*, exercise control. Where it does, there is wisdom, the wise man; where it does not, there is folly, the wicked man. Between the two, the Stoics, bending to their theory, allowed nothing intermediate. With them the willing of good was inseparable from the knowledge of it. More paradoxically, they denied the gradation of moral distinctions. All good actions were equally good; all evil were equally evil. They were more practical, as well as sensible, in asserting the advantages inseparable from virtue, in that reason unites all; since good men are attracted together by friendship and love; whereas the bad live always in discord. Zeno's ideal sketch of a state where the distinctions of race, nation, laws, give place to a common justice and order, reminds us of Bishop Butler's sketch of the necessary superiority of the nation unchangeably and steadfastly just.

The wise man was portrayed by the Stoics as the man possessed of virtue. They ignored any attainments short of virtue, although many of them must have confessed that they had not attained it themselves. It was, however, the ideal, to be ever kept in view. The wise man alone is free, exempt from irrational emotion and disturbing passion; enduring pain and sorrow, but not controlled by them; enslaved by no

lust, but obedient to reason alone. He only is rich, true king and master, true soothsayer and poet, acting with intelligence, in his mental status resembling a God, and almost rivalling Zeus in his independent blessedness.

But the matter was overdone when the sage was allowed to be superior to all law and custom, and with virtuous intentions, to commit acts morally vile or base. "To pass over their defence of lying, when it is not for purposes of deceit but of gain, of pederasty, of suicide, of a life of prostitution; their disregard of funeral rites, and the like, we find them allowing to the sage actions at which human nature shudders, and the virtuous man shrinks to name."* Indeed, the Stoic ideal is full of contradictions, and to the credit of some of its most distinguished adherents, they repudiated all sympathy with some of its obnoxious peculiarities.

The later development of the Stoic school, anterior to its being transplanted to Roman soil, has little to invite attention. We see it subjected to modifying influences, and tending to disintegration or degeneracy. The later Stoics relaxed the severity of the principles laid down by their predecessors. What had been accounted indifferent, or to be contemned, was allowed to be an element of good. Zeno, of Tarsus, denied the doctrine of a universal conflagration.. Panætius, to whom Cicero confesses his indebtedness (see *De Officiis*), and who was a kind of link between the Porch and the New Academy, held Plato in especial esteem as the "Homer of Philosophy," but in his refutation of superstition and denial of the possibility of foretelling future events, ran counter to Stoic traditions. Even in the sphere of morals, he receded from the severity of the older Stoics, contending, indeed, that the good is profitable and the profitable good, but admitting that some pleasures are agreeable, as well as that others are contrary to nature; that wisdom is not all-sufficient to happiness, but that we stand also in need of health, power and wealth. Posidonius, the pupil of Panætius, turned to the past to invigorate his thought from Plato, Aristotle, and even Pythagoras and Democritus, leavening stoicism with incongruous elements, asserting for the world a beginning and an end,

* Ritter, III. 589.

denying that virtue alone is all-sufficient for happiness, and maintaining the Stoic position, that nothing but the moral is good, in such a sense as to hold that certain actions were so base that they must not be committed, against individual morality, even for the greatest common good. Antiochus, an Academician, who is said to have introduced the Porch into the Academy, sought to reconcile the two schools, yet he regarded as an extravagance the doctrine of the Stoics that all transgressions of the law are equal, and that the happiness of life consists in virtue alone.

The New Academy revealed the sceptical drift of the age. Its tendency was retrograde toward a sophistic renaissance. Its founder, Arcesilaus, imagined that he was reproducing the views of Plato, but in denying the certainty of all knowledge, intellectual or sensuous, he seems to have invited the censure that he excelled Socrates, who *knew* that he knew nothing, a knowledge which Arcesilaus did not venture to assert. His refutation of hostile philosophical systems was by exposure of their incongruities, and his scepticism may have been the legitimate result of perplexity and indecision. Poverty he accounted an evil, but still subservient to the exercise of virtue. In the pursuit of good and the avoidance of ill, man, as a general rule, must be guided by probabilities.

Carneades, one of the successors of Arcesilaus, was a zealous opponent of the Stoics. He eloquently attacked the Dogmatists, and was sent by Athens as an ambassador to Rome, where he enchanted the young men by his powers of oratory, and delivered his famous discourses, for and against justice, so indecisive that his most trusted pupil, Clitomachus, declared that he could never discover the real opinion of his master. He sought to refute the doctrine of God, and assailed the *Necessity* of the Stoics. He denied that all in nature has its end in man. As the guide of life we can have no certain knowledge, and choice must rest upon higher or lower degrees of probability. The reputation of Carneades as an orator was higher than that of his character as a teacher and lover of truth.

One of his successors, Charmidas, was as sceptical as him-

self. Of others who linked together diverse schools, or embodied diverse tendencies, it is unnecessary to speak. It is enough to note the character of that philosophical decline which followed, in almost every direction equally, the waning influence of those who had more or less directly been moulded by Socratic influence. While some better elements of his philosophy survived in a degenerate form, his modest distrust of knowledge had been elevated and expanded into a sceptical system. The divergent views of his successors had introduced a confusion, in which some of the most noted thinkers were lost, and out of which they could find no clue of escape. Original investigation gave place to an erudition borrowed from the past, or a speculation that travestied the principles it professed to admire, yet vainly sought to harmonize or master.

CHAPTER XII.

THUCYDIDES. DEMOSTHENES.

It is not among the philosophers and poets alone, that we are to search for the evidence of the views of the moral system, entertained by the mass of the more intelligent and thoughtful minds of the time. Sometimes this evidence meets us where we should least expect it, and on this very account is entitled to peculiar weight. It would open too broad a field for us, if we should attempt an exhaustive survey of those remains of Greek literature—not poetic or philosophical—hitherto unnoted, but we may at least summon as witnesses the most eminent of Greek historians, and the most distinguished of Greek orators. From these we may learn what the best educated minds of their day believed most worthy of serious acceptance, or at least what they could venture to assert without incurring the risk of having their statements called in question. Thucydides and Demosthenes are important witnesses.

Thucydides (471–400? B. C.) was but thirteen years the junior of Herodotus, but the writings of the two historians belong to different ages; we might from internal evidence alone, be led to infer that they were separated by generations, if not centuries. Thucydides belonged to the age of the Sophists, and was the contemporary of Socrates. His style is compact, concise, vigorous; his grasp of his subject masterly, and his views comprehensive. His account of the mutual relations, the intrigues and conflicts of the Grecian states, and of the policy, diplomacy and efforts of Athens, during the Peloponnesian war, is, as a piece of art, worthy of the rank it has long held as a Greek classic. His attention is ever directed to the subject before him. Every apparent digression only presents a new phase of his theme, tributary to the general effect.

His mind is free from all superstitious trammels. He has the least possible to say about the Gods, and his references to the popular mythology are not only infrequent, but so far as he is personally concerned, they are quite non-committal. If the images of Mercury are all suddenly defaced in a single night, he calmly narrates the fact, but allows no intimation of indignation, any more than satisfaction, to escape his pen. Of his personal religious convictions, we can infer nothing, except from his studied and consistent silence, and his perfectly decorous references to religious matters. If he was a sceptic, he was a prudent one. If he sympathized with Socrates, who must have been known to him, he keeps the fact in reserve, and does not even mention his name.

But while reserved himself, he allows us in his pages to study the religious and ethical views of his countrymen, at least to a limited extent. In the accuracy and fidelity with which he presents them, we feel full confidence. He is a perfectly competent witness.

The Corinthians, in bringing those charges before the Lacedæmonians, in which they accused the Athenians of injustice, asked them for aid, that they might not be forced to seek redress from a new alliance.* "Such a step," they said, "if taken by us, could neither scandalize the Gods, who

* Thucydides, Book I., p. 23, Smith's Edition.

take cognizance of solemn oaths, nor men, who own their obligation." For themselves, they confessed that they should be guilty of impiety, if from any other reason than necessity, they receded from treaty obligations.

The Lacedæmonians subsequently found fault with the Athenians, that they tolerated among them even the posterity of men who had been guilty of sacrilege, and rendered themselves accursed of the Goddess. They had slain before her altar prisoners who had taken refuge there. The Lacedæmonians required that "the pollution" should be driven away, "with a face, indeed, of piety," remarks Thucydides,* "as vindicating the honor of the Gods," but really availing themselves of a general sentiment of religion to carry out their hostile designs. The fact is noteworthy, as showing the confidence of general Greek sympathy in whatever assumed to vindicate the sanctity of the Gods.

In a conference between the Athenian generals and the Melian magistrates during the Peloponnesian war, the former encouraged themselves with the persuasion of their own innocence, trusting to the "divine disposal" that would aid them in their struggle against injustice. On the other hand, the Athenians claimed that they might repose equal confidence in "the divine benevolence" that would be exerted on their behalf, inasmuch as neither their opinions nor acts were worse than those of the rest of mankind, "either in regard to the worship of the Gods, or an acknowledgment of their providence." "For of the divine nature," they said, "we think like the rest of the world," while admitting that men were impelled, "by the necessary bent of their nature, to seize dominion wherever they have power." As far as related to the Gods, they had no more reason than their neighbors to distrust their protection, while the terms in which they characterize Lacedæmonian policy are a comment upon their belief of human depravity. "According to the best lights we have been able to collect," they said, "they repute as honorable, the things which please them, and as just the things which promote their interest."†

Throughout the war we find frequent appeals to a natural

Thucydides, Book I., p. 42. † Ib., p. 213.

sense of justice, and to a general belief that it was not safe to disregard its claims. Those claims were under a divine guardianship that would avenge their violation. Before the war, when the Corcyrians and Corinthians appeared at Athens, the one to secure their alliance, and the others to defeat the project, the Corinthians rested their arguments in part on moral considerations. They warned the Athenians not to entertain the thought that iniquity could prosper by might; to beware, while admitting that what the Corinthians said was agreeable to equity, of yet supposing "that in case of a war interest inclineth another way; for interest is most surely to be found there where the least injustice is committed." "Never to act unjustly against equals is a firmer security of power than to be elevated upon present plausibilities."*

These views, which found expression in the emergency that called them out, had nevertheless a deep root in popular conviction. Their influence was felt in that imperfect system of inter-tribal rather than international law which grew out of the mutual relations of the Greek states. But they were more operative in early Roman experience, and in the sanctity which invested treaties, the inviolable character of ambassadors, and even the forms of declaring war, we discern in some measure the extent to which moral convictions had pervaded the sphere of national intercourse and usage.

In Demosthenes (382–322 B.C.), by general consent, we recognize the consummate perfection of Athenian statesmanship and oratory. His political ethics command our respect, and his long continued ascendancy in the councils of his country illustrates the remark of Quintilian, that in order to the highest success of the orator, he must be a good man, or maintain at least the reputation of justice. His career, therefore, may be adduced in evidence of the natural advantages which virtue possesses over vice, for in several instances, it was evidently his unblemished reputation which contributed essentially to his oratorical triumphs.

Although we do not anticipate, in the ordinary discussion of political topics, any elaborate exposition of obligation, or of the laws of the moral system, questions of justice, as relat-

* Thucydides, Book I., p. 15.

ed to expediency, are ever coming to the surface, and in dealing with these, the speaker or writer gives plain intimations of the view which he takes of the moral order of the world. Demosthenes, moreover, lived at a critical period of Athenian history. The old spirit of patriotism was nearly extinct. The national religion had ceased to furnish its wonted motives, or to command generally an implicit faith. The orator, in order to be effective, must necessarily adapt his language to the prevailing sentiments of his time. He could no longer appeal to superstitious beliefs. He could not rely upon patriotic sympathies, stronger than any native sense of justice, to carry his measures. Hence he resorts sometimes to considerations of obvious expediency, and sometimes to the ineradicable instincts of justice in the human soul.

The orations of Demosthenes indicate "an ardent love of right, and hatred of wrong," and are rendered thrilling and impressive by occasional "noble bursts of honest indignation." His words often derive their greatest force from the response which they evoke from the moral sense and convictions of his hearers, and are thus a powerful testimony to the laws of the moral system. He would have been false to his art as an orator, and his sagacity as a man, if he had ventured, in the moral sphere, upon positions which his hearers could have questioned, or which they could assume to contemn.

A peculiar importance therefore pertains to those sentiments of Demosthenes in which he touches upon moral questions. He speaks no longer as an individual. His language is rather the verdict of a national jury, appealing as he does to the select council which represents the people. Yet on the great principles of morals, and especially where they harmonize with the rules of expediency, or the suggestions of political sagacity, he is as clear and emphatic as any of the poets or historians that preceded him.

He speaks with a cautious reserve on questions relating to the national religion, adverting to them—and this was all that he was called to do—only on points where he was in substantial agreement with his hearers. He repeatedly recognizes an overruling Providence, yet not in such a way as to come into collision with the worshippers of "the unknown God." The

change in the councils of the Thebans, by which the progress of Athens' great enemy, Philip of Macedon, was arrested, is ascribed to "the kindness of some divinity." * He admits that "Fortune has indeed a great preponderance in human affairs;" it may even be said to be everything. Yet if the choice were given him, he would prefer the fortune of Athens, if she would but do her duty, to that of Philip, with his wonderful prestige of success; "for," he says, "I see you have many more claims to the divine favor than he has." † The decisive influence that prevails over all human policy or energy, is from above. "The end of all things is what the Deity pleases. . Do not then impute it as a crime to me that Philip chanced to conquer in battle; that issue depended not on me, but on God." ‡ The failure of Athens in a particular enterprise was but "a thing to which all mankind are liable, if the Deity so wills it." § It is for man freely to discharge his duty, the result is with God. In a particular case, he remarks, that the duty of brave men had been done by all, but "their fortune has been such as the Deity assigned to each." ‖ His own preservation at a critical moment had been "chiefly through the Gods." ¶ Referring to the epitaph of those who had fallen on the battle-field—

> "Gods never lack success, nor strive in vain;
> But man must suffer what the fates ordain,"

he turns his address to his rival and accuser: "Do you hear, Æschines, in this very inscription, that 'Gods never lack success, nor strive in vain?' Not to the statesman does it ascribe the power of giving victory in battle, but to the Gods." **

The insecurity of prosperous wickedness, and the frailty of its hopes, are repeatedly adverted to. "When one has grown strong, like Philip, by rapacity and artifice, on the first pretext, the slightest reverse, all is overturned and broken up. Impossible it is—impossible, Athenians—to acquire a solid power by injustice and perjury and falsehood. Such things last for once, or for a short period; maybe they blossom fairly with

* On the Crown. † Second Olynthiac. ‡ On the Crown.
§ Ib. ‖ Ib. ¶ Ib. ** Ib.

hope; but in time they are discovered and drop away. As a house, a ship, or the like, ought to have the lowest parts firmest, so in human conduct, I ween, the principle and foundation should be just and true." *

This is indeed the general conviction, where men are not blinded by self-interest. "Up to a certain point, all men, however disinclined, are ashamed not to observe justice," † and "it will be found, moreover, that what mars everything, and originates every mischief, is the unwillingness to observe justice uniformly." ‡ Justice is ever obligatory, but even Demosthenes allows some concession to expediency, on the ground, however, of universal depravity. "Our purposes and actions should always be just; but we must also be careful that they are attended with advantage." § "If all men were inclined to observe justice, it would be disgraceful for us alone to refuse; but when all the rest are seeking the power to do wrong, for us to profess high principle, and undertake no enterprise, would, in my opinion, be not justice, but cowardice." ‖

The nature of man is such that he prefers ease and pleasing delusion, to effort and stern truth, even when these are the only conditions of success. "Every one believes what he wishes, though the reality is often different." Hence "the wishes of men are a great help to their arguments, and therefore the easiest thing in the world is self-deceit." ¶ "So doth the moment's ease and indulgence prevail over distant advantage." **

Among the conditions of permanent prosperity are truth and piety.

Demosthenes exhorts the Athenians to expect that "the Gods are their greatest allies and defenders, when Philip, violating his faith, and disregarding his oaths to them, has perfidiously broken a peace."†† The Athenians of a previous generation owed their prosperity to their moral and religious virtue. "By a conduct honorable toward the Greeks, pious to the Gods, brother-like among themselves, they justly at-

* The Second Olynthiac.
† For the Megalopolitans.
‡ Ib.
§ Ib.
‖ On the Liberty of the Rhodi[illegible]
¶ [illegible]lynthiac.
** Second Philippic.
†† [illegible]e.

tained a high prosperity."* Yet even adversity may have its benefits in the wisdom it brings. Speaking of the policy to be pursued toward the Rhodians, Demosthenes says: "During prosperity, I doubt whether they would have learned discretion, but since they are taught by experience that folly is mightily injurious to men, they may possibly, perhaps, become wiser for the future; and this, I think, could be no small advantage to them." †

Not that which pleases for the moment is to be preferred, but that which accords with truth and wisdom. This is the law of the present state. Indolence or misdirected energy must accept the consequences. "A man idle himself, cannot require his friends to act for him, much less the Gods." ‡ The useful is better than the agreeable. "One who, acting for the best, frequently opposes your wishes, who never speaks to flatter, but always to benefit you, . . this is a courageous man, ay, and a useful citizen is he." § "Undeserved success leads weak-minded men into folly," ‖ and thus proves a curse rather than a blessing. But in any case truth must be the rule. "What greater crime can an orator be charged with than that his opinions and language are not the same?"¶ There is a desert which attends each variety of action, and cannot be separated from it. Human laws cannot dissolve the connection. Unintentional error calls for "pardon instead of punishment." A mistaken devotion, leading to calamity, challenges "not obloquy or reproaches, but sympathy." Willful offence calls for "wrath and punishment." "These principles will not be found in our states only: Nature herself has defined them by her unwritten laws and the feelings of humanity." Such is the eloquent response of the Athenian orator to the Athenian poet, as well as of Demosthenes to Æschines, asserting the eternal obligation of "the unwritten laws."

* Third Olynthiac.
† On the Liberty of the Rhodians.
‡ Second Olynthiac.
§ On the Chersonese.
‖ First Olynthiac.
¶ On the Crown.

CHAPTER XIII.

ROMAN PHILOSOPHY—LUCRETIUS, CICERO.

Before the time of Cicero, Greek philosophy was but little known or studied at Rome. The stern patriotism of Cato, and the traditional severity of Roman manners, repelled the intrusion of what came to them in foreign, and therefore suspicious, guise. Nevertheless, Rome had become the metropolis of the world, and was ultimately to attract the teachers of philosophy from all sides. No school of philosophy, properly so called, was yet formed there, but the increasing taste of the Romans for Grecian literature tended to familiarize them with the doctrines of the Greek schools, especially those of the Stoics and the Epicureans. Scipio kept for a long time in his train the stoic Panætius, who seems to have exercised great influence on the philosophical character of the Romans. Through his intercourse with other eminent statesmen, a knowledge of Plato and the stoical philosophy would naturally be introduced, leading necessarily to an acquaintance with other schools.

Along with the Epicurean and Stoic, the new Academy found adherents, while the old Academy rose into high repute, mainly through the charms and grace of Plato's style. But there was almost inevitably a blending of the old lines of distinction. Roman character and manners exerted a modifying influence, and produced an eclectic tendency. Through the influence of Philo and Antiochus among the wealthy and distinguished Romans, the doctrines of the Academy lost something of their sceptical character, and assumed rather that of a theory of probability, deferring to [illegible]ible of various opinions. This, as we sh[illegible]y true in the case of Cicero. Among t[illegible] strongly toward the Stoics v[illegible] M. Terentius Varro, who, i[illegible]

bined the physical doctrines of the Stoics with the philosophy of the Academy. Rejecting the popular notions, and distinguishing mythical from political and physical mythology, he endeavored to present the anthropological conceptions of the Gods under a philosophical aspect, connecting them with the universal force of nature in its various forms and spheres. To these already named, as inclining to the Stoics, we must add the names of L. Lucilius Balbus, Servius Sulpicius, and the younger Cato.*

But the early progress of the Epicurean school was more rapid, and its adherents were more numerous. Among them was Cicero's friend, Atticus; Cæsar's murderer, Cassius; L. Torquatus, and C. Velleius, whom Cicero, in his treatises, makes the champion of the Epicureans. The great popularity of this sect was due largely, no doubt, to the fact that it was the only one the doctrines of which were accessible to the Romans in their own language. In Lucretius (95–52 B.C.,—so well known by his poem, repeatedly translated into English, "On the Nature of Things"—Epicurus found not merely an interpreter, but an apostle. This didactic work probably superseded all that had preceded it in the same field. It was constructed after Greek models, but to a certain extent only was it a faithful reproduction of the philosophy of Epicurus.

The avowed object of Lucretius is to emancipate the human mind from religious restraint, to free it from all superstitious fears of the Gods, and infuse into the minds of men a consciousness of their power over destiny. He is unsparing in his ridicule of the perverse religious conceptions of his countrymen, and the fictions of the poets. He regards them at best as but pleasing fables. Thunder and lightning were but natural phenomena, and the notion that in them might be discovered the signs of the Divine will, was but a bare pretence. Why, he asks, are so many bolts wasted on the sea and desert? Why does not Jupiter smite the wicked,

* One merit, at least, must be conceded to the Stoics. "The most important of moral terms, the crowning triumph of ethical nomenclature—*Conscientia*—the internal, absolute, supreme judge of individual action, if not struck in the mint of the Stoics, at all events, became current coin through their influence."—Lightfoot on *Philippians*, 301.

rather than his own temples or statues? In the order of nature, he delighted to detect the evil and irregularity that conflicted with the argument from design in proof of an intelligent creator. Religion was not necessary or effective to prevent crime, when it sanctioned human sacrifices, or the act of Agamemnon, who did not spare his own daughter. True piety was to be found in the meditative repose of the sage, not in bowing to sticks and stones, prostrations upon the earth, heaping vow on vow, and inundating the altars with blood. What inducement could human gratitude offer to the Gods, to rouse them from their repose? Human ignorance, impelled by dreams, or led by fancy, had invented immortal beings under human forms, and invested them with power to effect those phenomena of nature for which no other cause could be discovered. This erroneous belief was to be dissipated by better knowledge, but that knowledge was little more than the Epicurean assumption, that the Gods are perfectly happy and enjoy eternal repose, never troubling themselves about the affairs of men, or the government of the world. As to the soul, it is compounded of fire, air, earth, and some fourth principle, of a very subtle nature, endowed with sensation; and who can imagine that this frail thing will survive the shock that separates it from the body? Nature is the only deity that Lucretius is willing to venerate. By her holy laws and ordinances, whatever is, is produced, and wastes away.

He does not, however, follow Epicurus at all points. Deifying nature, he ascribes vitality to the stars, which, as living beings, perform their proper motions in search of their appropriate food. Not only, with Epicurus, does he credit atoms with an internal impulse, but he ascribes to a principle of motion inherent in them, the voluntary movements of living creatures. He does not accept the notion of chance, and even submits the free motion of the will to a directing law, since the will is dependent on conceptions which arise from the sensuous impressions of the external world.

In his effort to free men from the evil brought upon them by their passions, Lucretius has recourse to the strength of

human will, which has power to overcome even the constitution of nature. The sage may equalize and correct the abnormal mixture of the elements of his being by proper self-discipline, and thus, too, by the force of reason, lead a life assimilated to the divine.

In the sphere of ethics, Lucretius more closely follows his master. He does not make sensual pleasure the governing object; at least, in accordance with the severity of Roman manners, he imposes checks upon its excess. Cicero, however, says that the Epicurean dared not state his doctrine in its length and breath. He was compelled to respect public opinion, and even in the Senate did not venture openly to avow the disgraceful tenets of his sect. The Roman interpretation of Epicurean dogmas leans more to strictness than to laxity. Neither Seneca nor Cicero, however inconsistent they might regard the Epicureans, found any grave fault with their practice. They admitted pleasures of mind, independent of the body, and allowed of a pure and disinterested friendship, worthy of the sage. Lucretius, however, is no rigorous moralist, and he admits of sensual enjoyment, so long as it does not run into inordinate indulgence. Men are to observe moderation, and beware of unchastened desire, or the wrong that dreads discovery or penalty. The real torments of Acheron are in the tortured bosom of the criminal. Beside the inward peace of the sage, only freedom from pain, and a sufficiency for natural wants, are required. Thus the doctrine of Epicurus, under its Roman phase, was reduced to the measure of a prudent indulgence. It admitted pleasure to be the end, only its pursuit must accord with certain fixed conditions, without which its attainment would be impossible.

A system like this was adapted to that degenerate Roman taste which was so prevalent in the age of Lucretius. Epicureanism, yielding to the softening influence of Roman Eclecticism, put off its most repulsive, and took on some attractive features, and thus became modified in accordance with prevailing local influences. We see this both in Seneca and in Cicero, not to mention others. Seneca is a Stoic, but, to a certain extent, he is an Epicurean also. Cicero is radically

opposed to Epicurean ethics, yet on some points he leans to Epicurean views.*

Instructed by Stoic, Epicurean, and Academician teachers, and confessing himself indebted to the Greeks for whatever he possessed of intellectual culture, it is not surprising that Cicero (105–43 B. C.), the most celebrated of Roman orators, should also have been attracted to philosophical pursuits. When the fortunes of the republic no longer allowed him an arena for his eloquence, he devoted a leisure that would otherwise have become intolerable to the preparation of his philosophical writings. These became the solace of his political disappointment, the occupation and refuge of an intellect that could not remain idle.

Yet Cicero was himself no philosopher. He reproached himself for coming short of his ideal. The prospect of a return to power scattered his philosophical theorizings, and left only the statesman and the orator. Yet he was a careful student of Greek writers, and in his hours of leisure, meditated seriously, if not profoundly, on the problems that had engaged their thought.

For the most part, Cicero's doctrines are not original. He borrowed them from Greek sources, and recast them in the mould of his own mind. Cautious by nature, he was on his guard against assenting to the dicta of a single sect. A temperate scepticism also was accordant with his mental character, and the New Academy which favored it, was in his time, still in high repute. Accordingly, Cicero abstains from the positive and unqualified assertion of his opinions. In one case, where he had presented two diverse views, he says, "Which is *true*, God must discern; a difficult question it is, which is the most probable." † Again, in offering to explain his views, he says that he shall not set forth what is absolutely certain and fixed, like the Pythian Apollo, but, as a weak

* "The conscience forms a strong point in the ethical systems of many of the ancients, especially of Plato, of Lucretius, of Persius—authors otherwise dissimilar enough, as representing three distinct species of thought. In mythology, it receives an imperfect embodiment in the Erinnyes, who, however, are spiritual forces acting from without rather than from within, upon the criminal."—*West. Rev.*, Oct., 1872. Art. *Pindar*. Note.

† Tusc. Quæs., I. ii.

mortal, and one of many, he will follow his own conjecture of what is probable, for beyond this, he had not the resources that warranted him to venture.* Even in matters more clear and evident, we waver and change our opinion, but where a matter is involved in a kind of obscurity, it is not becoming in us to be too confident. † He owns that on the most important subjects, he inclines differently, as circumstances change, for we must believe that he gives the reflection of his own experience. When speaking of the soul's immortality, he says: "I know not how it is; while I am reading, I give my assent to it, but when I have laid by the book, and given myself up to reflection, all that assent vanishes away."‡ Notwithstanding this confession, he remarks: "If I am in error in believing that the souls of men are immortal, I err willingly; nor am I willing, while I live, that this error, in which I delight, be wrenched away from me." In another connection, he hints at the arguments which had weighed upon his mind. "Why many things? Thus I have persuaded myself; thus I think. Such is the celerity of thought, so vast the memory of the past, the apprehension of the future, so numerous are the arts, sciences, and inventions, that the nature that can grasp them, cannot be mortal." § "You do not see the mind of man, as you do not see God; but as you recognize a God through his works, so recognize the divine energy of the mind, from its memory of things, its invention, its rapidity of movement, and all the beauty of virtue." ‖

With all this, Cicero claims to exercise an Academic liberty of speculation. He shuns extreme conclusions. He wishes a philosophy of a practicable kind, that a wise man can adopt, but not too elevated for a common man—a philosophy that will be a wise instructress and a true comforter. He appreciates science, and the elevating and ennobling influence of its pursuit. The highest pleasure of the soul is found in dealing with high and inspiring themes. But for philosophy, the most important question for investigation is, What is the supreme Good? What is that, by the knowledge of which, life is to be ruled and guided? To settle this is the scope and aim of one of his most elaborate treatises. He will

* Tusc. Quæs., I. ix. † Ib., I. xi. ‡ Ib. I. ii. § De Senect. ‖ Tusc. Quæs., I.

not answer the question—like some others—by pointing to any merely speculative pursuit. He will not accept the answer of any one sect of philosophers—in conflict as they were with one another—as decisive. Toward the Epicureans indeed, he shows no spirit of concession. Their selfish theory of morals was repulsive to him. The convictions of his own clear intellect and noble nature impelled him to spurn them with contempt. He, however, passes them in review, along with the opinions of the Stoics and other sects, sifting them as he proceeds, in order to arrive at the truth. He gives also his theory of probability. He does not question the distinction between truth and falsehood, but they have no sure standard. The impressions of sense force the assent of the mind, but reason must decide on the evidence before it. This is the case with the practical question of daily life, and for his own part there is much which he cannot assert as certain, which he will yet follow on the grounds of probability. Thus, without any elaborate attempt to refute the scepticism of the New Academy, Cicero manifests his disposition to nullify it. The points which he is most anxious to establish are, in the main, the doctrines of God and the human soul. The importance of religious convictions, especially of an overruling Providence, and the primary legislation of God in the soul, is evidently deeply felt.

In his celebrated work "On the Nature of the Gods," Cicero has much to say which throws light on the views anciently entertained as to a moral order of the world. In his introduction he speaks of "Philosophers, and those too, very great and illustrious men, who conceive the whole world to be directed and governed by the will and wisdom of the Gods; nor do they stop here, but conceive likewise that the Deities consult and provide for the preservation of mankind."

As he proceeds, he puts into the mouth of Velleius, the Epicurean, one of the interlocutors in the discussion, the assertion, that "Anaxagoras, who received his learning from Anaximines, was the first who affirmed the system and disposition of all things, to be contrived and perfected by the power and reason of an infinite mind." Passing by what is

said of the theological views of others, we come to what is reputed of the stoic Zeno, who "thinks the law of nature to be the divinity; and that it has the power to force us to what is right, and to restrain us from what is wrong"—a moral system, without an intelligent personal administrator.

Of Chrysippus, "the most subtle interpreter of the dreams of the Stoics," we are told that while he multiplied the list of unknown and unknowable Gods, he contended that "the divine power is placed in reason, and in the spirit and mind of universal nature; that the world, with an universal effusion of its spirit, is God; that the superior part of that spirit, which is the mind and reason, is the great principle of nature, containing and preserving the chain of all things; that the divinity is the power of fate, and the necessity of future events." Jupiter also "is that immutable and eternal law, which guides and directs us in our manners," and this he calls fatal necessity, the everlasting verity of future events. Such are the doctrines contained in Chrysippus' book on the nature of the Gods, and which the Epicurean interlocutor characterizes as the dreams of dotards. He acquiesces, however, in "the constant and universal opinion of mankind, independent of education, custom, or law, that there are Gods;" whence he infers that this knowledge is innate. These Gods, however, according to the Epicurean conception, do not disturb themselves by attention to human affairs.

Cotta, who represents the Academy, replies to Velleius, and exposes his crude theology and "frivolous, not to say, foolish doctrines." He remarks: "If you should ask me what God is, or what his character and nature are, I should follow the example of Simonides; who, when Hiero, the tyrant, proposed the same question to him, desired a day to consider of it. When he required his answer the next day, Simonides begged two days more; and as he kept constantly desiring double the number which he had required before, instead of giving his answer, Hiero, with surprise, asked him his meaning in doing so. 'Because,' said he, 'the longer I meditate upon it, the more obscure it appears to me.'"

In accordance with this, Cotta, admitting his own doubts, proceeds to expose in the most unsparing manner the views

of Epicurus, scarcely "worthy the name of philosophy, or even of common sense." The crudities and absurdities of the accepted mythology are laid bare, and Cotta, in a semi-sceptical but truth-seeking spirit, seems to reflect the views and feelings of Cicero himself, when he declares, with an evident sincerity which commands our sympathy and respect, "I wish I could as easily discover what is true, as I can overthrow what is false."

Lucilius Balbus, eminent as a Stoic, follows Cotta, and in a prolonged discourse, handles the chief points of natural theology, leaning, however, to Pantheism, and making the world, as well as each of the heavenly bodies, an animated divinity. He recognizes, however, the natural, and to some extent, the moral order of the universe. "In the heavens, there is nothing fortuitous, unadvised, inconstant or variable; all there is order, truth, reason and constancy." He puts a philosophical interpretation on much of the prevalent mythology, which strips it of its absurdities, or at least renders it less repugnant. He then asserts "that the universe, with all its parts, was originally constituted, and has, without any cessation, been ever governed by the providence of the Gods." Among the proofs of this, he adduces the argument from design. "How is it consistent with common sense, that when you view an image or a picture, you imagine it is wrought by art; when you behold afar off a ship under sail, you judge it is steered by reason and art; . . . and yet that you should imagine that the universe, which contains all arts and the artificers, can be void of reason and understanding?" He thus rebukes the suggestion that the universe is "the effect of chance, or some necessity, rather than the work of reason and a divine mind."

Indeed, "he who believes this, may as well believe, that if a great quantity of the one and twenty letters, composed either of gold or any other matter, were thrown upon the ground, they would fall into such order as legibly to form the Annals of Ennius. I doubt whether fortune could make a single verse of them. . . . If a concourse of atoms can make a world, why not a porch, a temple, a house, a city, which are works of less labor and difficulty?"

After an elaborate exposition of the beauty and order of nature, the object for which all is established is considered. "If we every way examine the universe, it is apparent from the greatest reason, that the whole is admirably governed by a divine Providence, for the safety and preservation of all beings. . . . Nothing can be less probable than that the Gods should have taken such pains for beings void of speech and understanding. For whom, then, will any one presume to say that the world was made? Undoubtedly for reasonable beings." The same conclusion is reached from a survey of the curious structure of the human frame, the wonderful faculties of the soul, and the relation of man and his wants and powers to the whole sphere of material things. Divination also forms a part of the Stoic argument, which aims to establish the position that all things are cared for and governed by the providence of the Gods. Indeed, "there never was a great man without divine inspiration."

To Balbus, Cotta makes reply, criticizing the materialism of his theory of the Gods, which represented the earth and heavenly bodies as vital—the multiplicity of his deities—his assertion of the justice of a divine Providence, and other points concerning which reason might question or doubt. Yet, in review of the arguments of all parties, Cicero, who imitates the non-committalism of the New Academy, if not of Socrates and Plato, declines to give any precise decision, but says "those of Balbus seem to me to have the greater probability."

In his work on "Divination," referring to this treatise, Cicero speaks of it as a matter to be taken for granted, "that there are Gods, that their providence governs the universe, that they consult for the best management of human affairs, and that not only in general, but in particular." But if it be "granted and conceded that there exists a certain divine energy, by which human life is supported and surrounded, it is not hard to conceive how all that happens to men may happen by the direction of heaven. . . . For if every animal, according to its own will, can direct the motions of its body, so as to stoop, to look on one side, or to look up, and can bend, twist, contract, or extend its limbs as it pleases, and does

those things almost before thinking of doing them, how much more easy is it for a God to do so, whose deity governs and regulates all things?"

Such is the language which Cicero puts into the mouth of his brother, Quintus, expressive in the main of truths which must be distinguished from the theory of divination with which they are associated, and which Cicero impugns with a most effective scepticism, worthy of a modern assailant of witchcraft or spiritualism.

In his first book on the *Laws*, Cicero introduces the discussion by asking Atticus whether he grants "that the entire universe is regulated by the power of the immortal Gods; that by their nature, reason, energy, mind, divinity, or some other word of clearer signification, if there be such, all things are governed and directed?" adding, that if this is not granted, it is what he must begin by establishing.

This point conceded, Cicero proceeds to show that law is "right reason," eternally obligatory. Since reason is the common property of God and man, God and men must be considered as associated together by law, "so that the entire universe may be looked upon as forming one vast commonwealth of Gods and men." Moreover, "man is born for justice, and law and equity have been established, not by opinion, but by nature." "Law is nothing else than right reason, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil."

To utilitarianism, as a basis of morals, Cicero is sternly opposed. Elsewhere he severely criticizes it; here he says, "real justice has really no existence, if it have not one by nature, and if that which is established as such on account of utility is overturned by some other utility." The power of law—"a certain eternal principle which governs the entire universe"—"is not only far more ancient than any existence of states and peoples, but is coëval with God himself, who beholds and governs both heaven and earth."

Cicero assumes throughout, "the existence of the Supreme Gods, their intellectual government of the universe, and their benignant consideration for the interests of the human race." He seems to sum up the leading features of the moral system in what he claims should be regarded as "a fundamental prin-

ciple in all societies," viz.: "that the Gods are the supreme lords and governors of all things; that all events are directed by their influence, and wisdom and divine power; that they deserve very well of the race of mankind, and that they likewise knew what sort of a person every one really is; that they observe his actions, whether good or bad; that they take notice with what feelings and with what piety he attends to his religious duties, and that they are sure to make a difference between the good and the wicked."

The view which Cicero takes of the phrase, "living according to nature," indicates the harmony which he discerned between the constitution of man and a moral system. "To live according to nature," he says, "is the highest good; that is, to lead a life regulated by conscience, and conformed to virtue and temperance. And to follow nature, and to live according to her law, that is to say, as far as depends upon the person himself, to omit nothing to secure nature in the attainment of those things which she requires, this surely is the most lawful and virtuous mode of living." This representation accords with the position taken by Bishop Butler, and could have been accepted by many of the ancient writers, who recognized in the constitution of the soul the rightful supremacy of the moral element. This, indeed, is a striking characteristic of the Confucian or Chinese philosophy established by Choo-tsze, which teaches that, "when man follows the dictates of his nature, his actions are good and harmony results; when he is unduly influenced by the outward world, his actions are evil, and discord intervenes."*

In his "Tusculan Questions," and also in his "Dream of Scipio," Cicero discusses some of the fundamental doctrines of Natural Religion. He attaches great weight to the fact that the belief in Gods is universal. There is no nation so wild or barbarous in which it does not prevail. "All suppose there is a divine force and nature."† It is no valid objection that God is invisible. We do not see the human mind, and in like manner we do not see God, yet we come to the knowledge of Him through His works.‡ Our conception of Him must be that of a mind, absolute and free, separate from

* Clarke's Ten Great Religions, 53. † Cic. Tusc. Quæs., I. 13. ‡ Ib., I. 28.

all that is perishable, perceiving and moving all things, and itself endowed with the power of moving from eternity.*

Over all God rules, assigning each his post, which he must not leave unbidden, unless, like Socrates and Cato, a just cause of withdrawal be given.† We have not been created without design, or by chance, but there is assuredly a power of some sort that takes counsel for the human race, and would never have produced and sustained it, only at last to sink into annihilation.‡

Many questions concerning the soul which Cicero suggests, he confesses that he cannot answer. Some deity alone can penetrate to the truth of the case.§ With his Academic caution, he will make no absolute assertion of the soul's immortality, and looks with all possible complacency on the dark alternative of its mortality,‖ herein widely differing from Plutarch, who would account that mortality an infinite evil. Still, he would fain believe the soul imperishable. How can we account for or justify the voluntary death of patriotic and good men, if the soul perishes with the body? ¶ It matters not that it is asserted that we cannot conceive of the soul released from the body, or existing apart from it. "To me," says Cicero, observing its nature, "the conception of the soul in the body, as in a dwelling alien to it, seems more difficult and obscure than the conception of it as going forth to heavenly freedom as its own home."** This present life, bound in "the fetters of the body," from which it slowly releases itself, like those who have long been bound, is a prison experience, or rather death. Only when the soul is released and reaches its destination, shall it truly live.††

But the soul bears within itself testimony to its immortal destiny. "That which thinks, feels, lives, puts forth vigor, is heavenly and divine, and of necessity ever enduring."‡‡ Nor is this all. It is indivisible, and not subject to decay. Following the line of Plato's thought, as others have so often since, Cicero says: "It cannot be doubted, however, that there is no admixture in the soul, nor concrete substance, nor is it connected in any way with matter, nor is it of a com-

* Cic. Tusc. Quæs., I. 27. † Ib., I. 30. ‡ Ib., I. 49.
§ Ib., I. 11. ‖ Ib., I. 32. ¶ Ib., I. 15.
** Ib., I. 22. †† Ib., I. 31. ‡‡ Ib., I. 27.

pound nature. It can neither be separated nor divided, nor torn or pulled asunder, nor is it capable of dissolution; there is merely a separation or severance of the bond by which, before its departure, it was annexed to the body." Cicero adds that this was the opinion of Socrates previous to his death.*

We trace Plato again in a passage from the *Dream of Scipio*. Cicero says: "Since it is plain, then, that that is eternal which is moved of itself, who is there that can deny that this nature has been bestowed from souls. For everything is soulless (*inanimatum*) which is impelled from without, but that which has the nature of soul (*animal*) is moved by interior impulse, and that its own; for this is the proper nature and force of soul. Which, if it be that alone of all things which is self-moved, and not produced, is surely eternal."†

Thus, while Cicero often confesses doubt and indecision, there are certain *probable* conclusions which, to borrow his own expressions, he is willing to follow. There is One supreme ruler, by whose providence the world is governed. He is intellectual and spiritual, but not necessarily in the modern sense, since Cicero does not venture to dispute the Stoic notion, that the intellectual may be a special kind of corporeal. Even to divine Providence, and the doctrine that all has been ordered wisely for the good of men, serious objections may be urged. Still, the fables of the poets, about the Gods and divine things, appear to him ridiculous, and he does not hesitate to expose their obnoxious features. As to the human soul, it is a part of the divine in the world, not necessarily pure incorporeal substance, and resident possibly in the brain, or in some peculiar matter distinct from earthly elements.‡ As a portion, however, of the divine and rational principle, Cicero is disposed to ascribe to it immortality,

* Cic. Tusc. Quæs., I. 29.

† Som. Scip., 9. In the discussions of heathen philosophy, which took place in England during the last quarter of the seventeenth century, Cicero was frequently quoted as a witness to the truths of Natural religions. Dr. John Edwards (Stile of the Holy Scriptures, II. 72) quotes from Cicero Scvestuto the following: "I go out of this world as out of an inn, not a mansion-house; for nature has given us here not a place of long continuance, but a short diversion and transitory entertainment."

‡ Tusc. Quæs., I. 27-9.

adopting, with his characteristic distrust, however, the arguments of Plato, and, while admitting the possibility of greater happiness for the soul after death, rejecting utterly the superstitious apprehension of punishments, and falling back on Socrates' forlorn hope, that if there be no future for the soul, it will, in ceasing to be, cease both to suffer and to fear.

In the interests of morals, Cicero vindicates free-will, as essential to responsibility for all that is blameable or praiseworthy. He accepts the position of Socrates, that the useful and the good are by nature united together; yet he holds that the wicked man punishes himself by the evil thoughts he entertains, and that duty is not to be discharged for the sake of any advantage that may possibly accrue from it, but that its rewards are in itself. This, however, does not commit him blindly to the Stoic position that the sage needs nothing else but his virtue. On this point, Cicero leans to the Peripatetics. The aids of fortune may contribute to happiness. Moderate pleasure is not to be condemned. Nor is the Stoic tenet, that each one is either wise or a fool, in other words, that all are equally bad or equally good, acceptable to him. It appears opposed to the practical wisdom which he sought to attain. Moreover, where the Greek philosophers identified the *beautiful* with the good, he substitutes the *honorable* (*honestum*). The *becoming* is ever a close attendant upon the good, and by it we are to understand that which is adapted to circumstances, personal and other relations, etc. As a general rule, the useful cannot come into conflict with the moral, yet in some cases, in which Cicero seems to concede that it may, the wise man may deviate somewhat from the path of strict justice.

Such is the ethical position taken by Cicero, and such his view of the great and much agitated questions of his time.

M. Terentius Varro, the most learned of Roman scholars, and the foremost of Roman antiquarians, was trained under a philosopher of the Academy, who possessed Stoic leanings. Ten years the senior of Cicero, whom he long survived, he was united with him in close intimacy. His theological and mythological works, portions of which have been preserved to us exclusively in the writings of the Christian fathers, are

indicative of his critical as well as eclectic taste. He was a zealous advocate for the physical explication of the mythological fables, in each case of difficulty resorting to this explication. St. Augustine assures us that he summarily disposed of the popular polytheism, by making Jupiter, Juno, Saturn, etc., the representatives of different parts or elements of the universe. He seems to have believed in the existence of one supreme and universal Deity, whom he regarded as all-pervading, the soul of the universe. Dependent and inferior divinities he admitted, possessed of intelligence superior to that of men, invisible beings inhabiting the middle region of the air, and existing in, or animating the celestial bodies. Image worship he rejected, as by the Romans it had been for nearly two full centuries from their origin, and as it was in his own day by the Jews.

Of the three departments into which he divided theology —mythic, physical, and civil—he represented the first as largely feigned, containing many things contrary to the nature and dignity of the immortals. The second part contained many curious questions which he was too cautious, or felt himself incompetent, to resolve, while the third was of importance mainly from its relation to the stability, peace or policy of the state. Of great philosophers, like Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle, Varro was niggardly in his praise, for he was as much perhaps a critic as a philosopher himself.

In his Book on Philosophy, he enumerated in his day, two hundred and eighty sects. The original sects differed in respect to that in which happiness was placed. By new questions these were subdivided. Varro himself, however, is introduced by Cicero as supporting the doctrines of the Old Academy. He stood opposed to those who denied all certainty to human knowledge. Moreover, he recognized the compound nature of man, and made the *summum bonum* to consist in the *prima Naturæ*, or perfect soundness of mind and body. These, therefore, must be sought on their own account. Virtue, as the great director and the highest wisdom of life, is included in the idea of the sound mind. The moral standard of Varro is a lofty one. Some of his writings are directly designed to expose and correct the vices and follies

of his day, which he contrasts with the pure and simple manners and sentiments of the most distinguished sages of the olden time.

CHAPTER XIV.

PLAUTUS, TERENCE, VIRGIL, HORACE, PERSIUS, JUVENAL, OVID.

The popular religious sentiment of a people is by no means always to be sought among its philosophers, or its most profound thinkers. These, like Anaxagoras and Socrates, may be far in advance of the great mass of their fellow-citizens. Indeed, we may often most readily discover the general moral tone of the age, by its poets, its dramatists, or essayists. Nor is it necessary that these should be men of serious or profound thought. Our inquiry is not so much what were their personal convictions, as what were the prevalent views which they reflected in their writings. Through these the sentiment of the age finds expression, and even the comic poet, as well as the satirist, becomes an important witness. It will repay our labor then, to glance over the testimony of some of the most noted of the Latin poets, not overlooking even those whose personal morals are far from exemplary.

Of Plautus (254–184 B. C.), we know little more than that he was of humble birth, that he early came to Rome, and that, commencing his career as a menial for the actors on the stage, he gradually rose to the position that he ever after retained, as the most illustrious comic poet of Rome. His comedies enjoyed an unrivalled popularity, and if their invention, wit and jests are their highest merits, they are not without value for those occasional sentiments, in which such views of theism find expression, as a writer striving for applause would be apt to employ. He would, at least, be studious to give no rude shock to any doctrine regarded as inviolably sacred, and his incidental allusions to the charac-

ter and providence of the Gods, would, we presume, strongly reflect the popular sentiment. Yet we have very clear evidence, that while rising above the prejudices of the old mythology, he yet recognized the existence and providence of the One God.

Plautus did not shrink from representing the deities popularly worshipped in his time as subject to the vices and frailties that disgrace men. Yet in some instances he distinguishes between Jupiter and the other deities, and clearly speaks of one God, who is characterized as omniscient. In the *Rudens*, he asserts the supremacy of one sovereign and imperial Lord, by whom the subordinate Gods are appointed over the earth, to examine the actions and manners of men, and to whom they report the recorded names of those who bear false testimony or perjure themselves. Upon these the Deity exercises judgment, and discriminates, without fear or favor, between the good and the bad. The prayer of Hanno in the *Pœnulus*, is an avowed recognition of a superintending providence. In the *Captivi*,* Tyndarus, in the guise of a slave, is bold to declare to his master his native freedom, and to add, "Assuredly, there is a God who both hears and sees what we do."

The plays of Terence (192–155 ? B. C.), composed with elaborate skill, on the designs of Menander, and vividly delineating the passions and characters of men, are far from being morally acceptable. Yet they contain sentiments of great beauty, and combine a playful pleasantry with peculiar terseness and purity of language. Terence was at one time a favorite classic of Luther's, and in his plays we meet with passages which speak of the superior efficacy of the prayers of good men, the futility of babbling repetitions, the gratitude due to the Gods, and which indicate apprehensions of the attributes of the Divine nature which have commended themselves to the approval of Christian men.

We do not look to the epic poet for the exposition of doctrines more appropriately treated in philosophical discourse. His object is less to teach, than to please or impress. Yet, in order to do this, he needs the power of a vivid intuition,

* Line 313.

to discern the sensibilities and passions of the soul, and lay hold of such truths, suggestions or fancies, as will awaken a response in the popular taste or conscience.

For this reason, the "Æneid" of Virgil is not without interest in this connection, as giving intimations of that view of the moral order of the universe, which he either accepted himself, or had reason to believe congruous to the popular conceptions of his age. That such a moral order existed is assumed throughout. No formal evidence of it is presented, but the course of human events is uniformly represented as coming in constant contact with, if not shaped by it.

The word which expresses the necessity of this moral order is *fate*. Æneas is *profugus fato.** Even Juno, confessing the restrictions imposed upon her, says, *Vetor fatis.*† While Æneas lingers at Carthage, he forgets the cities allotted to him by the fates.‡ Dido's words fall powerless on the ears of Æneas, for *Fata obstant.*§ She submits to the inevitable, if it be that *sic fata Jovis poscunt.*‖ The complaint made of Juno is that she will not submit to Jove's imperial sway, or to the fates.¶ Deiphobus brings no charge against human neglect on account of what he suffers, but he says, *Me fata mea . . . mersêre.*** Man's short, frail existence is allotted him by resistless destiny.†† *Stat sua cuique dies.* When Æneas lands in Italy, he pleads his innocence of any hostile purpose, for he says,‡‡

"*Nec veni nisi fata locum sedemque dedissent.*"

Nor is it to be questioned that—

"*Fatalem Ænean manifesto numine ferri.*"§§

Latinus and Lavinia admit that the union of the latter with Æneas has been determined by fate.‖‖ That this fate is not a blind necessity, dissociated from a wise order or intelligent purpose, is obvious from the connection in which it is frequently introduced. Sometimes the fates are *fata Jovis*,¶¶ and sometimes they are spoken of as nearly identical with His

* Æn., I. 2. † Ib., I. 39. ‡ Ib., IV. 225. § Ib., IV. 440.
‖ Ib., IV. 614. ¶ Ib., V. 784. ** Ib., VI. 511. †† Ib., X. 467.
‡‡ Ib., XI. 112. §§ Ib., XI. 232. ‖‖ Ib., XII. 28. ¶¶ Ib., IV. 614.

imperial will. The necessity that belongs to them is that necessity which determines the connection of cause and effect with reference to a pre-determined end. The fates and the will of Jove, whose epithet as the Supreme is *Omnipotens*, are ever in harmony.*

We find in Virgil traces distinct enough of the Stoic idea of a soul of the universe. *Spiritus intus alit.*† Whatever criticism may be made upon it, it harmonizes with the doctrine of an universal Providence. There is a deity—of course subordinate to the Supreme—everywhere. He may be unknown by name, but "whoever thou art," says Æneas, "we follow thee, *sancte Deorum*."‡ In invoking divine aid for his great final conflict for the kingdom, Æneas calls on Jupiter, *pater Omnipotens*, on Juno, Mars, the deities of the ocean, as well as rivers and fountains.§ The grove, the hill, has its deity, although it is added, *Quis Deus, incertum est.*‖ Nor are they always invisible. "The Arcadians believe that they have seen Jupiter himself," and the Latin priests in early ages were credited with having enjoyed interviews with the Gods.¶ Æneas acknowledges Apollo as his guide.** He is ever coming in contact with the unseen powers, and his every step is guarded by a providence. Hence, he is ever ready to acknowledge the divine presence. He is *pius* Æneas. If his fleet is in danger of being consumed, he calls on the Gods for help.†† Anchises calls on *Jupiter Omnipotens*, "if by any prayers thou canst be swayed, behold and help us."‡‡ In the hour of extremity, it is *Jupiter Omnipotens* to whom the suppliant has recourse.§§ He is alone supreme. He is above all others, the *Ipse Deûm Requator*, who is addressed as—

"*Cœlum et terras qui numine torquet.*"‖‖

This divine providence is accordant with fate. But it is the providence of the Supreme. Venus addresses herself to Him who rules the interests of men and Gods, *æternis imperiis.*¶¶ What in one place is attributed to fate, in another is spoken of as a divine allotment. It is Jupiter who has

* Æn., V. 784. † Ib., VI. 726. ‡ Ib., IV. 576. § Ib., XII. 178.
‖ Ib., VIII. 352. ¶ Ib., VII. 90. ** Ib., VI. 56. †† Ib., V. 686.
‡‡ Ib., II. 689. §§ Ib., IV. 206. ‖‖ Ib., IV. 269. ¶¶ Ib., I. 229.

granted (*dedit*) "to found a new city and bridle proud nations."* It was not guilty Paris, but the severity of the God that struck down Troy from its prosperous eminence.† Proud Ilium fell, because it pleased the powers above (*visum superis*) that it should be so.‡ Æneas expresses his conviction that his safe arrival at port was not without a divine significance, implying the purpose and providence of the Gods.§ He bids conquered Dares submit to the God (*Cede Deo*), as He might have charged him to yield to fate; ‖ and as we have seen, Jove's imperial sway and the fates are sometimes coupled together.¶ The pride of Mezentius, and his impiety in declaring his own right hand his God (*dextra mihi Deus*), are signally rebuked.**

But this divine providence is governed and directed by justice, and is the refuge of the consciously wronged and oppressed. Ilioneus is introduced as uttering the warning, "If ye despise the race of men and mortal arms, at least look out for the Gods, who take thought of right and wrong."†† It is Jupiter who sanctions the rights of the stranger guest.‡‡ Priam, outraged by the cruelty that slays his kindred before his face, prays the Gods to inflict suitable penalty and just retribution.§§ Dido's hope is, *si quid pia numina possunt.*‖‖ With her dying breath, she appeals to the Gods, if with them justice or regard for the wronged is to be found.¶¶

But, as illustrative of Virgil's views, or perhaps those which his age was most disposed to approve, if not accept, we must take note of the vision of the world of retribution granted to Æneas. Doubtless, Virgil guarded himself against the reproach of superstition, to which he was exposed by the scepticism of his age, by his ingenious device of the ivory gate, through which the Infernal Gods sent up lying dreams. But in the pictures of retribution which he exhibits, he is true to the instincts of a justice which anticipates hereafter a dispensation of awards which is imperfect here. In this we have the plain implication of the immortality of the soul, although this is elsewhere manifestly taught. Soul and

* Æn., I. 523. † Ib., VI. 603. ‡ Ib., III. 2. § Ib., V. 56.
‖ Ib., V. 467. ¶ Ib., V. 784. ** Ib., X. 773. †† Ib., I. 542, 3.
‡‡ Ib., I. 731. §§ Ib., II. 536, 7. ‖‖ Ib., IV. 382. ¶¶ Ib., IV. 519–21.

body are united by life, and the union is dissolved by death. Iris is sent from Olympus to Dido, to release her struggling soul.* In anticipation of her death, she looks forward to a conscious existence hereafter. *Omnibus umbra locis adero*, is her belief.† Satisfied with the manner of her death, she exclaims: *Sic, sic juvat ire sub umbras.*‡ Polydorus, the victim of foul crime, speaks from his shrub-covered grave, and pleads for pity.§ The image of the murdered and unburied Sichæus appears to the widowed Dido, in vision, to show his wounds, and unveil the long concealed wickedness of his murderer.‖

But while we may note in many other passages indications of a belief in the soul's immortality, as well as a moral government—now actually existing among men, and partially bestowing rewards on virtue or inflicting penalties on vice—it is in the vision of the under world with which Æneas is favored, that we have these doctrines distinctly and impressively enforced. If here on earth Æneas had accounted it impiety to handle sacred things before he had washed his blood-stained hands in the living stream,¶ he finds in the realm of spirits a justification of his scrupulous regard to the divine laws of purity. He witnesses the sad fate of the wicked, and sees the beauties of that Elysium which is the abode of the blest. Here is something beyond what Homer pictured in his vision of Hades. Here is not the mere negative blessedness of exemption from pain, and even the shadowy life which Virgil accepts from Homer without question, has, introduced into it, new elements of positive satisfaction. Virtue is sure of its reward; vice cannot escape its penalty. "Unhappy Theseus" utters his admonitions, and adjures all to learn the justice of the monition and not despise the Gods.** In Elysium are the spirits of martyred patriots, of good and holy men, *pii vates*, and others who have on earth been virtuous or dutiful, and they are privileged to breathe the air and enjoy the beauty of a paradise. On the other hand, the wicked expiate their ancient crime; *veterum malorum supplicia expendunt.*†† Nor is the under world altogether isolated from

* Æn., IV. 694. † Ib., IV. 386. ‡ Ib., IV. 660. § Ib., III. 45.
‖ Ib., III. 353. ¶ Ib., II. 720. ** Ib., VI. 618. †† Ib., VI. 739.

this. Anchises recognizes Æneas and becomes his conductor. He gives him to understand that he has heard, although not fully, of his wanderings and hardships. The state of probation on earth is consciously linked with that of retribution hereafter. The present and future state are subject alike to the divine laws and the divine order.

Thus do we find—although indefinitely portrayed—certain prominent and distinctive features of a moral system, reflected in Virgil's national epic. They are not the less significant from the connection in which they are found.

In gathering up the testimony of classic literature to the existence and laws of the moral system, the Roman satirists must not be overlooked. Living at the time when Roman power had culminated, and when, along with luxury, a critical and even sceptical spirit had sprung up, we can scarcely expect to find them free from the contaminating influence of their age. The old reverence for sacred things had passed away. Religious institutions maintained themselves by their *vis inertiæ*, rather than by the suffrage of living convictions. Yet, amid the ruins of a crumbling faith in the hitherto accepted belief, we meet with the significant recognition of the beauty of virtue and the claims of duty, as well as the odiousness of vice.

Even when Ennius (B.C. 238–178), doubtless putting the words into the mouth of an impious character, says,

> "Yes, there are Gods ; but they no thought bestow
> On human deeds—on mortal bliss or woe ;
> Else would such ills our wretched race assail ?
> Would the good suffer ? would the bad prevail ?"

he recognizes those facts in the moral order of the world, which find their solution only in the theory which modifies the exact administration of moral government here, by the element of human probation. His scepticism of the prevalent mythology, if it approaches Pantheism, has the merit at least of conceding a monotheistic will. Naming the various forces or objects of nature to which deity had been ascribed, he says:

> "This is the Jupiter whom all revere."*

* Dunlop's Rom. Lit., *Ennius*.

For the superstitions of augurs and soothsayers, he has unmeasured derision, nor does he spare the false ideas entertained of the worshipped divinities. This fact is important as showing that those who followed in his path would not reasonably be suspected of grounding their concessions to the claims of truth or morals on a mythology which even his age was almost prepared to repudiate.

But while the infidelity of Ennius is obvious in his writings, and while Plautus dramatized the vices of the Father of the Gods and the tutelary deity of Rome, Lucretius has thrown the charms of his genius over the doctrines of Epicurus, and shown how complete an emancipation from popular religious prejudices might consist with admissions essential to a correct appreciation of the moral system. His denial of Providence and the soul's immortality, challenged repeated Stoic refutations, but such denial was based on those aspects of the moral system which are given it by the element of probation.

Lucretius was contemporary with Cicero, and nearly a century later than Lucilius (born 146 B. C.), who seems to have had little more of religious faith than his predecessor Ennius, or his Epicurean successor. Still, virtue appears in his draughts with native dignity, and his living characters are most powerfully portrayed. Juvenal relates how he made the guilty tremble with his pen, as if he had pursued them with the sword. But his invectives against vice were by no means due to any superstitious element of belief. "In the first book of his satires, he appears to have declared war on the false Gods of Olympus, whose plurality he denied." He ridiculed the simplicity of the people who gave to an infinity of Gods that name of father which should be reserved for one. His tribute to virtue is worthy to serve as an illustration of Butler's claim of superiority in its behalf;

> "A constant will
> The claims of duty ably to fulfill. . . .
> A bold protector of the just and pure."

The very selection of objects which he made for invective or eulogy, shows that virtue is intrinsically noble, and that

vice can be exalted and made conspicuous only to its own infamy.

To appreciate the allusions, usually incidental, which Horace (65–8 B. C.) makes to the constitution and laws of the moral system, we need to know something of his own character and tastes, as well as his relation to his age. The son of a freedman, whose just praise is embalmed in his own lines, his early life was spent amid rural scenes, and his education was carefully conducted, first at Rome, and subsequently at Athens. His tastes and occupations were those of a scholar, not estranged from the world, nor unacquainted with its manners, but noting them with a critical eye, and often exquisitely depicting them in the unfading colors of his own genius. Fortunate enough to win the patronage of a Mecænas, and enjoying the friendship of the most eminent of his literary contemporaries, he cherished through life the genial sympathies of his early years, and, schooled himself in misfortune by the forfeiture of his property during the civil wars, he was ever disposed to judge men, not by garb, rank or pretension, but by their genuine human worth, their honest virtue and their good sense.

Although a satirist, as well as an exquisite lyrist, there is little bitterness in his lines. He is never overborne by passion. He never ceases to be master of himself. He is ever cool enough to carry out, better than Pope himself, the latter's professed aim, and "Shoot folly as it flies." And he never misses his mark. His keen eye detects every ludicrous feature of vice. He is equally capable of appreciating a virtue which he is too honest himself to profess. His pictures are photographs, and his pen, like a sunbeam, lights up the manners, good or evil, of his time, as they come under his notice.

He had in his nature few of the elements of the Stoic. Genial, witty, fond of society, if only cultured and jovial, yet fond also of the quiet of his Sabine farm, he wasted no rhetoric on abstractions, or set up any impracticable standard of life or duty. He is ever disposed to look on the bright side of things, to be content with his lot, to laugh when opportunity offers, yet not in malice; to cherish the friendship of

good men, and to undergo no self-denial for anything merely sentimental. He is no religious devotee, any more than a hypocrite. The whole man stands forth in his writings, for better or for worse, without disguise. There is a limit beyond which he would not pursue virtue, for "even a wise man may pass for a fool, and a just man for an unjust, if he pursue virtue itself to excess." * Yet "Would you live rightly? Who would not? If virtue alone gives this, boldly pursue it, leaving mere pleasures alone." † With such a utilitarian philosophy, that will admit perhaps of "love and raillery," Horace sums up all by saying, "Live and be happy; if you know anything better, frankly impart it; if not, join me in adopting my maxims." ‡

The mythology of his age could not have commanded his belief. He exposes as madness a superstitious fear of the Gods. § He has little faith in the divine origin of reported miracles. He cannot believe that the indignant Gods hurl down "from Heaven's high roof," special missiles of vengeance, ‖ as men interpret them. He is not altogether definite in his views of the unity or plurality of deity.¶ He confesses himself to be far from a devotee, but rather "a frugal, and by no means frequent, worshipper of the Gods."** Either discreetly or sceptically, he speaks of "whatever of Gods it be that rule in Heaven, the earth, and the human race." †† He addresses fortune as a goddess, "ready to exalt mortal man from the most abject state, or to convert superb triumphs into funerals." ‡‡

And yet, with that keen perception of what may be called the moral proprieties and the fitness of things, in which Horace was surpassed by none of his contemporaries, he gives in his testimony to what we may term the ethical claims of the Kosmos. He speaks, not as a moralist, but as a master of literary art, when he lays down those rules for the chorus, in which he seems to concede the supreme authority of the law that enjoins regard to the moral order of the world. "Let the chorus sustain the part and manly character of an actor;

* Epis., I. vi. 15, 16. † Ib., 29-31. ‡ Ib., 67, 8.
§ Sat., II. ii., 295. ‖ Ib., V. 102, 3. ¶ Epod., V. 1.
** Carm., I. xxxiv. 1. †† Epod., V. 1, 2. ‡‡ Od., I. xxxv.

nor let them sing anything between the acts which is not conducive to, and fitly coherent with, the main design. Let them both patronize the good, and give them friendly advice, and regulate the passionate, and love to appease those who swell (with rage); let them praise the repast of a short meal, the salutary effects of justice, laws, and peace with her open gates; let them conceal what is told to them in confidence, and supplicate and implore the Gods that prosperity may return to the wretched, and abandon the haughty."*

When the poet passes from the consideration of his own personal relations, to that of social order or public interests, he recognizes the necessities of a moral order and a superintending providence. He may sometimes speak as a Polytheist, but he sees in Jupiter the supreme, to whom all others are subordinate. He alone is "the father and guardian of the human race."† "He brings back the hideous storms, or takes them away."‡ "The empire of Jupiter is over kings themselves."§ He subdues the giants and shakes all nature with his rod. The wicked deeds of men cannot escape the notice and disapproval of Jupiter.‖

Co-operating with the will of Jupiter are the resistless though unseen forces of the universe. Fortune may be defied, but Necessity, her minister, always marches before her, holding in her brazen hand huge spikes and wedges.¶ "The will of Powerful Justice and the Fates," is resistless.** "Necessity, with an impartial rule, renders her allotments to the illustrious and the most abject."†† These forces of the universe do honor to justice, while they visit iniquity with stern retribution. They raise Hercules to heaven, while they forbid "Priam's perjured family, even with Hector's aid, to repel the warlike Greeks."‡‡ "On calamitous Italy, the Gods, because neglected, have inflicted many evils."§§

To a divinely established order, exemplary retributions are ascribed. His own times Horace represents as "fertile in wickedness," in this fully agreeing with his contemporaries, but tracing to this fountain "the perdition that has over-

* Ars Poet. 198-201. † Odes, I. xii. 49. ‡ Ib., II. x. 15, 16.
§ Ib., III. i. 6. ‖ Epod. V., 8. ¶ Odes, I. xxxv. 17.
** Ib., II. xvii. 15, 16. †† Ib., III. i. 14, 15. ‡‡ Ib., III. iii. 13, 26-28.
§§ Ib., III. vi. 7, 8.

whelmed the nation and people."* The fate of crime may be slow in overtaking it, but it is inevitable, and awaits it at least in hell.† After Minos has pronounced sentence, there is no longer hope.‡ Into the mouth of a boy tortured by hags, Horace puts the language of Thyestean imprecations: "I will persecute you with curses . . . not to be expiated by any victim. Doomed to death. . . . I will attend you as a nocturnal fury; and, a ghost, I will attack your faces with my horned talons (for such is the power of those divinities, the Manes), and, brooding upon your restless breasts, I will deprive you of repose by terror."§ The long shadow of retribution is seen stretching on over generations, when we are told that "a cruel fatality and the crime of fratricide have disquieted the Romans, from that time when the blood of the innocent Remus, to be expiated by his descendants, was spilled upon the earth."‖

As readily as the most pronounced Stoic, Horace finds in virtue itself what may suffice to commend it, and in vice, the grounds for its severe condemnation. As to virtue, he accepts Aristotle's definition, rather than Plato's ideal, of it. It is a mean between two extremes.¶ Although he does not, with the former, note the exceptions to this rule, and although we may imagine him applauding the counsel of the shrewd worldly adviser in Ecclesiastes—"Be not righteous overmuch, neither be overmuch wicked"—a sentiment that he seems repeatedly to echo, yet when he comes to paint virtue or vice, he leaves nothing equivocal about his picture. His portrait of the firm, just man is so familiar that we need not quote it.** It has come down to us like some memorable antique sculpture, peerless in majesty, and admirable in its finished grace of proportion. Of the native beauty of virtue, Horace shows his appreciation. "Virtue, throwing open heaven to those who deserve not to die, directs her progress through paths of difficulty, and spurns with a rapid wing, groveling cowards and the slippery earth."†† In a similar spirit, he scatters flowers on the patriot's grave. "It is sweet and

* Odes, III. iii. 17-19. † Ib., III. xi. 29. ‡ Ib., IV. vii. 21.
§ Epod., V. 89-96. ‖ Ib., VII. 17, 18. ¶ Epis., I. xviii. 9.
** Odes, III. iii. 1-4. †† Ib., III. ii. 19-24.

glorious to die for one's country." Thus "virtue, unknowing of base repulse, shines with immaculate honors."*

The ability to discern the truth is to be sought and cultivated. "Not he who is unable to compare the fleeces that drink the dye of Aquinum with the Sidonian purple, will receive a more certain damage, than he who shall not be able to distinguish the false from the true."† This knowledge, moreover, must be made practical. The soul must be purified by the truth. "Why do you hasten to remove things that hurt your eyes, but if anything gnaws your mind, defer the time of curing it from year to year?"‡ Virtue is sure of its reward, as vice of its retribution. "As much more as any man shall deny himself, so much more shall he receive from the Gods."§ Wealth and splendid offerings are not necessary in order to attain the divine favor. "If the hand in innocence has touched the altar, a magnificent victim does not more acceptably pacify the offended deity, than a consecrated cake and crackling salt."‖ "There is always something lacking to unjust riches,"¶ however much they may increase. "He is master of himself, and truly happy, to whom it is permitted to say daily, I have lived."** "You may not justly call the possessor of large estates happy."†† Nor does locality secure peace. "They change their climate, but not their disposition, who run beyond the sea. . . . By ships and chariots, we seek to live happily. What you seek is here (at home), is at Ulebræ, if a just temper of mind is not wanting to you."‡‡ In a style worthy of Æsop, Horace illustrates his own philosophy of life, which gave the preference to his humble Sabine farm above all burdensome wealth,§§ by the fable of the country and city mouse.‖‖

It is the soul's restless desires that deny it peace. "Nor Cybele, nor Apollo so shakes the breasts of his priests, nor Bacchus or the Corybantes . . . as direful anger."¶¶ Rage destroyed Thyestes and has demolished cities. But "repose can be purchased neither by jewels, by purple nor gold. For neither regal treasures nor the consul's officer can remove the

* Odes, 13-17. † Ep., X. 26-9. ‡ Ib., II. 38, 9.
§ Odes, III. xvi. 21, 2. ‖ Ib., III. xxiii. 17-20. ¶ Ib., III. xxiv. 62-4.
** Ib., III. xlix. 41. †† Ib., IV. ix. 45. ‡‡ Epis. I. xi. 27-30.
§§ Odes, III. i. 47. ‖‖ Sat., I. vi. 79-117. ¶¶ Odes, I. xvi. 5-9.

wretched tumults of the mind, nor the cares that hover over splendid ceilings."* "He lives happily on a little, to whom the ancestral salt-cellar looks beautiful on his frugal board, and whom neither fear nor sordid avarice robs of gentle sleep."† On the other hand, "Who, by becoming an exile, ever escaped himself? Consuming care boards even the brazen-beaked ships, nor does it quit the troops of horsemen, for it is swifter than the storm-driving east wind."‡ The source of happiness must be within, and not without. "Sicilian dainties" will not force a relish. "Sleep disdains not humble cottages." No convulsions of nature, or baleful constellations render him anxious, "who desires only a competence."§ "But fear and threats of conscience climb up along with their owner, nor does gloomy care withdraw from the brazen-beaked trireme, but mounts behind the horseman."‖

"Who then is free? The wise man, who has dominion over himself: whom neither poverty, nor chains, nor death affright; brave in the checking of his appetites, and in contemning honors."¶ Virtue, indeed, will not exempt from the lot of vicissitude common to man. "Pale death, with impartial tread, beats at the hovels of the poor and the palaces of kings."** "The same night awaits all, and the way of death must be once traveled."†† "The unforeseen assault of death has snatched away, and will still snatch away the nations."‡‡ Even "piety will not arrest the advance of wrinkles, approaching age and resistless death."§§ "No court more surely awaits its rich lord, than the destined limit of grasping Pluto."‖‖ "The impartial earth is opened alike to the poor man and to the sons of kings, nor has the life-guard ferryman of Hell, bribed with gold, brought back the artful Prometheus."¶¶ "Though more wealthy than the unrifled treasures of the Arabians and rich India, . . . if dire Necessity has fixed its grasp, . . . you shall not disengage your mind from dread, nor your head from the snares of death."*

* Odes, II. xvi. 9, 10. † Ib., II. xvi. 13–16. ‡ Ib., 19–24.
§ Ib., III. i. 25–8. ‖ Ib., 37–40. ¶ Sat., II. vii. 83–6.
** Odes, I. iv. 13. †† Ib., I. xxviii. 15, 16. ‡‡ Ib., II. xiii. 19, 20.
§§ Ib., II. xiv. 2–4. ‖‖ Ib., II., xviii. 29–32. ¶¶ Ib., 32–6.
* Ib., III. xxiv. 5–8.

Wealth itself may even torture. If one must watch, half-dead with terror, night and day, against thieves, fire, or slaves, "I should always," says Horace, "wish to be very poor in possessions held upon these terms."*

There is, indeed, Horace admits, no such thing as a happiness perfect in all respects on earth.† Nearly all men are discontented with their lot,‡ and are consequently wretched. But the true remedy is, that men must moderate their desires, and control their passions. "Let there be an end to the greed of acquisition."§ "He that has a competency, let him wish for no more. . . . The possessor must be well himself, if he expects to enjoy the treasures he has gathered."‖ Desire and fear will render the soul incapable of joy, like beauteous pictures to the sore-eyed, or music to the deaf. What is to be done, is to "undertake the study of true wisdom; begin it forthwith. He who postpones the hour of living well, is like the hind who waits for the river to run by; whereas it flows, and will flow, forever rolling on."¶

In sketching the moral features of his times, Horace shows that these counsels were especially pertinent. If the bright and vivid colors which he best loves to use, seem less befitting than the sombre hues of Tacitus, to do justice to the vices of the age, they are scarcely less expressive. The times are described as "fertile in wickedness." "The manly progeny of rustic soldiers" is no more. The tendency of things is from bad to worse. "The age of our fathers, worse than our grandsires, produced us still more flagitious, us, who are about to produce an offspring more vicious than ourselves."** The horrors of civil war seemed to him a fitting sequel to the crimes of an "impious age;"†† Rome is sinking under the weight of her own guilt and greatness. The manners of the times are in excess, and either extreme is vicious. "There is no medium observed among men."‡‡ The moral apostacy of the race could scarcely be asserted in stronger language than Horace employs. Juvenal is matched by the second satire of his first book. Elsewhere he represents a part of mankind as

* Sat., I. i. 78, 9. † Odes, II. xvi. 27, 8. ‡ Sat., I.
§ Ib., 92. ‖ Epis., I. ii. 46-50. ¶ Ib., 41-3.
** Odes, III. vi. 46-9. †† Ep., xvi. 9. ‡‡ Sat., I. ii. 28.

exultant and resolved in their pursuit of wickedness. A great part, also, is wavering, without any fixed purpose.* He speaks of virtue detested; of "empty laws, without morals;" of "Poverty, a great reproach, which impels us to do and suffer anything, deserting the path of difficult virtue,"† of "perjured faith" and "iniquitous wealth," riches overbearing honest poverty, and forms of debauchery and lewdness, which even his own graceful pen cannot disguise in decent expression. His pictures of human nature, as he saw it, are not flattering. They are the pictures of a manifest and repulsive depravity.

But vice carries its own penalty with it. Natural law acts as an avenger. "Those delicacies, perpetually taken, pall upon the stomach; and your cheating feet refuse to support your sickly body."‡ Moreover, "the covetous man is always in want. . . . The envious person wastes at the thriving condition of another. Sicilian tyrants never invented a greater torment than envy. He who will not curb his passion, will wish that undone which his grief and resentment suggested, while he violently plies his revenge with unsated rancor.§ The victim of ambition, avarice, luxury or superstition, or any other mental disease, is mad. The covetous man is both a fool and madman.‖ "Wherever there is a foolish depravity, there will be the height of madness. He who is wicked will be frantic, too."¶

Horace does not overlook the obligations of power and wealth. He holds up to ridicule upstart greatness. There is also a proper use to be made of what nature has bestowed. "Why is any one undeservedly left to want, while you are rich?"** From a vast hoard there are claims of country, and the ruinous temples of the Gods, to be met. Wisdom, moreover, necessitates moral discipline. The circumstances of life and man's relations to it, make it a probation. "Despise pleasures; pleasure bought with pain is hurtful."†† "While you are young, with untainted mind, imbibe instruction."‡‡ Apply yourself to the best masters of morality. Present transgression, though penalty be delayed, can never be sure

* Sat., II. vii. 6, 7.
† Odes, III. xxiv.
‡ Sat., II. vii. 107-9.
§ Epis., I., ii. 56-61.
‖ Sat., II. iii.
¶ Ib., I. 220-2.
** Ib., II., ii. 103.
†† Epis., I. ii. 55.
‡‡ Ib., 67, 8.

of impunity. "Seldom hath punishment, though lame of foot, failed to overtake the wicked.* The more conspicuous the offender, the more signal the vengeance. "The lofty pine is more frequently agitated with winds, and high towers crash with a heavier ruin, while the lightnings smite the loftiest mountains."† To fail even once in the time of trial may prove fatal. Neither does the wool, that has once been stained in its dye, resume its lost colors, nor does true virtue gain anything, after its fall, when its loss can be replaced only by what is inferior."‡ Although men must leave much to the care of the Gods,§ there is yet a sphere for their own activity. It is for them to be wise to-day—to so use their time, that with each closing day, they can say "I have lived."

No rigid moralist, no stoic sympathizer, not by any means inclined to credulity or superstition, Horace was led by his own good sense, and the observation he was constrained to make on the manners of his time, to conclusions not far divergent from those maintained by men who would have scorned him as a philosopher, while accepting him as a poet. Sometimes he simply reflects the more serious thought of his age, at others he gracefully gives expression to his own views, assured at least that they would not be repugnant to the tastes of even a degenerate age, or run any risk of contradiction.‖

Persius is, perhaps, the most grave and serious of the Roman satirists (A. D. 34–62). The sternness of stoic principles is conspicuous in his writings, and we note in them also that semi-scepticism toward the popular creed which makes his assertion of moral law more emphatic and significant.

With such law, bringing its inevitable penalty on vice, the Gods will not, perhaps cannot, interfere. He rebukes the prayer that is coupled with transgressions that preclude its

* Odes, III. ii. 29. † Odes, II. x. 9–12. ‡ Ib., III. v. 27–30. § Ib., 1. ix. 9.

‖ Dr. Robert Gray, in his "Connection between the Sacred Writings and the Literature of the Classical Ages," remarks that "there are many passages in Horace which indicate an acquaintance with traditions founded on truth. He alludes to the formation of man from the earth (Odes I. 16), to corrupted accounts of the deluge and of the building of Babel (Odes I., 1, 2, 3; II., 12; III., 4), to the shortening of human life (I., 3), to the necessity of an expiation (I., 2), and to the reward of pious men in the region of joy (I., 10). He seems to have considered the entailing of punishment as not inconsistent with divine appointment. He speaks of Jupiter as the Great Parent who directs the affairs of men and Gods," etc.—GRAY'S *Connection*, II. 382.

being granted. "You ask vigor of nerve, a frame that will hold out to old age. Well, be it so. But rich dishes . . . prevent the Powers above from granting these requests. They baffle Jove."* A sentiment which reminds us that "to obey is better than sacrifice," is thus expressed. "Justice to God and man, enshrined within the breast—the inner chambers of the soul hallowed—the breast imbued with generous integrity—give me these, that I may approach the temples, and I will propitiate with an offering of meal."†

The tyrannic power of sin, and the domineering nature of evil passions within the soul, finds expression in the almost bitter reply to one who boasts that he is free. He is asked how he comes to take this for granted, while subjected to so many masters. "Do you recognize no master, save him from whom the prætor's rod sets you free?" It is not external bondage that is most bitter. "But if within, and in thy morbid breast, there spring up masters, how dost thou come forth with less impunity than those whom the lash and terror of their master drive?"‡

Wickedness, moreover, bears its penalty with it. "O mighty father of the Gods! when once fell lust, imbued with raging venom, has fired their spirits, vouchsafe to punish tyrants in no other way than this. Let them see virtue, and pine away at having forsaken her."§ The business of man is to learn his nature, sphere and duty. "Learn, wretched men, and investigate the causes of things; what we are—what course of life we are born to run—what rank is assigned to us—how delicate the turning round the goal, and whence the starting-point, . . . what man the Deity destined you to be, and in what portions of the human commonwealth your station is assigned."‖

In Juvenal we recognize a master in the art of satire, and were it not that contemporaries like Tacitus and Seneca, attest the truth of many of his delineations of the prevailing depravity, we might be inclined to ascribe them to his genius for exaggeration and caricature. He does not spare the degeneracy of his times, but lashes it with indignant scorn. He intimates his acquiescence with Hesiod and Ovid in the

* Sat., II. 41–3. † Pers., II. 73–5. ‡ Ib., V. 124–131.
§ Ib., III. 35–8. ‖ Ib., III. 66, etc.

theory of a Golden age, and the human apostacy that followed it. The virtue of Saturn's reign lingered long on earth,* but had finally departed. Now, there is no street that has not its Clytemnæstra.† The race is, as it were, deserted by the Gods. "At Delphi the oracles are no more, and darkness as to the future damns the human race." Our religion is selfishness. In the temples of the Gods, where we offer our vows, we pray for wealth, and seek to extend the area of our domain.‡ The thirst for fame is greater than that for virtue, for who would embrace virtue itself, unless it brought rewards with it?§ "Good men are few, scarcely as many in number as the gates of Thebes or the mouths of the Nile."‖ The proper prayer to offer is for "a sound mind in a sound body."¶ It is not wisdom to dictate our own lot. "If you seek good counsel, leave to the Divinities themselves to weigh out what is fitting for us, and useful to our interests."**

The nature of vice is to become more vicious. "The love of money grows with its acquisition."†† Sin may exist in imagination, without the external deed. "For he who alone, in the silence of his own breast, devises any wickedness, incurs the guilt of the deed.‡‡ Unlimited indulgence in pleasure makes it pall upon the taste. It is commended by its infrequency.§§ "Revenge is the pleasure of a weak mind." "Virtue is the sole and single nobility."‖‖ There is something better than pleasure, nay, than life itself. "Life itself is a flower," so fleeting and uncertain is it. "Count it the highest wickedness to prefer life to modesty; and for the sake of life, to lose the very causes that make it worth while to live."¶¶ Happiness belongs to the good alone. "No wicked man is happy, least of all he who corrupts others."*

Wickedness cannot finally escape its due penalty. The very eminence of the transgressor, and the high respect in which he is held, aggravate the heinousness of vice.† The Gods themselves impel those who, like Orestes, act as

* Sat., VI. 1.
† Ib., VI. 655.
‡ Ib., X. 22.
§ Ib., X. 140.
‖ Ib., XIII. 26.
¶ Ib., X. 356.
** Ib., X. 346–8.
†† Ib., XIV. 140.
‡‡ Ib., XIII. 209.
§§ Ib., XI. 208.
‖‖ Ib., VIII. 20.
¶¶ Ib., VIII. 83.
* Ib., IV. 8.
† Ib., VIII. 140.

avengers. "Assuredly the anger of the Gods is slow, but it is so, that it may be the more effective."*

It is wisdom only that can overcome fortune.† The wicked man would have no divinity, if he had prudence. It is his folly that makes Fortune a Goddess and places her in heaven.‡ Juvenal accepts the Stoic rule of life, to follow nature, but it is a nature that owns the legitimate supremacy of reason over passion. "Never," he says, "does nature speak one thing, and wisdom another."§ Thoughts like these, interspersed among the terrible delineations of prevailing wickedness which characterize the pages of Juvenal, are peculiarly impressive. No more than preceding satirists, is he the slave of superstition. His observation of the actual condition of the world forces him to bear withering testimony to the hideousness, the misery, and the inevitable penalties of vice. It speaks well for his conscious integrity, that amid such a colluvies of vices as his times presented, he did not lose all faith either in virtue or a God. What a flash of light is thrown upon the theory of a divine Providence presiding over the moral system, when we are told that "man is more beloved by the Gods than he is by himself."‖

To a writer of so equivocal a reputation as Ovid, we should scarcely be prepared to turn as a witness to the laws or order of the moral system. He writes to please, and his scenes and pictures are often the reverse of puritanic. Yet if sensual passion has sometimes gloated over them, they are not wanting in lines which show that even the poet of pleasure cannot fail now and then to stumble on a moral truth, which becomes only the more impressive from the connection in which it stands. Like the flower that blooms on the edge of a glacier, it is commended to our attention by the very contrast in which it is exhibited to view.

In Ovid's account of creation, we are confronted with the fact that the world had a beginning. Chaos was the original, "the rude and indigested mass," from which the physical Kosmos was to be wrought. This was effected by the miracles of the Gods. Step by step, order is educed, the various ele-

* Sat., VIII. 216; Ib., XIII. 100. † Ib., XIII. 20. ‡ Ib., X. 365.
§ Ib., XIV. 321. ‖ Ib., X. 350.

ments take their assigned places, vegetable and animal life are developed, till man, "a creature of a more exalted kind," "for empire formed," has a soul breathed into him by the God of nature. It is in his sketch of creation that we trace a parallel between him and Lucretius. The latter sets forth the recent and progressive order of creation, while he notes also its future sudden destruction. He too depicts the original chaos, and the origin of man from the ground made fruitful by the celestial parent.

Human degeneracy is adverted to by both poets. With Lucretius, man's primitive state was highly favored. Piety prevailed. The earth yielded spontaneously its fruits, where now it produces thorns, or reluctantly allows itself to be subdued by labor. Not indistinctly is human apostacy suggested. "Some inherent evil has affected the nature of man." He is a vessel injured by a secret fissure, or tainted by some infection. His years have been shortened, and he wanders in darkness and danger, in quest of the way of life, the victim of his own false judgment. In like manner, Ovid sets before us the successive ages. The golden gives place successively to silver, brass and iron, until that state is reached in which

> "Truth, modesty and shame the world forsook,
> Fraud, avarice and force, their places took."

Impiety does not hesitate to invade the domain of the Gods, and the insubordination of subjects invites the vengeance of the rulers of Olympus.

Ovid's picture of the Age of Gold is, in connection with what follows, such a representation of the contrast between man's original condition and his present actual state, as to seem—but that he was preceded by Lucretius—a parody of the narrative of Scripture. To the truth of man's depravity, he adduces, as he proceeds, new testimony. In his own age especially, was he warranted to say:

> "Faith, truth, and friendship in the world are lost,
> A little and an empty name they boast." *

The rank of man in creation, as the necessary key to its meaning, is noted; while the loftiness of his aspirations is justified:

* Art of Love, B. 1, Dryden's Trans.

"Man looks aloft, and with erected eyes
Beholds his own hereditary skies."*

In the exposition of the Pythagorean philosophy, his immortality is elaborately argued and vindicated, although in connection with the doctrine of transmigration:

" Nor dies the spirit, but new life repeats
In other forms, and changes only seats.
Thus all things are but altered, nothing dies,
And here and there the embodied spirit flies."

The process by which the force of sin is increased is traced to habit, of which Butler makes such account:

" Ill habits gather by unseen degrees,
As brooks make rivers, rivers run to seas."
" Ill customs by degrees to habits rise,
Ill habits soon become exalted vice."

The justice of equal retribution is recognized:

" A rightful doom the laws of nature cry,
'Tis, the artificers of death should die."†

This justice is connected with a divine Providence:

" 'Tis for our interest the Gods should be,
Let us believe them; I believe they see,
And both reward and punish, equally."
" Lead then your lives as present in their sight,
Be just in dealings and defend the right;
By fraud betray not, nor oppress by might."‡

Into the mouth of one of his characters he puts expressions which indicate the sense of a moral government over men:

" Ye powers; if any so propitious are,
To accept my penitence and hear my prayer;
Your judgments, I confess, are justly sent:
Great sins deserve as great a punishment."§

Some of his portraits, vividly drawn, are attestations to the

* Metamor., I. † Art of Love, I. ‡ Ib. § Cinyras and Myrrha.

power of conscience as an element of the soul, as when, in the case of the guilty nymph, we read:

> "How in the look does conscious guilt appear,
> Slowly she moved, and loiter'd in the rear."*

So in the picture of envy, that "hag with eyes askew," "muttering curses," we see the sin and the penalty conjoined:

> "Restless in spite, while watchful to destroy,
> She pines and sickens at another's joy:
> Foe to herself, distressing and distressed,
> She bears her own tormentor in her breast."†

Thus through the fabric of a sensual imagination, we trace lines of testimony which bear witness to a sense of the moral order of the world. If Ovid had not that sense himself, he reflected its possession by others.

CHAPTER XV.

CÆSAR, LIVY, TACITUS, PLINY.

In Julius Cæsar (100–44 B. C.), the successful soldier of fortune, the lucid narrator of his own campaigns, the usurper of his country's liberties, an avowed disbeliever in the immortality of the soul, and paying a formal rather than sincere deference to the popular deities, we recognize the man of the world, the cold sceptic, rather than the devout worshipper. And yet the testimony which he bears to the moral order of the world is not without significance. In dealing with the Helvetii, he insisted upon it as a truth which they would not be disposed to question, that the immortal Gods are wont to grant long impunity to those whose wickedness they will ultimately avenge with the more terrible severity.‡ He

* Calisto. † Aglauras Transformed. ‡ De Bel. Gal., B. 1, 14.

testifies to the faith of the Druids in the immortality of the soul, to the belief of the Gauls that the life of man can be redeemed only by life; that otherwise the immortal Gods cannot be appeased, and that to them the punishment of gross offenders is specially grateful.*

The personal character of Sallust (86–34 B. C.) commands less respect than that of Cæsar, yet his testimony to the necessity of virtue to stable government and true success† is entitled to notice, and his report of Cato's speech, criticising Cæsar's avowal in the Senate of his disbelief of the soul's immortality, enables us to discern the sincerity of those convictions of the great Stoic, who did not hesitate to censure Cæsar's views as false. For himself, he accepted what was related of the dead in the world beneath, that the wicked, separated from the good, are doomed to regions foul and repulsive. As to Roman greatness, it depended not on the number of allies, citizens, arms, and horses, but on the virtues of industry at home, justice abroad, a spirit free to deliberate, and chargeable with no crime or lust. Even before Tacitus and Seneca, he denounces the wickedness of the age, praising wealth, pursuing ease, making no distinction between the good and bad, while ambition grasps at all the rewards of virtue. In times of emergency, the Immortal Gods had preserved the republic, but trust in them was warranted only when their aid was sought by vigilance and energy as well as supplications and vows.‡

In Livy (B. C. 59—A. D. 17), as the historian of Rome, tracing the steps by which it rose to empire, and with a patriotic faith ascribing its wonderful triumphs and dominion to the providence of the Gods, we may reasonably expect to find the religious sentiment of the nation reflected. Scepticism had, in his day, made sad inroads upon the ancient faith. The simple manners and severe morals of the earlier and heroic period of Roman history had become things of the past. His record, as a matter of necessity, must be that of a glory that had departed, but which he would fain see restored. Nor could he himself fail to be affected by the spirit of his times. He would naturally be on his guard against exposing himself to

* De Bel. Gal., B. 6, 14, 17. † Bel. Catilin, § 2. ‡ Bel. Catilin, § 52.

the reproach of a superstitious credulity, while his own culture would compel him to accept with some discrimination the traditionary marvels and prodigies of the period passed under review.

Yet, to a remarkable extent, he identifies himself with the prevalent national faith of Rome's heroic age. Repeatedly do we find him ascribing the greatness of the nation to the favor and the providence of the Gods. He avows his own belief that the origin of so great a city was due to the Fates, and that the founding of the vast empire was through the aid of the Gods.* In one of the most critical moments of its history, when the State was without a head, and without strength, the guardianship of the Gods was interposed, and the fortune of the city preserved it.† Relief from pestilence came, either through answers to prayer, or the close of the unhealthy season.‡ Sometimes the Gods may send the people a tribune in their wrath,§ or visit impiety toward themselves with sore calamity; at others, they manifest their indignation at the violation of the sacred obligations of the *jus gentium*,‖ and Jupiter himself interposes to defeat nefarious counsels,¶ or in visions to utter warnings against the dangers of impiety.**

Adverting to the prevalent incredulity of his own age, of which Livy declares himself to be fully aware, he confesses the forcible impression made upon his own mind by the things which he narrates. Searching into antiquity, he finds his spirit in sympathy with those olden times, and brought under such a religious impression as the wisest men had thought should be cherished.†† He related many prodigies and wonders, but they belonged to crises which made them worthy of record. He held that the Gods were the patrons of the State. Rome became what it was through the worship of the Gods, and the stern and manly virtues associated with, and naturally growing out of, the national reverence. The whole life of the people, in its relations and developments, had been pervaded and filled with the sense of a divine superintendence. If it was to be regenerated, and the nation was

* His., I. 4. † Ib., III. 7. ‡ Ib., III. 8. § Ib., III. 9.
‖ Ib., IV. 19, 32. ¶ Ib., IV. 45. ** Ib., II. 36. †† Ib., XLIII. 13.

to be recovered from its degeneracy, it could be only by a revived sense of religious obligation. The nation must go back to its glorious past; must see Romulus introducing the religious cultus, with the very organization of the State; must observe how Numa guides the development of the national energy by new religious sanctions and institutions; and note how, at critical moments, the appeal that proves effective is to religious motives.

It is in these appeals, as well as the conduct of the people in dangerous emergencies, that we discern the strong hold which religious convictions of a divine superintendence had taken of the popular mind. When Appius Claudius was arraigned for his monstrous crime against virtue and popular rights, and there was at last a prospect of the execution of justice, the people are heard congratulating themselves that finally it is evident that there are Gods, and that they do not neglect human interests.* When Camillus would sway the minds of the people, he does not forget to remind them that prosperity has attended those who reverenced, and adversity those who despised the Gods.† Appius Claudius Crassus enforces his appeals in behalf of a conservative policy, by a reference to the divine auspices under which Rome was founded, and the guilt and danger of provoking and insulting the avenging Gods.‡ When Hannibal's approach carries terror to the heart of Rome, the dictator Fabius insists that the Gods shall be consulted, and the Sibylline books be examined, to discover the offence that had been committed.§

The heroes who command popular applause and abiding fame, are those who cherish a deep sense of the superintendence of the Gods.‖ The impious are abhorred in spite of their valor. The State is safe only under the protection and favor of the divinity. When the unity of the divine counsels, or the force of Providence, overbearing all evasion and opposition, are to be presented to view, we have the abstract terms, fate, lot, fortune, divinity, employed.¶ The divinity protects Rome. The divinity of the Gods saw fit to regard the

* His., III., 56. † Ib., V. 51. ‡ Ib., VI. 41.
§ Ib., XXII. 9. See also XXIX. 18. ‖ Ib., V. 38, XXI, 63.
¶ Fatum. Fors. Fortuna. Numen.

Roman name. Calamity comes through the anger of the divinity. The Gods, in inflicting vengeance, vindicated their divinity.

So Fate is the Fixed and Unchangeable, the necessity of which cannot be overcome by human counsels. It was fate that brought Æneas to Italy. The fates impelled the building of the city. They crushed hostile nations before Rome's victorious arms. Alexander of Epirus flees only to rush into the midst of fate.

Fortune is used in a sense scarcely distinguishable from fate. It has more power than human counsels. It is specially powerful in warlike affairs. It blinds the minds of men who would resist it, making all that is human uncertain. Yet this is not inconsistent with human freedom. Virtue and guilt are man's own work; retribution and results belong to a higher power. "We Romans have, from those things which are in the power of the immortal Gods, what the Gods have granted—spirits subject to our control, in past and present fortune. If not by the wrath of the Gods, nor by fate, through the ordering of which the changeless course of human affairs is established, but by some one's fault we were ruined at Cannæ, whose was the fault?"

"This most exalted Power (Fate) appears as a moral force; it sets limits to men; it admonishes them of their weakness; it checks or punishes their presumption; and the higher the individual exalts himself, so much the more reason has he to fear it." * Hannibal recognizes its influence, and his tragic experience is more than once pointed out as exemplary. Æmilius Paulus feels himself subjected to it, when, at the height of his splendor, he is smitten by the bitterest calamity. On the other hand, it supports the brave and virtuous, and assures success to their efforts.†

The moral power of fate is strikingly illustrated in the history of Servius Tullius, and the family of Tarquin the Proud. Here it takes the form of a retributive providence. Crimes of horror find their fitting sequel in most horrid tragedy.‡ The guilty victim is dragged on from transgres-

* Weissenborn's Livy. Preface, in which many citations are given. P. 17.

† Livy, XLV. 41.

‡ Ib., I. 46.

sion to transgression, till the penalty is reached. Individual wickedness challenges a curse that dooms the family and the race.

Livy recognizes distinctly and emphatically the connection between the virtues of the citizens and the prosperity of the State. The true freedom of the one is identified with the freedom of the other. Rome rose to power by the virtue of her people. The fate that threatened her could be only arrested by the arrest of her vice, and a return to the severe rule of her earlier times. That primitive virtue is traced to a religious source.* Men believed that the heavenly powers (*Numen*) interested themselves in human affairs. All hearts were so imbued with this pious belief, that faith and the oath ruled the State rather than the fear of law and penalty. Foreign nations feared to invade a state all-devoted to the cultus of the Gods. Seditious violence was repressed by instructions to the effect that no act of wrong could dissolve the bond of religious obligation. † Thus, with the favor of the Gods, who were the honored guardians of Rome, and through the virtues which sprung from a deep religious faith, the nation rose to the empire of the world.

But from such a height, Livy sadly deplores the fall which it had experienced. He recognizes in human nature, and in Roman nature, degenerating tendencies. If he does not expressly assert in so many words the depravity of men, or the innate tendencies to degeneracy, against which a constant strife must be maintained, in order to save the sinking State, he gives at least all the facts from which his own conviction, not dubiously expressed, may be inferred. The Rome of early times and the Rome of his own age stood in striking contrast. The fate of civil liberty, as well as public and private virtue, seemed to be at hand. He speaks as if with prophetic foreboding of evils, already foreshadowed by the vices of the age. Past degeneracy gave sad premonition of future. Discipline had been gradually relaxed; morals had slowly given way, till they had hurried headlong. The time had at last come, when, he says: "We can neither endure our vices, nor their cure." ‡ Hence he counted it wise and profit-

* Livy, I. 21. † Ib., II. 32. ‡ Ib., I. Pref.

able to look back and learn from the past what was to be shunned and what avoided. For no republic had ever been "greater, or holier, or richer in good examples, nor into any city had such lawless avarice and luxury found their way." *

His view of human nature is unequivocally and forcibly expressed. In free nations and peoples, "almost the whole of the common people everywhere, is inclined to the worse." † It is incapable of ruling itself, or attaining to true freedom. "This is the nature of the multitude; it is meanly slavish, or proudly domineering." ‡ Such is his estimate of the actual moral condition of the race.

Thus individuals and states, with strong and almost irresistible tendencies to violate the moral order of the world, are subjected to the necessity of resisting them. The greatness and permanence of nations are conditioned on the observance of the laws of the moral system. These laws find partial expression at least in that *jus gentium*, to which Livy makes such frequent reference, and the violation of which, so abhorred by the old Romans, brought down upon the transgressor, not only the indignation of men, but the wrath of heaven.

Thus, while Livy is guarded in the two opposite directions —not to offend popular prejudice by too marked a dissent from the prevalent forms of religious belief, nor to expose himself to the charge of credulity from the more free-thinking portion of his countrymen—he reflects unequivocally those convictions of the constitution and laws of the moral system which he shared very largely also with those for whose perusal his work was designed.

Undoubtedly Tacitus, in speaking of the Gods, conforms much to the opinions and usages of his age. Of the Divine existence as a reality, he nowhere makes any express assertion. § Like most of the philosophers, he held the unity and spirituality of God, as is manifest in his criticism of what was obnoxious in Judæism. He has no fault to find with the fundamental articles of Jewish belief, and his mention of them seems to indicate approval, if not admiration. "The God of

* Livy, I. Pref. † Ib., XLII. 30.
‡ Ib., XXIV. 25. § C. Tacitus, K. Nipperdey, 1864, Pref. XIV.

the Jews is the great governing mind, that directs and guides the whole frame of nature, eternal, infinite, and neither capable of change, nor subject to decay. In consequence of this opinion, no such thing as a statue was to be seen in their city, much less in their temple. Flattery had not learned to pay that homage to their own kings, nor were they willing to admit the statues of the Cæsars." *

On the subject of a Providential government of the world, Tacitus confesses himself to be undecided in his views. In connection with the Prophecy of Thrasullus, and its surprising fulfillment, he remarks: "When I reflect upon this fact, and others of a similar nature, I find my judgment so much on the balance, that whether human affairs are governed by fate and immutable necessity, or left to the wild rotation of chance, I am not able to decide." Adverting to the theory of Epicurus, he contrasts it with that of the "other school, which maintains that the immutable law of fate is perfectly consistent with the events of the moral world; that law does not depend on the course of wandering planets, but is fixed in the first principle of things, supported and preserved by a chain of natural causes. Man, notwithstanding, is left at liberty to choose his sphere of action; but his choice once made, the consequences follow in a natural course, fixed, certain, and inevitable. By this sect we are further taught, that good and evil are not always what vulgar error has so defined; on the contrary, many, whom we see struggling with adversity, are yet perfectly happy; while others, in all the pride and affluence of fortune, are truly wretched. The former, by their fortitude, tower above the ills of life; and the latter, by their indiscretion, poison their own felicity." †

Tacitus characterizes this theory as "sublime." He admits the existence of a third, which we may term the astrological, and which, as rooted in the human mind, cannot be eradicated. But evidently it does not command his suffrage. ‡ His Stoic leanings, and especially his Stoic ideal of virtue, would naturally induce him to favor the theory which he pronounces "sublime," while his own more elaborate and apparently eulogistic description of it would seem to imply that he

* His., V. 5. † An., VI. 22. ‡ Ib., IV. 58.

was only kept from a full and unqualified adoption of it, by those very difficulties which are incident to the introduction of the element of probation into a scheme of moral government.

Tacitus wrote in what he calls "a black and shameful period." The most extreme moral contrasts came under his eye. He saw vice in all its hideousness, "a slavish spirit branding the character;" depravity so confirmed and odious that to describe it was to hold it up to reprobation. With rare illustrations of "virtue and fair integrity doing honor to the heart," to serve as a background, he traces most effectively those pictures of iniquity and license which were most unblushingly furnished by the age in which he lived. Sternly faithful to his duty as a historian, he defines that duty to be "to rejudge the conduct of men, that generous actions may be snatched from oblivion, and that the authors of pernicious counsels, and the perpetrators of evil deeds, may see beforehand the infamy that awaits them at the tribunal of posterity."* In the terrible earnestness of his purpose, and with an indignation so intense that it is only repressed within legitimate limits by the severest self-control, he often seems to break over the bounds of his own doubting theories, or wavering belief, and to speak almost in tones of prophetic denunciation of the iniquity he records. His keen moral sense insensibly moulds his intellectual convictions. If the penalty of wickedness seems too tardy and uncertain, he appears for the time almost to despair of the existence of a just Providence, and is on the verge of a skeptical despondency, but when vice meets its fitting doom, or the plans of unscrupulous power are strangely defeated, he speaks of Divine interposition as confidently as if no shadow of doubt had ever crossed his mind.

Describing Rome as it appeared at the time of Nero's death—that "melancholy period, barren of public virtue," yet not without some examples of truth and honor—while teeming with omens and prognostics, "often big with terror," he adds, "the Gods never gave such terrible instructions, nor, by the slaughter of armies, made it so clear and evident, that,

* An., III. 65.

instead of extending protection to the empire, it was their awful pleasure to let fall their vengeance on the crimes of an offending people."* The lamentable ascendancy which Sejanus gained over Tiberius, which could not be explained by any superiority of birth or genius, was, according to Tacitus, "a phenomenon so very extraordinary that it could be ascribed to nothing less than the wrath of the Gods incensed against the Roman State."† As he traces the depravity of the times, crowded with disasters and tragic issues, the conviction finds more confident expression that, "the truth is, the wrath of heaven was bent against the Roman State."‡ Under Otho and Vitellius, as in the times of Sylla and Marius, this was manifest in the violence and discords of the soldiery, when "the same wrath of the Gods pursued them," and "the same vices conspired to urge them on to mutual slaughter."§

But sometimes it is not a vengeful providence that is noted. Virtue has friends above. That the iniquitous scene of Nero's attempt to murder his mother "should not be wrapped in darkness, the care of Providence seems to have interposed."‖ In the time of Vespasian, at a critical moment in the conflict with the Batavians, "the Gods became propitious to the cause of Rome." "Nothing but their special protection," could have wrought the change that assured victory to the Roman arms.¶ Citing an instance of truth and honor in the person of one distinguished for his wealth, who, having followed his friend in prosperity, would not desert him in distress, and in consequence was deprived of all and sent into banishment, Tacitus adds, by way of comment, "The Gods, in their just dispensations, permitting an example of virtue, even in ruin, to stand in contrast to successful villainy."** In the case also in which Rome derived advantage from the conflicting counsels of her foes, Tacitus remarks, "the Gods indulged us with a view of conflicting barbarians."††

Sometimes he falls into that use of the word fortune, which seems to ascribe a fickleness to the Deity, or supersede his Providence. "Fortune was preparing," far away, the means

* An., I. 3. † Ib., IV. 1. ‡ Ib., XVI. 16. § His., II. 38.
‖ An., XIV. 5. ¶ His., IV. 78. ** An., XVI. 33. †† G., 33.

of elevating the Flavian family to the throne.* But far oftener, we are confronted with the idea of fate or destiny. In the case of Galba, who, "regardless of prodigies," could not be deterred from his purpose, and so hurried to his doom, we are told, "it may be that what is fixed by fate, cannot by human prudence be avoided."† Vespasian was "reserved by his superior destiny for the highest elevation."‡ The peculiar happiness of Lepidus, in hazardous times, is said "naturally to raise the inquiry whether the favor or antipathy of princes, like all other sublunary contingencies, is governed by the immutable laws of fate, and by consequence the lot of man may be said to be determined in his natal hour." Tacitus pronounces the question intricate, but suggests, "perhaps free will and moral agency are still so far allowed, that each individual may chalk out the line of his own conduct, and by steering between the opposite extremes ... pursue a middle course with safety and with honor."§

But it is in his own proper sphere as a historian that Tacitus becomes a most important and eloquent witness in behalf of the moral system of the world. His works are a vast picture gallery, where every portrait is a moral demonstration of the beauty of virtue or the hideousness of vice. Tiberius, a monster of depravity himself, yet scorning his fawning sycophant, and contemning the servility that supported his throne; ‖ the vaulting ambition of Brutidius, that overleaped itself, and provoked its own discomfiture; ¶ the hateful lineaments of Romanus Hispo, the mercenary advocate, that can be traced only to invite a retributory reprobation; ** the vices of Nero, that can only be exhibited to his eternal infamy, and by their enormity defy fitting comment; the vengeance that overtakes —it may be slowly, but surely—notorious offenders, when the tyrant on whom they had fawned is "satiated with their flagitious arts,"†† or the very tools of their wickedness pierce the hand that wields them;—all such pictures as these—and the pages of Tacitus are crowded with them—are so many testim[illegible] to the relative nature, experience, and efforts of div[illegible] qualities, which evince the natural superiority of [illegible]

[illegible] ‡ An., XVI. [illegible] Ib., IV. 20.
‖ [illegible] ** Ib., I. 74. [illegible] Ib., IV. 71.

But it is in dealing with such characters as Tiberius, Nero and Domitian, as well as those of inferior station, but scarcely subordinate in the rank of depravity, that the simple, terse and unvarnished narrative of Tacitus, impresses us like a vision of Dante's Inferno. It is unnecessary here to do more —by way of illustrating the nature of the argument derived from the descriptions of Tacitus, as they bear upon the moral system—than to give his account of Tiberius, when he interposed by letter to the Senate, in behalf of the guilty Cotta—a letter, as Tacitus remarks, "too remarkable to be omitted." "His words were as follows: 'What to write, Conscript Fathers; in what terms to express myself, or what to refrain from writing, is a matter of such perplexity, that if I know how to decide, may the just Gods and the Goddesses of vengeance doom me to die in pangs, worse than those under which I linger every day.'" We have here the features of the inward man. His crimes retaliated upon him with the keenest retribution; so true is the saying of the great philosopher, the oracle of ancient wisdom (Socrates), that if the minds of tyrants were laid open to our view, we should see them gashed and mangled with the whips and stings of horror and remorse. By blows and stripes the flesh is made to quiver, and, in like manner, cruelty and inordinate passions, malice and evil deeds, become internal executioners, and with unceasing torture goad and lacerate the heart. Of this truth, Tiberius is a melancholy instance. Neither the imperial dignity, nor the gloom of solitude, nor the rocks of Capreæ could shield him from himself. He lived on the rock of guilt, and his wounded spirit groaned in agony.*

We attach little importance to Tacitus' account of Vespasian's miracles, to which he evidently gave the least possible faith;† we pass without comment the language of the dying Germanicus, who felt that in his early and sad fate, he might call the Gods severe; we leave Tacitus to his own doubts between an inexorable fate and a free-will of Gods and men, but when we find his portraits of character, sternly true, all witnessing to the superior beauty and excellence of virtue, and himself, in spite of doubts or theories, finding his expla-

* An., VI. 6. † His., IV. 81.

nations of events in the wrath or favor of the Gods, we record his testimony as on the side of the moral order of the world.

The elder Pliny (23–79 A. D.), so eminent for his vast collections in Natural History, and for his untimely death from an eruption of Vesuvius, was an avowed Pantheist. He assails the popular mythology with considerable force, on the ground of its degrading representations of the divine nature. Yet, while his works abound with grave and noble sentiments, and expressions of contempt for the meanness and degeneracy of his age; his love of the marvellous, and his low estimate of human nature, lead him to introduce what is strange and wonderful, or adapted to illustrate the wickedness of man and the unsatisfactory arrangements of Providence. Lacking in critical judgment, he indulges in the declamations of a discontented philosophy, which carps at mankind, nature, and the Gods themselves. In the main, his philosophy was borrowed from the Stoics. He agreed with them as to the manifold divine activity of nature and the origin of the soul. But here he parted company with them. The idea of the future existence of the soul, he scouts as ridiculous, and contravening the greatest blessing of nature—death. Human wickedness he never wearies to dilate upon. His pictures of depravity will vie in coloring, however inferior in other respects, with those of Tacitus and Juvenal.

The younger Pliny (62–115 A. D.) was more of a scholar and critic, as well as a far more genial man than his uncle, the naturalist just mentioned. Eminent as an advocate, and exemplary in conduct, he is best known to us by his ten books of letters. He rarely refers to religious questions. He seems to accept the theory of a divine Providence; recognizing genius as a gift of the Gods,* ascribing to them power to deliver from disease,† and anger in view of human perjuries.‡ He counsels Maximus to "Pay reverence to the Gods, founders of states."§ He assures Trajan that the Immortal Gods hastened to reward his virtues,‖ and again informs him, "We have earnestly implored the Gods to preserve and prosper you."¶ A pleasant impression is made by the evi-

* [illegible] I., 2. † Ib., 22. ‡ B. II., 20.
§ [illegible] ‖ B. X., 1. ¶ B. X., 38.

dent regard shown by Pliny to freedom and virtue. He exulted to face danger, when fidelity to truth made him obnoxious to "wicked princes."* He showed his sensibility to the prevailing wickedness that excited his indignation. He had lived in a time "when virtue was suspected, when vice was rewarded . . . when all things were out of order, in confusion, and even turned to their contraries."† His views of human depravity, indeed, may well compare with those of the elder Pliny, or of Tacitus.

Evidently with some reluctance, he gave in his adhesion to the belief that phantoms of the dead re-appeared to man, and that events occurred prophetic of an inevitable doom, which a wise man might sometimes interpret correctly. He would have Licinius Sura advise him of his opinion, whether these phantoms were real figures, carrying in them some kind of divinity, or were empty, vain shadows, occasioned by fear acting upon the imagination.‡

CHAPTER XVI.

THE NEW CYNICS. SENECA.

If Cicero was rather an eclectic than an original thinker, we can scarcely anticipate, in his immediate and less eminent successors in the philosophical sphere, any marked manifestation of originality. Quintus Sextus, who belongs to the times of Julius Cæsar and Augustus, established a school at Rome of an eminently stoic character, adopting, however, some of the Pythagorean doctrines. He sought to improve the state of morals, and revive in his countrymen a more manly spirit. His ethical treatises enjoin a rigorous practice of virtue, which he depicts as truly great and sublime.§ It is not unattainable, but, against the seducing influences of luxury and vice, it must be earnestly and strenuously pursued. Every one, at the close of each day, should examine himself as

* Epis., B. IX., 13. † B. VIII., 14. ‡ B. VII, 27. § Ritter, IV. 165.

to what good he had done, what evil he had overcome, and what improvement he had made. The angry man should look at himself in a mirror, and learn to restrain his passions. Animal food is to be avoided, lest it incite to cruelty, or tend to luxury. Beside his son of the same name, Sextus had Sotion of Alexandria, the teacher of Seneca, as his successor, and the latter approximated to the Pythagoreans in the doctrine of the Metempsychosis, which he used as an argument for temperance and self-denial.

To this period belong the New Cynics, differing from the New Stoics only by their greater tendency to extravagance and extremes. With some objectionable features, this sect met the prevalent corruption of morals with satirical mockery, and urged propriety of life and manners, through a simple and natural life. The first of the school who rose to distinction was Demetrius, a friend of Seneca, enjoying a high repute at Rome in the times of Nero and Vespasian. Proudly independent of external advantages, he boldly invited every visitation of the Gods and every blow of fate. He wished to exhibit, in his own courage and energy, a contrast to the moral supineness of his countrymen. His philosophy was limited to rules for the conduct of life. A few precepts, fast held, were, he contended, better than large knowledge. Man should not bewail his lot of limited science, for what is of practical necessity, is laid open to all. Within himself he must seek his true treasures. Death is not an evil, and man has little to fear from his fellows; nothing from God. To him we should lay open our conscience, and our life should be ordered, as under the eye of others.

Demonax, of Cyprus, belongs to the next century. He was a very loose eclectic, and although a Cynic, frequently censured the extravagances of his sect. He honored the Gods, yet sought to emancipate men from the fear of them. When accused of impiety, he defended himself in such a way as not to conceal his contempt for the established worship. For religious ceremonies he manifested no respect, and even denied [illegible]ortality of the soul.

[illegible]dara, of the time [illegible]drian, or later, was [illegible]er. He rid[illegible] [illegible]oracles, and in

his contempt for what was reputed sacred, disregarded even decency. He urged, however, repentance and reformation, and the emancipation of the soul from idle prejudices. He insisted on free-will, human responsibility, and independence, even of high Cynic authorities.

But the extravagance of Cynic rules brought the sect into disrepute. The Stoics, with some modification of their doctrines, enjoyed more lasting consideration. Beside the oft-quoted example of the younger Cato, the sect had its martyrs, a Caius Julius, a Thraseus Pœtus, and Helvidius Priseus, whose sufferings and death ennobled their philosophy. At Rome were Athenodorus of Tarsus, teacher of Augustus, and Attalus, teacher of Seneca.

In Seneca (2 B. C.–65 A. D.) we recognize the rhetorical expounder and eulogist of the Stoic Philosophy. From the praise which he bestows upon his teacher Attalus, and the sentiments which he attributes to him, we are led to infer that from his early years, he had been accustomed to observe closely the relation of moral good and evil to the experience of human life. At a later period, the example of Cato, the model Stoic, seems to have inspired him with admiration, while his wide range of reading and observation confirmed him in his preference for the Stoic ideal of virtue.

He was, however, something of an eclectic. Familiar with the writings of Epicurus, he quotes him on some occasions with marked approval. At times he prided himself on mental independence, and professed aims which rose above the authority of schools and sects. Writing, for instance, to his friend Lucilius, who had asked the loan of some of his writings, he says: "Such as they are, I will send them; and entreat you to read them, as the writings of one who is still seeking after truth; not presuming to have found it, and seeking it with earnestness and resolution; for I have not given up myself to any particular master. I have not enlisted myself solemnly in any sect. I trust, indeed, much to the judgment of great men, but at the same time, despise not my own." *

We attach little, if any, importance to the tradition of Seneca's correspondence with the Apostle Paul, although it is not

* Epis., XLV.

improbable that he may have come in contact with some who bore the Christian name. From first to last, he is the Stoic rather than the Christian. Some of his sentiments approximate to the truths of revelation, but we are not warranted in ascribing them to a Christian source. His repeated defence and manifest approval of suicide, although not altogether in harmony with other views which he maintains, might serve to show how far, on some points at least, he was from the Christian standard.

He avows it, moreover, to be his purpose, in his writings, to oppose, with all his powers, the prevalent debauchery and frivolity. This opposition, he declares, is his daily, though ineffective employment, yet these vices should not gain the upper hand without his vigorous resistance. Undoubtedly, this practical aim led him to appeal for motives to the moral and religious sphere, and to study with more intense application, the great questions of human duty and destiny. He professes his high estimate of the privilege of uninterrupted meditation and investigation of the facts and laws of nature, in the broad sense of this word. His long continued ill-health, even at as early a date as the reign of Caligula, when the report of his hopeless consumption saved the tyrant from the crime of ordering his execution, served to turn his attention to questions remote from civil strife, and probably led him to engage more deeply than ever in studies that had become already congenial.

In his preface to *Quæstiones Naturales*, he indicates the class of topics most suited to his tastes. He professes himself grateful that he might investigate the material universe—"who is its author and guardian; what God is, whether self-absorbed, or disposed to regard us; whether He is always creating, or has created once for all; etc." A life consumed in mere toil and sweat, or eating and drinking, seems to him worthy only of contempt. The man who has not risen above the common level of humanity is an object to be despised. He should be prepared to understand heavenly things, and become worthy of communion with God. In this connection occurs the passage which a German writer* considers one of

* Die Anschauung des Universum, von Wilhelm Bernhardt. Wittemberg, 1861.

the most important in his writings—"What is God? The mind of the universe. . . . What is the difference between His nature and ours? The better part of ours is the soul. With Him, soul is all. He is reason entire."

The same writer also calls attention to the grounds of that popularity which Seneca's views of physics enjoyed in the Middle Ages. Among these were his doctrine of the Unity of God, in marked contrast to the Polytheism widely prevalent; his teachings as to the immortality of the soul, and the life to come; his views of human depravity, the sinful apostacy of man, and the penal administration of God. On these subjects he approximated to the Christian standard, and gave evidence of the studious attention with which he had investigated these great problems of human destiny, which come within the sphere of reason, or challenge the curiosity of men. For much that he accepted and maintained, he was evidently indebted to the wisdom of his predecessors, or the traditions of the past. But it is to his credit that he sifted the wheat from the chaff, that he was sagacious in deciding what to accept and what to reject, and that when he speaks on these grave topics, concerning which many great men had doubted, or been divided in opinion, he speaks with the confidence of intelligent conviction.

We are often filled with surprise and admiration, as we follow him along lines of thought where few could be found to pioneer his way. He seems, as if by a flash of intuition, to apprehend the moral relations of men, and the proper aims and duties of human life. He sets himself up as a teacher—not an example, for he confesses his imperfections and deficiencies—and his words are memorable, alike for their terseness and their truth. That he stood aloof from Christianity—that the vigor of his years had passed before he could have had any knowledge of Christianity—adds to our surprise.

This fact, however, only invests with new interest those sentiments, in regard to the constitution of the moral system, which he had derived from his predecessors, or had developed as the fruit of his own experience and reflection. No writer before him, not even Cicero, has gone so fully into questions

bearing upon the present condition and prospective destiny of the soul. We find in his writings, what we vainly seek for in other productions of his own, or an earlier age, the distinct recognition, not only of the leading proofs of the existence of a moral system, instituted by an overruling Providence, but of those conditions of human depravity and the duty of self-denial, which make the present state one of severe probation. If we find him sometimes wavering between diverse and contrasted opinions, such doubt and indecision, as we have seen, are by no means peculiar to himself.

Sometimes, evidently for the sake of argument, he seems to concede the possibility of Chance, or Fate. He says, for instance: "Whether Fate binds us by an inexorable law, or God, the Sovereign of the world, disposeth of all things, or Chance impels and tosseth about at random human affairs: still Philosophy must be our defence."*

Nor is he blind to the fact that the material universe—and human affairs, so far as they are involved in it—is subject to what we recognize as the laws of nature. He remarks: "A chain of causes, invincible and invariable, binds and draws all things with it."†

But, back of matter and all material phenomena, he recognizes an intelligent Mind, a supreme director and ruler. After citing evidence of this, he adds: "All this, says Epicurus, *Nature* gives me. But when you say so, do you not perceive that you use another name for God? For what else is Nature, but God and the divine reason, pervading the whole world and all its parts? If you wish, you may call Him otherwise; this Author of things, Jupiter Optimus and Maximus, Tonans, Stator, for He is Stator and Establisher, by whose goodness all things stand, and if you should call Him also Fate, you would not go astray, for fate is nothing else but the involved series of causes, and He the First Cause of all, from which all the rest depend. So many titles only express as many functions."‡

remarks: "What, then, is the First Cause? Why, that is, God; so that there are not many and

† Ib., LXXVII. ‡ De Benef., Lib. IV., § 7.

particular causes, but one, upon which all others depend, and that is the efficient." *

And in the same connection: "The universe consists of God and matter. God rules and governs all things, which being dispersed around, follow Him, their ruler and their guide." † Elsewhere he asks: "If there were not an ordering and overruling Providence, how comes it that the universality of mankind should ever have so unanimously agreed in the madness of worshipping a power that can neither hear nor help us?" ‡

But as to the extent of his recognition of "Fate," "Nature," "Providence," or "The world," as governing forces, or their relations to the supreme, Seneca does not leave us in doubt. Speaking of the old Etruscans, he says: "Never did they believe that this Jupiter whom we honor at the Capitol and in other temples, scatters with his hand the thunderbolts, but they mean our Jupiter, the supporter and ruler of the All, the Soul and Spirit, the Lord and Creator of this world-structure, to whom the name belongs. Will you call Him Fate? You will not err; for that He is, on which all depends, the cause of causes. Will you call Him Providence? With justice, for He it is whose wisdom cares for the world, so that it moves on without confusion and fulfills its tasks. Will you call Him Nature? You will not err in this, for He it is from whom all has sprung, and by whose breath we live. Will you call Him World? You do not deceive yourself in this, for He is the All which you behold, distributed into its parts, and maintaining itself by its own power. Just this was also the belief of the Etruscans, and hence they said that the lightnings were sent down from Jupiter, while, without Him nothing takes place." §

The character of God is brought into view, not only inferentially from a study of those features of the universe which evince his power and justice, but by direct assertion. His providence is represented as extending to all. Nothing is contemned as beneath his care or notice. "The Gods are neither disdainful nor envious; they admit, and reach out

* Epis., LXV. † Ib., LXV. ‡ De Benef., Ch. IV.
§ Natural Questions, II. 45.

their hands to those who are ascending. Do you wonder that men should ascend to the Gods? God descends to men, or rather He dwells within them. There is no good man without God." * God moreover is good. "In what then does Jupiter excel a good man? He is everlastingly good."† "The sufferings that men endure are no malicious inflictions;" "The man is mistaken who thinks the Gods afflict any one willingly. They cannot. They can neither do, nor receive an injury." ‡ All the thoughts of men, as well as their actions, are known to God, and the following reminds us of that expression which the Apostle Paul ascribes to some of the Greek poets—that "in Him we live and move and have our being." "God is a great (I know not what) incomprehensible power. It is to Him that we live, and to Him that we must approve ourselves. What avails it that consciences are hidden from men, when our souls lie open to God?" § The omnipresençe of God is made the sanction of duty. "So live with men as if God saw you; so speak with God as if men heard you." ‖ "What profits it, if any matter is kept secret from men? Nothing is hidden from God." ¶ "The Gods are witnesses of everything." ** God is moreover an object of worship. He is near us, and seeks and accepts the homage of the heart. As a spirit, He is to be worshipped, not by forms, but "in spirit and in truth."

"There is no need to lift up your hands to Heaven, or to pray the Ædile to admit you to the ear of an image, that so your prayers may be heard the better. God is near thee; He is with thee. . . A holy spirit resides within us, the observer of good and evil, and our constant guardian. As we treat Him, he treats us. At least no man is without a God. Can any one ever rise above the power of fortune without His assistance? It is He that inspires us with thoughts, upright, just, pure. We do not indeed pretend to say *what* God; but that a God dwells in the breast of every good man is certain." ††

* Epis., LXXIII. † Ib., III. ‡ Ib., XCIII. § Ib., XV.
‖ Ib., X. ¶ Ib., LXXXIII. ** Ib., CII.
†† Ib., XLI. The original is more forcible and pointed than Morell's translation: "Prope est a te Deus, tecum est, intus est. . . Sacer intra nos spiritus sedet, malorum bono rumque vestrorum observator et custos. . . Bonus vir sine Deo nemo est. . . . In unoquoque virorum bonorum (quis Deus incertum est) habitat Deus."

In the same strain, Seneca in another place indicates the worship which is acceptable to God, and shows how it is connected with a correct knowledge of His being and His relations to man. Speaking of the rites observed by some, he remarks: "God wants not such services, nor requires at his altars such idle ministers. For why? He himself ministers to man. He is everywhere present and easy of access to all. . . A man will never be perfect in religious duty till he hath conceived in his mind a right notion of God, as the possessor and giver of all things." *

A large portion of Seneca's writings is devoted to an exposition of what may be called stoic ethics. His moral essays, frequently enriched by illustrative anecdotes, take up the topics of Anger, Consolation, Providence, Tranquillity of Mind, the Constancy of the Wise Man, Clemency, the Shortness of Life, the Happy Life, the Leisure of the Wise Man, Benefits. The most noticeable of these is the one on Providence. It proposes to answer the question—How, if the world is governed by Providence, many evils befall the good? That there is a Providence, Seneca infers from the constitution and order of nature, but as his questioner admits it, he proceeds with little delay to meet the objection suggested.

It is worthy of note that at the outset of his treatise, Seneca adverts to what is now termed the reign of law, even where only disorder and irregularity are apparent. To his discussion of "Natural Questions," we may attach very little scientific importance, but it is evident that his attention had been called to the order of nature, which really exists, in spite of apparent irregularities. The extraordinary phenomena of nature, as storms and earthquakes, are not, he asserts, accidental, nor do they come to pass (*sine ratione*) without design. They take place according to law, and each has its own proper cause. They take place neither by chance or caprice. The tides change with the hour and day, but they are obedient to the influence of the moon. It is this recognition of natural laws at the outset which prepares the way for the enlightened views which follow.

The nature of things is such, says Seneca, that the good

* Epis., XCIII.

cannot be injured by what is good. Through the virtue of good men they are at friendship with God. They are his scholars, imitators, true offspring. Like stern fathers, the Great Father of all educates his children to virtue.

But nothing really evil can happen to the good man. Whatever takes place, he makes it tributary to a soul too powerful to be governed by anything external. Not that he does not feel its force, but he overcomes it. Adversity is his exercise. Like an athlete, willingly subject to severe drill, he welcomes what may train his energies. Virtue, without an adversary, pines away. Endurance reveals what it can do and bear. Yet the question is not what is borne, but how it is borne. God's fatherly affection for the good is manly, rather than womanly. He would have them strive, and if they fall, fight on their knees. The brave man, matched with a hard lot, is a sight for God to behold. On earth there is nothing more beautiful. Seneca's ideal is Cato, standing erect amid the ruins of the republic, brave and true till hope is dead, and then opening out his own path of escape from life by his sword.

But what the objector calls adverse and repugnant, is for the interest of the good man. Exile, want, household bereavements, ignominy, bodily prostration, may all be like the remedies of the surgeons, painful but healthful. The Stoic Demetrius is quoted with commendation for saying, none can be more unhappy than he who has never experienced adversity. The gladiator counts it an ignominy to be matched with an inferior, and to conquer without danger is to conquer without glory. Fortune seeks out the brave to contend with; the craven she disdains. She allots death to Mucius, poverty to Fabricius, exile to Rutilius, torture to Regulus, poison to Socrates, death to Cato. Can one count Mecænas more happy, worn and sleepless with domestic anxieties, and invoking the soothing influences of music, wine, and a thousand pleasures? One will keep his vigils on feathers, the other on the cross. Far as vice has triumphed over the human race, we must believe more would choose to be born a Regulus than a Mecænas. Was Socrates ill-treated? He accepted his potion as *medicamentum immortalitatis*, and discussed death till it

came. How preferable to the lot of those whose luxurious indulgence induces vomiting! To overcome calamity and terror belongs to greatness. But how shall I know that greatness, till fortune has exhibited it in conflict? If there is no one beside yourself on the arena, you may bear off the crown, not victory. I pronounce you wretched in that you never were wretched, and have passed through life without an adversary; you need experiment to know yourself. Great men have chased flying dangers, as brave soldiers the foe. Soldierly spirits glory in wounds. In the storm you may appreciate the pilot, in the battle the soldier. Fear not what the immortal Gods apply as stings to urge on the soul to effort. Calamity is the occasion of virtue. The veteran is not moved at the sight of blood. So God hardens, trains, owns those whom he approves and loves. The soldier, sent out on a desperate night-march, does not say, the general judged ill of me. If we suffer, God counts us worthy to test what human nature can bear. It is not cruelty, but discipline. The energy of barbarous nations comes from what they have to endure from exposure and inclement skies. The tree is frail that springs up in the sheltered, sunny vale.

But the good man's hardships are also for the common welfare. He is to show that the true good is not what the mass of men hope, or the real evil what they fear. Riches are not *the* good. Let the fool have them. The Senate consults the whole day long, while the idlers trifle and amuse themselves. Good men toil from choice, not dragged to it. Demetrius would grant to the Gods what they ask, without waiting for them to take it. We should suffer willingly, not compelled. Why should we complain? Frail ourselves, we have received what is perishable. Let nature use her own as she will, cause follows cause in fixed order. The Maker and Ruler of all has written the fates, but He, too, follows them. The artificer cannot change His material. Some things cannot be separated from others. The brave man cannot have a smooth path. He must be tossed as on the waves.

Seneca concludes that God removes all real evils from good men, such as crime, shameful, lustful, avaricious thoughts. He sends upon them only what they invoke sometimes for

themselves, even exile or death. Why do they suffer hardship? To teach others to suffer. They were born to be examples. Others may have false good, empty imaginations, but no solid or pure happiness. This is in the soul, and it is enduring.

In this treatise, we have the leading thoughts of Seneca's philosophy. He is fond of repeating them in varied phraseology, and with all the attractions of rhetorical expression. The providence of God and the wise man's immunity from evil, are the two foci around which conjointly he makes his discussion revolve. In his other treatises there are some thoughts that are germane to our subject, but it is in his letters, as artistic as his treatises, that we meet with his most memorable passages.

One point, to which he often recurs, is the attraction and obligation of virtue, independent of any results which may flow from it. With Cicero, he asserts a natural and radical distinction between right and wrong. Against Epicurus, he stoutly contends that vice is to be avoided, not for the inconveniencies which it brings with it, but because it is evil in itself. These inconveniencies, however, are by no means overlooked.*

The constitution of things, and the nature of the soul, as harmonizing with virtue, and at war with vice, are impressively urged by Seneca. Virtue has a natural beauty which commends it, and exercises "a kind of charm over the soul." Even wicked men are compelled to pay an involuntary tribute to it. "What is morally excellent pleases by its own nature, and virtue has such a charm, that even wicked men are compelled by what has been implanted in their nature to approve the better."†

In the human mind, moreover, there is, even in those who are abandoned in wickedness, what may be regarded as a

* Illic dissentiamus cum Epicuro, ubi dicit, nihil justum esse natura, et crimina vitanda esse, quia vitari metus non possit. Hic consentiamus, mala facinora conscientia flagellari, et plurimum illi tormentorum esse, eo quod perpetua illam solicitudo urget et verberat, quod sponsoribus securitatis suæ non potest credere.—*Epis.*, XCVII.

† De Benficius, Lib. IV., § 17. The original is: (Honesta) placent suapte natura, adeoque gratiosa virtus est, ut insitum etiam sit in malis probare meliora.

natural restraint, a moral sense. "They have, even when led off to the most abandoned courses, a sense of good, so that, though they may neglect, they cannot altogether be ignorant of what is shameful, and all men cover up their sins."*

The very practice of men in this respect is a concession to the authority of virtue, and guilt itself cannot hope for more than temporary security. It fears exposure. The good conscience courts the light. Wickedness is afraid of the very darkness. As Epicurus well said, the guilty may chance to escape detection. He cannot be confident of it."†

The office of conscience, as the witness and accuser of the soul within itself, is presented to view in a style which suggests the nature of those opportunities for observation which, at a period of abounding immorality and crime, Seneca must have enjoyed. As if the guilty parties were before him, and he was giving expression to their hopes and fears, he exclaims: "What is it that we do? To what end is it to stand contriving, and to hide ourselves? We are under a guard, and there is no escaping from our keeper. One man may be parted from another by travel, death, and sickness; but there is no dividing us from ourselves. 'Tis to no purpose to creep into a corner where nobody shall see us. Ridiculous madness! Suppose no mortal eye could find us out; he that has a conscience gives evidence against himself."‡

He returns repeatedly to the subject. He exposes the tremulous anxiety of those who are made conscious of their wickedness. "An evil conscience may sometimes think itself safe, but never secure. For a criminal, though not immediately apprehended, must think himself liable thereto. Even his dreams disturb him. His own guilt stares him in the face: he never supposes it sufficiently obliterated, or closely enough concealed from the world."§

And again: "Conscience accuses them and betrays them to themselves. It is the property of guilt to tremble. It would

* Epis., XCVII. Alloqui ut scias, subesse animis, etiam in pessima abductis, boni sensum, nec ignorari turpe, sed negligi: Omnes peccata dissimulant.

† Epis., XCVII. Bona Conscientia prodire vult, et conspici: ipsas nequitia tenebras timet. Eleganter itaque ab Epicuro dictum puto, Potest nocenti contingere ut lateat, latendi fides non potest.

‡ Epis., I. xvi. § Ib., CV.

be bad for us indeed, forasmuch as many crimes escape the law, the judge and penal statutes, if these natural and grievous punishments were not immediately inflicted, and fear supplied not the place of an officer."*

Thus it is that retribution is sure to overtake the transgressor. "The least and lightest consequence of wickedness falls upon others, the worst and heaviest part of it stays behind and afflicts the doer. As our Attalus was wont to say: *Malitia ipsa maximam partem veneni sui bibit,* malignity generally drinks the greatest part of its own poison. The venom which serpents throw out to destroy withal, and yet retain without prejudice to themselves, is not like this; for this torments the possessor. The ungrateful man torments and racks himself. . . . The pleasure the wicked enjoy in the reception of a benefit, is but one and short; whereas the pleasure it gives a wise man is large and perpetual."†

So far as the constitution of the soul itself is concerned, retribution is inevitable and immediate; and of all kinds of penalty this is the most severe. "The greatest punishment of evil deeds lies in the deeds themselves. They are punished immediately, as soon as they are done, nay, while they are doing." ‡

The vindication of moral government is found in the fact that, "Various as are the opinions of men in these respects (as to the real good), yet all, with one mouth, as they say, declare that a grateful return is due to the well-deserving." §

The true and proper aim of human life must be that which accords with the superior and peculiar nature of man. Virtue finds, according to Seneca, its real foundation in what Dr. Samuel Clarke has called the reason and nature of things: "What is the excellency in man? Reason. Perfect reason, therefore, is the proper good of men. . . This reason, when

* Epis., XCV. Multos fortuna liberat pœna, metu neminem. Quare? Quia infixa nobis ejus rei aversatio est, quam natura damnavit. Ideo nunquam fides latendi sit etiam latentibus: quia coarguit illos conscientia, et ipsos sibi ostendit. Proprium autem est nocentium, trepidare. Male de nobis actum erat, quod multa scelera legum et judicem effugiunt, et scripta supplicia: nisi illa naturalia et gravia [illegible] præsentibus solverent, et in locum patientiæ timor cederet.—SENECA, Epis., [illegible] (Melmoth does not follow the numbers of the Latin edition (1672), which [illegible])

† Ib., [illegible] ‡ Ib., LXXXVII. § Ib., LXXXI.

perfect, is called virtue, or what is right and fit in all circumstances." *

Nor, though happiness attends virtuous action, is the pleasure of sensuous gratification the proper aim of men. "The sum of our happiness consists not in gratifying the flesh. That only is the true good, which is prescribed by reason—solid and everlasting; which cannot be decreased or diminished." †

In a fuller exposition of this matter, Seneca remarks: "It is not money. . . . a crowd of servants . . beauty or strength that can make you happy; all these things are subject to decay. We must, therefore, look out for something which is not to be impaired by length of time; something which fears no let or hindrance; and than which nothing better can be desired. And what is that? A soul that is truly just and good and great. For what else can you call this but a *Deity within?* And which a freedman or a slave may be master of, as well as a Roman knight. . . From any obscure corner of the world, you may rise to heaven." ‡

And again, he gives us his lofty ideal of Stoic virtue: "He is not the happy man whom the vulgar esteem so, on account of his great wealth, but whose mind is all goodness; upright and noble, trampling upon what the world holds in admiration; who sees no one with whom he would change condition; who reckons a man happy, only in that he preserves the dignity of man; who takes nature for his guide; conducts himself by her laws, and lives up to her prescriptions; whose truly good possessions are such as no external power can take away; who turns evil into good; sure and steady in point of judgment, without prejudice, without fear; whom no external force can disturb, though perchance it move him, whom fortune only rakes, but cannot wound." §

The first and greatest good is that which pertains to the soul itself. "The first good—what is it? It is a mind or soul regardful of truth; well knowing what to avoid and what to pursue; setting a value upon things, not according to fancy, but reason; intermixing herself with the great universe, and contemplating what is doing therein; intent also upon her

* Epis., LXXVI. † Ib., LXXIV. ‡ Ib., XXVI. § Ib., XLV.

own thoughts and actions; as truly great as zealous in her endeavors; alike invincible by prosperity and adversity, subjecting herself to neither; . . . Undisturbed, intrepid, whom no violence can shake, no changes or chances can either lift up or cast down. Such is the soul when accomplished with virtue." *

Hence "Whoever desires to be happy, let him think—whatever is, is right. If he thinks otherwise, he by no means judgeth rightly of Providence, since many inconveniences happen to just men, and since, whatever is our lot, it is but of short duration in comparison of the time past and to come. From this murmuring it follows, that we are very ungrateful interpreters of divine matters." †

Thus the Stoic ideal of "living according to nature," is substantially the same with that which Dr. Samuel Clarke and Bishop Butler have been willing to accept. It is identical with what is fit and reasonable; "What is the *summum bonum*, or chief good of man? The behaving himself agreeably to the dictates of nature." ‡

Indeed, "to live according to nature," may be regarded as the substance of all rules of duty and all conditions of happiness. "Everything that a man ought to do, or avoid doing, may be comprehended in a few words; whence to *follow Nature* may be looked upon as a complete direction and rule of human duty." §

Seneca does not overlook the necessity of making life accord with the conditions of a probationary state. "We cannot as yet reach heaven, till duly qualified by this interval." ‖

Hence, he says, presenting what seems, indeed, a Christian ideal: "That light which now thou seest dimly, informs us the Gods are witnesses of all our actions: it commands us to make ourselves acceptable to them; to prepare ourselves for communion with them, and have always eternity in view. . . . What can deter him from the practical discharge of every duty, who dies in this hope?" ¶

And again: "Let us, therefore, so dispose our minds as if

* Epis., LXVI. † Ib., LXXIV. ‡ Ib., LXVI.
§ Ib., XCIII. ‖ Ib., CII. ¶ Ib., CII.

this day were to be our last. Let us defer nothing. Let us daily make even with life." *

That life is to be regarded as a discipline, and that sufferings are to be viewed as wise and sometimes necessary chastisements, is distinctly taught by Seneca. This is forcibly presented in the Essay on Providence. "Whom He loves, He hardens, chastises, disciplines." † "Nothing seems to me more unhappy than the man whom no adversity has ever befallen." "The life free from care, and from any buffetings of fortune, is a dead sea." ‡ Hence resignation is a duty. "It is best to endure what you cannot mend, and without murmuring to attend upon God, by whose ordering all things come to pass. He is a bad soldier who follows his captain complaining."

But that the soul may shake off the chains and burdens of its present state, effort must be made: "Mortifications must be undergone for the attainment of liberty; it is not to be purchased for nothing." §

This implies the discharge of duties repugnant to the passions and lusts of men, as, for instance, love to enemies, if they have ever done us a benefit. "Forget the injury, and be always mindful of the benefit." ‖

There are grave difficulties in the way of attaining the Stoic ideal, and the gravest of these, Seneca displays to view in those assertions of human depravity and proneness to evil, in which, among ancient philosophers, he stands almost alone. He notes, for instance, the vices of his own age. We can accept his testimony, accordant with that of Tacitus, when he says: "Pleasure is sought out in every quarter; no vice keeps within its own sphere. Luxury runs headlong into avarice; justice and honesty are quite forgot; nothing is thought base and scandalous where the gain is sweet. Man, that sacred animal, man, I say, is killed in mere jest and sport." ¶

Still stronger language, if possible, is elsewhere found on the subject of human depravity. "Every vice exists in every man, though every vice is not prominent in each." **

* Epis., CI. † De Prov., § 4. ‡ Epis., LXVII. § Ib., CIV.
‖ Ib., LXXXI. ¶ Ib., XCIII. ** De Benef., I. 10.

"Not one of us is without fault." * "These are vices of mankind, and not of the times. No age has been free from fault."†

From these scenes of contemporary vice and cruelty, he looks back fondly to the "Golden Age," and in his ninetieth letter portrays, with a poet's enthusiasm, its peace and innocence. But a great change has supervened. "We are all prone to evil, because herein we seldom want either a leader or a companion. Not but that the business goes on without a leader or companion; men are not only prone, but run headlong into evil." ‡

New evidence of human depravity is afforded by men's studious concealment of their vices. Here, in fact, is a test which Seneca does not overlook: "I will tell you how to judge of the morals of men. You will scarce find any one who dares to live with open doors. It is self-consciousness, not pride, that sets the porter there. We live as if we were in fear of being caught, or seen, unawares. But what avails it to hide ourselves, and escape the eyes and ears of men? A good conscience calls a crowd around it undismayed; a bad one, even in solitude, is anxious and uneasy." §

That experience of internal conflict between opposite elements in the soul, which is so graphically sketched in Rom. vii., finds more than a dim reflection in the pages of Seneca. ‖

Hence, the conditions of human probation are sorely aggravated. For instance: "It costs a man no small matter to be grateful." ¶ And again: "The common madness of the world makes this (to live up to the dignity of man's nature) difficult. We push one another on to vice." **

* De Ira, II. 28. † Epis., XCVII.

‡ Epis., XCV. The original is more forcible: "Omne tempus Clodios, non omne Catones, feret. Ad deteriora faciles sumus, quia nec dux potest, nec comes deesse; et res etiam ipsa sine duce, sine comite, procedit. Non pronum est tantum ad vitia, sed præceps."

§ Epis., XLIII.

‖ Quid est hoc, quod nos alio tendentes, alio trahit, et eo unde recedere cupimus, impellit? Quid colluctatur cum animo nostro nec permittit nobis quidquam semel velle? Fluctuamus inter varia consilia, nihil libere volumus, nihil absolute, nihil semper. . . . Nemo per se satis valet, ut emergat; oportet manum aliquis porrigat, aliquis educat.—*Epis.*, 52.

¶ Epis., LXXXI. ** Ib., XLI.

The attainment of the envied lot of triumphant virtue is not frequent. "Whom do you think I here call a *good man?* One but of the second class, for, of the first, you will scarce find such a phœnix in a thousand years." *

The conditions of virtuous attainment, however, are laid down, as well as the enviableness of the blessing sought. "The mind that hath once disclaimed all external things, and is determined to quit the field, stands upon an insuperable eminence, protecting itself in its own citadel; while every hostile weapon falls beneath it. . . . But it is the knowledge of self and nature that can enable us to do this. Let a man, therefore, know and consider from whence he came, and whither he is going; what is good for him, what the contrary; what to pursue and what to avoid." †

The faith of the good man, necessary in order to render acceptable worship, is thus sketched: "The first step to the right worshipping of God, is, to believe there is a God. And next, to ascribe to Him all majesty and all goodness; to know, likewise, that it is He who governs the world, and presides over the universe as His own; who hath taken mankind in general under His protection, and on some is pleased to bestow particular favor. He can neither do, nor suffer evil. God, however, is sometimes pleased to chastise and lay heavy penalties upon some persons, under the appearance of some good." ‡

Seneca does not overlook the apparent inequalities of retributive justice on earth. Speaking with reference to the great and destructive fire that had recently taken place at Lyons, he remarks, "Men and cities are alike the sport of fate." § But it is worthy of note that, asserting, as Seneca does, the fact of human depravity, he seems scarcely to have noted the importance of some theory in accordance with which the Supreme Ruler might forgive sin. Indeed, he apparently assumes that repentance is all that is required, and that what may be accepted at the tribunal of the soul, will also be accepted at the tribunal of the great Judge. He says, for instance: "I conceal nothing from myself: I let nothing slip; for why should I fear my own errors? It will be easy

* Epis., XLII. † Ib., LXXXII. ‡ Ib., XCIII. § Ib., XCI.

for me to say, See thou doest this no more, Seneca, and for this time I pardon thee." *

With his attention thus directed to moral questions, Seneca would naturally regard with peculiar interest the destiny of the soul, and the relation of soul and body. He vindicates the curiosity which he in this matter avows, on the grounds of reason. He asks: "Shall I not inquire after these things? Shall I remain forever ignorant whence I came; and whether I am to see this world but once or often; whither I am going, and what happy mansion awaits the soul, when delivered from the servitude of the body? Do you forbid me to concern myself with heaven, that is, do you command me to live with my head ever bowed down to the earth? No! I am greater, and born to nobler purposes, than to be the vile bond-slave of my body, which I consider in no other light than as the chain which deprives me of my native liberty. This body, then, let Fortune attack when she pleases: she cannot wound me through it: all that can suffer in me is the body; subject as this tabernacle is to injury, the soul that dwells therein is still free." †

It is true that Seneca sometimes speaks of the soul as possibly mortal, and uses language which seems to betray his own lack of clear conviction on the subject. In one case he presents the alternative of death as either annihilating consciousness, or opening the door to liberty. He says: "Death either quite consumes us, or sets us free. If the latter, what a better state may we not expect, disencumbered of this load of flesh! If the former, there is an end of all; we are equally deprived of good and evil." ‡

Again, as if forgetful of his professions of belief on other occasions, he asserts: "To die is not to be; and what that is, I already know. It will be the same after I am gone, as it was before I was in being." §

On another occasion, he seems to represent his faith in immortality as a fond fancy, a sort of Elysian reverie in which it was pleasant to linger. Writing to Licinius, he says: "I was delighting myself with an inquiry into the immortality of the soul; nay, more, with a firm belief in it. For I was

* De Ira, B. 3. † Epis., LXV. ‡ Ib. XXIV. § Ib., LIV.

easily induced to give credit to the opinions of some great men; though I must own they seemed rather to promise this great truth than to prove it. However, I gave myself up to this, so great hope; I began to disdain myself, and despise the concerns of life, even the remains of my yet unbroken age, being about to launch into that immeasurable time, and take possession of eternity, when I was suddenly awakened by the receipt of your epistle, and so lost the sweet reverie, which I will try to recover and redeem, as soon as I have despatched this, my present engagement to you." *

Far more frequently, in speaking of the soul's immortality, Seneca either assumes it as unquestioned, or sustains it by arguments which seem to carry conviction to his own mind. The grounds of proof, which are oftenest urged, are the nature, capacities and aspirations of the soul itself. The body is a mere "clog," and its destiny is not to be conjoined or identified with that of the soul. Seneca holds that "The soul of man is great and generous, admitting no other bounds to be set to her than what are common with God. First, she acknowledgeth not any terrestrial city, as Ephesus or Alexandria, etc. No, she claims for her country the universe. . . . Nor, secondly, does she suffer herself to be confined to any number of years. All years, she says, are mine. . . When the day shall come that will separate this composition, human and divine, I will leave this body here where I found it, and return to the Gods; not that I am altogether absent from them even now, though detained from superior happiness by this heavy earthly clog. This short stay in mortal life is but the prelude to a better and more lasting life above." †

And again, "It is a very strong argument with me that the soul is derived from a higher source, when it looks upon all earthly things, wherewith it is at present conversant, as mean and vile; and is under no dread to leave them. . . . Though such a weak and putrid body be our portion, we nevertheless lay schemes for eternity; and as far as human life can possibly

* Epis., CII. The original is worthy of being reproduced. "Credebam enim facile opinionibus magnorum virorum, rem gratissiman (animæ eternitatem) promittentium magis quam probantium." † Epis., CII.

be extended, so far do we stretch our hopes, never satisfied with riches or power." *

In speaking of Scipio Africanus, Seneca expresses his full confidence of his blessedness in heaven. He says: "Nor did I in the least doubt but that his soul returned to heaven, from whence it came, not because he was the leader of great armies, but for his excellent moderation and piety." †

Even now the soul "makes excursions," as it were, toward its native clime. "The wise man, and even the disciple of wisdom, remains indeed still in the body, yet the better part of him frequently makes excursions; all his thoughts are set upon sublime things; and as if bound by the military oath, he looks upon the gift of this life as his present pay; and so reforms himself as to have neither love nor hatred thereto; and from hence patiently endures all that mortality is subject to, well knowing that greater and more solid satisfactions are yet to come." ‡

The relation of the body to the soul is one of such subordination that their several destinies must be different. "This body is the load and punishment of the soul; the soul perpetually labors under the weight of it. It is actually in bonds, till philosophy comes to its relief, permits it to breathe awhile, and delight itself with the vast prospect of nature; and to transfer the affections from things below to things above, from the terrestrial to such as are heavenly." §

Again: "Matter is ever subject to his Almighty power, and what God is in the world, such is the mind or soul in man; what in the world is matter, in us is body. Let the worse, then, be subservient to the better." ‖

Seneca does not overlook the fact that change of form or condition is consistent with continued existence: "Consider that none of these things which are taken from our sight, and are hid in the bosom of nature, from whence they come and go, are entirely consumed. They go off the stage, but do not perish; and death, which we so much dread and detest, puts off life for a while, but does not deprive us of it entirely. A day will come, which shall raise us again to light, and

* Epis., CXX. † Ib., LXXXVI. ‡ Ib., LXV. § Ib. ‖ Ib.

which many indeed would refusé, had they not forgot all that was past. . . . Things that seem to die and be lost, are only changed." *

Hence, again, "The soul, which is of the finest and most subtle quality, cannot be surprised and crushed within the body. . . . If it survives the body, it can by no means perish, because it is not perishable, since no immortality admits an exception, nor can anything destroy what is naturally eternal." †

We are thus prepared for the sublime, if not Christian conclusion, "(That hour) is not the last to the soul, if it be to the body. Whatever things are spread around thee, look upon them only as the furniture of an inn. We must leave them and go on. . . . This day, which men are apt to dread as their last, is but the birthday of our eternity." ‡

This is the warrant of the consolatory language which Seneca employs, in speaking of the death of a friend—language which he enforces by reference to "wise men:" "Perhaps—if the report and opinion of some wise men be true, that there is a place prepared for our reception hereafter—he, whom we fondly imagined to have perished, is sent before us to that happy mansion." §

It will be seen that while Seneca is unreserved in his assertion that sin is its own torment, and that the evil-doer, above all, injures himself, he has little, if anything, to say of future retribution. We are left to infer from his avowed views of the nature of the soul itself, that a change must take place in it, unless it is to be hereafter what it is now, its own accuser, witness, and tormentor.

The sincerity with which Seneca avowed his convictions will scarcely be disputed. He may betray oftentimes perhaps an ostentatious sentimentalism, and he may have been more moved by a regard for the opinions of others than he was willing to confess; but in his writings generally, we have the candid statement of what he at least wished to believe. He sought to harmonize his beliefs with one another, and with the facts of experience, and in doing so, he reached conclusions on some points that do him honor. Slavery he repudi-

* Epis., XXXVI. † Ib., LVII. ‡ Ib., CII. § Ib., LXIII.

ated, prevalent as it was. He says, answering an objector: "They are slaves, you urge; nay, they are men. They are slaves! Nay, they are comrades. They are slaves! Nay, they are humble friends. They are slaves! Nay, they are fellow-slaves, if you reflect that fortune has the same power over both. . . . He is a slave, you say! Nay, perchance he is free in spirit. He is a slave! Will this harm him? Show me who is not. One is a slave to lust, another to avarice, a third to ambition, all alike to fear." Again: "He whom you call slave, is sprung from the same origin, enjoys the same climate, breathes the same air, and is subject to the same conditions of life and death." *

Thus, he held that God is good, as well as just, and that all men, if not brethren, are equals in His sight. Admitting the high moral aim of Seneca's philosophy, it will naturally be asked, was he sincere in it? and how far was his own life consistent with it? Happily, his own confessions help us to an answer. Evidently he had been reproached for not living up to his own professed standard. The duty and privilege of the good man, as he taught, was to be independent of external good, and yet he had accumulated a large fortune. He praised poverty, and yet he was rich. His contemporaries could not help noting it, and throwing it in his teeth. But he defends himself by admitting that on some points, he did not strictly adhere to the Stoic creed. It was, he confessed, more comfortable to enjoy wealth than to want,† and though an inferior good, it was, on the whole, to be preferred, so long as it was not inconsistent with the highest good.

I do not tie myself,‡ he says, to the authority of any leading Stoic. Only the rule which all accept—live according to nature—does he profess to subscribe to. This is happiness, under whatever conditions. But some barking objector may ask, Wh[illegible] talk m[illegible]ely than you live? Why weep in[illegible]egard [illegible] calumny, cult[illegible] your fields be[illegible] need[illegible] your rule in f[illegible]dulge in rich [illegible]? A[illegible]ch objecti[illegible]lies Seneca; [illegible] as [illegible] now I [illegible]

* Epis., [illegible] De V[illegible] ‡ [illegible]

you. "I am not a wise man, and neither, to feed your malice, will I be. I exact of myself not to be equal to the best, but better than the bad; this is enough for me, daily to take away something from my faults, and chide my errors. I have not come to sound moral health, nor shall I attain it. I devise fomentations rather than remedies for my (gout) inward disease, content if it be less frequent and severe in its attacks. . . . One says, you speak one thing, you live another. Malignant spirits made the same objection to Plato, Epicurus, Zeno. All these told not how they lived themselves, but set forth the proper rule of life. I speak not of myself, but of virtue. . . . No malignity shall prevent my persevering praise, not of the life I lead, but of the life that I *ought* to lead." * For himself, Seneca admits, ironically, that he is "in the deep of all vices," but as to the philosophers, if they do not practice all they preach, they practice much, honestly intended. Men who fall, attempting great things, are to be respected. "I know at least that my country is the world, and the Gods are over me, around me, censors of my deeds and words. When nature shall demand back my spirit, or reason surrender it, I will depart, testifying that I have loved a good conscience, good aspirations; that no one's liberty, least of all my own, has been prejudiced by me. He who shall propose, will, attempt, to realize this, will make his journey to the Gods." †

Seneca shrank from the chilling dogma of Stoic indifference to all external circumstances. "I know," he says, "that some are found who will not allow a wise man to mourn." But their experience had never subjected them to the test that would have wrung out an unwilling confession of the truth. Let tears flow, but let them have their limit. Let the heart pour forth its groans, but let them also come to an end. ‡

* De Vita Beata, §§ 17, 18.

† Ib., §§ 20, 21. The citations from Seneca on the topics which have been passed in review, might have been largely multiplied, but they would only have added to the impression of Seneca's brilliance and point as a writer, and would have been superfluous as testimony to his doctrines. The reader will find in L'Estrange's Seneca many fine passages which I have not reproduced, for the simple reason that they are not the language of the Roman Seneca, but of Seneca L'Estranged.

‡ De Consolatione, XXXVII.

There is assuredly no sufficient ground for impeaching the sincerity of Seneca in what he taught. He did not profess to be perfect. He did not call himself *wise*. To strive after wisdom was the measure of his professions, and the fact that all the reproach urged against him does not impeach his moral integrity, but bears merely against his possession of wealth, and his ambitious rhetoric—for other charges seem now to have been abandoned—may be taken as presumptive evidence of a relative moral superiority of life, that must have been conspicuous in the age in which he lived. As Nero's preceptor, he certainly was not successful, and his statesmanship could not recover a state corrupt beyond remedy. But we must, in common justice, admit that he honestly endeavored to reform his age, and that, in his writings, he has forcibly, if too artistically, laid down moral precepts that other ages beside his own would be the better for observing.

CHAPTER XVII.

EPICTETUS.

In the history of Roman philosophy there are no names more memorable—Cicero and Seneca possibly excepted—than those of Epictetus, Plutarch, and Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. All these are to be classed—though not without regard to their eclectic sympathies—as adherents of the Stoic school. Two of these, Epictetus and M. Aurelius Antoninus, presented, as to their social rank and relations, a striking contrast. One originally occupied the very humblest, while the other was elevated to the most exalted position. Marcus Aurelius was the Emperor of Rome, while Rome yet assumed to be the mistress of the civilized world. Epictetus was a slave securing emancipation by his merit, and, if tradition is not at fault, subjected to the disadvantage of personal deformity.

'40–110 ? A. D.) has been justly pronounced "the

great ornament" of the Stoic school. He flourished under the reigns of Domitian and Hadrian, when that school may be regarded as having attained its full development. Born a slave, and maimed in person, his good conduct secured for him his manumission. His virtuous example corresponded to the purity of his doctrine. It furnishes the noblest type of Stoic discipline. The sentimentalism of Seneca suffers by contrast with the genuine earnestness of Epictetus. His motto, "Bear and forbear," seems to have guided his life as well as inspired his discourse. His maxims are terse and pregnant with sense, while his appeals and exhortations are sympathetically human. Severe in discipline, he assumes none of the dictatorial sternness of the teacher. If he speaks of virtue as persecuted, or chides the injustice of the world, it is to be remembered that he was himself a sufferer.

In Epictetus the recognition of the moral order of the world is habitual. It was an axiom of his philosophy, and he is not content without advancing far beyond it. To bring out his views adequately, it would be necessary to transcribe large portions of his works. A few extracts, however, will serve to indicate the manner in which, if the task had been imposed upon him, he would have constructed his theory of the moral system.

A superintending Providence is repeatedly and distinctly asserted. "In this great city (the world) there is a householder, who ordereth everything." * His presence is not limited to place. "When ye have shut the doors, and have made all dark within, remember never to say that ye are alone, for ye are not; but God is within." "To this God ye ought to swear allegiance, as soldiers do to Cæsar." †

The reason of man indicates this to be his duty. "If I were a nightingale, I had done the work of a nightingale; if a swan, the work of a swan. So being what I am, a rational creature, I must sing hymns to God. This is my task, and I perform it." ‡ Nor is Epictetus behind his Stoic brethren in paying tribute to the greatness of the soul. "Thou art an offshoot of God; thou hast some part of him in thyself. Why, therefore, dost thou not perceive thy noble birth? Why dost

* Book III., 22. † B. I., 14. ‡ B. I., 16.

thou not know whence thou art come?" Nor is the law of duty, incumbent on one of such origin and connection, overlooked. "Thou bearest God about with thee .... and thou dost not feel that thou art defiling Him with thy impure thoughts and thy filthy deeds. If an image of God were present, thou wouldest not dare to do any of these things which thou doest; but God himself, being present within thee, and overlooking and overhearing all, thou art not ashamed to think and to do these things, O man, insensible of thine own nature, and visited with the wrath of God!" *

The fatherhood of God is recognized. "Remember that thou art a son. What profession is due to this character? To consider all that belongs to Him as belonging to a father, to obey Him in all things, never to complain." † Hence submission, and under a form that approximates the Christian, rather than the Stoic standard, is a duty. "Dare to look up to God and say, Use me henceforth whereunto thou wilt. I consent unto thee. I am thine. I shrink from nothing that seemeth good unto thee. Lead me where thou wilt, clothe me with what garments thou wilt." ‡

Neither may the authority of God be despised. He is, even in the Scripture sense, a "jealous God." "Let us obey God, lest God's wrath fall upon us." § Nor should we neglect to seek by prayer his favor and aid. "He who setteth his hand to so great a matter without God, calleth down God's wrath." ‖ He who knows the will of God, is not only bound to do it himself, but to impart it to others. "He must be wholly given up without distraction to the service of God, free to converse with mankind, not tied down by private duties, nor entangled in relations," and thus "fail in his part as the messenger and watchman and herald of the Gods." ¶

Epictetus maintains not only the being of a God, but a Providence. "If God had made colors, and had not made the faculty to see them, what would have been their use? On the other hand, if He had made the faculty of observation, without objects to observe, what would have been the use of that? . . . Who is it that hath fitted the sword to the scab-

* Diss., II. 8. † Ib., II. 10. ‡ B. II., 16.
§ B. III., 1. ‖ B. III., 22. ¶ B. III., 22.

bard, and the scabbard to the sword? Is there no such Being? From the very construction of a complete work, we are used to declare positively, that it must be the operation of some artificer, and not the effect of mere chance." * "Any one thing in the creation is sufficient to demonstrate a Providence to a grateful mind." †

God moreover is good, and man's unhappiness springs from the perversion of his gifts. "If any man is unhappy, remember that he is so for himself; for God made all men to enjoy felicity and peace. He hath furnished all with means for this purpose. . . The essence of good or evil he hath placed in things which are our own." ‡ It is base in man to complain of his benefactor. §

Man is not only God's creature, but His child. "You are a distinct portion of the essence of God, and contain a part of Him in yourself. Why, then, are you ignorant of your noble birth? Why do you not consider whence you came? ‖ It is our duty to be submissive to the divine will as sovereign over us. "I have placed my pursuits under the direction of God. Is it His will that I should have a fever? It is my will too." ¶ "A person who reasons thus, understands and considers that if he joins himself to God, he shall go safely through his journey. . . How then can this be done? Why, how otherwise than by considering the workings of God's power and His administration? What has he given me to be my own and independent? What has he reserved to himself? . . Why then do I fight against God?" **

Man's duty is determined by his relations to God. "Think of God oftener than you breathe." †† "God hath introduced man, as a spectator of Himself and of His works; and not only as a spectator, but an interpreter of them. It is, therefore, shameful that man should begin and end where irrational creatures do." ‡‡ As to God's works, "What speech can fitly celebrate their praise? For, if we had any understanding, ought we not, both in public and private, incessantly to sing and praise the Deity, and rehearse His benefits? Ought

* B. I., 6. † B. I., 16. ‡ B. III., 24. § B. I., 6.
‖ B. II., 8. ¶ B. IV., 1. ** Ib. †† Frag., 114.
‡‡ B. I., 6.

we not, whether we dig or plough, or eat, to sing this hymn to God? . . . These things we ought forever to celebrate; but to make it the theme of the greatest and divinest hymn, that he has given us the power to appreciate these gifts, and to use them well." *

The course inculcated by philosophy is the course of duty. "The philosophers say, that we are first to learn that there is a God, and that His providence directs the whole; and that it is not merely impossible to conceal from him our actions, but even our thoughts and emotions. We are next to learn what the Gods are; for such as they are found to be, such must he seek to be, to the utmost of his power, who would please and obey them. If the Deity is faithful, he too must be faithful; if free, beneficent and noble, he must be free, beneficent and noble likewise, in all his words and actions behaving as an imitator of God." †

Again, Epictetus says: "Be willing to approve yourself to yourself. Be willing to appear beautiful in the sight of God. Be desirous to converse in purity with your own pure mind, and with God; and then, if any such semblance bewilders you, Plato directs you, 'have recourse to expiations; go a suppliant to the temples of averting deities.'" ‡

In this struggle after purity of soul, "the combat is great, the achievement divine; for empire, for freedom, for prosperity, for tranquillity. Remember God. Invoke him for your aid and protector, as sailors do Castor and Pollux in a storm. For what storm is greater than that which arises from these perilous semblances, contending to overset our reasons?" §

Such language prepares us for the views of Epictetus, as to the nature of the present life as the period of probation. "Every one's life is a warfare, and that long and various. You must observe the duty of a soldier, and perform every thing at the nod of your general, and even, if possible, divine what he would have done. For there is no comparison between the above mentioned general, and this whom you now obey, either in power or excellence of character." ‖ So, while saying "attempt nothing without God," ¶ he insists on

* B. I., 16. † B. II., 14. ‡ B. II., 18. § Ib. ‖ B. III., 24. ¶ B. III., 22.

personal effort. "It is the Olympic games, man, for which you are entered; not a poor slight contest." * This effort, too, must be patient and prolonged. "No great thing is created suddenly, any more than a bunch of grapes or a fig. If you tell me that you desire a fig, I answer you, that there must be time. Let it first blossom, and then bear fruit, then ripen. Since, then, the fruit of a fig-tree is not brought to perfection suddenly, or in one hour, do you think to possess instantaneously and easily the fruit of the human mind? †

The severity of the trial has also its use. "Difficulties are things that show what men are. In case of any difficulty, remember that God, like a gymnastic trainer, has pitted you against a rough antagonist. For what end? That you may be an Olympic conqueror, and this cannot be without toil." ‡

From this conflict no one should allow himself to be diverted. "A wise and good man, mindful who he is and whence he came, and by whom he was produced, is attentive only how he may fill his post regularly and dutifully before God." § In this, moreover, his highest pleasure is to be found. "For all other pleasures substitute the consciousness that you are obeying God, and performing not in word but in deed the duties of a wise and good man." ‖

These duties are enforced by the highest authority and the severest sanctions. "Is there not a divine and powerful and inevitable law which exacts the greatest punishments from those who are guilty of the greatest offences?" ¶ And again, "there are some punishments appointed, as by a law, for such as disobey the Divine administration." ** The standard of duty is not one of formal compliance with external commands. "For my own part, I would be found engaged in nothing but in the regulation of my own will; how to render it undisturbed, unrestrained, uncompelled, free. I would be found studying this, that I may be able to say to God, 'have I transgressed thy commands? Have I perverted the powers, the senses, the instincts which thou hast given me? Have I ever accused thee or censured thy dispensations?'" ††

Epictetus does not overlook the apparently unequal allot-

* B. III., 22. † B. I., 15. ‡ B. I., 24. § B. III., 24.
‖ Ib. ¶ Ib. ** B. III., 11. †† B. III., 6.

ments of the present life. But as to hardship, his philosopher is "persuaded that whatever he suffers of this sort, it is Zeus who doth it to exercise him." * And beside this, "whenever you lay anything to the charge of Providence, do but reflect, and you will find that it has happened agreeably to Reason." † That this is the case, Epictetus proceeds to show by an argument substantially identical with that employed by Pope, when he argues that the rewards of worldly enterprise and of virtue are quite distinct, and that the affluence that crowns the one is not to be confounded with the peace that attends the other.

But, however varied the external lot of the good man, he may still be confident that all shall be for the best. "Is God so negligent of His own institutions, of His servants, of His witnesses, whom alone He uses for examples to the uninstructed, to show that He exists, and that He administers the universe rightly, and doth not neglect human affairs, and that no evil can happen to a good man, either living or dead?" ‡ Outward circumstances and bodily condition, to the wise man, will be of small account. "The things you have, . . . remember who gave them, and to whom, and for what purpose. Habituated once to these reasonings, can you still think it makes any difference what place God allots you? Are not the Gods everywhere at the same distance? Do they not everywhere equally see what is doing?" § Everywhere the mind is represented as the source of joy. The body is its shell, its encumbrance. "You ought to hold your whole body but as a useful ass, with a pack-saddle on, so long as may be, so long as it is allowed you. But if there should come a military conscription, and a soldier should lay hold on it, let it go. Do not resist or murmur." ‖

Death, therefore, should not be regarded with affright. "At what employment would you have death find you? For my part, I would have it to be some humane, beneficent, public-spirited, noble action. . . . If death overtake me in such a situation, it is enough for me, if I can stretch out my hands to God and say, 'The opportunities which I have received from Thee of comprehending and obeying Thy administra-

* B. III., 22. † B. III., 17. ‡ B. III., 25. § B. IV., 4. ‖ B. IV., 1.

tion, I have not neglected. As far as in me lay, I have not dishonored Thee.' " *

Of the immortality of the soul and the future life, Epictetus has less to say than either Cicero or Seneca. Future retribution, however, is fairly implied in many passages of his writings. Still, his aim is to examine the practical aspects of the present life, to show what are its proper aims and duties, and lay down the rules by which they may be attained. References to the moral system, sufficient to intimate his general views, are interwoven with his exposition of a true life, and harmonize with it. Terse in expression, direct in argument, earnest in tone, he rises above most of his predecessors, but bows with reverence at the memory of Socrates. Unlike Seneca, he does not approve of suicide. He says, emphatically, "Wait till God calls you, and stand faithful at your post." His reference to the stubbornness or madness of the Galileans, indicates the little acquaintance which he possessed with the Christian doctrines, to some of which he makes so near an approach. In dealing with the questions of Providence, probation, and the duties of social life, he departs somewhat from the Stoic school, with which he is classed, and yet, even less than Seneca, is disposed to compromise with the doctrines of Epicurus. He repeatedly jeers at the sensualism they tolerate, as well as the inconsistency of an author who writes books for a world for which he cares nothing. When he departs from the views of those who preceded him in the school to which he belonged, it is rather in the direction of Christian than Epicurean ethics. It is significant that Marcus Aurelius ranked him with Socrates, while Origen thought that his writings had done more good than those of Plato. Later critics have not spoken less warmly in his praise.

Niebuhr said, "Epictetus's greatness cannot be questioned, and it is impossible for any person of sound mind not to be charmed by his works." We may add, that his testimony to certain leading features of the moral system is most exact and emphatic, nor is it the less weighty that it comes to us in connection with a manual of moral duty, unsurpassed by any production of the classic period of the ancient world.

* B. IV., 10.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PLUTARCH.

No classic writer, perhaps, has met with more general acceptance, or attained higher popularity in modern times, than Plutarch (50–120 ? A. D.). A native of Chæronea in Bœotia, a genuine Greek in his thirst for knowledge, an extensive traveler, visiting Rome and there giving lectures upon Philosophy, with a reputation that gave plausibility to the false report that he was preceptor to Trajan, to whom he dedicated one of his works. Plutarch's great merit for us is, not his profundity as a philosopher, not his excellence as a rhetorical writer, but his exuberance of information and good sense on the manners and morals of antiquity, and his generally sound ethical views on the great variety of subjects of which he writes.

Of his personal history we have scant information. For nearly all we know of him, we are indebted to his writings. The genial spirit that breathes through these endears him to us. We accept him as a companion, and listen to him as a most entertaining narrator and kindly critic. There is a peculiar charm in his "Lives," which have been the favorite reading of thousands through successive generations, while his "Morals," or essays, ethical, critical and miscellaneous, incite to reflection without tasking the mind. The charm of Plutarch's writings has been felt and owned by old and young, soldier and statesman, the philosopher and the man of business. Minds of the most diverse tastes have perused them with equal satisfaction. The explanation is to be found in the large humanity, extended observations, varied knowledge and sensible reflections of Plutarch. He is thoroughly human, never sour, usually serious, though not averse to humor, and uniformly distinguishing between the show and tinsel of life

on one hand, and its true happiness and proper perfection on the other.. He follows Seneca with the interval of a generation, and the Roman philosopher had scarcely passed from life at a tyrant's orders, when Plutarch seized the pen, and with a wiser, because more truly human eclecticism, made the world the school of a philosophy that wore the garb of common life.

Scattered through the writings of Plutarch—sometimes incidentally presented in sentences and paragraphs, sometimes embodied in elaborate essays—we meet with these views of the moral system, in which he not only avows his own belief, but reflects the carefully considered belief of the most eminent philosophers of antiquity. On nearly all the leading features of that system he has something to offer, and his conclusions, fortified by extensive observation, have been reached after a patient and candid examination of such monuments of ancient learning and philosophy as were then extant, or within his reach.

Differing from the Stoics on many points, he evidently assents to their conclusion, which he states to be this: "That nothing beauteous could casually or fortuitously be formed, but that it (this visible Kosmos) was framed from the art of a great understanding that produced the world." * "Some of the philosophers," he remarks, "such as Diogenes the Median, Theodorus the Cyrenian, and Euemerus the Tegeatan, did unanimously deny that there are any Gods," and with these the tragedian Euripides is classed, although "he durst not openly declare his sentiments; the court of Areopagus terrified him." † Yet these were exceptions to the almost universal acceptance of Theism. "If you will take the pains to travel through the world, you may find towns and cities without walls, without letters, without kings, without houses, without wealth, without money, without theatres and places of exercise; but there was never seen, nor shall be seen by man, any city without temples and Gods; or without making use of prayers, oaths, divinations and sacrifices, for the obtaining of blessings and benefits, and the averting of curses and calamities. Nay, I am of opinion that a city might sooner be built without any

* Plutarch's Morals (Goodwin's Ed., 1871), III. 115. † Ib., 118.

ground to fix it on, than a commonweal be constituted together, void of any religion and opinion of the Gods; or, being constituted, be preserved." * In opposing the speculations of Epicurus, which forbade men "any recourse to God in adversity and misfortune," he declares that "Atheism is no less an evil than inhumanity and vainglory, and into this they would lead us, who take away, with God's anger, the comfort we might derive from him." † "It doth but ease us of fear and a certain superstitious persuasion, but helps us not to any comfort or joy." ‡

"Far better" than the sceptical assertion of Heracleitus, "it is, in submission to Plato's judgment, to avow, both in discourse, and in our songs of praise, that the glory of the structure (the Kosmos) belongs to God—for the frame itself is the most beautiful of all masterpieces, and God the most illustrious of all causes." § "The creation was not out of nothing," but God disposed, digested and embellished the confused mass, so that he brought to perfection a most absolute and glorious creature." ‖ "The greatest and most perfect work, that will admit of no additions, is that which agrees best with the dignity of the Gods." ¶

The condition of man, without a presiding Intelligence, would be pitiable. "For what is to be sought, or what is to be learned by mortals, if all things go by fortune?" ** "No man ever wetted clay and then left it, as if there would be bricks by chance or fortune, nor, having provided wool and leather, sat him down and prayed to fortune that they might be made clothes and shoes for him." †† "Since Thales has asserted the being of a soul in all the principal and most noble parts of the universe, it is no wonder that the most commendable acts are governed by an overruling power; for as the body is the organ of the soul, so the soul is an instrument in the hand of God." ‡‡ But Plutarch does not allow this acceptance of what Cudworth would call a plastic nature, to commit him to such a pantheism as would either destroy the personality of God or make Him the author of the evil ac-

* Plutarch's Morals, V. 380. † Ib., II. 189. ‡ Ib.
§ Ib., II. 330. ‖ Ib., 331. ¶ Ib., IV. 11.
** Ib., II. 476. †† Ib., II. 480. ‡‡ Ib., II. 39.

tions of men. Evil is not from God. "For there is nothing which hath life so ill-compacted as that, against its will, its feet will go, its tongue speak, its horns push, or its teeth bite. The most of which things God must of necessity suffer, if the wicked, being parts of Him, do, against His will, lie, cheat, rob and murder one another." *

Plutarch asserts repeatedly the existence of a wise and beneficent Providence. He says: "It is impossible either that a man beloved of the Gods should not be happy, or that a wise and just man should not be beloved of the Gods."† He quotes with approval, as "well worth the recounting in his very own words," the opinion of Hermogenes: "For these Gods," saith he, "who know all things, and can do all things, are so friendly and loving to me that, because they take care of me, I never escape them either by night or by day, wherever I go, or whatever I am about. And because they know beforehand what issue everything will have, etc." ‡

Again, Plutarch asks: "What man is there, or ever was, excepting these (whom he argues against) who does not believe the Divinity to be immortal and eternal?" § "One may, perhaps, light upon some nations so barbarous and savage as not to think there is a God; but there was never found any man, who, believing a God, did not believe Him immortal and eternal." ‖ Equally explicit is the assertion of the Divine justice. "The one King and Supreme Ruler, who is God," "comprehends the beginning, the middle, and end of the universe; Who passes through all things in a straight course, compassing all things according to nature. Justice follows Him to take vengeance on those that transgress the Divine law." ¶ Elsewhere, more emphatically, we are told, "If we may be permitted to guess at these matters, Jupiter hath not Justice for an assessor or counselor, but is Himself Justice and Right, and the original and perfection of all laws." **

His wisdom is likewise asserted. "The likeness of God is found in wisdom and understanding, not in the sceptre, the

* Plut. Mor., IV. 408. † Ib., II. 193. ‡ Ib., II. 194. § Ib., IV. 404.
‖ Ib., 405. ¶ Ib., III. 19. ** Ib., IV. 326.

thunderbolt, or the trident."* His benevolence, especially to men, is declared. Love of man is asserted to be "an attribute of the Deity."† The instruments, as subordinate beings, or demons, through whom He rules the universe, are subject to His will, and not malevolent. "That there should be evil Genii placed by Providence over such charges—how can it but be a reproach to God, as it would be to a king to commit the administration of his provinces to evil and rash governors and captains, and suffer the best of his subjects to be despised and ill-treated by them."‡ In his "Banquet of the Seven Wise Men," Plutarch introduces Gorgias narrating the experience of Arion the musician, miraculously rescued from the sea, but before his rescue favored with visions of the unseen world. He thought—in his vision—"God's justice had more eyes than one, and that with these many eyes, the Gods beheld what was acted here below, both by sea and land."§ After his rescue was effected, "he plainly perceived, and with thanks acknowledged, a Providence."‖

But, more distinctly perhaps than any other of the ancient writers, Plutarch connects the doctrine of the immortality of the soul with the providence of God. In his remarkable treatise, *De sera Numinis Vindicta*, he says, "There is one and the same reason to confirm the providence of God and the immortality of the soul. Neither is it possible to admit the one, if you deny the other."¶ Indeed, from the wisdom of God, he reasons to the conclusion that its vindication would be impossible if the soul was "only to blossom and flourish for a day." "Can we think that God so little considers His own actions, or is such a waster of His time in trifles, that if we had nothing of Divine within us, nothing that in the least resembled His perfection, nothing permanent and stable, but were only poor creatures that—according to Homer's expression—faded and dropped like withered leaves, yet He should make so great account of us—create us souls to blossom and flourish only for a day, in a soft and tender body of flesh, without any firm and solid root of life, and then to be blasted and extinguished in a moment upon every slight occasion?"**

* Plut. Mor., IV. 326. † Ib., II. 412. ‡ Ib., IV. 465. § Ib., II. 35.
‖ Ib. ¶ Ib., IV. 170. ** Ib., 169.

We are referred on this subject repeatedly to "the sayings of the old philosophers and poets." If these have truth in them, we must believe the soul immortal. Pindar is quoted as saying: *

> "Nothing can damp that bright and subtle flame,
> Immortal as the Gods from whence it came."

Socrates and Plato are also referred to as bearing accordant testimony. In the representations given of the blessedness of the just, the same doctrine is either expressed or implied. "Plato and Pythagoras say that the soul is immortal; when it departs out of the body, it retreats to the soul of the world, which is a being of the same nature with it." † Empedocles, "in what he says of himself, shows the condition of us all, that we are pilgrims and strangers and exiles here in this world. . . . and by the soft name of pilgrimage, he insinuates the origin of the soul," which here "is tied and linked to the body, like an oyster to its shell," or "hangs her head like a decaying plant." ‡ "The lovers of truth" prove themselves immortal by their aspirations. With limited reason, "through the fog and mist of the body, they yet look upwards like birds, as ready to take their flight to the spacious and bright region, and endeavor to make their souls expedite and light from things mortal, using philosophy as a study and preparation for death. . . . the soul being to live there a real life." § Affection, too, though among those of "the vulgar sort," bears kindred testimony. "When they lose their children, wives, or friends, they would rather have them be somewhere and still remain, though in misery, than that they should be quite destroyed, dissolved, and reduced to nothing." ‖

The soul is, moreover, sustained by the hope of immortality. "He who considers the nature of the soul, and that death will transport it to a condition either far better, or not much worse than what he now enjoys, hath contempt of death to sustain him as he traveleth on in this pilgrimage of life, no small *viaticum* towards tranquillity of mind.¶ For, "if the waves grow turbulent and the sea rougher, the port is at

* Plut. Mor., I. 336. † Ib., III. 164. ‡ Ib., 34.
§ Ib., II. 199. ‖ Ib., 196. ¶ Ib., I. 168.

hand, and he may leave this body, as he would a leaky vessel, and swim ashore." *

In his consolatory letter to his wife on the death of his daughter, Plutarch says: " Be assured that the soul, incapable of death, is affected (here) in the same manner as birds that are kept in a cage." † And again: " The laws of our country teach us that it is an impious thing to lament for those whose souls pass immediately into a better and more divine state." ‡ In another treatise he says: " The corruption or death of any creature, is not its annihilation or reduction into a mere nothing, but rather a sending of the dissolved being into an invisible state." §

Plutarch does not, like Seneca, acquiesce in the alternative of annihilation. " For to say that the destruction of all that we call ours, toucheth us not, is too absurd; for it toucheth us already by the very apprehension. . . . If our end be in not being, and that be infinite and unalterable, then hath privation of good found out an eternal evil, to wit, a never-ending insensibleness." ‖ A better portion is that of " the good man." " For he who ceaseth to be among men becomes a partaker of a divine life, is free from the servitude of the body, and all those solicitous cares which they who are embarrassed with a mortal life, of necessity must undergo, till they have finished the course which Providence hath marked out for them." ¶ It may, therefore, be that the dead " need no eulogies." They are already blessed. " Who knows but that the Deity, with a fatherly Providence, and out of tenderness to mankind, foreseeing what would happen, hath taken some purposely out of this life by an untimely death? Many, by a timely death, have been withdrawn from greater calamities." **

The frequent reference which Plutarch makes to the experience of virtue and vice in the world, indicate his close observation of the moral government of God on earth, and the conditions of human probation. He sees virtue and blessedness closely allied, and vice even now attended with sharp penalties. " For a man's felicity consists not in the outward and visible favors and blessings of Fortune, but in the inward

* [illegible]r., I. 163. † Ib., V. 393. ‡ Ib., 394. § Ib., III. 8.
‖ [illegible] ¶ Ib., I. 324. ** Ib., 330.

and unseen perfections and riches of the mind."* "The happiness that riches pretend to, is such that it depends upon spectators and witnesses; else it would signify nothing at all. But it is quite otherwise when we consider temperance or philosophy, or such knowledge of the Gods as is requisite. For these, though unknown to all other mortals, communicate a peculiar light and great splendor within the soul, and cause a joy that dwells with it, as an inmate, whilst it enjoys the chiefest good, though neither Gods nor men may be privy to it."†

On the other hand, vice is followed by wretchedness. "A proneness to speak evil of another, anger, envy, ill-nature, a jealous and perverse temper, are the pests of those who are infected with them."‡ "Thus disgrace pursues ambition; pain and indisposition, sensuality; softness and effeminacy are fretted with troubles; contentiousness with disappointments and defeats."§ Homer is quoted ‖ as saying:

"Thus ill acts prosper not, but end in shame."

Moreover, the sin cleaves to the soul. "A man cannot write a bill of divorce to his vice and thereby free himself from further trouble, and procure his own repose by living apart; but it still cohabits with him, and dwells in his very bowels, and cleaves to him both by night and by day . . . being through its vain-glory a burthensome fellow-traveler, and through its voracity a chargeable table-companion, and a troublesome bedfellow by breaking and spoiling one's sleep at night, with cares, anxieties, and surmises." So that, though the body rest, the mind is tortured, even in dreams.¶ Vice, indeed, is "such a self-sufficient worker of infelicity, that it has no need either of instruments or servants. Other tyrants, endeavoring to render those men miserable whom they punish, maintain executioners and tormentors, devise searching-irons and racks, to plague the reasonless soul. But vice without any preparation of engines, as soon as it enters into the soul, torments and dejects it, filling a man with grief, lamentations, sorrow and repentance."**

* Plut. Mor., II. 21. † Ib., II. 304. ‡ Ib., I. 144. § Ib., 69.
‖ Ib., II. 53. ¶ Ib., II. 483. ** Ib., IV. 500.

Plato relates the anecdote of a criminal who was constrained by the twittering of the swallows, who seemed to accuse him, to confess his guilty secret.* It illustrates his assertion that "wickedness, at the same time it is committed, engendering its own vexation and torment, not at last, but at the very instant of the injury offered, suffers the reward of the injustice it has done. And as every malefactor who suffers in his body bears his own cross to the place of execution, so are all the various torments of various wicked actions prepared by wickedness herself. Such a diligent architectress of a miserable and wretched life is wickedness, wherein shame is still accompanied with a thousand terrors and commotions of the mind, incessant repentance, and never-ceasing tumults of the spirits."† The soul itself, from its guilty memories and fears, becomes its own tormentor. "For visions in dreams, noonday apparitions, oracles, descents into hell, and whatever objects else which may be thought to be transmitted from heaven, raise continual tempests and horrors in the very souls of the guilty."‡

If the soul contemplates itself or its deeds, it finds nothing consoling. "Wicked men, contemplating their own wickedness, find it always void altogether and destitute of hope, since pleasure gives but a short and empty delight."§ Moreover, "wherever eager avarice and voluptuousness, inexorable hatred, enmity and improbity associate together, there you shall also be sure to find superstition nestling and herding with effeminacy and terror of death, a swift change of the most violent passions," so that, in Plutarch's opinion, the infliction of positive punishment by Gods or men on wicked and sacrilegious offenders is unnecessary, since "the course of their own lives is sufficient to chastise their crimes, while they remain under the consternations and torments attending their impiety."‖ Even when men flatter themselves that they have escaped present punishments, their real punishment is only spun out; they "endure a more lasting, not a slower punishment; not punished with old age, but growing old under the tribulation of tormenting infliction."¶

* De Sera Numinis Vindicta, IV. 153.
† Ib., 154.
‡ Ib., 156.
§ Ib., 158.
‖ Ib., 159, 160.
¶ Ib., 155.

Plutarch takes note also of the forebodings which guilt excites, and the grounds of apprehension which find expression in popular conceptions of future retribution. The case of King Philip is cited, who in the excess of his prosperity apprehended reverse, and cried out, "Propitious Daemon! let the affliction be moderate by which thou intendest to be even with me for this complicated happiness." * A similar expression of foreboding fell from the lips of the tyrant Theramenes. From such fears the doctrine of Epicurus is no sufficient relief. It may "ease us of fear and a certain superstitious persuasion, but helps us not to any comfort or joy from the Gods at all." † Moreover, the pleasures of sin are bitter at last. Pindar is quoted as saying:

> "The pleasure which injurious acts attends,
> Always in bitter consequences ends." ‡

It is experience of this that makes men seek to escape themselves. To some, "their own life and actions would appear the most unpleasant spectacle in the world, and therefore they fly from the light of their conscience and cannot bear the torture of one reflecting thought upon themselves; for when the soul, being once defiled with all manner of wickedness, is scared at its own hideous deformity, it endeavors to run from itself, and pampers its own malignity with malicious speculations on the ills of others." §

Wealth cannot offset the misery of such a lot. "Heap up gold, gather together silver, raise up walks, fill your house with slaves and the town with debtors: if you do not appease the disorders of your own mind, and stint your unsatiable desire, and deliver yourself from fears and cares, you do but rack wine for a man in a fever, and administer honey to a man disturbed with bile." ‖ Sometimes worldly prosperity is of the nature of a punishment. Vice procures in it a curse. She renders men "rich, abounding in wealth, having great inheritances," ¶ only to torture them thereby. Fortune alone does not suffice. It "must have in itself some ulcer of its own, and some malady within its flesh, that it may render

* De Sera Num. Vind., I. 306. † Ib., II. 189. † Ib., 57.
‡ Ib., II. 428. ‖ Ib., 484. ¶ Ib., V. 503.

those accidents which come from abroad miserable and lamentable." * On the other hand, "to be innocent is the greatest comfort in afflictions." †

Plutarch does not overlook the apparent inequalities in the distribution of justice on earth, and carefully considers those objections to the order of the moral system which are suggested by lingering processes of retribution. In his remarkable essay, *De Sera Numinis Vindicta*, he lays down distinctly the proposition, that "neither is the nature and disposition of any man concealed from God," who more exactly "scrutinizes the soul than the body," ‡ yet, for good reasons, He selects occasions, that to men may seem inappropriate or tardy, to inflict punishment.

Euripides is quoted as asserting the tardiness but certainty of justice:

> "Justice is not so hasty, foolish man,
> To pierce thy heart. . . .
> But with slow pace and silent feet his doom
> O'ertakes the sinner when his time is come." §

This delay and procrastination, to the objector, appears as a great "inconveniency and absurdity." But Plutarch replies by showing that an apparent may not be a real absurdity. To a stranger, Solon's law might appear absurd which branded with infamy the citizen who remained neuter in a time of sedition. "What wonder then, since the actions of man are so difficult to be understood, if it be no less difficult to determine concerning the Gods, wherefore they inflict their punishments upon sinners, sometimes later, sometimes sooner." ‖ Plato was too wise to punish in haste or anger. He held "his cudgel over his page's shoulders as himself relates, pausing a good while, correcting his own anger." "For it is not the revenge that is nearest to the injury," as Thucydides says, "but rather that which is most remote from it, that observes the most convenient opportunity." ¶ There is, indeed, a lesson for men "to be cautious and circumspect in these matters, and to deem as a divine part of virtue that mildness

* De Sera Num. Vind., V. 503. † Ib., I. 324. ‡ Ib. IV. 174.
§ Ib., IV. 142. ‖ Ib., 146. ¶ Ib., 147.

and long-suffering, of which God affords us an example, while by punishing, He reforms some few, but by slowly punishing, He helpeth and admonisheth many." * "As for those who may be thought to transgress rather out of ignorance of what is virtuous and good, than through choice of what is foul and vicious, He grants them time to turn; but if they remain obdurate, then likewise He inflicts His punishments upon them; for He has no fear lest they should escape." †

Sometimes hasty penalty would cut off those who, "with the co-operating age and season for reason and virtue," might produce the ripe fruit when Nature has matured it," ‡ and delay is justified by the result. Sometimes, again, "the Deity makes use of some wicked persons as common executioners to punish the wickedness of others, and then destroys those instruments of His wrath." § A race may be spared, though contaminated with crime, till it has produced some chosen instrument of Providence. "As the husbandman never cuts away the thorn till it injures the asparagus, or as the Lybians never burn the stalks till they have gathered all the laudanum, where is the absurdity if God never extirpates the evil and thorny root of a renowned and royal race, before He has gathered from it the mature and proper fruit?" ‖

But the punishment may begin before the hour of final execution. We are not to "deem the last moments of the punishment only to be the punishment, and omit the commotions, terrors, apprehensions, and embitterments of repentance, with which every malefactor and all wicked men are teased upon the committing of any heinous crime." ¶ This life itself may be an imprisonment preparatory to, and in fact a part of, the penalty. For "man is but shut up in this life, like a close prisoner in a gaol, from whence it is impossible to make an escape, while yet we feast and banquet, are full of business, receive rewards and honors and sport." ** While the Gods seem to delay, they are simply holding under arrest the guilty offenders, and making their own crimes and guilty memories their accusers.

The visitation of the sin of the parent upon the child does

* De Sera Num. Vind., IV. 148. † Ib. ‡ Ib., 150. § Ib., 151.
‖ Ib., 152. ¶ Ib., 155. ** Ib.

not escape Plutarch's observation. He admits the fact that the penalty of a crime seems often to reach the posterity of the criminal. This, he says, draws attention, keeps up the sense of a just Providence, and makes a more deep and lasting impression. "Those punishments that reach succeeding posterity, being conspicuous to all that are living at the same time, restrain and curb the inclinations of many wicked persons." * Moreover, "for a young man that treads in the footsteps of a criminal race, it is but just that he should succeed to the punishment of his ancestor's iniquity, as one of the debts attached to his inheritance." † Besides, "If we believe that the reward of virtue ought to be extended to posterity, by the same reason it becomes us to take it for granted that punishment for impieties committed ought not to be stayed and cease any sooner, but that it should run forward at equal pace with the reward, which will in turn requite every man with what is his due." ‡ The child also may partake of the parents' disposition. This would not be strange, "neither is there anything of absurdity, if, being the offspring of such parents, they should retain many of their bad qualities." § As the different parts of the body sympathize together, so one may suffer through another, or be healed through the application made to another.

Plutarch does not overlook the distinction that may be made between moral government and moral discipline in this state of probation. This is indicated in passages quoted above. But he expressly teaches the duty of man to draw advantages from hardship and trial. We can scarcely expect him to speak of afflictions as "sanctified," in the Christian sense of that word, but yet he tells us that "Men that are wise, as the bees draw honey from the thyme, which is a most unsavory and dry herb, extract something that is convenient and useful even from the most bitter afflictions." ‖

Submission to evils we cannot prevent or avoid, is enjoined as a duty. Such submission is a part of our moral discipline. "[illegible] can say what a thing ought to be? . . . [illegible] this life to be dogmatical and prescribe

[illegible] ‡ Ib., 164.

to it; but we must obey the dictates of the Gods who govern the world, and submit to the appointments of fate and Providence."* The relation of the present state to the future, is distinctly indicated to be that of probation to retribution. "Champions are not used to receive the garland before they have performed their exercises, but after they have contested and proved victorious; in like manner is it with those that are persuaded that good men have the prize of their conquests after this life is ended." "Those that have led pious and just lives" may "expect no ill after death, but on the contrary, most glorious and divine things."† And again, "It is certain, in the regions prepared for pious souls, they conserve not only an existence in (or agreeable to) nature, but are encircled with glory."‡ For them, he says, "I account death a truly great and accomplished good thing; the soul being to live there a real life, which here lives not a waking life, but suffers things most resembling dreams."§ On this ground he bases his counsel of consolation to a mourning friend not to weep.

In condemning the doctrines of Epicurus concerning death, as having nothing either of good hope or solace, he implicitly classes himself with those who "look for many amiable, great and divine things, and conceive the minds of men to be imperishable and immortal, or at least to go about in certain long revolutions of times, being one while upon earth and another while in heaven, until they are at last dissolved with the universe, and then, together with the sun and moon, sublimed into an intellectual fire."‖ A kindred fancy is displayed when, speaking of the moon, he says, "She adds to her motion by heat (when she measures the shadow of the earth), that she may quickly pass the shady place, carrying with her the souls of the blessed, which make haste and cry. For when they are in the shadow, they can no longer hear the harmony of the heavenly bodies. And withal, the souls of the damned are from below presented to them, lamenting and wailing, through this shadow."¶

We can trace the influence of Plato's teachings in what Plutarch has to say of future punishment. He quotes at

* De Sera Num. Vind., I. 319. † Ib., II. 199. ‡ Ib., III. 9.
§ Ib., II. 199. ‖ Ib., II. 203. ¶ Ib., V. 288.

length, indeed, Plato's vision of the judgment,* and in his *De Sera Numinis Vindicta* he narrates a vision of Hades and its retributions, revealed to "one Thespesius of Soli." The different kinds of punishment are here somewhat minutely detailed, and in drawing up the scenes of the vision Plutarch shows himself no unapt pupil of his master, Plato. He pictures Adrastea, the daughter of Jupiter and Necessity, "seated in the highest place of all, to punish all manner of crimes and enormities; and in the whole number of the wicked and the ungodly there never was any one, whether great or little, high or low, rich or poor, that ever could, by force or cunning, escape the severe lashes of her rigor."† The vision presents impressively the diverse fortune of the good and evil, suffering being ever proportioned to guilt. We seem, indeed, as we gaze, to be breathing the air of Dante's Inferno. The Roman tyrant is a signal victim. "Among the rest," Thespesius "saw the soul of Nero many ways most grievously tortured, but more especially transfixed with iron nails. This soul the workmen took in hand; but when they had forged it into the form of one of Pindar's vipers, which eats its way to life through the bowels of the female," order was given that it be transfigured again, "and so they made it to resemble one of those creatures that usually sing and croak about the sides of ponds and marshes." This tempering of judgment was from "some compassion due him for that he had restored the Grecians to their liberty, a nation the most noble and best beloved of the Gods."‡ So exact is the retribution meted out in Hades, or the future world. That Plutarch rejected the belief that mere ceremonial observances are of any avail to ameliorate the condition of the soul hereafter, is manifest from the manner in which he represents Diogenes commenting on a passage of Sophocles, which represents those as exclusively blessed who had seen the mysteries. "What, then," said the philosopher, "shall the condition of Pantæceon, the notorious robber, after death be better than that of Epaminondas, merely for his being initiated in these mysteries." §

Plutarch held that moral distinctions are not conventional,

* De Sera Num. Vind., I. 337. † Ib., IV. 181. ‡ Ib., 188. § Ib., II. 58.

but eternal. He says,* "Antisthenes, seeing the Athenians all in a tumult in the theatre, and justly, upon the pronunciation of this verse:

> "Except what men think base, there's nothing ill,"—

presently subjoined this corrective:

> "What's base is base, believe men what they will."

He commends Philosophy for its moral and religious teachings; for by the advice and assistance thereof we come to understand what is honest and what dishonest; what is just, what unjust: in a word, what we are to seek and what to avoid. We learn by it how we are to demean ourselves towards the Gods, towards our parents, towards our elders, towards the laws," etc. "That is, we are to worship the Gods, to honor our parents, to reverence our elders, to be subject to the laws, etc., not to be overjoyed in prosperity nor too much dejected in adversity; not to be dissolute in our pleasures, nor in anger to be transported with brutish rage and fury."† To be ignorant of divine things, he accounts the greatest calamity. It is the worst blindness, and "a fatal unhappiness," to be "deprived of the fairest and brightest of the mind's many eyes, the knowledge of God."‡

It is to the Gods that wise men must go for all good things. "Much more ought we, when we would aim at knowledge of which our nature can arrive at, to pray that they themselves would bestow it upon us; truth being the greatest good that man can receive, and the goodliest blessing that God can give."§ The divine presence and approval are essential to blessedness. "From some of our festivals we exclude the flute and the garland, but if God be not present at the sacrifice, the rest is but unhallowed, unfeastlike and uninspired."‖ A formal or ceremonial worship is of no avail to him who is "the Prince of all good things."

The nature of man is such that his life must be a constant struggle with evil both within and without. "As the oracle told the Cirrhœns that they ought to fight continually day and

* De Sera Num. Vind., II. 85. † Ib., I. 19. ‡ Ib., 173.
§ Ib., IV. 65. ‖ Ib., II. 191.

night; so you and every wise man ought to be perpetually on your guard, and if you can be assured that you maintain a constant combat with vice, that you are always at enmity with it, and never so much as come to terms, . . you may reasonably at last expect a conquest and enjoy a crown of righteousness for your reward." * Plutarch speaks of "the frequent conflict of the intellect and reason with concupiscence and anger." † His view of human depravity is distinctly presented. "All human affairs are replete with vice, and the whole life, from the very prologue and beginning to the end, being disordered, depraved and disturbed, as having no part of it pure . . . is the most filthy and unpleasant of all farces." ‡ This is said in refutation of the Stoics' plea that sin is but an interlude, a discord by which the harmony of the whole is made more perfect—a position which Plutarch indignantly denies, as an impeachment of the divine wisdom, which needs no "malice, covetousness, lying," etc., to profit the universe. In another place Plutarch says: "In human life there are many such examples of vice. For there is not any one sober to virtue; but we all stagger up and down, acting shamefully and living miserably." §

The explanation of this is found in the nature of the soul. To arm ourselves "against these assaults, one way will be always to remember that since our souls are made up of two different parts, the one sincere, honest and reasonable, the other brutish, false and governed by passion, the friend always adapts his advice and admonitions to the improvement of the better part," etc. ‖ Again: "In the soul itself there is a certain composition of two dissimilar and distinct natures, the brutal part whereof, as another body, is necessarily and physically compounded with and conjoined to reason, which was, it should seem, no secret to Pythagoras himself." ¶

Hence the duty of introspection. "Turn the point of thy curiosity upon thyself and thy own affairs, and thou shalt within doors find matter enough for thy most laborious inquiries. . . . So vast a heap of offences shalt thou find in thy own conversation, such variety of perturbations in thy soul, and manifold failures in thy duty." ** Again: "Obstruct

* De Sera Num. Vind., II. 450. † Ib., III. 464. ‡ Ib., IV. 386.
§ Ib., 490. ‖ Ib., II. 128. ¶ Ib., III. 463. ** Ib., II. 425.

every prospect that looks to thy neighbor's quarters; close up all those avenues that may lead thee to any foreign curiosity; become an eavesdropper to thine own house, listen to the whispers of thine own walls. . . . Here this inquisitive and busy disposition may find an employment that will be of use and advantage." *

Plutarch indignantly rejects the scheme of Epicurus,† and on some points he sharply criticises the Stoics. Against the latter, he will not admit that all men are equally vicious,‡ and that there are no degrees in guilt or virtue. Their theory of Fate, as sometimes presented, is open to serious objection. He will not allow that things are the effects of "negligent and careless chance," or that in the divine prophecies there is anything of "conjecture or blind uncertainty." § He assents to Homer, where he puts into the mouth of Hector the testimony to the irreversible decrees of Fate, such that

> "No force can them resist, no flight can save,
> All sink alike, the fearful and the brave."‖

He speaks of the views of Fate entertained by others. Heracleitus identified it with necessity. The Stoics made it a chain of causes. Chrysippus called it a spiritual faculty, which, in due order, doth manage and rule the universe. Posidonius made it a being third in degree from Jupiter. Plato declared it the eternal reason and the eternal law of the nature of the universe.¶ Plutarch leans to Plato's view, which he largely details. He makes Supreme Providence "the most ancient of all things, except him whose will and understanding it is," ** and yet Providence "comprehends even Fate itself." †† The first and principal conclusion seems to be that there is nothing done without a cause, but that all things depend on antecedent causes; and the second that the world is governed by Nature, and that it conspires, consents, and is compatible with itself." ‡‡

To understand Plutarch's use of the term Nature, we are to bear in mind what he says of "The sentiments of Nature philosophers delighted in." Excepting Democritus, Epicurus,

* De Sera Num. Vind., II. 426. † Ib., 194. ‡ Ib., 488.
§ Ib., III. 80. ‖ Ib., I. 331. ¶ Ib., III. 180, V. 194.
** Ib., V. 305. †† Ib., 304. ‡‡ Ib., 308.

and those who "affirm that the world is not an animal, nor governed by any wise Providence, but that it is managed by a Nature *void of reason*," he adds, "all the other philosophers affirm that the world is informed with a soul, and governed by reason and Providence." * Aristotle is noted, however, as holding peculiar views, viz., that "the whole world is not governed by a soul in every part of it." Plutarch, however, not only holds with those who deny that Nature is void of Reason, but he introduces Dæmons through whom the scheme of Providence is carried out to the most minute matters. Dissenting alike from those "who will have God simply the cause of nothing at all in the world," and from those "who would have Him concerned in all things," both of whom he regards as "running into extremes," he says: "It seems to me that those who have ranked the genus of Dæmons between that of Gods and men, have solved greater doubts and difficulties, as having found the knot which does, as it were, join and hold together our society and communication with them." † Thus we are relieved from the force of their arguments who "constrain us to perplex and confound all things together, by mixing the divine nature with human passions, and plucking it down from heaven." ‡ Thus, by an ensouled Nature, guided or inspired by reason, and by the agency of intermediate beings, he solves to himself the difficulties of Providence, and vindicates the moral order of the world.

In Plutarch's "Lives" we find much that harmonizes with and corroborates the sentiments expressed in his "Morals." But it would be superfluous, at any considerable length, to cite them here. A tribute is paid to the native claims of justice when Theseus is represented as pursuing his travels to punish abandoned wretches with the penalty of the same kind of death which they had inflicted upon others. He sets before us the views of Pythagoras and Numa, in opposition to idolatry, with evident commendation. He represents Camillus as asserting that war, although a savage thing, has its laws, which men of honor will respect. He evidently inclines to the belief that, in connection with the imprecations of Camillus on his ungrateful country, some deity interposed in vengeance,

* De Sera Num. Vind., II. 133. † Ib., IV. 14. ‡ Ib., 18.

to show that "virtue shall not be oppressed by the ungrateful with impunity."

It is thus that Plutarch reads a Providence in history. As he extends his reading and observation, he finds his convictions of the moral order of the world confirmed. If we sum up the conclusions which he seems to have reached, we find them assuming the aspect and dimensions of a system. An intelligent creator and ruler of the world; a sleepless and omnipresent Providence; a superintending justice, which allows no crime finally to escape with impunity; a Divine favor of which the good man is made the object; a Divine vengeance that will track the wicked man to his grave and beyond, and perhaps visit the penalty of his sin on succeeding generations; the reiterated truth of the depraved tendencies of human nature; the present state as one of temptation and trial; the superior beauty and rewards of virtue; the constitution of the human soul such that, in case of transgression, it may become its own tormentor; the fearful apprehensions of future retribution which conscious guilt will excite; the reasonable hope of future blessedness which the good man is warranted to cherish;—all these points, and others kindred to them, are set forth by Plutarch with admirable clearness, and evidently under the force of overmastering conviction. It has justly been said of his Essays, that "some of them bear a striking resemblance to Bishop Butler's Analogy, and treat, in a precisely similar manner, the difficulties of belief in a moral government of the world." *

CHAPTER XIX.

MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS.

In the "Meditations" of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (121–180 A.D.), we meet with much that indicates careful observation and study of the moral system. In him the Stoic philosophy presents its most attractive aspect, and

* *Fortnightly Review.*

for once we see its lofty ethics harmonized with the conditions of imperial power and splendor.

The views which he presents are not less noteworthy that we cannot regard him in any high sense as an original thinker. With a sensitively receptive nature, he embodies in his "Meditations" the best heathen thoughts of his own and of preceding times. No doubt also he was largely, however unconsciously, indebted to the Christianity which he misapprehended and sometimes scorned.* He may, therefore, be said to reflect the views which he shared with many others, or which he had borrowed from them, so that, in listening to his words, we may learn much which was advocated by the class of Stoics most in sympathy with himself. He repeatedly refers to Epictetus, and confesses his indebtedness to him. His quotations show that he was familiar not only with Plato † and Aristotle, but with the most eminent writers of his own language. A grandson of Plutarch, and Arrian, the disciple and commentator of Epictetus, are said to have been among his instructors. But his own enthusiastic pursuit of philosophy would have supplied many deficiencies, and doubtless led him to imbibe from some sources beside those he has indicated, the ethical tenets by which he proposed to be guided.

His views of the moral constitution of the world are scattered through his writings. They are presented often in a merely incidental manner, or are brought out in connection with his theories of duty and of human life. Of the existence of an intelligent author of nature, he expresses the firmest assurance. "To those," he says, "who ask 'where have you seen these Gods? or, whence are you assured that they exist, that you thus worship them?' First, they are visible, even to the eye; ‡ again, my own soul I cannot see, and yet I reverence it; and thus too, as I experience continually the power of the Gods, I both know surely that they are and worship them." § Nor was Antoninus the dupe of the popular polytheism.

* B. IX., c. 3. He speaks of "mere obstinacy, like that of the Christians;" nor can we vindicate him from complicity at least in persecution.

† B. X., § 11.

‡ The heavenly bodies, according to the Stoics, were animated bodies and subordinate Gods.

§ B. XIII., § 28.

Maximus Tyrius and others assure us that all wise men in the heathen world believed only one supreme God, or original cause of all; and the language of Antoninus, on repeated occasions, shows that he was no exception.

He recognizes fully and explicitly an infinitely wise Providence, presiding over and directing the moral order of the world. "Whatever the Gods ordain," he says, "is full of wise providence."* "A God without counsel and providence is inconceivable."† "If there are no Gods, or if they have no regard to human affairs, why should I desire to live in a world without Gods and without providence? But Gods there are, undoubtedly, and they regard human affairs, and have put it into our power that we should not fall into what is truly evil."‡ Again, "Who told you the Gods do not give us their assistance, too, in the things which are in our own power? Begin, therefore, to pray about these things, and you will see." §

The order of events, also, is in accordance with justice. "If you attend well, you will find that whatever happens, happens justly. I don't mean only in an exact order and destined connection, but also according to justice, and from one who distributes according to merit." ‖ "That universal nature, which cannot be obstructed, is intelligent and just." ¶ "Either there is an orderly, well-disposed universe, or a mixture of parts cast together without design, which yet make an orderly composition. Or can there subsist in these a regular structure, and yet no regular constitution be in the universe?" ** But "there is one grand, harmonious composition of all things; and as the regular universe is formed such a complete whole of all the particular bodies, so the universal destiny or fate of the whole is made a complete cause out of all the particular causes. The very vulgar understand what I say. They tell you, 'Fate ordered this event for such an one, and this was prescribed or appointed for him.'" Elsewhere the alternative is presented,†† of either admitting that all things happen "according to a necessary consequence or connection" and a primary intent, or, with-

* B. II., § 3. † B. VI., § 44. ‡ B. II., § 11. § B. IX., § 40.
‖ B. IV., § 10. ¶ B. VIII., § 7. ** B. IV., § 27. †† B. VII., § 75.

out rational intent or design, the most excellent things are produced. And again, "there is either a fatal necessity and an unalterably fixed order, or a kind and benign Providence, or a blind confusion without a governor." * Antoninus leaves no doubt as to the theory which he chose to adopt. He does not deny that there are apparent imperfections and confusion. Yet he says: "Do not be adding, 'Why were such things in the universe?' A naturalist would laugh at you, as would a carpenter, too, or a shoemaker, if you were finding fault because shavings and parings of their works are lying about in their work-houses." † There is no event or object whatever that is not included in the scheme of an infinite providence. "Whatever happens to you, it was before preparing for you from eternity; and the concatenation of causes had, from eternity, interwoven your subsistence with this contingency." ‡ Yet this does not conflict with a benevolent providence. "The intelligence which governs it (the universe) has no cause in itself of doing evil to any. It has no malice, nor can it do anything maliciously; nor is any one hurt by it. It is the cause of all that happens, as it executes all things." § Again: "Embrace whatever happens, although it should appear harsh and disagreeable, because it tends to the health of the universe—to the prosperity and felicity of Jupiter in his administration. He never had permitted this event had it not conduced to good." ‖

Antoninus does not allow the idea of mere contingency to attach to his use of the word *happen*. "Our very word for happening to one (συμβαίνων) is to go together appositely, as the squared stones in walls or pyramids are said by the workmen to fall or join together, and suit each other in a certain position. Now, there is one grand harmonious composition of all things." ¶ This is the very idea of the moral Kosmos. It would be difficult to give it more exact or fitting expression, and, as we have seen, according to the view of Antoninus, it clearly evinces the wisdom, justice, and benevolence of its author.

Turning now to inquire what the author held as to the

* B. XII., § 14. † B. VIII., § 50. ‡ B. X., § 5.
§ B. VI., § 1. ‖ Ib., § 8. ¶ B. V., § 8.

nature and end of man's existence, we find him, after summing up the varied experience of life, saying: "To what purpose all this? You have gone abroad, made your voyage, arrived at your port; go ashore. If into another life and world, the Gods are also there: if into a state of insensibility, at least, you shall be no longer disturbed by sensual pleasure or pains, or be in slavery to this mean corporeal vessel. Is not the soul, which is often enslaved to it, much more excellent than the body? The soul is intelligence and deity; the body, earth and putrifying blood." *

Of the superior nature of the soul, Antoninus speaks with a Stoic's enthusiasm. "You forget, too," he says, "that the soul of each man is divine, an efflux from God; and this also, that no man is proprietor of anything: his dear children, his very body, and his life, proceeded from the same God." † It is true, indeed, that the soul is sometimes represented as possibly absorbed in God, who is its original source. This is more especially the case with reference to the *animal* soul, which may be "changed, diffused, rekindled and resumed into the original productive spirit." ‡ Again: "I consist of an active and a material principle. Neither of these shall return to nothing, as they were not made out of nothing. Shall not, then, every part of me be disposed, upon its dissolution, into the corresponding parts of the universe; and that again be changed into some other part of the universe?" § Antoninus also speaks of the great and the humble as alike "resumed into the original productive causes of all things." ‖ Yet it seems evident that he did not always suppose this absorption of the soul in its source to extinguish its conscious being. He admits the possibility of it, yet does not see how it consists with the wisdom and benevolence of God. "How is it," he asks, "that the Gods, who have disposed all other things in such comely order, and with such goodness to men; yet have neglected this one point, to wit: the preventing that some of the very best of men, who have, as it were, lived with the Gods the greatest part of life, and, by a course of holy and religious services, been, as it were, familiar with the Divinity, should have no further existence after they die; but be en-

* B. III., § 3. † B. XII., § 26. ‡ B. IV., § 21. § B. V., § 13. ‖ B. VI., § 24.

tirely extinguished? If this be truly the case, be well assured, had it been proper that the case should have been otherwise, they would have made it so. Had it been just, it would have been practicable. Had it been according to nature, nature would have effected it. From its not being so, *if really it is not so*, you may be assured, it ought not to have been. You see, that in debating this point, you are pleading a point of justice with God. Now, we would not thus plead a matter of justice with the Gods, were they not perfectly good and just. And, *if they are so*, they have left nothing unjustly and unreasonably neglected in their administration." * The earnestness with which, in this connection, Antoninus urges, "Consider in what state shall death find you, both as to body and soul," † indicates—as well as much else—to which side of the question his own convictions inclined.

The theory of human duty adopted by Antoninus, is that which regards man as a citizen of the universe and a creature of God. "My natural constitution is that of a rational being, fitted for civil society. My city and country, as I am Antoninus, is Rome; but as I am a man, 'tis the Universe. That alone, therefore, which is profitable to those cities, can be good to me." ‡

According to this "natural constitution of a rational being," man should live. This is to live "according to nature," in Plato's sense, which Antoninus adopts. "We should live a divine life with the Gods. He lives with the Gods, who displays before them his soul, pleased with all they appoint for him, and doing whatever is recommended by that divinity within, which Jupiter hath taken from Himself, and given to each one as the conductor and leader of his life. And this is the intellectual principle and reason in each man." § "The proper work of the rational and intelligent power is to circumscribe itself, and to be unconquerable by the appetites and passions; for both these are inferior faculties, common to the brutes. The intellectual part claims to itself this power over them, and not to be subjected to them; and that very justly; as, by its own nature, fitted to command and employ all these lower powers." ‖ Such is the conclusion, identical with that

* B. XII., § 5. † Ib., § 7. ‡ B. VI., § 44. § B. V., § 27. ‖ B. VII., § 55.

reached by Bishop Butler, to which Antoninus comes, after "meditating with himself, and inquiring what is truly *the life according to nature*."* "A man thus disposed," he says, "wants nothing to entitle him to the highest dignity of a priest and fellow-worker with the Gods, who rightly employs the divinity within him."† "The end of rational beings should be this, to follow the reason and law of their most ancient and venerable city or country,"‡ and this, as we have seen, is the universe. For it is "peculiar to the good man to have the intellectual part governing and directing him in all the occurring offices of life; to love and embrace all which happens to him by order of Providence; to preserve the divinity placed in his breast, pure, undisturbed by a crowd of imaginations, and to follow with a graceful reverence the dictates of it as of a God; never speaking against truth, or acting against justice."§ Thus, "whatever one's natural structure and powers are fitted for, 'tis for this purpose he is designed; and by a natural impulse is carried to it: and his supreme end is placed in that to which he is thus carried."‖

Thus the way is prepared for assigning to man, as "the citizen of that higher city, of which the other cities and states are but as families,"¶ the duties that belong to him. The basis of social duty is this: "I know that I am a part of the whole; and the whole must be conducted by its own Nature, be that what it will: and that I am in some manner socially connected with the parts that are of the same kind with myself."** For this reason, "I cannot be angry at my kinsmen, or hate them. We were formed by nature for mutual assistance, as the two feet, the two hands, etc. Opposition to each other is contrary to nature; all anger and aversion is an opposition."†† "Whatever I do, whether by myself, or with the assistance of others, ought to be directed to that alone, which is useful and suitable to the public."‡‡ Hence results the duty of forgiveness and love to enemies. "'Tis the part of a man to love even those who offend him, and this one may do, if he would consider that those who offend are our kindred by nature, etc."§§

* B. I., § 14. † B. II., § 4. ‡ B. II., § 16. § B. III., § 16. ‖ B. V., § 16.
¶ B. III., § 11. ** B. X., § 6. †† B. II., § 1. ‡‡ B. VII., § 5. §§ B. VII., § 22.

As to the soul's duty to itself, it must first know its own place and end. "He who knows not there is an orderly universe, knows not where he is. He who knows not for what purpose he was formed, knows not himself, and knows not the world. He who is deficient in either of these parts of knowledge cannot tell you for what purpose he is fitted by nature." * This knowledge is, indeed, difficult of attainment. "To many philosophers—and these no mean ones—all things seem uncertain and incomprehensible. The Stoics themselves own it to be very difficult to comprehend anything certainly. All our judgments are fallible." † Hence, the soul must question itself. "To what purpose am I now using my animal powers? This should be matter of frequent self-examination; as also, what are the views and purposes of that governing part, as we call it? What sort of a soul have I?" ‡

Here are the elements of the soul's probation, although Antoninus does not use the phrase. There are opportunities given it by which it may become "a victorious champion in the noblest contention, that against the passions. . . . thinking continually on what is appointed to him by the Governor of the universe." § Indeed, this is the soul's proper work. "There is a certain time appointed for you, which, if you don't employ in making all calm and serene within you, it will pass away, and you along with it; and never more return." ‖ Our rational power should apprehend, too, how a man is related to God, and by what part; and in what state this part shall be, when it returns to Him again." ¶

Antoninus does not overlook the fact of the apparently unequal allotments of men on earth. "The bad ofttimes enjoy pleasures and possess the means of them; and the good often meet with pain, and what causes pain." But the Stoic prescription of regarding physical sensations with indifference, is here called to do service, and he who does not exercise himself to that indifference, in submission to Nature's dispensation, is guilty of impiety. That is, he does not suitably regard the "certain ancient purpose of that Providence and design," ** according to which the universe was constructed

* B. VIII., § 52. † B. V., § 10. ‡ Ib., § 11. § B. III., § 4.
‖ B. II., § 4. ¶ Ib., § 12. ** B. IX., § 1.

and arranged. Moreover, "the Gods, who are immortal, are not fretted that in a long eternity, they must bear with such a numerous wicked world; nay, further, they always take care of it." * Indeed, they may allow strange dispensations for the good of the soul. "For the soul can convert and change every impediment of its first intended action, into a more excellent object of action; and thus 'tis for its advantage to be obstructed in action; and it advances in its road by being stopped in it." † If, however, the soul turns against the allotments of nature, "dissenting from the nature of the whole," "it is acting ungracefully, in opposition to the comely order of the universe; for he fights against its nature and design, who sets himself against truth. . . . He, too, who pursues pleasure as a good, and shuns pain as evil, is guilty of impiety, for such an one must needs blame frequently the common Nature as making some unworthy distributions to the bad and the good." ‡ To Nature's allotments all must submit without murmuring, awaiting the prescribed term of life. This is no more as to the great Disposer, than "as if the prætor who employed the player, should dismiss him again from the scene. But, say you, I have not finished the five acts, but only the three. You say true; but in life, three acts make a complete play. For 'tis He who appoints the end to it, who, as He was the cause of the composition, is now the cause of the dissolution." § This lesson can be taught by "Philosophy alone." "And this consists in preserving the divinity within us free from all affronts and injuries, superior to pleasure and pain, doing nothing either inconsiderately, or insincerely and hypocritically, embracing cheerfully whatever befalls, or is appointed, as coming from Him from whom itself was derived, and above all, expecting death with calm satisfaction." ‖

The fact of sin is not, indeed, overlooked, but it occupies a subordinate place in the "Meditations." We are told, indeed, that "he who does wrong, does a wrong to himself. He who is injurious, does evil to himself, by making himself evil." ¶ The remedy for this shows how inadequately Anto-

* B. VII., § 70. † B. V., § 20. ‡ B. IX., § 1.
§ B. XII., § 36. ‖ B. II., § 17. ¶ B. IX., § 4.

ninus had entered into some of the problems which had engaged the thought of Plato, and which meet us at the outset of any proper investigation of remedies for human wickedness. "Particular wickedness," we are told, "hurts not another; it hurts himself only; who yet, has this gracious privilege, that as soon as he heartily desires it, he may be free from it altogether." *

Of Hades and future retribution, Antoninus is silent. Whether under the doubt of the future conscious existence implied in his theory of a possible absorption of the soul in its original source, he felt that his lips were closed, or whether he was too oppressed by a sense of the solemn mystery of a future which could be explored only through the gate of death, to give expression to his apprehensions, it is nevertheless the fact, that he pauses at the brink of the grave, and though the varied future is already foreshadowed, and the seeds of retribution are already confessedly sown, the imperial philosopher pauses where Plato reverently yet boldly pressed on, and over his meditative treasures there come no rays from the dazzling light of a throne of final judgment.†

CHAPTER XX.

DECLINE OF PHILOSOPHY.

THE Stoic, L. Musonius Rufus, banished from Rome by Nero, but returning thither on the accession of Galba, was, in part, contemporary with Seneca, whom he survived. His philosophy, ostentatiously proclaimed a cure for all the cor-

* B. VIII., § 55.

† Of Antoninus, Lightfoot, in his recent "Notes on Philippians," remarks: "Beset by all the temptations which unlimited power could create, and sorely tried in the most intimate and sacred relations of life—with a profligate wife and an inhuman son—he neither sullied nor hardened his heart, but remained pure and upright and amiable to the end, the model of a conscientious, if not a wise ruler, and the best type which heathendom could give of a high-minded gentleman."—LIGHTFOOT'S [illegible], 315.

ruptions of the human mind, has been preserved in his "Memorabilia," written by Pollio, after the model of Xenophon's "Memorabilia" of Socrates. To the many dogmas of the Sophists, through which they fed their vanity, he manifests his disgust. Of logic and of the physical doctrines of the Stoics, he makes little account. Their religious views, he mainly approves; while adopting the national religion, and even speaking of the nurture which the Gods derive from the vapors of the earth and waters. He asserts, however, that the Gods knew all things without reasoning; that to them nothing can be obscure or unknown. The soul of man is akin to the Gods, yet is it corporeal, and, after having become corrupted, may again be purified and cleansed.* The liberty of the human soul, in a manner utterly opposed to the stoical principle, is strongly asserted, and reason is represented to be wholly free from subjection to necessity. Philosophy is reduced simply to the pursuit of a virtuous life. It is the mental art of healing. Instruction in the nature of good is indispensable, yet, unassisted by practice, it is insufficient to lead men to virtue. A life according to nature consists with social and friendly habits. All selfishness is to be condemned. Marriage is fundamental to the good of the family and the state, and the preservation of the race. Numerous specific precepts are laid down, as rules for a simple life; among them, the direction to abstain from animal food.

Musonius Rufus thus adopted a stoicism materially modified, and he is credited with having brought Epictetus over to his views. We may, from the well-known doctrines of the pupil, infer that the stoicism of his teacher had been strongly leavened with the better elements of a humane and liberal culture. This is confirmed by his opposition to civil strife, and the exception made in his favor when other philosophers were banished from Rome.

But there were other tendencies at work, and stoicism was leavened with less genial elements. Roman philosophy was, in its later stages of development, strongly pervaded by a distrustful scepticism, or even a cold unbelief. In Cicero's *De Natura Deorum*, the interlocutor who closes the discussion, and to whom no sort of reply is made (unless we account

Cicero's expressed preference for the views of the Stoic Balbus, indicating his opposite convictions, the substitute for one), is Cotta, the head of the priesthood, the Pontifex Maximus, and yet he argues against Providence, and while professing, as it were, *ex officio*, to believe in divination, seems to amuse himself in exposing its absurdities.

In Pliny, to whom reference has already been made, the tone of sceptical utterance becomes sad and despairing. "What God is," he asserts, "if in truth He be anything distinct from the world, it is beyond the compass of man's understanding to know. . . . The vanity of man, and his insatiable longing after existence, have led him also to dream of a life after death. A being full of contradictions, he is the most wretched of creatures; since the other creatures have no wants transcending the bounds of their nature. Man is full of desires and wants that reach to infinity, and can never be satisfied. His nature is a lie, uniting the greatest poverty with the greatest pride." Thus did the learned naturalist, representing in this respect, no doubt, many of his contemporaries, reject as an argument for the immortality of the soul, those very aspirations of which he was conscious, and urge them in proof of the dismal wretchedness of man's mortal lot.

To acquiesce in such a conclusion, however in harmony with a widely prevalent scepticism, must have been for many minds impossible. A better hope must be sought, and recourse was had to the older philosophy. But the effort was transient, if not futile. The old philosophy might be galvanized, but not restored to life.

Apuleius, a native of Africa, educated first at Carthage, and subsequently at Athens, where he became warmly attached to the Platonic philosophy, belongs to the second century, in the early part of which he was born. With his strong Platonic prepossessions, he conjoined ample learning and information, derived from his own studies and extensive travels in Italy, Greece, and Asia. Making it his aim to investigate all kinds of religious opinion and worship, he was initiated in many of the mysteries and secret fraternities, so numerous in his age. The productions of his pen were

voluminous, and his high merits for fancy, wit, sprightliness, learning and acuteness, are balanced by equally obvious defects, which display the inveterate affectation of the rhetorician.

His general views as to the divine order and government of the world, are very fairly reflected, probably, in the *Liber de Mundo*, frequently ascribed to Aristotle, but which is included in some editions of Apuleius. On other evidence, we infer his acceptance of an overruling Providence, by which the visible universe is regulated and sustained. In his *De Deo Socratis Liber*, he represents man as intermediate between the Gods above, and sensual life beneath; with the one, sharing a common immortality, with the other, subject to passion or suffering. In his *De Dogmate Platonis*, he makes Fate to be the equivalent of the Divine law, by which the inevitable plans and projects of God are fulfilled.* He represents the nature of man at his birth as neither absolutely good nor absolutely evil, for it contains in it seeds capable of diverse development, in accordance with the educating influences to which it may be subjected.†

But the most noted work of Apuleius is his "Metamorphoses," with its famous story of the Golden Ass. Here the author's fancy revels without restraint, and apparently without object. It is only when we interpret it in the light of his own experience, and the sincerity of a pagan faith which rebelled against the abuses to which it had been subjected, that we are led to regard his book as an exposure of the priestly frauds and impositions of the old religion, and a vindication of the moral verities upon which alone it could maintain a continued existence.

In this last-named work we find evidence of the fact that Apuleius had studied carefully the great problems of the moral order of the world, and on some points, at least, had reached definite conclusions. He makes his Ass reason as a philosopher, and speculate freely on the wrongs and inequalities of the lot of man on earth. Why, for instance, it is asked, does Fortune bestow her riches on the wicked and unworthy, and injudiciously select as objects of her bounty

* Lib., I. † Lib., II.

persons whom, if she had eyes to see, she would fly from? Why, again, are men placed before the world under false appearances, so that the reputation of probity is bestowed on the villain, while punishment for the crimes of the wicked is heaped on the head of the virtuous? Moreover, "the fatal disposition of Divine Providence is neither to be prevented nor modified by the most prudent counsels, or the most sagacious remedies." And yet the conclusion of the whole matter dispels the gloom of this sad reflection, and at the close of the ninth episode, we have a consummation not unlike that in the case of Job, while the victim of a blind Fortune, redeemed from her power, is reminded that "calamity hath no hold on those whom our Goddess hath chosen for her service;" "for now thou art received under the guardianship, not of Fortune blind, but of that clear, far-seeing Fortune, who illuminates all the other divinities by her nocturnal light." This is the result, when the wronged sufferer "hath joyfully vanquished his evil destiny through the providence of the great Isis."

All this accords with the principle that "ever is the eye of kind Providence attentive to the sufferings of an innocent soul." That Providence is one, and it is irresistible. It is "the Parent of universal nature," the "Supreme of deities," "our sole Divinity under many forms," the Phrygian "Mother of the Gods," the Athenian Minerva, the Paphian Venus, the Cretan Diana, the Egyptian Isis, whom the stars obey, and to whom Gods above and beneath do homage, at whose nod "the winds breathe, the clouds gather, seeds grow, buds germinate, the earth revolves and the sun gives his light." To this power, the life preserved or restored by him, is to be dedicated. Thus, the light of a monotheistic faith is invoked to chase away the shadows of doubt and fear which gather over the lot and hopes of men on earth.

The serious, earnest, thankful and devoutly religious tone in which Apuleius closes his Metamorphoses, and celebrates the praises of "the One God under many names," must arrest the attention of every reader. We may surmise that a leaven of Christian influence had penetrated the decaying mass of Paganism as we read of the solemnities in which the

priest of Isis, standing before the doors, "read out of a book from a high pulpit, solemn prayers for the prince, the Senate, the equestrian order, and the entire people of Rome, the ships at sea, and all the subject provinces. After which, according to Greek custom, he proclaimed in that language, λαοις αφεσυς, dismissal of the people. On this the congregation shout assent (amen?) and go home."

But the memorable fable of Cupid and Psyche must not be overlooked. It matters not whether we account it original with Apuleius or not, so far as its moral significance is concerned, since he at least adopted it. Its significance consists in the fact that it represents Psyche, or the human soul, as too weak to guard the secret of its own happiness, and, under the impulse of curiosity, violating its promise, only to find itself transformed in a moment from a princess to a slave. It yields to the pressure of temptation, and, in consequence of its fall, becomes subject to a sad thraldom from which there is no prospect of release, and from which, by its own unaided strength, there is no release for it. Only as the love it had wronged and alienated, interposes its invisible ministries, is it finally emancipated from the wretchedness of its lot, learning by the experience of evil, the blessedness of its former state, as well as its own frailty and folly. None can doubt that this beautiful allegory, one of the gems of classical literature, was intended to mirror the actual experience of the human soul, and to impress those lessons of vigilant fidelity to duty, and to every sacred trust, by the observation of which the better portion may be retained, and the imminent peril of the soul be warded off.

But the writings of Apuleius could scarcely serve to stem a tide swollen by traditionary influences, and made almost resistless by the depravities of the age. The attempt among the Romans to revive the Platonic doctrine resulted in little of importance. "Yet a breath of the Platonic spirit blows upon us when Maximus Tyrius (160 A. D.?) bids us look for a knowledge of God in the multiplicity of the shapes of the beautiful, to whose pure and simple forms, divested of all matter, we have but to recur, in order to behold the divine. And the same spirit breathes in the declaration of Alcinous,

that God, in and by himself, cannot be known; that his essence is inexpressible, and that, therefore, we must simply strive by negation and analogy, or by rising from the lowest to the highest, to exhibit the transcendent idea of God." *

In this connection we find the declaration that images and sanctuaries are not necessary, for those, at least, who retain a sufficient remembrance of the view of the divine which they once enjoyed. For the mass of men, however, the customs of worship common to all nations, and addressed to the divinity under different forms, may be retained. For them the images of the Gods may be of service. The ethical position is also taken, that virtue should subordinate pleasure to it, as the soul does the body. It may, however, be asserted that every virtuous pursuit is at the same time a pursuit of pleasure.

Maximus Tyrius refers the cause of all evil which does not flow from the human will, to matter, which resisted the fashioning power of God as intractable, while Alcinous holds that the soul of the world is eternal, as also its reason, as well as matter. Of this soul, it can only improperly be said, that it was made by God; He rather awakened it to activity, and occasioned forms and ideas to arise in it. On other points, Plato's views were rather travestied than followed.

Later writers, like Taurus and Atticus (176 A.D.?) were rather critics than philosophers. The latter attacks Aristotle for holding that virtue is insufficient for happiness, and for denying the immortality of the soul and a divine Providence for men, as well as asserting that God could not preserve the world from decay, although created by Him. He even considers Aristotle no better than Epicurus, and evidently has no adequate apprehension of his doctrine.

Thus, in conjunction with the Roman conception that the

* Ritter, IV. 231. A striking passage from Maximus Tyrius is quoted by Dr. John Edwards, in his "Stile of the Holy Scriptures," 1694 (Vol. II., p. 71). "Imagine this life to be a way, a way full of passengers, some of which are running, some are thrusting one another on; some labour, others rest; some lie down, others turn out of the way and wander, for there are many by-ways and false paths (these are all but different paths of the same broad way). But there is one narrow way, steep and rugged, and trod by very few, and this leads directly to the very end of the journey: and this journey some diligent and laborious souls are endeavoring to perform, with much work and difficulty, with great pains and sweat."

most important business of philosophy is to acquire a knowledge of the Gods, and lead men to virtue, Neo-Platonism sprang up. An element of distrust or even scepticism was combined with it, and the mind was perplexed by the richness and variety of the old systems, often conflicting. The Peripatetics commanded less attention, although Aristotle found expounders. Eminent among these is Alexander of Aprodisias, who attacked the Platonists and Stoics, only occasionally deigning to notice the Epicureans. His reasonings were specially directed against the Stoical doctrine of an all-determining force of necessity. It is not everything that comes to pass that is pre-determined by fate, but that alone which is accomplished in obedience to the laws of nature; and even these are subject to exceptions. Of the modification of the views of the later Stoics, Alexander takes no notice. His objection to the doctrine of a universal necessity is, that it imperils all feeling of piety and religion; it is also inconsistent with a particular providence, which supposes the Gods to care for individuals, and reward them according to their deserts. What reasonable worship can be rendered them, even though they reveal themselves, or render assistance to man, if this revelation and assistance result of necessity from predetermining causes?

He adheres to Aristotle, yet asserts a divine Providence, in the peculiar sense that God moves all for the sake of some end. He evinces a strong desire to set himself in unison with the pious sentiment that had begun to pervade philosophy, while retaining the principle of his school, which insisted upon the due recognition of the natural connection of all forces and phenomena. That the soul is a materialized form, and not necessarily and of itself immortal, he maintained in consistency with his master.

But in connection with the history of natural theology, a far more important name than Alexander's, is that of the noted physician, Claudius Galen. Born at Pergamus, in Asia, 131 B. C., he flourished in the time of Marcus Aurelius, and by him was summoned to Rome. His education had been extensive and carefully conducted. He had traveled widely. He had studied, if not mastered, the various phil-

osophical systems of his time. Adopting the eclectic method, he leaned strongly at certain points to the Stoic doctrine. But by the very nature of his profession, he was led to look to experience as the most reliable source of knowledge.

He is said to have been the author of seven hundred and fifty works or treatises, of which five folio volumes represent what remains to us. So far as they treat of philosophical subjects, they are mainly ethical, yet they suffice to justify his fame for learning and skill. In his physical inquiries, he especially sought to discover design in organic structures. This branch of study he considered the proper introduction to a true theology. Hence, he abounds in praise of the Divine wisdom, so manifestly traceable in the formation of living creatures. His aim throughout is practical. He appealed to Socrates, Xenophon, and even Plato, as authority for asserting that no art which does not promote the ends of existence is worthy of the name. Hence, he regarded speculations on God's nature, the eternity of the world, etc., as displays of useless ingenuity. He inclines rather to the Aristotelian than the Platonic view of the soul, since the doctrine that it is absolutely incorporeal appears to him unintelligible, nor is it plain how it can diffuse itself over the body, if it has no part in the body. No more can he believe that the soul, diffused over the whole world, is the source of all living things. Such a notion is impious and degrading to the Divine energy. He does not accept Plato's arguments for the soul's immortality, while he adopts his classification of its faculties.

The most celebrated work of Galen is his treatise *De Usu Partium*. It is, in fact, a treatise on natural theology, tracing design in the structure of the body. It anticipates at different points such expositions of the wisdom of God in creation, as we possess in certain of the celebrated Bridgewater Treatises. Notwithstanding his imperfect acquaintance with anatomical science, he is eminently successful in showing how admirably each part and organ of the body fulfills the office for which it was manifestly designed. So high did his reputation rise, that long after his death, his name was mentioned with almost unbounded eulogy. Eusebius relates the divine honor that

was paid him; Trallian gives him the title of *most divine*; the Arabian physicians, Aricenna and Averroes, took the best of what they had from him, and were loud in his praise; while modern scholars have not hesitated to cite his testimony to the truths of natural theology. It is true that he was not without personal weaknesses that detract from the respect due to his fame. He was conspicuously vain, praising himself in his own writings, while the repeated dreams which he reported as divine revelations have exposed him to the reproach of credulity and superstition. But, in spite of these faults, his writings are of special interest and importance in the sphere of natural theology. Of the later Sceptics—for Cicero considered the Sceptical school as extinct in his time—represented by Sextus Empiricus, and yielding to those experimental methods, which many of them as physicians, like Galen, felt constrained to follow, little need be said. They arose at the time when the Stoical school exercised the greatest influence on scientific thought, and to this especially, as well as in some measure to other dogmatic sects, they stood in opposition. They date, therefore, from before the close of the second century, A.D., when the Stoical philosophy had begun to decline, and they were overshadowed by the Neo-Platonism that began to flourish by the middle of the third century.

Of these new Sceptics, we have little personal information. The most noted names they can boast are now obscure. We can trace pantheistic ideas in their habits of thought. Some of them laid down ten, and some five, definite grounds of scepticism, among them the inconsistency of human ideas, whether of life or science, illustrated by the conflicting doctrines of the schools, and the unreliability of representative knowledge. No knowledge, they said, can be demonstrated, for in order to do it the process of proof must be carried back from premise to premise, to infinity. Yet they prudently refrained from the assertion that nothing can be known. The sceptical principle, according to Sextus—in opposing the older scepticism, which was of a different character—was like fire, which, with the combustibles that feed it, destroys itself. He thus ingeniously but vainly seeks to harmonize his own principles.

We need not be surprised to find the Sceptics involved in contradictions, and perplexed to harmonize their own principles. They had no high moral aim in their desultory speculations. Their moral view was in fact very low. They would not free man from evil impulses, but teach him prudently to control them, conceding a kind of happiness to the very unrest and self-strife of the wicked man, who satisfied his impulses without deliberation. Even an irrational life, without sense or consciousness of itself, was no evil. Utility was the object which was ever to be kept in view. Mathematics were depreciated, except so far as arithmetic and mensuration were of practical use. The end of the New Scepticism was to get rid of every step in science and art which goes beyond the profitable. All that is requisite to a right conduct of life is the knowledge of phenomena, and nothing which transcends experience can be known. The criteria of truth were disputed, and even the existence of truth questioned. Some of the arguments employed to maintain their positions can be regarded only as disputative raillery.

Their doctrine of the soul was, that it was something unknown, and eluding perception. It was remitted to the obscure domain of the imperceptible, but yet was by no means allowed to be incorporeal. Objects of mere intellection are contemptuously dismissed, and nothing can be established except through appeal to sense and experience. Even the invisible soul, however, is corporeal in its nature. Accordant with this materialism is the view, that to the composure of the soul the gratification of the animal impulses is of higher value than rational culture and intellectual pursuits.

Thus, in the name of utility, the New Scepticism warred on philosophy, professing to spare common sense. It was not always serious. It could not be when it mooted the question, whether man with his reason was preferable to the brute? It might be more honest in asserting that it is impossible to determine the nature of body, much more of the soul; but its reasoning against causation is simply ingenious and quibbling. The question whether the incorporeal can be the cause of aught, either corporeal or incorporeal, is answered in

the negative; while, if the possibility were conceded, it could not be known. One main argument employed is, that cause and effect must be contemporaneous, and the difficulty is urged in various applications.

We can, of course, estimate at its right value the profession of the Sceptics that, with the Stoics, they admitted God as the supreme cause. The concession seems made in deference to universal belief and general opinion. It does not follow from any logical premise. Yet, admitting His being, it is ingeniously shown that He can be neither infinite nor finite, neither corporeal nor incorporeal, neither simple nor compound, neither sentient nor senseless. A divine Providence is asserted, yet only to be overwhelmed with difficulties and doubts. Evil is in the world. If we deny God to be the cause of it, we limit the sway of His providence. With such objections they confronted their opponents. But their reasonings attracted little attention, and in many cases could not have been seriously urged. With the rise of the Neo-Platonists they disappeared, and left behind them little more than a name.

CHAPTER XXI.

CHRISTIAN APOLOGISTS AND NEO-PLATONISM.

During the decline of the Stoic tendency, that became marked after the transient popularity given it by a Stoic emperor, there seemed little prospect of any effective reaction against the sceptical spirit of the age. Apuleius, assuming to be at once the regenerator of a corrupt and effete paganism, and the reviver and champion of the Platonic philosophy, found few sympathizers, and seemed to have labored in vain. But other influences, more powerful than his wit or learning could set in motion, were already at work to effect a new philosophic development in the sphere kindred to that in which he labored. Platonism, in its original form and fea-

tures, was not to be reproduced, but it was again to be recalled to the attention of men, and, in its modified phase of Neo-Platonism, it was to run a career not destitute of claims to notice and to fame. An Alexandrian Jew, combining Jewish learning with Hellenic philosophy; the Christian Fathers appealing to Greek philosophy against heathen idolatries, and heathen philosophers invoking the aid of Platonism against the inroads of Christianity, were all unconsciously to combine in helping forward the development of Neo-Platonism.

Of Philo Judæus (20 B.C.—50 A.D.) brief mention must be made. He was educated and lived at Alexandria, and belonged to a distinguished, probably a priestly, family of the Jewish race. His learning was extensive, but he was not an original thinker. He has been called the Jewish Plato, and it was said of him, "*aut Plato Philonizat, aut Philo Platonizat.*" His tenets were, in fact, "a compound, or medley, of the Egyptian, Platonic and Mosaic principles." * He is noted for his allegorical method of interpreting the Scriptures, in which he found not only a literal, but a more profound and recondite sense. His theology blends Platonism with Judaism. The anthropomorphism of the Jewish Scriptures was in his view but an accommodation to the wants of sensuous man. God is to be worshipped as a personal being, although He is the most general and absolute of existences. Yet Philo expresses a decided aversion to every doctrine which assumes the form of a sensuous pantheism, or a worship of the sensible world, or mundane soul, as God.† He admired and eulogized the Essenes, who, rising above idle disputes about terms, cultivated the study of morals alone, guided by their national laws and customs. Human wisdom, he held, can attain to no more than a reflection, a shadow, as it were, of God. With the Academics, he held that little confidence can be reposed in sensuous representations. Man's own soul is the worthiest object of his thought, although human reason, like the eye, is incapacitated to discern itself. Whether the soul is corporeal or incorporeal cannot be determined.

But here grace intervenes. God only is wise, and God [illegible] can furnish a knowledge of the truth. In that calm

* [illegible]'s His. Com., I. 384.
† Ritter, IV. 410.

enthusiam with which He inspires the soul it may attain to a knowledge of the divine. Such inspiration, filling him with thoughts and ideas from above, Philo professes to have experienced. Thus, not merely from the Platonic philosophy, or the Aristotelian and Stoic systems, but from the realm of Oriental mysticism, does he derive the materials with which his fancy sports. Indeed, he borrows indiscriminately, with an eclectic taste, rather than a philosophical discernment. He is far from consistent in his views of the primary principles of human conception, sometimes allowing the sensual no share in true knowledge, and again admitting that the senses and the body are perhaps the instruments by which God leads man to a knowledge of the invisible—Himself.

Of God, his language is not uniform. Sometimes He is the One and All, which embraces and fills all, and we have a suggestion of the pantheism which Philo abhorred. At times He is the Uncompounded, the Good, the Simply Existent; but in general, in the strict sense of the term, God is without properties. When regarded as the Creative Reason, He is higher than virtue and science—higher than the good and beautiful. With the Jewish idea of the namelessness of God is naturally associated the belief that His nature is unknowable.

Philo's doctrine of the creation of the world is, that God allowed the non-existent to come into being, after contemplating His own goodness, and finding joy in giving. But he harmonized his own inconsistencies, perhaps, by his theory of the Word of God as the creative God, the instrument by which all is fashioned. Here the relative takes the place of the absolute, and an anti-pantheistic basis is established. Now, though God is without properties, He is designated as the Creator and Governor of the world, the first cause, good and beneficent. Another feature of Philo's system is his distinction of the energies of God from God himself. They are considered as His instruments, His ministers in the formation of the world, partly beneficent, partly vindictive, but, in the latter case, designed to suppress evil. They constitute, collectively, the supra-sensible world—analogous to the Platonic world of ideas. Even the world is the first-born Son of God,

and the air is full of angelic natures, ready to enter as souls into the bodies of mortal men. These energies, however, are sometimes abstract qualities, or are identified with the divine attributes. All divine forces are at times comprehended in the Word, which serves as the organ of creation, and in it finds expression analogous to that of thought in speech. Lower and inferior forces, in a descending scale of emanation, bear the same relation to the Word that the Word does to God Himself.

In this gradation of the orders of being, we reach those limitations of perfection and those conflicting qualities, in which evil—which cannot be from God—has its origin. Philo went so far as to hold that even the perfect power of the Deity himself is limited by the physical incapacity of all mundane things to receive the gifts of the divine mercy. This incapacity is more than what belongs to a subordinate sphere or relation. A positive force or principle, by its nature blind and irrational, is assumed, which disturbs and corrupts the reason when brought in contact with it.

Philo asserts human liberty, and yet wavers in his views. Activity can be predicated of God alone, and mere passivity of created things. Every good disposition of the soul is brought about by the guidance of God, and, on the other hand, every evil one also is no less the result of the divine will, since it results from the sensual desires which matter occasions. The bad become so by the wrath of God, as much as the good are made such by his mercy. The natural tendency of things is to carry man further and further from the perfection of his original creation. Yet, if men are miserable, the fact is due to their guilt alone, and their desert, for good or evil, is asserted in the strongest terms. On any other theory, punishment would be unjust.

Such are the leading sentiments of a writer whose reputation for high ethical aims is superior to his reputation for philosophical consistency. He had a lively sense of the evil of the world, and the sin and misery of mankind. He cherished a lofty ideal of the position to which man should aspire. Though that position could never actually be reached, it should be the object of earnest striving. To render it

attractive, Philo dilates upon mental peace, repose and joy in God, as the supreme good of man. With the Stoics, he identified this good with virtue, and yet there is a sublimated virtue whose office is the expiation and atonement of faults and errors generated in the pursuit of sensual pleasure. To attain this, is too lofty an aim for human weakness alone, even though it combine practice with science. Man must do his part, but it is to meet and secure the operation of divine grace. Hence, in his "virtue" appear the elements of hope, repentance and justice. Repentance is possible, for God mercifully forbears to punish. Yet the supreme end of human endeavor reaches only to a preparation for the reception of divine graces; to an approximate, not an absolute purification of the soul. None the less, man's business is to follow and imitate God. To be strong, the soul must become His dwelling-place, His holy temple. To it, when thus exalted above empty and corporeal things, he holds forth a promise of divine illumination and pleasure incredible. The distinction which he makes between the rational soul, generated of the Word, and a portion of the Deity, and the sensitive soul, occupied with the images of sense, is the basis on which he builds up what has been not improperly termed, his Mystic theory.

The theosophy of Philo, not without sympathizers among the Essenes of Palestine and the Therapeutes of Egypt, was contemporary with the revival of Pythagoreanism at Alexandria. To this revival, Apollonius of Tyana, contributed his influence. He distinguishes between the One God who exists separate from all things, and the other Gods; to the former, no offerings whatever should be brought. Earthly things are unworthy to come in contact with the Supreme, while to the inferior Gods, bloodless offerings should be presented. Nicomachus (140? A.D.) reduced the Pythagorean numbers, as Philo reduced Ideas, to thoughts of God, in accordance with which, as archetypes, all things are ordered.

Meanwhile Platonism found scholars and propagators. While Apuleius distinguished between God and his Reason, which contains the ideal forms, etc., and whatever, on the other hand, is sensible and material; blending Stoic and Peripatetic

doctrines together in defence of Platonism, others were found, in some cases seconding, and in others opposing, the tendencies which he favored. Galen, already named, busied himself with the minute exposition of Plato as well as Aristotle. Celsus, so noted as the opponent of Origen, was a Platonist. Numenius, in part his contemporary, combined Pythagorean and Platonic opinions, and traced the philosophy of the Greeks to an Oriental source, representing Plato as an Attic-speaking Moses, and doubtless reflecting the opinions of Philo.

But a new and powerful influence was introduced by the spread of Christianity. It came into collision, to some extent, with heathen philosophy as well as religion. But in the collision, it was modified itself. Its champions, in meeting its antagonists, sometimes borrowed their armor. Thus, at an early period, arose various forms of Gnosticism, essaying to harmonize Christian doctrines with the speculations of reason. The various philosophical and theological tendencies of the age, which prevailed more or less in different parts of the Roman Empire, were brought face to face at Alexandria. The result was inevitable — a mutual intermingling and modification of them all. The strongest, of course, were destined to prevail, and absorb the others in themselves. These, as the result showed, were Christianity and Neo-Platonism.

Of these, Christianity was the more vital, but it gave, as well as borrowed, from its rival. In the early conflicts of Christianity with Paganism, the champions of the former were disposed, in numerous instances, to avail themselves of the opinions and concesssions of the Greek philosophers. Plato especially, was their favorite. In appealing to his authority, as against their opponents, they would not allow that they were relinquishing their own Christian position. In their view Plato was a witness for God. Either God had revealed to him a measure of the hidden wisdom, as he had in larger measure to the Old Testament prophets, or he had himself derived his spiritual knowledge from the writings of Moses and converse with the East. In any case, as against many of the errors of paganism, he was a competent witness.

This was especially the case when the strength of Christianity was recruited from the ranks of Philosophy. The converted pupil of Plato gladly recognized in Scripture much that his master had taught, and was thus induced to summon the philosopher to bear testimony to the truth of the evangelist.

To indicate the manner in which some of the Christian Fathers contributed to help forward the development of Neo-Platonism, it is necessary only to cite here a select few whose Platonic sympathies were strongly marked, and whose philosophy, so far as they had any, had been leavened by Platonism. The views of others may be more appropriately presented in connection with Gnosticism. Among the former, we may class Justin Martyr (died 166 A. D.), the first Christian apologist whose writings have come down to us. He begins by an appeal to reason and truth. He cites the case of Socrates, who "by true reason and examination" exposed the fallacies of his time, and was put to death as an atheist. In like manner, the Christians had been persecuted, charged with the same crimes. He narrates his own Platonic experience, preparatory to his acceptance of the Christian faith; asserts that the heathen writers had many of them spoken truth, according to the share of "the spermatic word" that was in them; declares that Plato borrowed from Moses, although sometimes inconsistent with himself; and, while exposing "the drivelling theogony" of Hesiod and Homer, vindicates the real monotheism that lay at the basis of their belief. Indeed, he cites abundant heathen testimony to the Unity of God, excuses Plato's concessions to Polytheism by his fear of the Areopagus, and explains his assumption of the eternity of matter by his disposition to avoid charging God with the creation of evil. Anaxagoras, Orpheus and the Sibyl, as well as many others, are cited in support of the fundamental truths of religion. From the hymn of Orpheus he quotes:

"Look to the one and universal King;
One, self-begotten, and the only One,
Of whom all things, and we ourselves, are sprung.
All things are open to his piercing gaze,
While He himself is still invisible—

Present in all his works, though still unseen,
He gives to mortals evil out of Good,
Sending both chilling wars and tearful grief;
And other than the great King there is none."

To Christian doctrine, he finds much that is analogous in heathen writers. "For, while we say that all things have been produced and arranged into a world by God, we shall seem to utter the doctrine of Plato; and while we say that there will be a burning up of all, we shall seem to utter the doctrine of the Stoics; and while we affirm that the souls of the wicked, being endowed with sensation even after death, are punished, and that those of the good, being delivered from punishment, spend a blessed existence, we shall seem to say the same things as the poets and philosophers; and while we maintain that men ought not to worship the works of their hands, we say the very things that have been said by the comic poet Menander, and other similar writers, for they have declared that the workman is greater than his work."

It was thus that Justin Martyr, in encountering the opponents of Christianity, availed himself of heathen testimonies. Many of the more learned converts of his time must have sympathized with him in his views; and it is not surprising that Plato and other Greek writers should have been held in high repute by the Christian apologists. But against this seeming concession to human wisdom, a reaction was produced. This reaction is most conspicuous in the writings of Tertullian, and as the result, those who followed in the track of Justin Martyr had to bear a measure of reproach.

Undeterred by this, however, Clement of Alexandria (about 150–220 A.D.) did not hesitate to employ the language of Greek writers in his defence of Christianity. A native probably of Athens, most of his life was spent at Alexandria, where he came under the influence of Pantænus, master of the Christian school of that city. For twelve years he was his assistant, and in 211 A. D. became his successor, and had among his pupils the celebrated Origen. Eminent for learning, an eclectic in philosophy, and sympathizing with the Stoics, he was especially fond of speculation. His treatises se his remarkable familiarity with Greek literature and

theology. Among the fundamental doctrines of natural religion, there is scarcely one which he cannot support by abundant citations. Exposing the iniquities of heathen rites, or the absurdities of heathen mythology, he is at no loss for heathen witnesses. Heracleitus denounces the shameful orgies of the mysteries. Prevailing errors with regard to the Gods were detected by Euhemerus, Nicanor, Diagoras, Hippo of Melos, Theodorus of Cyrene, "and numbers of others who lived a sober life," but won the reproachful title of atheists. Pythagoras is repeatedly referred to, with qualified commendation, for his testimony to the truth. It is true that these men "plagiarized" from the Hebrews, as has been proved by Tatian and Casian; still their testimony, and that of the poets, might legitimately be cited to expose the errors and perversions of heathen theology. It was not in vain that Greek philosophers had speculated. They had reached some important truths. Philosophy had become the handmaid of theology—a preparatory training for the reception of Christian truths.

There are several phases of the moral system which Clement vindicates as a philosopher rather than theologian. He meets and answers the objection that a loving God can inflict punishment or chastisement. He contends that everything contrary to right reason, is sin. Repeatedly he betrays the influence of his philosophic studies, in appealing to reason and fundamental principles, conceded by heathen authors, rather than to the letter of Scripture, to which they might object. While Clement sees much to reprehend in Greek literature, he is strongly drawn towards the speculations of Plato. The legends of the poets are odious to him; the music of Orpheus and Amphion, he thinks, only tended to excite the passions; the different theories of the philosophers about the Gods he treats with slight respect; but when he comes to Plato, he extends to him the right hand of fellowship. "I desire," he exclaims, "not the winds, but the Lord of the winds; not the fire, but the Lord of the fire; not the world, but the Artificer of the world; not the sun, but Him who brings light to the sun. I seek God, not the works of God. Whom shall I have as my fellow-laborer in this inquiry? I cannot disclaim thee,

Plato, if thou wilt go along with me. But, tell me, Plato, in what way we must trace the footsteps of the God? It is a mighty work to find the Father and Creator of this great whole: and having found, to speak of Him to all is impossible. Because, thou sayest, 'He is in no wise expressible in language.' Right, O Plato, thou touchest the truth. But thou shouldest not have despaired. Join me in the search concerning the *good;* for some divine efflux hath descended upon all men whatsoever, especially on those who are occupied about wisdom. Wherefore, even unwillingly, they confess that there is one God, indestructible and unbegotten: that He is somewhere behind the heaven, dwelling always in His own proper habitation. 'Tell me,' says Euripides, 'what kind of God we are to conceive of Him that seeth all things, and is Himself unseen?' Menander was therefore evidently bewildered when he said, 'O Sun, for thee must we worship as the first of Gods, by whose light it is permitted us to see the other Gods!' The sun would never show the true God. He is shown us by that pure Word, who is the sun of the soul. Plato indicates Him thus: 'All things are about the King of all, and He is the author of all that is good.' Clement follows Justin in holding that to Christianity the views of the heathen philosophers were opposed, not as positive errors, but as partial truths. Out of these views the Christian is at liberty to select what is true, and what accords with Christianity.

In a similar line of thought, Origen (185–254 A.D.) followed Clement. He was a careful student of the Greek philosophers, especially of Plato, Numenius, Moderatus, and some of the Stoics. First among Christian theologians he attempted to construct a system of doctrine. In his interpretation of Scripture he is famous for his free use of allegory, and in his defence of doctrine he makes large use of analogy. Some of his doctrines are peculiar to himself. He favored the view that the soul will in the future state of retribution reach a point where remedial agencies will effect its restoration. The influence of Plato and others upon his mode of thought is seen where he speaks of the stars as living beings, and discusses the question whether their souls came into existence at the same time with their bodies, or seem to be anterior to

them. He will not allow that Christianity rests upon a blind and unreasoning faith. In his reply to Celsus, he asserts that in the Christian system "there is, not to speak at all arrogantly, at least as much of investigation into articles of belief" as in other systems. He gives to Numenius the preference for impartiality before Celsus, since the former, in his treatise, showing that God is incorporeal, enumerates the Jews among those who hold this view, and even makes use of the language of their prophets, while giving it a metaphorical interpretation. He notes it as a fact that Hermippus recorded, in his first book on *Lawgivers*, that it was from the Jewish people that Pythagoras derived the philosophy which he introduced among the Greeks.

It was the aim of Origen to trace the vestiges of truth in all human systems, and his residence at Alexandria, where all sects were represented, as well as his travels abroad, and his acquaintance, diligently sought and improved, with distinguished men, tended to confirm his liberal habits of thought. He had no prejudice to blind him to the merits of heathen or heretic, and was ready to accept the truth, by whatever lips it might be uttered. He thus evinced the same disposition with Justin Martyr and Clement before him, to make use of the testimonies of heathen writers to religious truth.

We have thus passed in review the circumstances in which a vigorous and temporarily successful attempt was made to revive the Greek philosophy. Christian teachers had contributed to bring Plato again into notice. They had assisted to revive his fame, and prepare the way for new champions in his behalf.

Neo-Platonism took form at Alexandria, where the Greek and Oriental philosophies met together and were both confronted with Christianity. The school was founded by Ammonius Saccus, who, after receiving a Christian education, is said to have renounced his belief, and gone over to the pagan worship. His disciples were numerous, and some of them distinguished.

Numenius—previously referred to—a native of Syria, and naturally predisposed to adopt Oriental ideas, was held in high esteem by the Neo-Platonists, for whom he prepared

the way. His veneration was divided between Moses and Plato, the latter receiving from him the title of the Athenian Moses. To Oriental sources he attributed the wisdom of Greece, tracing it through Plato to Pythagoras, and through Pythagoras to the sages of the East. Holding that whatever is corporeal is perishable, he sought to demonstrate the necessity of an incorporeal first cause. An immaterial soul is necessary to preserve the body from dissipation and corruption. The incorporeal is the simple unchangeable substance, that which is. This he calls Reason, or the Good. But this supreme and prime Reason is beyond the ken of man. If it has life, it is a life without mode or change. God is not the Creator, but the Father of the creator deity—Reason, which diffuses itself over the world. But this second God is divided into a second and third, strangely blended, however, and distinguished by the fact that Reason, as supra-sensible, contemplates the supra-sensible on one hand, while on the other, it adopts into itself the nature of matter, and in seeking to form and fashion it becomes the sensible God, in short, the world.*

But the soul (of this world) is distinguished by two aspects, the rational and irrational, ever in constant collision, like good and evil. It is the soul's calamity to be embodied in matter, yet, through its rational faculty, it participates in the divine reason. It was thus that Numenius sought to give definite shape to the Oriental view of the relation that subsists between the sensible and the supra-sensible world. It is obvious that his theory, in which we discern some analogy to the leading ideas of the Gnostics, was calculated to prepare the way for the Neo-Platonic view of emanation.

How far Ammonius accepted the speculations of Numenius, we have no means of knowing, except through the inferences to be drawn from the tenets of his disciples. His professed aim was to establish the essential agreement of Plato and Aristotle on leading points of speculation. Of his successor, Plotinus (205–272 A. D.), we have fuller knowledge. A native of Egypt, and educated at Alexandria, his mind was imbued with a reverence and taste for the wisdom of the East, and to enlarge his acquaintance with it, he followed the Emperor

* Ritter, IV. 517.

Gordian on his Persian expedition. Returning to Rome, he assumed the character of a teacher of philosophy, numbering among his pupils Amelius and Porphyry.

The object of Plotinus was a general, but mainly philosophical culture of the mind. Practical duty was postponed to fanciful speculation. He cherished the idea of founding a city to be called Platonopolis, and to be governed by the laws of Plato. He declared himself ashamed of his body, which he asserted to be but a phantom, and a burden to bear about. Six times, during his life, he claimed that he had beheld, and been united to, the supreme God.*

It is difficult to trace the thread of his ideas. He borrowed somewhat indiscriminately from various sources, mainly Platonic, Stoic, and Oriental, showing little originality, except in ingenious combination. He assumes to interpret Plato, yet rejects as non-Platonic what he cannot approve. He controverts Aristotle where he cannot reconcile him with Plato, with the single exception that he admits the eternity of the world. With the Stoical doctrine of the sensuous elements of knowledge and its materialism, he is at issue, treating them as manifest absurdities. To mythology he refuses to appeal, yet he accepts magic and incantations, while refusing to concur in the opinion that the Gods can be moved by prayer.

Plotinus went beyond Plato in depreciating sensuous perception. The soul is in a body, according to him, for its punishment solely. Its perceptions of the corporeal are its calamity, from which it should seek to free itself. The perfection of the soul in heaven is to dispense with words and ratiocination, for to these cleaves the stain of the sensible and external. Passing beyond Numenius in his doctrine of the union of the Soul with Reason, he holds that there is something higher than the reason, which he designates as the One,

* Neander (Church History, I. 390) calls attention to the fact that Plotinus, in no part of his works, openly attacked Christianity, but felt himself under the necessity of opposing the Gnostics, since in their speculations, they pretended to outstrip Plato and the old Greek philosophy. It seemed ridiculous to him that they should transfer to the Demiurge the relation of the human artist to his work. Gieseler (Church His., I. 175) remarks that in the works of Plotinus, many passages are aimed at Christians, without their names being introduced.

the First, or the Good. "He who reflects upon himself," says Plotinus, "reflects upon his own original, and finds the clearest impression of some eternal nature and perfect being, stamped upon his own soul." There is a knowledge above that of definitions and syllogisms. The First, whom we are intuitively to apprehend, is near to all and remote from none. All that is alien to it must be put aside, and man must advance to it alone and in solitude. In the result—the lauded contemplation of the divine—we reach that height of mysticism which Plotinus describes as enthusiasm, an inspiration of Apollo or the Muses, an intoxication of the soul. In it the soul lives no longer; it is exalted above life; it thinks no longer, it is above thought. It is no longer soul or reason, but has become what it contemplates. Man becomes God. He breathes the One, and continues to be what He permits him.

With the unintelligible, Plotinus combines the contradictory. The soul thinks while it does not think. It may be identified with the One, yet think itself not to be. The One is not all things, since otherwise it could not be the origin of them, and yet it may be regarded as all, since it is everywhere. It is, and it is not, the existent: neither moving nor at rest; neither free nor necessary. Still Plotinus predicates of it volition. He credits it with energy, he ascribes to it love. Yet, in his effort to eliminate from the idea of God all relativity, he insists that it would be wrong to ascribe to the One even a good will, for the idea of good cannot well be entertained without reference to something else. Yet it must be admitted that in some sense the One is the Good. God is, moreover, the prime substance, or origin, of all that is beautiful; but still, in another sense, He is not the origin of it. Like Philo, Plotinus is at a loss for a fitting name for Him who is even simpler than unity, and whom he can most appropriately call the One. Thus does he struggle to conceive of God, purely and absolutely, without reference to aught else. His aim was to provide satisfaction for the impulse of a religious craving after union with God.

But the futility of his theory of the absolute is seen when he attempts to trace the derivation of things. Here he is

compelled to conceive his First, relatively to the Second, as creative. There is, what is equivalent to emanation, and yet the First is as absolute as ever. Thus vainly does Plotinus endeavor to reconcile the unchangeable rest of the Good with the necessity of its becoming the principle of the Second. This Second, as an emanation, is inferior to the First. But from the Second, as an emanation of Reason, comes the (mundane) soul, or thought, such as the soul is conceived to be. In this, are all kinds of entity, to be fashioned into the sensible world. Plotinus insists on the idea of Providence being so understood as to imply the principle that all in the world proceeds from Reason. It is the peculiar attribute of Soul that it forms the world, takes an outward direction, and thereby becomes practical. The sovereignty of the world is claimed for it, yet its participation in the sensible and corporeal is not to be compared with that of the human soul in its body, for it rules over it; it feels no want, no pain; experiences no sensuous perception. The sensible world, in some sort a copy of itself, closes the series of emanations. The passage from the highest to the lowest has been found. This lowest is sensible matter, and in this limit of existence, we come upon the non-existent, the principle or indication of privation and evil.

As to the individual soul, it is sometimes represented as an emanation from the mundane soul. At others, sensation emanates from the soul into animals, and nature—a soul and efflux, also—into plants. Indeed, all that is in the world is life and soul, or thought and reason. This is evinced by the beautiful forms and order of all things, the soul shaping, from within, all matter to itself, so that all the elements are filled with its vitality. Life may not be apparent, and yet be really present. Even the stars and the earth have a divine life and reason. As to the evil that exists, it is necessary and indispensable, the result of dependence and limitation, but when considered in all its connections, the discord resolves itself into a higher harmony; the very evil is subservient to good. Thus the world is a work worthy of the soul, even while the sensible is degraded, as a delusive image and a vanity, to the lowest point, and, in accordance with Aristotle, is admitted to be eternal.

As to the relations of the human soul to the external sphere, Plotinus drifts with the current of the philosophy of India. "This sensuous life is a mere stage-play; all the misery in it is merely imaginary; all grief a mere cheat of the player." * Human freedom is asserted, but it is a freedom to evil rather than good, more to be deprecated than desired. And yet man is a free creature, responsible for his own deeds, and capable of guilt. True liberty, however, is, not to follow nature by yielding to the sensuous desires. Reason alone is free, and whatever is without matter is also free; but the practical reason, oppressed by the material, has no claim to liberty.

But the good man is emancipated from bondage to sense. In its separation from the body at death, the soul asserts its capacity to contemn corporeal advantages. The soul constitutes the man, and our aim should be to emancipate it from all sensual desires. Whatever does not belong to it, must be put off and removed. The real virtue of the soul is simply wisdom—the contemplation of whatever the Reason comprises. Its happiness is its own intrinsic energy. To emancipate it from all that is low and mean, and to direct men's thoughts to the Supreme excellence, is the object which Plotinus exhorts to pursue; and if a man is unable to loose himself from the sensual, the fault is his own. Truth should be the property of man. He should aspire to the highest excellence that reason can desire. This is within his reach, if he will labor and call forth the faculties of his soul, scorning whatever is selfish and sensual.

It is superfluous to criticise incongruities which lie upon the very surface of such theories as those of Plotinus. We must not fail, however, to do justice to the scientific as well as moral aim of his speculations. The times called for a readjustment of the relations of philosophy to morals, and,

* Ritter, IV. 586. Ueberweg (His. of Phil., I. 250, Am. Ed.) notes one phase of Plotinus' doctrines, at which Ritter barely glances: "In consequence of their descent into corporeality, the souls of men have forgotten their divine origin, and become unmindful of the Heavenly Father. They wished to be independent, rejoiced in their self-lordship, and fell constantly farther and father from God, forgetting their own dignity, and paying honor to that which was contemptible. Hence the need of man's conversion to that which is the more excellent."

cumbered with materials, he made a selection and combination such as accorded with his capacity and tastes.*

His successor and editor was the celebrated Porphyry, born in Syria, 233 A. D. At Rome, in his thirtieth year, he joined the School of Plotinus, whom he regarded with enthusiastic admiration. In his work against the Christians, charging them with falsifying the doctrines of their master, he depicted Christ himself as an enlightened sage. In his view of the relations of the corporeal and incorporeal, he made the former emphatically subordinate. He was disposed to recognize the widest diffusion of the incorporeal. Thus he accepted many superstitious opinions. His theory of demons is remarkable. They are beings of the air, invisible and shapeless. There the good rule, and the evil are subject to them. Sacrifices, to propitiate evil demons, are allowable, and the power of magic and necromancy is admitted. Though forbidding all animal sacrifices, Porphyry does not prohibit the worship of even the national Gods. Men should do homage to the Divinity according to their national customs. There are Gods beside the Highest, and next follow demons, and other orders of being superior to man.

Porphyry admitted the power of the flesh over man, but this only when the evil was in him, and the blame was to be imputed not to the flesh, but the soul. From this empire of passion man was to emancipate himself, even at the sacrifice, if necessary, of his whole body. The present state of man was one of degeneracy, far removed from the purity and innocence of the olden time. In the golden age, the Pythagorean rule of abstinence from flesh was observed. It is through a holy life that man, with difficulty, attains the perception of

* Schwegler (His. of Phil., p. 140, Am. Ed.), in describing the method by which Plotinus aspired to attain to absolute truth, remarks: "Knowledge of the true, he maintains, is not won by proof, not by any intermediating process, nor so that objects remain outside of him who knows, but so that all difference between the knowing and the known disappears; it is a vision of reason into its own self. . . . The supreme degree of cognition is vision of the Supreme, the single principle of things; in which all separation between it and the soul ceases; in which the latter, in divine rapture becomes the absolute in itself, feels itself filled by it, illuminated by it. . . . This mystical absorption into divinity or the One, this trance of swooning into the absolute, is what gives so peculiar a character to Neo-Platonism, as opposed to the Greek philosophical systems proper."

God. In the worship of Him nothing material must be offered. No word or thought which bore the trace of passion could meet His approval. It was not allowable to speak of Him publicly and before the uninitiated. We should rather honor Him by silence and pure thoughts, and only to the supra-sensible God should we direct our prayers and hymns. The highest virtue is that which subdues the passions and assimilates us to God, yet higher eminence belongs to him who devotes his whole soul to knowledge, and thereby becomes a God, living only for the reason, and becoming one with the One.

Most noticeable, as indicating his divergence from the prevalent theistic conceptions, is his letter to the Egyptian priest Anebos. In this, he proposes questions and doubts which he would have resolved. Should the Gods be conceived of like the stars, indivisible, and infinite in power, yet with finite bodies? How can infinite beings be subject to passions to be appeased by prayer and sacrifice? How can man call some deities benignant and others malevolent? How is the presence of a God, angel or demon, to be distinguished, when the appearance of all is described as the same? Can we suppose the Gods attending to soothsaying and divination? Can they delight in animal sacrifices while their priests abstain? What virtue can the barbarous and unmeaning forms of invocation possess? Why are they employed for the most trifling objects? It was to be suspected that the Egyptians were in error as to the true nature of the divinity, and the means of attaining a union with him.

By such bold doubts, Porphyry projected his philosophy into the sphere of theurgy, and risked the whole authority and reputation of his school. Some, and if one report is true, his successor, Jamblicus, felt that he had betrayed their cause, since to this successor has been ascribed the reply to Porphyry's letter. This reply defends almost every practice of the theurgists and magicians, and attempts to reconcile these with the Neo-Platonic theory of Gods separate from all evil. It is, of course, rather ingenious than conclusive. It mediates between rational worship and superstitious ideas. It surrenders that part of Plotinus' theory which evaded the admission

that the One suffered the world-creating Reason to issue from itself. It dwells upon supernatural manifestations, and recites many stories of the awful appearances of gods, demons, angels and souls, and of the advantages that have flowed to such as have invoked their presence. Theurgy is an art, yet not every magic art deserves the name. The earliest traditions were to be followed, and mischief could only attend the indulgence of a love of change. The pure worship of the pure Gods is by no means fit to be prescribed for all. Few are capable of high converse with the immaterial Gods. To this man can attain only by means of lower grades of worship, commencing with the material, and ascending to the immaterial Gods.

Whether this reply was by Jamblicus is uncertain. But it is quite plain that on some important points he diverged alike from Porphyry and Plotinus. Plato was not so much his idol as Pythagoras. To the theurgists he makes great concessions. The statues of the Gods were in his view endowed with a power derived from the divine presence. Priestly virtues were pre-eminent above others. The Gods are always with us, but we are not always with them. Thus did Jamblicus enlist philosophy in the cause of a polytheistic theology, and thus, too, as Ritter remarks, "did the philosophy of Greece gradually revert to that form of theogony, from which, in all probability, it received its first stimulus." *

Associated with the name of Porphyry is that of the Egyptian, Abammon, who, in reply to a question of Porphyry respecting the notion of a primary cause, declares the doctrine of Hermes to be, that before all substances and the principalities of the world, there is one God, earlier than the first God and King, remaining unmoved in the singleness of his own unity. For neither is the intellectual interwoven with Him, nor anything else. He is His own archetype—His own Father, begotten from Himself, *the* Good. For He is greatest and first, fountain of all things, and root of all the intelligible forms. He is the beginning, God of Gods, ruler of the

* Ritter, IV. 631. Ueberweg (His. of Phil., I. 253) remarks that—"Above the One of Plotinus, Jamblicus assumes still another absolutely First One, superior to all contraries, and as being wholly without attributes, elevated even above the good. Under, and next to this utterly ineffable first essence stands that One, which (as Plotinus had taught) is identical with the Good."

Noetic principalities, which are the oldest of all, above the empyrial, and ætherial and celestial. Next to this being comes Eicton, the first of the intelligences, to be worshipped in silence; then Emeth, Ammon, Osiris, etc. Man has fallen from the vision of God; he can only be blessed by recovering this vision. The perfect good is God himself: the good of man is unity with Him. It is a mistake to say that the human will is subject to the movements of the stars. The Gods are above fate; and men ascending to the Gods partake of their freedom. Abammon prays for right thoughts, more perfect participation of divine knowledge, and the perpetual possession of the truth. With all this he unites the defence of priestly theurgy, by which we may acquire a God, instead of a demon, as leader of our souls.*

The last of the Neo-Platonists that deserves mention in this connection, is Proclus, born at Constantinople (412 A. D.), and educated at Alexandria. But he was more a seer than a philosopher. He embraced the olden, but now persecuted, religion with enthusiasm. He claimed to enjoy the special favor of Athena, Apollo and Asclepius. He soared in contemplation to the supra-sensible. His prayers could effect cures, and by the resources of his magic he could evoke the showers and still the earthquakes. In one of his premonitory dreams, it was revealed to him that within him dwelt the soul of the Pythagorean Nicomachus. He aims to be the expositor of Plato, rather than the propagator of original opinions. It seems impossible to justify the eulogium which Cousin has bestowed upon him, as if he were the incarnate epitome of all philosophy. It is true, he was reverent and serious. He prays all the gods and goddesses to guide his reason in his speculations. He welcomes the divine guidance of Plato, directing his knowledge into the very brightness of being. Among his works, preserved to us in an imperfect form, is his treatise on "Providence and Fate." Both are causes of the world and of what comes to pass, but Providence is antecedent to Fate, and all which happens according to Fate comes to pass by a much earlier law from Providence, while the whole order of things, depending directly on Providence, is

* [illegible]'s Moral and Metaph. Phil., I. 340.

diviner than Fate. One soul comes down from above, and is separable from body. Another dwelling in bodies cannot be separated from material existence. In his "Doubts on Providence," Proclus raises some of the most profound and difficult questions that have ever engaged human thought. The nature of evil, and how it arises, are points carefully considered. The conclusion is that evil is privation. Evil, as evil, is that which is separated from the fountain of good. Here we seem to tread upon ground made familiar to us, with some modifications, by some of the Christian Fathers. Proclus, however, confesses that all he says, had been said before him by Plato. His compositions were numerous, including many hymns, but he declared, that if it depended upon himself, he would permit the circulation of no other works but the "Oracles" and the "*Timæus*."

His conception of the Gods was akin to mysticism. Who, he demands, can ever express the truth of divinity? Man may speak about the Gods, but he can never express what they really are. He may speak scientifically, but not rationally. Works of theurgy are better than any human wisdom, and yet Proclus talks of the One, and the Gods, and the higher orders of existence, as if they could be made objects of science and be definitely expressed.

At some points he differs radically from Plotinus. He does not accept, without material modifications, the latter's theory of emanation.* He is more disposed to rate the condition of humanity as mean and low, depreciating the power of reason, which required extrinsic aid. The power of reflection, of turning back upon itself, was the peculiar characteristic of the incorporeal, and furnished the proof of the soul's immortality. Although opposed to all systems which made human happiness dependent upon external advantages, he regarded the destiny of the soul as not absolutely independent

* Ueberweg (His. of Phil., I. 257, 8) notes, among the tenets of Proclus, that he derives from the primordial essence, not a single One, inferior to the First, but a plurality of unities, not precisely numbered, but all of them exalted above being, life, reason, and our power of knowledge. They are agents of Providence, and Gods in the highest sense of the word. Proclus also held that every soul is by nature eternal, and only in its activity related to time. Matter is, in itself, neither good nor evil. It is the source of natural necessity.

of things without. The sins of one may pass over to others, and children are implicated in the guilt of their parents, and subjects in those of their sovereigns. The mundane system, in fact, constitutes a living unity, and it is just, that individuals should share the consequences of the acts of the body they constitute. Like several of his predecessors, Proclus represents the One as unknowable, but the inferior Gods may be known mediately through that which participates in them. Thus the Highest is raised above all relativity, yet even in this position, Proclus is not always consistent with himself. His theosophy and his philosophy are repeatedly coming into collision, and with the old paganism in its death-throes, before a Christianity that had snatched from it the persecutor's sword, it is scarcely possible to imagine Proclus as having any successor. Neo-Platonism had developed many and contradictory tendencies. It was less a school than a series of schools, oftener clashing than harmonizing with one another, until at last it threw itself into the arms of the old paganism, and died on the breast at which it had first been nursed.

CHAPTER XXII.

GNOSTICISM AND THE CHRISTIAN FATHERS.

THE testimony of the Christian Fathers is of interest to us in this history, not so much for the light which it throws upon their own doctrines, as upon those which they controverted. What their general doctrines were with respect to the moral system, is obvious enough from the fact that they were derived from the sacred Scriptures. They may be briefly summed up in Irenæus' position, in his work "Against Heresies" (B. III., ch. 25), that "this world is ruled by the Providence of one God, who is both endowed with infinite justice to punish the wicked, and infinite goodness to bless the pious, and impart to them salvation."

But, at a very early period, heresies had sprung up, some

of which seemed to be, under a new nomenclature, plagiarisms from the old mythologies. Indeed, the parallel between them is elaborately drawn out by Irenæus. Men who had been educated in paganism, and who, upon their conversion to Christianity, retained predilections for their former philosophic opinions, were disposed to put their own interpretation upon the dogmas of their new faith. In some cases, doubtless, they were sincerely anxious to commend that faith, purified of what might be objected against it, to those with whom they came in contact. Hence, they demanded a *Gnosis*, something approaching to a scientific statement of the relations of God to men, and to a creation marked by imperfection and evil. Some were deeply impressed with that sense of internal conflict between "the flesh" and the "spirit," so vividly portrayed (Rom. vii.) by the Apostle Paul from his own experience. Some were already tainted with Oriental Dualism, and, like Philo, felt the necessity for some theory, by which the Supreme God might be relieved from all direct connection with the evil of the world, or responsibility for it. In these circumstances, the notion of a Supreme Deity, with subordinate intelligences, including a series of emanations and a Demiurge, was well calculated to meet with favor. The infinite diversity of forms into which this notion might be molded, formed a new attraction, and, as the result, heresies almost innumerable sprang up, nearly all belonging to the same general class of Gnosticism, and, while differing among themselves, possessing a family likeness.

The very term *Gnosis* implied the assumption of superior knowledge. The Gnostic claimed to have attained to an apprehension of truth, far above the simple faith of the vulgar, and superior to the literal teachings of Scripture. To him the exoteric, or surface doctrines of Christianity, were but the shell through which his Gnosis would break its way to the esoteric. The questions about which he concerned himself were—how to explain the apparent confusion in the order of the world where evil existed, and where the powers of good and evil perpetually clashed—how to apprehend the beginning of creation, the transition from the infinite to the finite—how to conceive of the relation of God, infinitely

good as well as incorporeal, to matter, and the evils associated with it—how to explain the derivation of an imperfect world from a perfect Cause—how to account for human depravity and the almost infinite variety of existence, from the pure and spiritual, to the grossly sensual and material.

With such questions pressing for a solution, and with a great variety of minds variously constituted and trained, essaying to solve them, the almost infinite diversities of Gnosticism are easily accounted for. To one who failed to discern the harmony between the Old and New Testaments, it seemed that they must have emanated from different sources. The God of the one could not be the God of the other. To the Oriental Dualist, embracing Christianity, but bringing with him his old methods of viewing the order of the world, it was natural to seek, in his previous philosophy, the means of defining the relations of a Redeemer to a world in conflict with Him, and to which, as well as to its Author, He must be supposed to stand in hostile relations. To the Hellenic convert, familiar with philosophies that made (*Hyle*) matter the unpliable and eternally resisting element which creative wisdom had at once to mold and overcome, it might even seem necessary to associate with the original matter a turbulent, lawless motive power, a kind of mundane soul, over which the Supreme should have indeed partial control, but to which, imperfect itself, the imperfections of the created world might be ascribed.

But when the views held by these different classes were almost infinitely blended, when Oriental theosophy with its Dualism, and Greek philosophy with its *hyle*, and Judaism with its anthropathic conceptions of a Deity who might be the Demiurge, or world-framer, but could not be the God of Redemption, were brought face to face, it was inevitable that Gnosticism should assume such diversities of feature as sometimes to appear rather alien than kindred.

And yet we find certain common difficulties, and certain common conclusions, among the great mass of the Gnostic sects. All held to a Deity existing apart from matter, pure, holy, infinite, and in no way responsible for the evil in the world. The method by which the problem of creation was

solved, was by means of the Demiurge, either the God of the Old Testament, or a being approximating to the Ahriman of the Persians. Some made this Demiurge one of a series of emanations from the Supreme, one of numerous Æons, sometimes named after the attributes of God.

With such views as these, doctrines or inferences the most diverse were associated. If the infinite and Supreme God is to exist apart from all contaminating contact with an evil world, he can communicate with it only through the medium of Æons. These, as emanations from his central fullness, and as embodiments of the divine attributes, discharge their functions, answering to their different names, and taking charge of the spiritual world. The lowest of the Æons—in some cases—is the Demiurge himself, the creator of the visible universe, the Jehovah of the Old Testament, the Archon, the son of Chaos, whose work may be absolutely, or, with some, only relatively evil.

But in some cases, we trace a series of emanations, each successively inferior to its predecessor, till we come down to human nature, and even the lowest and most debased phases of it, where it comes in contact or combination with the originally evil matter, is overcome by it, and is left to helplessness, beyond the hope of redemption, and destined to be annihilated.

As to the arbitrary manner in which those who held such views, dealt with Scripture, interpreting it by their fancies, or theorized as to the person of Christ, even denying his actual incarnation, we need not speak. The age might be described as Gnostic. This, indeed, was evinced by the spread of Neo-Platonism. The analogy between the speculations of the Neo-Platonists and the Gnostics is sufficiently obvious, even while some of the former—like Plotinus—were avowedly hostile, on some points, to the Gnostic schemes. A common tendency, however, is manifest in both. A First Being, transcending all sensual apprehension, uncontaminated by any direct contact with matter or the material creation, is yet, by some scheme of emanations, to be connected with the actual world, human and physical. The same influences which pushed forward the development of Neo-Platonism,

impelled to kindred theorizings in the Christian sphere of thought. There was a predisposition to Gnostic speculation. The tendency has been traced back to Simon Magus, and to Cerinthus, who is said to have been contemporary with the Apostle John, and the intermediate link between the Judaizing and Gnostic sects. But while Cerinthus placed a boundless chasm between God and the world, filling it with numberless spirits of an angelic or inferior nature, Basilides placed the unrevealed and incomprehensible Supreme at the head of a universe of emanations evolved from his several self-individualizing powers. Within this emanation universe, each being was precisely what it ought to be at its serial stage of evolution, but from the mixture of the Godlike and the ungodlike proceeded the discord which called for a harmony-restoring power. With these views, Basilides connected his doctrines of pre-existence and transmigration of souls, an Archon, as a Demiurge, acting in subordination to the Supreme, and other tenets, in support of which he could appeal to Zoroaster as well as Plato and Aristotle. However opposed his system might be to some of the teachings of Christianity, it did not deny theism or Providence. Like Basilides, Valentine, somewhat his junior probably, placed at the summit of being, the Primal Essence, which he denominated Bythos, but the *powers* of Basilides became the Æons of Valentine. He introduced, also, the idea of the Horos or Redeemer. Other peculiarities of his system are noted by the Christian Fathers who attempted its refutation. He was followed by Heracleon, Ptolemæus, Marcus and Bardesanes, who may be regarded as his disciples, while among the Gnostic sects are reckoned the Ophites, Nicolaitans, Simonians, Marcionites and others. Many of these were not merely independent of Christian authority in their speculations, but even grossly ignorant of Scripture itself. We may doubt, however, whether the most accurate knowledge would have restrained their speculations. Their theories warranted them in putting an allegorical or arbitrary interpretation upon what conflicted with their views, while their *Gnostic* pride, in many cases, would have resented the idea that they could be taught by those who had not attained to their own level. To their refutation, a large

portion of the writings of the Christian Fathers is specifically devoted.

Toward the close of the second century (about 177 A. D.), Athenagoras, an Athenian philosopher, who had embraced Christianity, presented to the Emperors, Aurelius and Commodus, his "Apology," or Plea for the Christians. He repels the charge of atheism, brought against them; cites the testimony of heathen poets and philosophers to the unity of God; exposes the absurdities of polytheism and argues its comparatively recent origin; censures the scepticism of Euripides and Aristotle concerning a divine providence; insists that the heathen Gods were originally men; and asks, in view of all the facts adduced, that the Christians may be fairly judged.

Tatian was a disciple of Justin Martyr, but after his death fell under the influence of the Gnostic heresy. Embracing rigid ascetic principles, he became the founder of the sect known as Eucratites (166 A. D.), the "self-controlled," or "masters of themselves." In his "Address to the Greeks," he exposes the vices, errors and ridiculous assumptions of the philosophers; sets forth the Christian view of the unity of God and the creation of the world, the fall and the resurrection; is unsparing in his ridicule of the heathen divinities; traces demon-worship to human depravity as its source; and presents in striking contrast the philosophy, ethics and usages of Christianity and Paganism.

Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, who died a few years before the close of the second century, in three books, addressed to his friend Autolycus, goes over much the same ground with Justin Martyr, and other early apologists. He holds that God is known by his works, that the heavens declare his glory, and the elements his power. The immoralities of the heathen Gods and the absurdities of idolatry, invite his censure. The theories of the philosophers—Plato excepted—concerning God are shown to be degrading. Homer and Hesiod are criticised, and heathen genealogies are shown to be fabulous. The contradictions of Greek writers on the subject of Providence are specified. The Scripture account of creation is vindicated, and as to future retribution, the teachings of the Greek poets and tragedians are quoted in confirmation

of the testimony of Hebrew prophets. The superior antiquity of the latter, and the contrast between the writings of the Hebrews and Greeks, form the conclusion of the letters.

The "Recognitions" of Clement (perhaps falsely ascribed to him), of uncertain date, but written possibly as early as the close of the second century, are a kind of philosophical and theological romance. Under the form of autobiography, the author narrates his early doubts and anxieties, the circumstances of his conversion, the account given him by his teacher of the scheme of Old Testament history preparing the way for the advent of Christ, the planting, spread and persecutions of Christianity, and the heresy of Simon Magus. After a statement of leading Christian truths and duties, we meet with the exposure of polytheism and certain Gnostic errors, the vindication of God as the Father, one and supreme; an extended refutation of Simon Magus, in which the origin of evil is touched upon, human liberty is asserted as essential to goodness, the righteousness as well as goodness of God evinced, and such topics as the immortality of the soul and a judgment to come, are briefly considered. In connection with the subsequent narrative, we meet with the discussion of many points of interest—as, Providence vindicated, why God permits evil, the evil of idolatry, suffering the effect of sin, free-will, eternity of punishments, judgment to come, the responsibility of knowledge, theories of creation by the Greek philosophers, the atomic theory, the mechanical theory, the various illustrations of design furnished by the works and correspondences of the creation, Probation and Retribution. The "Recognitions" close with a merciless criticism of heathen mythology, transformations of Jupiter, the errors of philosophers, and the kindred evils with which these were associated.

Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons in Gaul (177 A.D.), was a native of Asia Minor, and in his early youth heard Polycarp, who is said to have himself heard the latest survivors of the Apostles of Christ. The principal work of Irenæus is entitled "*Adversus Hæreses*," in five books. In these he takes a broad review of the errors of his time, and pays special attention to early Gnostic speculations. He exposes and censures the scheme of those who traced the process of creation and the

formation of the universe, through the Æons, or high spiritual emanations, and the Demiurge, or framer of things material and animal. Some of them denied the creation of matter, while others made it the source of imperfection and evil. Others attempted, of their Æons, to constitute a Christian mythology. In place of Night and Silence, they substituted Bythos and Sige. Instead of Chaos they put Nous, and for Love, they brought forward Logos.* Others still, under the sanction of Aristotle, made God the slave of the necessity imposed by matter, denying His power to impart immortality to what is mortal, or bestow incorruption on what is corruptible. The doctrine of the transmigration of souls was revived, with the sanction of Plato, and other opinions, in which fancy seemed to have subjugated reason, were industriously taught and disseminated.

All these Irenæus confronts with reason and the authority of Scripture. As to those who hold them, he says,† "Plato is proved to be more religious than these men, for he allowed that the same God was both just and good, having power over all things, and Himself executing judgment . . pointing out that the maker and framer of the universe is good . . establishing the goodness of God as the beginning and cause of the creation of the world, but not ignorance, nor an erring Æon, nor the consequence of a defect, nor the mother weeping and lamenting, nor another God or Father."

Tertullian (160–240? A. D.), born at Carthage, and a presbyter of the Church, was pre-eminent as an earnest and impetuous pulpit orator, and a vigorous controversialist. He was evidently deeply imbued with the learning of his age. He was familiar with heathen mythology and Roman law, as well as the productions of the most celebrated poets, historians, jurists, orators and philosophers of the ancient world. His style, which has been sharply criticised, indicates the rapidity and vigor of his thought. With all its abruptness, studied terseness, and occasional obscurity, it sparkles with antithesis and wit, and alternates with brilliant declamation and biting sarcasm.

Throughout his writings, he shows no complacency toward

* Irenæus, Adver. Hær., II. 14. † Ib., III. 25.

heathenism, in any of its forms. The old mythologies are mercilessly criticised. Greek philosophy has no charms for Tertullian. Not even when pursuing and exposing Marcion's heresies, does he seem more animated and ardent than when he is denouncing pagan speculation and pagan morals. His views of the moral order of the world are spread through his voluminous writings. He scorns to cite heathen authorities, but he appeals to reason as well as Scripture. In his work, "*De Anima*," he inquires into the nature of the soul, its origin, its excellence, its powers, its immortality; the period at which it is joined to the body, its progressive development, its susceptibility to sin, and its condition after death. Although his arguments border at least on materialism, he finds in the instincts of the soul, as well as its powers and aspirations (see "*De Testimonio Animæ*"), evidences of immortality.

It is in his work against the semi-Gnostic, Marcion, that Tertullian ably vindicates the unity, the attributes, and the providence of God, harmonizing the testimony of the Old and the New Testament. Marcion, bold to reject what he disliked, and eager to defend what he accepted, distinguished between the God of Nature, or the God of the Old Testament, and the God of the Gospel. The former he represented as a jealous God, inexorably severe; the latter as gentle and loving. The Ruling Spirit of the ante-Christian world, so far as evil prevailed in it, was personified in the Demiurge, who could not understand or appreciate the new divine principle which, through Christ, entered into the world. Here was a dualism not altogether unlike that of Parsism, although the Demiurge of the Law of Sinai was by no means a counterpart of Ahriman. A third fundamental principle with Marcion was matter, the substance out of which the Demiurge wrought. From the resistance it offered to his formative might, proceeded evil—a wild, ungodlike impulse, which became concentrated in Satan. Christ was the Son, not of the Demiurge, but of the good Deity, and he came to destroy the works of the law. But his visible bodily frame and his passion were illusory, since he never assumed flesh, or suffered on the cross.

Tertullian, in his refutation, in a confident and exultant

tone, exposes the Dualism of Marcion, as condemned alike by reason and by Scripture; shows that the justice of the Old Testament and the mercy and goodness of the New are in full accord, and that in the life of Christ both are conjoined. There was no reason why Marcion should limit himself to *two* supreme powers. "Valentinus was more consistent and more liberal; for he, having once imagined two deities, Bythos and Sige (depth and silence), poured forth a swarm of divine essences, a brood of no less than thirty Æons, like the sow of Æneas." "God was known and acknowledged as one, before he was revealed to Moses." "The greater part of the human race, although they knew not even the name Moses, much less his writings, yet knew the God of Moses." Even after idolatry had been introduced, they spoke of God, and the God of Gods. "To none of the writings of Moses do they owe this. The soul was before prophecy. From the beginning, the knowledge of God is the dowry of the soul, one and the same among the Egyptians, and the Syrians, and the tribes of Pontus."

Nor is the creation of material things unworthy of the Good Deity, as Marcion would represent. Even the Greeks called creation Kosmos, to indicate their sense of its order and beauty, and "if to be the author of our creation, such as it is, be unworthy of God, how much more unworthy of Him is it to have created absolutely nothing at all."

By his treatise against Hermogenes, Tertullian has commemorated the peculiar views of an errorist whom he essays to refute. Hermogenes was a painter at Carthage, who adopted the tenet of the Greek philosophy concerning matter (*hyle*). Combating the emanation theory of the Gnostics, he felt the difficulty of reconciling the idea of God's holiness with the sinfulness of beings supposed to emanate from him. Hence he rejected the doctrine of creation out of nothing, on the ground that if the world had no other cause but the will of a holy God, it would have been perfect, and nothing unholy or impure would have found a place in it. Naturally enough, he found in matter, kinship, not only to the corporeal world, but to the soul also, indirectly derived from it. Souls needed a divine life, supernaturally communicated by redemption and

regeneration, in order to vanquish the evil element growing out of their origin. Hermogenes consistently denied the natural immortality of the soul, and regarded immortality as the consequence of the new divine life imparted by Christ. All evil—including evil spirits—were finally to be resolved into the matter from which they originally sprang.

In opposition to this, Tertullian maintained, "that the souls, sprung from the first soul which arose immediately from the breath of God, are immortals endowed with free-will, in possession of a faculty of divination—evident signs of their heavenly origin."

In his later years, Tertullian became a Montanist, and thus forfeited that measure of authority as a Christian teacher, which he had previously possessed. But his influence was still widely and powerfully felt, and of Cyprian, it is recorded, that he never allowed a day to pass without reading a portion of Tertullian, and that he was wont frequently to exclaim to his confidential attendant, "Give me my master."

The *Octavius* of Minucius Felix (flourished about 230? A. D.), at one time a distinguished Roman lawyer, occupies a conspicuous place among the early apologies for Christianity. Of the three persons that take part in the dialogue, Cæcilius is a Pagan, and Octavius a Christian. Cæcilius, while admitting the difficulty of the religious problem, defends the old faith, and bitterly assails the new. Octavius replies, with great force and eloquence, and, in the course of his argument, traverses the broad field of Theism. He very concisely and forcibly presents the argument for design, derived from the structure and order of the world. Notwithstanding our ignorance and doubt, he insists we may yet know God. The unity of the ord[illegible] [illegible]re, proves the unity of the Deity. This unity is ad[illegible] [illegible] early [illegible] philosophers. Even Epicurus admitted [illegible] [illegible] Aristotle recognized a unique divine [illegible] [illegible]itted a Providence. After reciting th[illegible] [illegible] writers, and especially what is tau[illegible] [illegible] Plato, conce[illegible] supreme Providen[illegible] [illegible]ame alm[illegible] [illegible]pinions." In [illegible] [illegible] like a [illegible] [illegible]lling God the [illegible] [illegible] world [illegible]

some points it might even be held that the Christians were philosophers, or philosophers Christians. The crudities and absurdities of heathen mythology, the ridiculous, obscene and cruel rites connected with the mysteries, the uncertainty of oracles and futility of divinations, as well as the slanderous reports against the Christians, are noted, and the argument for the soul's immortality is concisely presented. "For our consolation, all nature suggests a future resurrection. The sun sinks down and arises, the stars pass away and return, the flowers die and revive again; after their wintry decay, shrubs resume their leaves; seeds do not flourish again unless they are rotted." Future retribution is asserted. Fate is declared to be nothing unless it be God. The soul of man is free, and man is to be judged for his doings, not his dignity. The tone of the apology is earnest and impressive. The arguments are clearly stated and forcibly pressed. The style is terse and vigorous, and the purity of the diction gives plausibility to the views of those who would carry back the age of the author to the times of the Antonines.

The age of Hippolytus, who was probably a Bishop, near Rome, is somewhat uncertain. The more probable opinion fixes it during the first half of the third century (235–239 A. D.). His principal work is his "Refutation of All Heresies," in which he gives a summary view of heathen philosophy from Thales to Plato, including also critical notices of the Epicureans, Stoics, Academics, Brachmans, and Druids. Astrology is elaborately refuted, and the various cosmogonies of the world are passed in review. As to the wise men of the world (B. iv., 43), "they declared a single cause for things that fall under the cognizance of vision." The heresy of Valentinus is traced to the theories of Pythagoras and Plato. Its Primal Essence (Bythos, or the abyss in which the spirit is lost in contemplation), with its transcendent fullness of life, contrasting with the Absolute of the Neo-Platonic philosophy; its Æons, answering to the δυνάμεις (powers) in the system of Basilides; its Horos, or genius of limitation, the power that fixes and guards the bounds of individual existence, restoring them when they have been disturbed, and thus approaching the character of Redeemer; its three orders

of existence, sprung from the evolution of the divine life, through the various combinations of the mundane soul, or the wisdom from beneath, with matter; its Soter, former and ruler, as well as redeemer of the world, exercising his redeeming, formative power first upon the mundane soul, and then on kindred spiritual natures that sprang from her; the hostility of the Demiurge and his powers to man, whom they would hold in subjection, suppressing the consciousness of his higher nature; all these, together with the redemptive features of the scheme, constituted a curiously complex system, which Hippolytus counted worthy of refutation, and the original of which he traced to heathen sources. Valentinus, therefore, might be "justly reckoned a Pythagorean and Platonist, not a Christian." His disciples represented the originating cause of the universe to be "a Monad, unbegotten, imperishable, incomprehensible, inconceivable, productive, and a cause of the generation of all existing things." Creation was explained by calling into service Wisdom and the Demiurge, and numerous Æons, while the Incarnation and Redemption furnish scope for speculations equally elaborate and equally fanciful.

Against these, as well as the peculiar theories of Cerinthus, Basilides, and Noetus, Hippolytus directs his logic and his learning. He seems predisposed to trace all heresy to a heathen source, for he finds the germ of the errors of Basilides in Aristotle. In his "Discourse Against the Greeks," he asserts a future judgment, with fitting retribution, ceaseless tortures to the wicked, and rewards to the righteous, in a world where there will be no corruption or care, no burning sun or stormy sea.

In Cyprian (205?–258 A. D.), we find little discussion of questions of natural theology. The philosopher is overshadowed by the ecclesiastic. In his brief treatise on the "Vanity of Idol-Worship," he attempts to prove that the Pagan Gods were not true divinities, and also to demonstrate the unity of God. In his letter addressed to Demetrian, he replies to the accusation of the Pagans against Christians, as occasioning, by their neglect of the worship of the Gods, the plagues, famines, and other calamities by which the Roman

empire had been visited. Cyprian retorts the charge upon the Pagans, who neglected the worship of the only true God, while he explains the common lot of both on earth, by a reference to the future awards that will be meted to each according to their deserts.

In Cyprian's miscellaneous writings we find the self-torturing power of vice noted. "Pride inflates, cruelty embitters, faithlessness prevaricates, impatience agitates, discord rages. . . But what a gnawing worm of the soul it is, what a plague-spot of our thoughts, what a rust of the heart, to be jealous of another, either in respect of his virtue or his happiness, . . to make other people's glory one's own penalty, and, as it were, to apply a sort of executioner to one's own breast, to bring the tormentors to one's thoughts and feelings, that they may tear us with intestine pangs. . . . To such no food is joyous, no drink can be cheerful. . . . Whoever he is whom you persecute with jealousy, can evade and escape you. You cannot escape yourself. Wherever you may be, your adversary is with you; your enemy is always in your own breast; your mischief is shut up within. You are tied and bound with the links of chains from which you cannot extricate yourself." Such are the just and forcible remarks of Cyprian on "Jealousy and Envy" (Sec. 9).

Similar sentiments occur in some of his epistles. He vies with Tacitus and Juvenal, as he dilates upon the unblushing and audacious depravity of his time. Yet the fortunate aspirant, with his prizes of honor and wealth, only succeeds in making himself wretched. "In the midst of his banquet he sighs, although he drinks from a jeweled goblet . . . he lies wakeful in the midst of the down; nor does he perceive, poor wretch, that these things are merely gilded torments, that he is held in bondage by his gold, and that he is the slave of his luxury and wealth rather than their master." The picture drawn of the soul as a living temple, embellished with "the colors of innocence," enlightened with "the light of justice," never falling to decay by age, or defiled by the tarnishing of its walls and gold, carries with it the force of an argument in commendation of virtue.

In his treatise on "The Vanity of Idols," Cyprian argues

against heathen polytheism, showing that many of their divinities were but deified men. In his treatise "On the Mortality," he exhibits the present as a state of trial, through which many have passed triumphantly, and animates those whom he addresses by the hope of rising at length from the burdens of mortality to the heavenly reward of the virtuous.

Arnobius (flourished about 300 A. D.), in his *Adversus Gentes*, attacked the popular polytheism. He pronounces it absurd and immoral. The belief of a God is innate, and atheism scarcely needs to be refuted. The soul is not, according to Arnobius, by nature immortal; nor can he accept Plato's doctrine, that knowledge is reminiscence. The doctrine of Epicurus, that souls perish, excludes the idea of future rewards, and encourages the indulgence of the passions.

Yet some of the pagan philosophers held views similar to those of the Christians. Such were their doctrines of the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, and the infernal fire. As to the quality of souls, it is something intermediate between spirit and body. Arnobius holds that it is corporeal and generated.

Methodius, noted as an opponent of Origen's allegorical method of interpretation, died as a martyr (about 312 A. D.) in the last of the great persecutions. Like several others of the Christian Fathers, who strongly asserted free-will as essential to responsibility, and in opposition to heathen objectors, he charges men with being the cause of their own misery. They cannot cast the blame on fate or destiny. "If the evil are evil in accordance with destiny, by the decrees of Providence, they are not blameworthy and deserving of the punishment which is inflicted by the laws." "If destiny makes men to injure one another, and to be injured by one another, what need is there of laws? . . But the law destroys destiny, teaching that virtue should be learned and diligently performed, and that vice should be avoided, and that it is produced by want of discipline. Therefore, there is no destiny." It is in his treatise, "Concerning Free-Will," that Methodius discusses the question of the origin of evil, denying that it is traceable to God or to the eternity of matter, or its qualities, but to man's voluntary disobedience.

Lactantius, one of the most eminent of the Christian Fathers, belongs to the last half of the third, and the first part of the fourth century. His writings show a very extended acquaintance with heathen philosophy, and his style has earned for him the title of "the Christian Cicero." His principal work is his "Divine Institutes." In this, his aim is to expose the falsehood of heathen religion, and the insufficiency and unsoundness of heathen philosophy, and at the same time vindicate the claims of Christianity, supporting its doctrines by reason and the testimony of the most eminent philosophers. In prosecuting his task, he presents arguments in proof of a divine Providence, the unity of God, and the immortality of the soul. In a fine passage (*De Ira Dei*, ch. 13), he indorses the view of the Stoics, as to design in creation. "If any one considers the entire administration of the world, he will certainly perceive how true is the opinion of the Stoics, who say that the world has been constructed for our behoof." Then follows a rapid survey of the physical Kosmos. Lactantius also brings forward, though not in any elaborate manner, certain features peculiar to the moral system.

The chief end of man is not happiness, not wisdom in the sense of the philosophers, but religion, the knowledge and service of God. Through the lack of divine teaching, even Aristotle and Plato had failed in their task. They could not, by searching, find our God. Of the exposition, given by Lactantius, of doctrines distinctively Christian, including the divine nature of Christ, we need not speak. His criticisms of the philosophers, whom he is frequently disposed to accept as witnesses, not as guides, is often searching, and at times ingenious.

Their disagreements among themselves are cited to show that each pronounced the others false.* Some of them were atheists, and others were dubious in their teachings as well as belief.† Their frequent recognition of the unity of God, in spite of the popular polytheism, is noted; and, beyond most Christian writers, Lactantius is fond of quoting, on this and other points, the language of Orpheus, Hermes Trismegistus

* Div. Inst., Lib. I. 1.

† Ib., I. 2.

and the Sibyl. The last is cited with unquestioning faith, and evidently in the conviction that it would not be excepted against, as a Christian forgery, by the heathen objector. Indeed, modern writers, to prove that the unity of God was accepted by the wiser heathens, would only need to adopt the argument of Lactantius, as he quotes from Aristotle, Plato, Cleanthes, Virgil, Ovid, and many others.* All the Sibyls, it is asserted, witnessed to the same truth.

Various errors of the philosophers, both speculative and practical, including the ascription by the Stoics of a divine character and vitality to the stars, are refuted. The eternity of matter is denied, and its creation by God asserted. A beginning of this order of things, there must have been.† What consists of the perishable cannot be naturally imperishable.

The doctrine of the Stoics, which permitted, if it did not encourage, suicide, is censured by Lactantius. The community of wives, which Plato introduced into his "Republic,"‡ excites his indignant rebuke. The apostasy and depravity of the race is asserted from the facts of experience and heathen testimony.§ The blindness of reason which resulted, allowed wise men to err. They did not seek the true fountains of light. Lactantius does not, like some of his predecessors, credit Plato with wisdom borrowed from the Jewish Scriptures.‖ He criticises the philosophy of Pythagoras, which compared life, with its two paths, to the letter Y, and gives his own interpretation of it in accordance with Christian doctrine.¶ Vice offers a smooth and flower-strewn path, inviting by wealth, honor, repose and pleasure; although these are conjoined with injustice, pride, lust, falsehood and folly. The heavenly way, on the other hand, is difficult and steep, rough with thorns and hard to tread, but justice, temperance, truth and wisdom characterize it.

But the pleasures of vice are short, while its pains are lasting. Of virtue the reverse is true. Life is a warfare, and to attain the true good of the soul there must be patience and toil. Sometimes the wicked triumph, and the good are oppressed, and "if virtue is to have no existence after the disso-

* Div. Inst., Lib. I. 4. † Ib., II. 10. ‡ Ib., III. 20.
§ Ib., IV. 1. ‖ Ib., IV. 2. ¶ Ib., IV. 4.

lution of the body," we might well despair. But virtue finds its compensation in "the goods of everlasting life." * To this, Pherecydes, Pythagoras, Plato and Cicero bore testimony.† The superior nature of man, and his capacity for virtue, argue his immortality. Virtue is perpetual, and death admits man to his reward, or subjects him to the penalty of his crimes. "Zeno, the Stoic, taught that there were infernal regions, and that the abodes of the good were separated from those of the wicked; that the former enjoyed peaceful and delightful regions, but that the latter suffered punishment in dark places, and in dreadful abysses.‡ Similar is the testimony adduced from the Sibylline Poems, and numerous other sources.

Of the other writings of Lactantius, "On the Anger of God," the "Epitome of his Institutes," "The Manner in which the Persecutors Died," and "The Workmanship of God," or "The Formation of Man"—the last two only require our notice. That "On the Anger of God," is in refutation of the Epicurean doctrine of impassive deities. That on the death of Persecutors, interprets the fate they experienced as a manifestation of the just displeasure of God on account of their crimes. The last of the four is really a treatise on natural theology, adducing the structure of the human body and its organs in proof of the wisdom and providence of the creator. It repeats, to some extent, the arguments of Socrates, Cicero and Galen. In illustrating the adaptations manifest in the forms of the organic world, Lactantius goes into quite minute details, passing in review successively the members of the body and their several uses.

Lactantius recognizes without question the sphere of human reason. In dealing with objectors who disputed the authority of the sacred writings, appeal must be made to it. Error "must be refuted by arguments and reason." § Here was where his predecessors, Tertullian and Cyprian, had failed. Yet his own use of reason will not be found always accordant with the results of science. He argues strongly against the existence or possibility of the antipodes, in this respect going counter to views advanced in Cicero's "Nature of the Gods."

* Div. Inst., Lib. IV. 9. † Ib., VII. 7, 8. ‡ Ib. § Lib. V., 4.

It is to his credit, however, that while exposing the weak points of ancient philosophy, and setting forth its inconsistencies, uncertainties and incongruities, he recognizes the necessity of appealing to the principles which his opponents held in common with himself, and to those testimonies of reason to the fundamental docrines of religion, which had been borne by the wisest minds of the heathen world.

The importance of the writings of Lactantius in the department of literature to which they belong, may be inferred not only from the ability which they evince and the elegance of their style, but from the fact that after the invention of printing, they were among the earliest works which were scattered abroad by means of the press. Twenty-nine editions of them appeared between 1468 A. D. and 1600, and their continued popularity was evinced by the issue of many subsequent editions. We might readily point out defects in the works of Lactantius, and note his inadequate apprehensions of some even of the Christian doctrines which he sought to expound; but in his arguments for the fundamental truths of natural religion, he appeals to reason and to the testimonies of the wisest of his heathen predecessors, thus meeting his opponents on their own ground.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MANICHEISM AND THE CHRISTIAN FATHERS.

As we enter upon the study of the Christian Fathers of the fourth century, we find that Gnosticism no longer obtrudes itself upon us in their writings. Beside the Arian heresy, which excited earnest and prolonged controversy, the Manichean scheme engaged their attention. It sprang from the attempt of the P[illegible] or Manes, toward the close of the third ce[illegible] [illegible]nd the religions of [illegible]e

intermixture of a Hellenic element. Manicheism borrowed rather from an Indian than a Greek source. The perfect Manichean approximated on some points to the Buddhist. While he held to the old Persian Dualism, he reverenced a universal life in nature. The same spirit, of heavenly origin, was imprisoned in all natural objects. Injury, even to the leaf of a tree, might be a wrong akin to sacrilege.

Mani was a Persian, of the sacred race of the Magi, and the influence of their faith, in which he was doubtless educated, was manifest in his speculations. A man of high rank, extensively if not profoundly learned, skilled in astronomy, in painting and in other arts, familiar with the theurgical mysteries of the East, and well versed in the Christian Scriptures, he is said to have been at one time a priest in the region bordering on Babylonia. Propagating his doctrines, he came in conflict with Magianism, and became an exile to escape the wrath of the Persian monarch. In Turkestan—from which he passed successively to India and China—he withdrew himself from the society of men, and in his grotto with its spring, like Mahomet in his cave, he left his followers to believe that he had ascended to heaven, to commune with the Deity. Reappearing from his retirement, he displayed his Ertang, or Gospel, embellished with paintings, giving it forth as a divine revelation.

His system was a strange compound. It was enriched with contributions from the entire sphere of his studies, and entire range of his wanderings. "From his native Persia," says Milman,* "he derived his Dualism, his antagonistic worlds of light and darkness; and from Magianism, likewise, his contempt of outward worship and splendid ceremonial. From Gnosticism, or rather from universal Orientalism, he drew the inseparable admixture of physical and moral notions, the eternal hostility between mind and matter, the rejection of Judaism, and the identification of the God of the Old Testament with the Evil Spirit, the distinction between Jesus and the Christ, with the docetism, or the unreal death of the incorporeal Christ. From Cabalism, through Gnosticism, came the primal man, the Adam Cædmon of that system,

* His. of Christianity, B. III., 1.

and (if that be a genuine part of this system) the assumption of beautiful human forms, those of graceful boys and attractive virgins, by the powers of light, and their union with the male and female spirits of darkness. From India, he took the Emanation theory (all light was a part of the Deity, and in one sense the soul of the world), the metempyschosis, the triple division of human souls, the one the pure, which reascended at once, and was reunited to the primal light; the second, the semi-pure, which, having passed through a purgatorial process, returned to earth, to pass through a second order of life; the third, of obstinate and irreclaimable evil. From India, perhaps, came his Homophorus, as the Greeks called it, his Atlas, who supported the earth upon his shoulders, and his Splenditenens, the circumambient air. From Chaldea, he borrowed the power of astral influences, and he approximated to the solar worship of an expiring paganism. Christ, the Mediator, like the Mithra of his countrymen, had his dwelling in the sun."

Leaving it as an open question whether the Dualism of Zoroaster was developed from Monism, or had Monism subsequently grafted upon it, to perfect and harmonize a scheme which without it would be repulsive with its aspect of everlasting and hopeless conflict, there can be no doubt that nearly in the times of Mani, Persian Orthodoxy asserted a higher Unity, above all conflicting Dualism. Taking his stand upon this ground, as we may presume, Mani may have flattered himself with the hope of effecting a harmonizing combination of the Magian and the Christian faith. Mani accordingly supposed two principles, absolutely opposed to each other, with their opposite creations—God, the original good, the primal light, from whom all good, all light emanates, and original Evil, matter, darkness, fire without light, working only to confuse and destroy. Nearly connected with the king of the empire of light were Æons, his representatives, channels for the diffusion of the primal light, and Deities in such a sense as not to detract from the supreme honor of the primal essence. A glimmer from the realm of light reaches the powers of darkness as they approach it in their mutual strife, and they are attracted by its splendor. They combine

to penetrate it, and appropriate some of its light to themselves. The holy Æons are threatened by the vast desolation arising out of the darkness, but the blind force of nature, resisting the God-like element, is to be tamed, subdued, and finally rendered powerless, by intermingling with it. Here the Buddhist element comes in, in that nature, in degrading and fettering the spirit, is to bring about its own dissolution, the final result being a dead *residuum*, which we might suppose would be the triumph of Nirvâna. But of this point, Mani stopped short. The Ruler of Light, to protect his boundaries, produces, as an emanation from himself, the Æon, *Mother of Life*, answering to the *highest mundane soul*. This Æon generates the *primitive man*, in order to oppose him to the powers of darkness. He, with the five pure elements of fire-light, air, water, and earth, enters into the conflict. By their life-giving power, they are his allies against Ahriman's destroying influence. Indeed, they are not elements of *actual* nature, but of a higher world which radiates and manifests the divine essence. To them, the corresponding impure elements of the realm of darkness are opposed.

But the primitive man is worsted in the conflict, calls for aid, and has the living spirit, emanating from the primal essence, sent to his relief. He is restored, but with the loss of a part of his light essence, the mundane soul, which is now absorbed and mixed with matter.

This is a seed of divine life which must be purified and developed. Through it, the wildly tumultuous kingdom of darkness is, in spite of itself, to be tamed and rendered powerless. To recover and purify the souls mixed with matter, or the kingdom of darkness, is the final cause of the entire creation—the end aimed at in the whole course of the world. Souls unaffected and uncontaminated, are raised from the earth and placed in the sun and moon, that by the refining processes of the life which they feed, they may attract back to themselves, from the kingdom of darkness, kindred souls. Here is Mani's Christ, answering to the Mithras of Zoroaster, the soul enthroned in the sun, and triumphing in the unfolding and blossoming of every plant from the seed that the dark bosom of the earth enfolded. So the living soul, breaking

loose from its dark confinement, rises, and in the pure air and light, aspires to its kindred above. Thus the Manichean could speak of a suffering son of man hanging on every tree, of a Christ crucified in every soul. Even pagan fables furnished drapery for their ideas.

The powers of darkness now see themselves deprived of the soul element on which they had seized. By its kindred sun-spirit, it is gradually set free, evaporated, drawn forth to light. Soon, the kingdom of darkness, deprived of its stolen light, must sink back to gloom and death. The soul element still remaining, and striving to liberate itself, must be securely charm-bound. Hence man, the image of primitive man, is constituted. By a feat worthy of the wildest fancies of Greek mythology, the result is achieved, so that man becomes a microcosm—a copy of the entire world of light and darkness, a mirror of all the powers of heaven and earth. Such is every man that is born, since, in the generation of each, the evil nature, matter, which forms the body, absorbs the powers of light, and thus in man both are combined.

But the light-nature in him attains to conscious and free evolution. It aspires to govern the corporeal world in its details. There is danger, notwithstanding its double constitution, that it may assume dominion. To prevent this, man's lower nature is appealed to, and the powers of darkness with him, to partake of the fruits of the trees of Paradise, that he may be kept from the consciousness of his real kindred. But the artifice is baffled by an angel of light—Christ himself, the Spirit of the Sun. The next resource is to seduce man through his associate, Eve, to yield to carnal desires, and become a slave to nature. In this, the tempters succeed. The soul is bound down to a material body, and, in the propagation of the race, the bondage is continually renewed. Spirit is indeed born of spirit, but flesh also of flesh. Human nature bears still the original stain. The spirit is ever struggling with the flesh. The law brings it to the consciousness of evil. It can be delivered only by the interposition of the Spirit of the Sun, who must reveal himself in humanity.

But this spirit cannot unite with a material body. It must assume only a shadowy, sensible form, to be apprehended by

sensuous man. But the powers of darkness, unaware that Christ was superior to all suffering, sought to crucify him. It was only a semblance, yet a type, of the crucifixion of the soul, sunk in matter, which the sun-spirit would raise to itself.

In such a system of speculation, the Christian Scriptures, so far as they could not be interpreted in its support, would have little or no authority. Mani himself assumed the position of a divine teacher, a Paraclete, not the Holy Spirit, but a holy prophet. Wild as his doctrines were, they were extensively propagated. His sect was organized on the Christian model. He constituted twelve apostles and seventy-two bishops. He distinguished between the Elect, or Perfect, and the Catechumens. To the East and West his doctrines spread. They made a deep impression even upon strong minds. For years, they exercised a power over Augustine, which he could not shake off. Their extensive prevalence, and the ascendancy they acquired, are attested not only by the contemporary writings of the Christian Fathers, but by the history of the term, Manicheism, and its odious application in subsequent centuries. These facts must be known, to enable us to appreciate the voluminous literature, commencing perhaps before the death of Mani (277 A. D.), in which the Christian Fathers sought to refute the threatening error.

Eusebius (about 264–338 A. D.), best known as an ecclesiastical historian, was one of the best read and most scholarly men of his time. His works indicate his patient and laborious research, and he must have come in collision with paganism at many points. We meet, however, with little in his writings to our purpose. In his *Preparatio Evangelica*, he defends Hebrew theology, which Christians should accept. The doctrines of the immortality of the soul, and of the unity and providence of God, accord with right reason. Against the old philosophers, the eternity of matter is denied. Plato's teaching, however, is remarkably conformed to that of Moses, and many of his views accord with those of the Jews. The parallel is drawn out at some length, and yet Plato is charged with error. The philosophers, moreover, are not accordant among themselves, and one is refuted by another. Eusebius

"places the antagonism between Christianity and heathenism in its most pronounced form, and distinctly repudiates any attempt, like those made by Clemens and Origen, to discover any independent goodness or truth in Greek philosophy, making it his object to show that heathen lore was generally false and foolish, and that when it attained or approximated to the truth, it was but a feeble echo of the distinct revelations of the Old Testament." * In his treatise against Hierocles, Eusebius exposes the assumptions made in behalf of Apollonius of Tyana, whose pretended miracles his biographer, Philistratus, did not himself believe. At the close of this treatise, Eusebius gives his views against the necessity of fate. In some of his sermons, also, he discusses the doctrines of the providence and justice of God, and sets forth proofs of the immortality and spiritual nature of the soul.

The writings of Athanasius (298–371 A. D.) are mainly in defence of the orthodox doctrine impugned by Arius. Yet he wrote two treatises against the Pagans, exposing the origin of idolatry in human apostasy, and refuting the Oriental theory of a dual Deity, designed to explain the presence and collision of good and evil in the world. Neither the Gods of the poets, the world, nor any of its parts, can be recognized as true divinities. God exists, and His existence is manifest to reason through our thought, which is neither corporeal nor mortal, and through the beautiful order of the universe, which proves the existence of an intelligent author. In his "Oration Against the Gentiles," Athanasius denies that evil was in the beginning. The Greeks had wandered, he said, from the right way, in having affirmed evil to be in substance, and to have an actual existence of its own. This was grounded upon one of two errors: either the denial that the Demiurge was the creator of the things that are, or the assertion, that if he was so, he must needs be the creator of evil. But evil does not come from the good, nor is it in it, or through it. It is traceable to the soul's revolt from higher and better things.

Hilary, who died 367 A. D., in the first of his twelve books on the Trinity, which serves as a preface to the whole, contends that blessedness consists not in wealth or ease, or the

* Donaldson's Literature of Ancient Greece, II. 331.

simple knowledge of good and evil, but in the knowledge of the true God. Many are ready to impart false knowledge, teaching polytheism, or making the Gods like men or animals, or denying their existence altogether, or at least their providence. But the spirit of man, detecting the falsehood of these representations, knows naturally that there can be but a single God, almighty, omnipresent, omniscient, administering all things. Reason discerns grounds for belief in the immortality of the soul, while the fate of man, as mortal, occasions disquietude, and urges him to seek a higher knowledge.

Titus, the Arabian, in the times of Julian and Jovian, wrote against the Manicheans. He supported the unity of God by metaphysical reasonings; argued against the assumption that He was the author of evil; insisted that He had created man free, and capable of doing good and evil, so that he is responsible for his own sin, which is chargeable, not to his nature, but his will. The good are always blessed, even in calamity, and the sufferings they endure here are disciplinary. Death is not to be reckoned an evil, since it arrests the crime of the wicked and leads to the reward of the good. All events, indeed, are in accord with the Providence of God. Didymus of Alexandria, nearly contemporarary with Titus, followed somewhat the same line of argument against the Manicheans.

Cyril of Jerusalem (flourished 350–386 A. D.), in the sixth of his "Instructions to Catechumens," maintains the unity of God against pagans and heretics. He also argues against the Manicheans. The essence and nature of God, are, he maintains, above human comprehension. In the last of his "Instructions," he adduces the justice of God in proof of a future life, where the present unequal allotments of the good and bad will be rectified. Some knowledge or apprehension of another life, he holds to be natural to man, and hence the horror excited by the spoliation of the dead. From nature, he adduces many examples of changes analogous to that which man will experience. The Phenix, on the authority of St. Clement, is not overlooked. The birth of man is not less marvellous than his resurrection. The God who could create a universe, must be able to raise the dead.

St. Gregory of Nyssa (330–395? A. D.), in his books on Scripture, discusses questions concerning the creation of the world, the formation of man, the nature and the origin of the soul. On this latter point, he refutes the opinion of Origen that the soul exists anterior to the body. In another treatise, he gives his views as to the method to be employed in refuting errorists. Regard must be had to the common principles of reason, concerning which both parties are agreed, and in disputing against the Atheists, the existence of God must be proved from the creation of the world. In the case of the Pagan, who admits many divinities, it must be shown him that there can be but one sovereignly perfect.

In a treatise against the Manicheans, St. Gregory calls in the aid of syllogism to prove that evil is not an incorruptible and uncreated thing, any more than the devil who is the author of it. In his treatise on the soul, after dealing with the sentiments of philosophers and heretics, he argues that it is a substance spiritual and immortal, united to the body, pervading it and acting through it.

A disciple of Origen, Gregory is the representative of the separation, beginning in his time, of theology and philosophy. He reasons like one endeavoring to prop up a wavering faith. Aristotelian and Platonic ideas, and a teleological physiology, are combined with biblical propositions. He holds that faith in immortality is essential to virtue, but he does not, like Lactantius, proceed to construct on this an argument for immortality. This must be maintained by speculation and scientific, rather than moral, arguments. He denies the power of thought to be an attribute of matter. In a treatise "On Destiny," he, like Eusebius, endeavors to refute the Greek philosophical notions on the subject.

St. Ambrose (333–397 A. D.), Bishop of Milan, memorable for the bold rebuke with which he confronted the Emperor Theodosius, as well as for his high rank among the Christian Fathers, in his discussions on the Happy Life, points out the methods by which it is to be attained. The principal of these is, to follow the light of right reason, by which the passions may be controlled and repressed. These passions may not be extinguished, but they may be held in check, and in

doing good or evil, we act as free and voluntary agents. In his first book of "Offices," St. Ambrose enlarges upon the doctrine of a Divine Providence, and, against some of the philosophers, contends that it is universal. He meets the objection that the wicked prosper, by the theory that life is a conflict, and the future state is one of reward or punishment. The duties of man are set forth in accordance with this theory. Man's highest good is not material, but spiritual. Apparent good or evil is not always really such. Indeed, apparent evil may be real good, and real good apparent evil. In conclusion, St. Ambrose holds that in all cases, the right must have the preference over the expedient or useful. In this connection, usury is condemned as a kind of robbery, and it is asserted that interest is no proper basis for friendship.

The writings of St. Chrysostom (about 344–407 A. D.) consist almost exclusively of sermons, homilies, and comments on the Scriptures. His Episcopal dignity at Constantinople, his severe asceticism, his reverses of fortune—for he died in exile—combine with his learning, his eloquence and his boldness, to render him memorable; and yet only infrequently or incidentally does he enter into discussion of questions of natural theology. In his sixty-fourth sermon he confutes those who represent demons as governing the world, and rebukes those who murmur under divine chastisements. Against the Anomians, he asserts, in one of his homilies, the incomprehensibility of the divine nature. In his books on "Providence," he answers the question, Why are the righteous afflicted and persecuted, if there is a Providence that governs the world? He finds its solution in a future state of retribution, where each will receive his deserts. If only the wicked suffered here, men would easily persuade themselves into a disbelief of future penalty. If only the righteous suffered, men would infer that virtue was the cause of adversity. Their suffering has its use, to expiate their sins, and correct their faults; or, if they fall, the lesson is one of humility and self-distrust.

In a letter of consolation, he represents sin as the only real evil that is to be feared. All other ills may be borne with patience, for the love of God. Life is but a journey, and all

worldly goods are but dust and smoke. In his "Oration Against the Gentiles," he asserts that faith must receive much which reason cannot explain. "I know," he says, "that God is everywhere, and all entire in every part of the world, but I know not *how* it can be. I am assured that God is without beginning, but I cannot conceive how that is. Human reason cannot comprehend a being who has no beginning." In his remarks on the virtues and on the passions, Chrysostom recognizes elements which attest the moral order of the world.

St. Jerome (345–420 A. D.) is famous as the translator of the Septuagint and a commentator on the books of the Bible. Although his writings are so voluminous, they furnish little which bears directly upon the themes which engage our attention. As the translator of a portion of Origen's writings, he was suspected of holding some of his obnoxious views, and the suspicion in his early years was just. But against this, when it at length grew into a charge, he vehemently protests. He expressly repudiates Origen's doctrine that souls have been sent from heaven to earth on account of their sins, and incarnated in bodies, as in a prison. With this he classes the belief that devils will yet repent and be saved, and that the body will be raised with flesh and bones at the resurrection. He hesitates to accept either of the three theories of the origin of the soul; that of Tertullian and Lactantius, that they are propagated; that of infusion after the formation of the body; and that of Origen and some Greek authors, that souls were created at the same time that the world was made. This matter he [illegible] the [illegible]ledge of God, and of those to whom He may [illegible] he professes his belief that God is the [illegible] body. On the subject of free-will, he seem[illegible] a Pelagian [illegible]. In his "Commentar[illegible] he mainta[illegible] God's particular provid[illegible] men, w[illegible] other beings are subject [illegible] not insensible to the exc[illegible] of his consolatory let[illegible] of Pagans who have tri[illegible] inference is that the Chri[illegible].

The great na[illegible] illustrious

alike for his rare gifts of genius, his activity as a writer, and his devoted piety, naturally attracts special attention. His works are voluminous, and in them nearly all the religious questions of his age are amply discussed. Among his earliest works are three books against the Academics. In imitation of Cicero, he adopts the form of dialogue. At the outset it is disputed in what wisdom consists—whether in knowing or in seeking the truth. The sentiments of the Old and of the New Academy are set forth, and those are rallied on their inconsistency who deny that we can know truth, and yet may know the probable, which is verisimilitude, or likeness to what we cannot know. Cicero's principles, and those of others who asserted that we can know nothing certainly, and must make no positive affirmation, are refuted. The maxims of those who will allow that what appears probable shall be decisive, are condemned, as pregnant with dangerous consequences, and could not really have been accepted by Cicero himself.

In his two books on "Order," St. Augustine treats of Providence, showing that all good and evil which exists, enters into its scheme. Glancing at this scheme, he proceeds to discuss the special objections that may be urged against it. Foolish and wicked deeds have their place, as subservient to the universal good, and illustrative of the justice of God. This justice is eternal, and evil has been introduced into the world contrary to the divine order. The rules of duty—upon which he enlarges—are from two sources, authority and reason. All sciences result from reason being employed in the investigation of different objects.

In his two books of "Soliloquies," his professed object is to perfect his knowledge of God and his soul. He questions his reason, and demands its reply. Discussing the nature of the soul, he concludes that it is immortal, as the dwelling-place of truth, which is eternal. Moreover, reason and the soul are one; but reason is changeless and eternal. Matter cannot be annihilated: it may be divided, but it still exists. Who would believe that the soul is worse conditioned? Nothing can create itself, and nothing can annihilate itself. Life is the essence of the soul: it cannot, then, be deprived of it. The more it is disengaged from sense and body, the more

clear its apprehension. It cannot be changed into body, for it would be necessary that the soul should will it, or that the body should constrain it; both of which are absurd. The place and composition of the soul are subsequently discussed.

In his books on "Free-Will," St. Augustine traces sin to the perversion of what was given for a good end. In his work on "The True Religion," he asserts that the philosophers recognized the falsehood of the popular religion, even while they conformed to its external rites. Plato despaired of convincing the people of the truth of his own maxims. Religion must not be sought among philosophers whose teachings were contradicted by their actions.

Sin is voluntary, and to recover men from it, to heal them of the disease, use must be made both of authority and reason. Death, feebleness and pain are evils flowing from sin, but they are not without use in detaching the soul from worldly things.

In one of his letters to Marcellinus, Augustine confesses his indecision in regard to certain questions that concern the soul, which neither Scripture nor reason has determined. Scripture and reason, he says, cannot be opposed to one another, for if reason shows itself opposed to Scripture, it is a false deceiver, and not the true reason; and if what is derived from Scripture is found directly opposed to plain reason, it must be admitted that Scripture has been ill understood. In another letter—to Jerome—he disputes the doctrine of the Stoics, that all sins are equally heinous, and excepts to the teaching of the philosophers that we cannot have one virtue without possessing all. In his resolution of more than eighty questions on different subjects, he discusses many things which belong to the sphere of natural theology. Among these are the nature and relations of the soul, Cicero's definition of virtue, the Platonic ideas, the use which God makes of human wickedness.

But it is in his most elaborate "Treatise on the City of God," that Augustine enters most fully into an examination of heathen religion and philosophy. Here he indicates his high estimate of Plato, even while he sharply criticises many of his speculations. He exposes in the most unsparing manner the inconsistencies and absurdities of Roman mythology,

as well as the assumption that the fate of the empire had been hurried on by the neglect of their worship, provoking the anger of the national Gods. In his fourth book, he traces the absurdities and inconsistencies of the Roman polytheism, showing what the more intelligent citizens of Rome had thought of it. In his fifth book, he directs his arguments against astrology and fate. Cicero's refutation of the latter, as implying the denial of divine fore-knowledge, he is unwilling to accept. Nothing happens. All things are subject to Providence. Roman greatness was the reward of Roman valor, but that valor was not Christian virtue. The sixth and seventh books follow up the exposure of the cruelties of Roman worship. The eighth enters upon the subject of natural theology, and examines the opinions of the old philosophers. Socrates saw that men were unfitted to study divine questions, while their minds were blinded by lusts. Above all others, Plato approached nearest to the standard of Christianity. With others, he held the unity, the spirituality, and immutability of God. Whether he was indebted to revelation, Augustine does not venture to decide. Yet, in his *Timæus*, he speaks somewhat after the manner of Moses in Genesis.

In his tenth book, he comes into more direct collision with the later Platonists. They admitted that true happiness, whether in men or angels, was from the One God, and yet held—yielding, perhaps, to popular error—that many Gods were to be worshipped. They held that the created soul must be illuminated by the Creator. Porphyry admitted the need of purgation, and that it cannot be supplied through sacrifices or rites performed to the sun and moon. No sect, as yet, in its ethics or teachings, had revealed it. The help necessary had not been received; at least, it had not come to his knowledge. Augustine denies that evil is an original creation, and he opposes Origen's theory of the pre-existence of souls, subjected to punitive discipline in their present bodies, for sin previously committed.*

* In an article on the "City of God," in the *Presbyterian and Theological Review* for July, 1865, I have given a fuller account of Augustine's relation to heathen philosophy and religion, to which I must refer the reader.

The subject of evil and its origin occupied a large share of Augustine's attention, as might be inferred from his early Manichean tendencies, with which his Christian faith came in irreconcilable and fatal conflict. To this subject, so largely discussed by his predecessors, and so necessarily involved in the Gnostic systems, he repeatedly refers in his writings. In his *Enchiridion*, for instance, he discusses the nature of evil, and shows how profoundly he had reflected upon the great problem involved in it. He holds that by a supremely good Creator all things were originally made good, but not supremely or indefectibly good. Evil is simply negative, the absence of good. There can, in fact, be no evil where there is no good, and the evil of sin can inhere only in an intelligent moral nature, which, as such, is good. In the universe, moreover, that which is called evil, when regulated and put in its own place, only enhances our admiration of the good: "For we enjoy and value the good more when we compare it with the evil." "Almighty God, supremely good, 'would never permit the existence of anything evil among His works, if He were not so omnipotent and good that He can bring good even out of evil.'" As disease is the privation of health, so "what are called vices in the soul are nothing but privations of natural good." Free-will is asserted, and each individual is held responsib[illegible] for his conduct.

In Augustine, we me[illegible] with any exaggerated estimate of the wisdom of [illegible] nor such depreciation of it, as that in wh[illegible] [illegible] rather riots than indulges. Wherever [illegible] he recognizes it, no matter by what lips utt[illegible] says, "wh[illegible] are called philosophers, and [illegible] [illegible]ists, [illegible] said aught that is true and in [illegible] we not only [illegible] shrink from it, [illegible] use from [illegible] ve unlawful [illegible]

Of thi[illegible] Bishop o[illegible] been a h[illegible] of the [illegible] candidly co[illegible] [illegible]s doctri[illegible] with Origen [illegible] [illegible]philus. blend Platonism [illegible]

* Do[illegible]

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE CHRISTIAN FATHERS AND MOHAMMEDAN AND JEWISH PHILOSOPHY.

For successive centuries the attention of the Christian Church was largely drawn to dogmatic questions, which, in some cases, convulsed both Church and State. It had conquered Paganism, only to find itself confronted by foes of its own household. Gnosticism and Neo-Platonism had intruded within its pale. Manicheism had threatened the integrity of its doctrines. But subsequent agitations were based mainly on varied phases of Christian opinion. We have our attention called to the Novatian schism (251 A. D.), to the Arian heresy (318 A. D.), to the Pelagian (411 A. D.), the Nestorian (431 A. D.), the Eutychian or Monophysite (440 A. D.), the Monothelitic (633 A. D.), and the Iconoclastic (726 A. D.) controversies, some of which were of long duration, and absorbed the thought and study that would doubtless have been devoted otherwise to the fundamental truths of natural theology. It was in the midst of these controversies, at the commencement of the seventh century, that a voice was heard from the Arabian desert, calling back the thoughts of men to certain neglected phases of religious truth, and at the same time challenging them to vindicate their old beliefs.

But, before we consider its significance, we must follow for a while, the line of Christian thought. Among the writings of Isidore of Damietta, who flourished in the time of Justinian II., [illegible] "Letters on Doctrine." In these he contrasts the sacred [illegible] heathen writings, pointing out the sublime truths of the [illegible] which command our respect, and exhibiting the fabulous [illegible] useless fables and inventions, with which the other

[illegible] ndria, who died A. D. 412, was a controversial [illegible] mperor Julian. In ten books, dedicated to

the Emperor Theodosius, and constituting one of his most important works, he appears as a champion of the Christian faith. He avails himself of the testimony of the heathen philosophers and historians to prove the antiquity and reasonableness of the Jewish religion, and to show its superiority in these respects to that of the Greeks. It is exhibited in contrast with Paganism, while Julian's estimate of Plato, placing him above Moses, is refuted.

Theodoret, born at Antioch, A. D. 386, and elevated to the episcopate, is justly regarded as one of the most eminent of the Christian Fathers. As a controversialist and a commentator upon the Scripture, he attained high distinction. In the last book of his work "Against Heretics," he gives an exposition of the faith of the Church. The sole principle of all things, he holds, is God, eternal, infinite, uncompounded, incorporeal, supremely good, supremely just. A Divine Providence is proved by the admirable arrangement of the heavenly bodies, by the wonderful order of the elemental forces, by the construction of the different parts of the human body, and the empire over the material creation, conferred on man. Even what seem discordant elements, wants, and hardships, have their use. The practice of virtue is not vain, since a recompense awaits it in the life to come.

Of Salvian, one of the Fathers of the Church, who flourished about A. D. 440, and was a priest at Marseilles, there remain to us eight books "On the Providence of God."* This Providence is universal; it rules all, and will judge all. Reason testifies in part to this. But how then do Pagans sometimes prosper more than Christians, and the wicked more than the good? It would suffice to confess ignorance, and that it does not belong to man to unfold the secret designs of God, or render reasons for His impenetrable judgments. We are in this world to be disciplined by suffering. Who can claim the sinlessness that deserves good alone? The morals of. the age furnish a reply. From this point Salvian digresses to administer sharp reproof to the abounding wickedness.

From the first century onward, the teachers of the Church had exhibited leanings toward materialistic views of the soul.

* Du Pin holds this doubtful.

So manifestly was this the fact, that when Dodwell, in the early part of the seventeenth century, put forth his argument, "Souls Naturally Mortal," he rested the strength of it on the testimony of early Christian writers. Tertullian expressly denied the possibility of pain or pleasure without the presence of the body. "Who does not see," asks Arnobius, "that that which is ethereal, immortal, cannot feel pain?" John of Damascus holds similar views. "God," he says, "is incorporeal by nature; as to angels, devils, and men's souls, we only call them incorporeal by grace, and comparatively with the grossness of matter." Thus, in many quarters, the materiality of the soul was the dominant opinion.* It was even "more general among the Christian doctors from the first to the fifth century, than among the pagan philosophers of the same period."

At the end of the fourth century, the current of opinion changed. The doctrine of the immateriality of the soul was more positively asserted. Augustine maintained it in Africa, and Nemesius, Bishop of Emessa, in Asia, while Claudianus Mamertus represented Gaul.

The latter, who belongs to the fifth century, was a priest of Vienne, and author of three books on the nature of the soul. They were written in confutation of Faustus, who became, 433 A. D., Abbot of Lerins, and about 462 Bishop of Riez (Rhegium). He had already taken a leading part in the semi-Pelagian heresy, and had written a book against the predestinarians. Of an active, independent, intermeddling spirit, he possessed great influence in the Gaulish Church. In a long philosophical letter, addressed to a bishop, he had maintained that God alone is incorporeal, while all creatures, including the human soul, are corporeal. For this, he claims the authority of Jerome and Cassian, at the same time drawing from reason arguments to the same effect. The soul, he said, is in space; it is extended; it is therefore corporeal. Imagination and thought may wander far, but the substance of the soul remains in the body, animating it, and giving it life. How can it not but be in the body, when separation from it is death? How, if souls do not exist locally, can one

* Guizot's His. of Civilization, II. 129.

be said to be in hell, and another in heaven? What separates them? If the soul is not somewhere, it is everywhere. How, then, could it be said to descend or rise?*

Mamertus replies that the soul is incorporeal, for it is made in the image of God. It does not depend on corporeal sense, but it animates and informs matter. The view of Jerome and others was simply, that after the resurrection, the souls of men will have spiritual bodies, adapted to their nature. It is strange that any Christian should imagine that he will see God with his bodily eyes. As to the soul being local or extended, it may be asked in what part of the body is it, and how shall it be divided? Why does it not lose something of its energy when a part of the body is removed? If the soul may be in part in the arm, then it is divisible. But that cannot be, for all divisible things may be dealt with in parts. But the soul is entire in its movements. It has neither length, breadth, nor height. It has neither interior nor exterior parts. It thinks, feels, fancies, in its whole substance. The soul has quality, but not quantity. Man, unlike the beasts, can know himself also; through his body, things corporeal; without the body, things spiritual. Moreover, the soul can conceive what transcends sense. No perfect geometrical figure can be drawn, but we can conceive it. How, again, does it know its own thought? Not by sense.

That the soul has not weight or measurable quantity, is proved by the sentiments of heathen philosophers, who held that the soul is incorporeal. So thought Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome. Hilary, however, is expressly excepted. No little ingenuity is shown in meeting the objection that the soul is local in the body. As to heaven and hell, they are not to be understood as different places, but different states. The soul sees what is incorporeal, without corporeal presence.

* Faustus, Bishop of Rhegium, in Gaul, and one of the most prominent semi-Pelagians after the middle of the fifth century, as also Gennadius, who lived near its close, held that in every created object matter and form are united. All [illegible]eated things are limited, exist in space, and are material. They have quantity [illegible] God only being exalted above and independent of the logical [illegible] quantity involves relation to space and extension, so that the [illegible] the body is material. [illegible]an, the chief founder of semi-[illegible] Hilary, Bishop of Poic[illegible] substantially the same views. [illegible] Phil., I. 353.

The conclusion is, that man is compounded of the spiritual and corporeal; the immortal and mortal; soul and body. God is incorporeal, and the soul is His image. Its nature is to think, and thought is incorporeal. It wills, but will is not body. It remembers, but what memory gathers does not augment its body. The body feels where it is struck; the soul feels throughout. The body cannot approach or withdraw from God; the soul may.

The praise bestowed on Mamertus by Sidonius Apollinaris, is excessive. He rates him above all writers of his age, superior to all other philosophers and scholars, the peer of Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes, Hortensius, etc., in their several spheres.*

Contemporary, in part at least, with him was Nemesius, Bishop of Emessa. In a work of forty-nine chapters, he discusses the nature of man. He follows Origen in maintaining the soul's pre-existence. It is immaterial and eternal, like all supra-sensible things. From it, the body receives motion. As to its separate faculties, and its freedom to choose—placed as it is, midway between the sensible and the super-sensible—Nemesius, though writing from the Neo-Platonist standpoint, leans to the views of Aristotle.

Julian Pomerus belongs to the close of the fifth century. Born in Africa, his life was spent as a priest in Gaul. Like Mamertus, he wrote a work on the nature and qualities of the soul, and this likewise is divided into eight books, in which much the same questions are discussed as had engaged the attention of Mamertus.

Æneas of Gaza, contemporary with Nemesius, was educated at Alexandria, and is the author of a work on the immortality of the soul and the resurrection. He embodies in his dialogue many passages from the heathen philosophers, and many curious facts of history. He believed that God created human souls at the time when they are placed in the body, thus rejecting the doctrine of Origen. Apart from body, souls have no feeling, and in the resurrection they will resume the form they had here.

Fulgentius (A.D. 468–533) was one of the most illustrious

* Guizot's His. of Civ., II. 132.

of the Christian Fathers, and his works have been repeatedl reprinted. He was one of the African bishops exiled b Thrasimond, an admirer of Augustine, whose style he imitate and whose doctrine he followed. Summoned to reply t Faustus, whose writings had been published at Constantinople he wrote a work, in the close of which he treats of the origi of souls, whether by immediate creation or traduction. Lik Augustine, he leaves the question undecided. On either sid were insoluble difficulties. He concludes that we must hol that the soul is not body, but spirit; it is not a portion of th divine substance, but a creature; it is not put into the bod as a prison for its past sins, but by God's appointment, tha it may live.

Boethius, whose full name is Anicius Manlius Torquatu Severinus Boetius, is classed by Du Pin among ecclesiastic writers. Whether there is sufficient warrant for this, is stil among scholars, an open question. The views of Gibbon an Niebuhr are adverse to those of the multitude, who in pas centuries have conceded to him the credit of a Christian au thor. Their opinion is strengthened by the fact that no re erence is made by Boethius to Chrisianity where we shoul most expect it, as well as by the fact that in the age in whic he lived, he may have been greatly indebted to Christianity without being disposed to confess it. His writings are pe vaded by a strong religious theism. They indicate the au thor's firm belief in prayer and providence, and for the perio of nearly a thousand years enjoyed a most remarkable popu larity. They were one of the classics of the middle ages translated into Hebrew, High German, French and Anglo Saxon—Alfred the Great giving the chief of them to hi countrymen in their own tongue.

The Christian character of Boethius was the more readil conceded, while several works, distinctly Christian, were popu larly, but falsely, ascribed to him. Their acceptance by th Scholastics is explained in his case, as in that of Seneca, b their elevated moral tone, and their accordance with th fundamental truths of natural religion. The parallel betwee the two men, might be extended to their lives as well as thei writings, for each was the victim of arbitrary power. Whe

Boethius presents his sentiments, related to Christian doctrine on the one side, and to Plato on the other, we discern that he leans almost uniformly to the Greek philosopher. Indeed, Nitzsh * would seem to have shown conclusively, that he can no longer be classed as a Christian writer. As to the moral order of the world, therefore, he may be quoted almost as a heathen witness.

Boethius (A. D. 472–526), says Gibbon,† "is the last of the Romans whom Cato or Tully could have acknowledged for their countryman. . . . The erudition of the Latin language was insufficient to satiate his ardent curiosity; and Boethius is said to have employed eighteen laborious years in the schools of Athens, which were supported by the zeal, the learning, and the diligence of Proclus and his disciples. . . . The geometry of Euclid, the music of Pythagoras, the arithmetic of Nicomachus, the mechanics of Archimedes, the astronomy of Ptolemy, the theology of Plato and the logic of Aristotle, with the commentary of Porphyry, were translated and illustrated by the indefatigable zeal of the Roman senator."

In his writings—the most important of which is his "*De Consolatione Philosophiæ*," written in the prison to which, on false accusation, he had been committed, and where he was to end his days—we meet with a simple monotheism, worthy of his great master Plato, and the recognition of God not only as a personal being, but as the originator and providential governor of the world. Goodness and justice are among His attributes. He rewards the good; He punishes the wicked. Prayer is the medium of communion with Him.‡ The "love" that rules in heaven determines the harmony of the Kosmos, if it is not rather, in some sense, identified with it. The stoic idea of living according to nature, finds peculiar expression: "O happy race of men, if the love that rules heaven, might only rule your minds!"

Boethius nowhere asserts the original creation of matter out of nothing, in the accepted Scripture sense. He asserts, however, a Providence that shapes and governs, controls and judges

* Das System Des Boethius, Von F. Nitzsh. Berlin, 1860. Prof. Maurice dissents from Nitzsh.

† Decline and Fall, Ch. XXXI., 9. ‡ On all these points, see Nitzsh, 50–80.

all. His argument for the existence of God reminds us of Dr. Samuel Clarke's reasoning. We observe the world, and discern imperfections; but the imperfect is known only in contrast with the perfect, which we must assume to exist. The terms which Boethius uses with reference to the divine existence betray the Neo-Platonism that leavened his conceptions. He is thoroughly penetrated, not only with a sense of the orderly construction and subjection to law of the physical world, but with the conviction of a moral order, over which "the One and the Good" presides. Fate is but the mediating principle between God and His works, and to it spiritual agencies are subject, working out His will. Sometimes it is employed in a sense scarcely distinguishable from Providence, which is, however, the transcendent divine understanding itself. In all these, however, there is no conflict. They may be regarded as concentric circles, equally related to the common personality, the central *prima divinitas*.

Physical evil is explained as only the means for good, serving either to carry out some operation of nature to its end, or to exercise the virtues of the good, and reform or punish the wicked. Moral evil is derived, not from matter, but from the human soul, endowed as it is with freedom. "The majority of men are wicked"—so far, depravity is recognized and asserted; but there are those who are complete in virtue, and Boethius knows nothing of a depravity radical to the heart, or of the necessity of expiation. "The salvation (health or blessedness) of the soul is righteousness." This, however, is but another form of the Stoic precept, living according to nature. "Sin enslaves the soul;" but this is held not in any Augustinian, but rather in the Pelagian sense.

As to virtue, it is, in itself, its own reward; and as to vice, it is its own punishment. The reward is inalienable from the virtuous; the penalty inseparable from the vicious. Yet in addition to the curse that cleaves to the very nature of wickedness, there comes also the infliction of the divine judge, and this need not be corporeal or earthly. Purgatorial inflictions are admitted, but in the Platonic rather than the churchly dogmatic sense. Indeed, on this point Seneca and Boethius seem to be in accord.

Happiness may be considered the chief good of a rational being; but then it must be a happiness that does not fluctuate, that is not transitory, that does not depend on the goods of fortune, that, instead of ending with the body's dissolution, must run parallel with the immortality of the soul. Power and honors cannot confer it. Riches cannot satisfy the restless cravings of avarice. Power cannot make the victim of opprobrious vices master of himself. Fortune renders no man virtuous. Indeed, "adverse fortune is, in reality, more beneficial to mankind than prosperous fortune. The one deceives; the other instructs." Our confidence must be in God, who distributes just awards to all, and who will not leave inefficacious the prayers addressed to Him by the pure und upright.

The conclusion is—"Detest and flee every vice; cultivate and pursue every virtue; exalt your mind to God, the only true hope; and offer up your prayers with humility to His throne."

The monk Jobius belongs to the sixth century. His writings abound in curious questions, some of them relating to the soul; but he is not as satisfactory in his answers, as ingenious in his inquiries. Marcus Aurelius Cassiodorus, a Roman senator, and in favor with Odracer, as also with his Gothic conqueror, Theodoric, belongs for the most part to the sixth century, having been born about A. D. 470. His closing years were devoted to monastic study and meditation; the Psalms and Augustine's writings furnishing him food for reflection. Beside his works on history and chronology, he composed treatises on the sciences and the liberal arts. In his work on the soul he asserts its creation by God, its spirituality and immortality. He follows several of his predecessors in denying it measurable quantity or extension. In its separate state after death, it is incapable of good or evil, and free from the burden of earthly feebleness. A vein of practical morality pervades some of this author's writings.*

It is at least doubtful whether we should concede to Pope Gregory I., elevated to the Pontificate at the close of the sixth century, certain writings on the separate state of the soul which have been ascribed to him. If conceded to be his, the

* Ueberweg, I. 355, states the indebtedness of C. to Boethius.

miracles and visions of departed spirits with which they abound would naturally recall to some minds his own language, as attributed to him by Du Pin, "We are deceived (*fallimur*) because we are men"—Popes as well as others.

Maximus, confessor (580–662), noted as a leading opponent of the Monothelites, taught that God had revealed Himself in His works as well as His word. Among other matters, he discusses briefly, the nature and use of the passions. Among his "Maxims," are many on the principles of morality. Like so many previous writers, he produced a treatise on the Soul, designed to prove it incorporeal, uncompounded and immortal.

John of Damascus, who belongs to the eighth century, is to be classed with the writers above mentioned. In the second book of his treatise on the orthodox faith, he treats of created beings, angels, demons and men. Man is composed of soul and body, the former being spiritual and immortal. The author discusses its faculties, passions, actions and freedom, which last consists in its power over its own actions. He examines also the subjects of providence, foreknowledge and predestination. His writings had great authority in the East, and commanded the respect of the Western Scholastics. Among his works are to be found a dialogue between a Saracen and Christian. Another dialogue is designed to refute the Manicheans.

John of Damascus is among the first—if not the first—to take note of the spread of the religion of Mohammed. In his day it had already, by its rapid spread, excited surprise and apprehension. Its marked characteristic, by which it assumed a Protestant aspect toward the prevalent religions of the East, was its monotheism. Trinitarianism, with all its internal variations, as well as gross corruptions, had shown itself intolerant as it became dominant. But dissent was only partially suppressed. Threatened by temporal and eternal punishments in the Theodosian edict, it retained a latent vitality, especially among the Ebionitic Christians of the Nabathæan wilderness, and of certain portions of Arabia. To one of their number, Kora, who preached at Mecca the unity of God and the resurrection of the dead, Mohammed himself, who heard him, is

said to have been doctrinally indebted. The Essenes professed a rigid monotheism. Known as Hanifs in Arabia, they inculcated submission to one God. Indeed, among the Arabian tribes—in the midst of prevailing idolatry, particularly Sabaism, and of various superstitions—"the remembrance was still preserved of an original, simple, monotheistic religion," while, by the numerous Jews scattered among these tribes, in part also by Christians, who possessed however but a very imperfect knowledge of their faith, the recollection of this primeval religion was freshly revived. The influence of both Judaism and Christianity is distinctly traceable in the Koran.

At first, the system of the Prophet assumed a protestant, self-defensive, rather than aggressive attitude. We must beware of interpreting his life by the deeds of his successors. A recent writer, not prejudiced in his favor, has said of him: "In his own age and country, he was the greatest of reformers—a reformer alike religious, moral and political. He founded a nation, and he gave that nation a religion and a jurisprudence which were an unspeakable advance on anything which that nation had yet accepted. He swept away idolatry; he enforced the practice of a purer morality; he lightened the yoke of the slave." *

As a religious reformer, his one idea was the Divine Unity. It was grasped with the firmest conviction, and maintained with the most intense enthusiasm, to say nothing of more worldly elements, to which for its successful dissemination it may have been indebted. The fire he kindled spread like a conflagration. The simplicity of his leading doctrine commended it to all but those who believed that in Christianity they possessed a higher truth than any taught by the Arabian prophet. There was no necessity, no occasion, for philosophical speculation. It seemed impossible that any philosophical school should spring up, based upon the teachings of the Koran. And yet, insensibly, perhaps, the confident zeal of the warrior, who seemed to feel the inspiration of the prophet, as he bore his banner, assumed the tone of fatalism; not the fatalism of despair, but the fatalism of assured victory. Moreover, in the rejection of every-

* Brit. Quar. Review, 1872.

thing like Dualism, as well as the Christian Trinity, the One God was absolutely enthroned over all creatures and events. His providence was universal, and His will supreme. The faithful disciple of Mohammed, resolving all into that will, could scarcely fail to become a predestinarian fatalist. Here was one tendency. Another was soon to appear.

At a very early stage in the historical development of Mohammedanism, there were manifested tendencies toward a surprising freedom of speculation. "Wâsib ben Atâ formed a school of seceders (*mutazalas*) whom we may term Rationalists; since they teach that all knowledge is attained through Reason, and must necessarily be so attained; that, therefore, the discrimination between good and evil is within the province of Reason; that nothing is known to be wrong or right until Reason has distinguished them; that man has perfect freedom, is the author of his own actions, both good and evil, and deserves reward or punishment accordingly. They uphold the unity and the justice of God; teach that the tendency of actions to the happiness of the many, is a good criterion of Right." *

Moreover, while two articles, simple enough in themselves, and adapted to popular apprehension, constituted at first the entire and simple creed of the Prophet's followers, their contact with surrounding nations brought their faith into collision with hostile beliefs, and the necessity was imposed, to defend it by the pen as well as by the sword. Through Syrian Christians, they became acquainted with the writings of Aristotle. A Nestorian was the friend and physician of the Prophet. Medical, and afterward philosophical authors, had been translated by Syrian scholars, and thus Greek learning was made accessible to the Arabian thirst for knowledge. During the reign of Ahmamun, and at his instance (813–833), the works of Aristotle were translated, and brought within the reach of Arabic scholars. Nor were the writings of his commentators overlooked. Plato's *Republic*, *Timæus*, and *Laws* were translated into Arabic. The advantages thus afforded to Alfarabi, Avicenna and Averroës are obvious. The two first had studied with Syrian and Christian physicians. Alfarabi was also

* Fraser's Magazine, 1872.

especially indebted to Aristotle, and borrows from his metaphysics his proof of the existence of God. The world is composite. It must have had a beginning and a cause. But a series of causes cannot be infinite, or return like a circle into itself. The first link, on which all depends, must be the first being, necessarily existent, and the cause of all that exists. With the Neo-Platonists, Alfarabi accepts emanation. The actual human intellect is a simple substance, independent of matter, and surviving the body. Evil, in a finite world, is a necessary condition of good. All things are created good, and are subject to providence.

Alfarabi died about 950 A. D., and thirty years later Avicenna was born. He taught medicine and philosophy in Ispahan. Accepting at first the doctrines of his predecessor, he receded from the Neo-Platonists toward the real Aristotelian doctrine. Genera are *ante res* in the mind of God, for all that exists is related to Him, as his work of art is to the artist. The cause which orginated all things must sustain them in being. The world, however, as Aristotle taught, has existed from eternity.

Averroës, born A. D. 1126, was a native of Cordova. His philosophy subjected him to suspicion, and he found a refuge in exile at Morocco. He reverenced Aristotle as the founder and perfector of all scientific knowledge. He held that after death, the active intellect which had absorbed the passive into itself, continued to exist, not as an individual substance, but as an element of the universal mind, which, however, was not to be identified with Deity itself, of which it was an emanation. Averroës considered religion as veiling philosophical truth under figurative representations. The religion of the philosopher was to know God through His works.

The name of Alkendi, who died about 870 A. D., calls for brief notice. He was eminent for scientific and philosophical attainments. In theology, he was a rationalist, and his ideas of the material Kosmos were fanciful. But a more important name than his, is that of Algazel, or Al-Ghazzali, which, within a recent period, has been lifted from the obscurity that had long covered it. Whewell and Lewes, in the later editions of their respective works, have found a place for him, and

Ueberweg concedes him a recognized position in the history of philosophy. The recent translation of his "Alchemy of Happiness," by H. A. Homes, an American scholar, enables us to test the claims of this Arabian philosopher, who may also be called a theosophist, to the rank to which in his own day, and at length, after the lapse of ages, once again, he has been elevated.

Al-Ghazzali was a native of Khorasan, born about A. D. 1056. Educated as a Mohammedan, his mind was early a prey to doubt, and for a time he was an absolute skeptic. His learning and genius, however, recommended him to the sovereign, who bestowed upon him a professorship in the College of Bagdad. Harassed by doubts, he resigned his position, and went as a pilgrim to Mecca and Jerusalem. He returned to his native Khorasan, to devote himself to monastic study and devotion, and write out the results of his careful meditation.

The temper of his mind was not unlike that of Pascal. He saps the foundations of philosophy, that he may find a larger place for faith. He studies man in his feebleness and strength, in his degradation and his nobleness, bringing out the contrast between the creature of clay and the child of God, in sentences and paragraphs that repeatedly remind us of "Pascal's Thoughts." Again, we are struck by the parallel between the Mohammedan philosopher, Al-Ghazzali, and the French philosopher, Des Cartes. The latter flung aside all his previous opinions and beliefs, that, starting from the simple argument, "I think, therefore I am," he might construct on a solid base a system of demonstrated truth. The Mohammedan seems to have passed through a similar experience; and in the work now translated, we see the conclusions at which he arrived—conclusions the more important to us, from the fact stated by Mr. Homes in his introduction, that his translation has been made from the Turkish edition of 1845, and that it thus indicates not only the opinions of a philosopher of eight hundred years ago, but the views which are regarded or tolerated as orthodox at the present day.

These views are certainly remarkable, considering the source from which they come. We are scarcely surprised at

the estimate of their author, given by the veteran German professor, Tholuck. "Ghazzali," he says, "was truly—if any man ever deserved the name—a divine, and he may justly be placed on a level with Origen, so remarkable was he for learning and ingenuity, and gifted with such a rare faculty for the skillful and worthy exposition of doctrine. All that is good, noble, and sublime, which his great soul had compassed, he bestowed upon Mohammedanism; and he adorned the doctrines of the Koran with so much piety and learning, that in the form given them by him they seem in my opinion worthy the assent of Christians."

"The form given them by him," Tholuck well might say, for under his handling the grosser doctrines of the Koran disappear, and the moral elements that underlie them, or are interwoven with them, are brought into the foreground. His rationalism acts as a solvent to disintegrate whatever is obnoxious to his moral sensibility and his spiritual aspirations, and yet his aim is constructive rather than destructive. He presents such phases of the moral system and the government of God as frequently remind us of Butler's "Analogy."

In his "Alchemy of Happiness," he addresses himself to the "seeker after the divine mysteries," reminding him, in the spirit of the old Greek proverb, that he should first seek to know his own soul. This knowledge is "to know what you are, how you are created, whence you are, what you are here for, whither you are going, in what your happiness consists, and what you must do to secure it." This will open the way to the knowledge of God, which should be pursued by the spirit as the huntsman pursues his prey. There is, indeed, "no more precious jewel" than this.

Yet the soul is a substance of which it is difficult, if not impossible, to apprehend the essence. They who say it is matter, are in error, for matter is divisible, and spirit is not. Its origin is from God, and to Him it returns. The body is simply its vehicle, while the corporeal organs are its subjects. It rules the senses, directing the eye when to see, the ear when to hear. Indeed, we are reminded of Plato's "Republic," and his famous analogy between the soul and the State, as we read Al-Ghazzali's description of "the kingdom

of the heart," of which "desire is the standard-bearer," reason the vizier, and anger, quick to rebel, the superintendent. We see the elements of revolt in human depravity, and the necessity that "the heart, like a sovereign, enthrone itself in its capital, the body, stand at the door of service, and direct its prayers to the gate of eternal truth, seeking for the beauty of the divinity."

To serve God and grow in the knowledge of Him, is the end for which man was created. But to this knowledge the soul is indisposed. Assuming its perfection in a pre-existent state, from which it has fallen, Al-Ghazzali speaks of it as forgetting "the assembly with which it had been familiar, and imagining that this miserable place was its mansion of rest," and thus choosing it as its home. But the knowledge of God calls for spiritual self-denial and effort. Holiness can be reached only by "the paths of difficulty." Yet the forces and methods of Divine Providence are typified in the soul's control over the body. Legions of angels, in all the spheres of creation, are agents of the Divine will. Still, man cannot comprehend states of being which transcend his own nature. None but the great God Himself can comprehend God. We cannot attain to know Him by the senses alone. Yet to know and love Him, is essential to happiness.

Here our attention is directed to the constitution of man's body, "a great world," where there is "an infinity of most wonderful things to be observed." Here the philosopher becomes the physiologist and anatomist. In a style worthy of Paley or Galen, he points out the complexity and manifold wisdom of design in the human frame, exhibiting it as an admirable mechanism, even while he declares that all the books written on it have not exhausted or illustrated it, any more than a drop can illustrate the ocean, or an atom the sun. "It is impossible for the thing formed to understand the knowledge of Him that formed it." Yet the study of our frame may help us to apprehend other things. It will reveal the perfection, and show us the favor and compassion of God. This knowledge is necessary to the soul—that "precious jewel confided to you, and wrapped in a veil"—which is to reach eternal rest in "the house of reunion, where no evil enters,"

where there is joy without pain, strength without infirmity, knowledge without doubt, and a vision of the Lord of endless enjoyment.

The illustration of the blindness of science, resting in second causes, is strikingly illustrated. An ant sees a pen making marks on the paper. Overjoyed in its discovery, it traces the effect to the pen, and cries out *Eureka*. Another ant, assuming more wisdom, calls out, You are mistaken; it is the hand, and not the pen, that writes. But neither the first, nor the last, who may be compared to the astrologer, penetrates to the secret of *the will*, or traces all back to the power of God.

But Divine Providence is universal. God sends misfortune and affliction as "the bridle of His love," to draw His saints to paradise. But many willfully, some blindly, mistake here. Our apprehensions of God, at best, are imperfect and inadequate. Our condition is like that of one that has always lived in a dark cave. Another would describe the sun to him. But he has only a glow-worm by which to illustrate light. Such an illustration can give but the poorest and meanest conception of the full light of day. Al-Ghazzali notes *seriatim* several classes of men who fail to arrive at the knowledge of God, some through pride, some through lusts, some through their ignorance that "the soul is treacherous, deceptive, perfidious, malicious, false." But the knowledge of the world should remind them of their danger and their duty. The body should be "kept under." "As a camel is to a pilgrim, so the body is like an animal upon which the heart rides." "If he should be busy with his camel day and night, and should expend all his capital in feeding it, he would not reach his destination, would lose all, and in view of the injury he had sustained, would be the victim of unceasing regrets, and ruin would ensue." The delusive nature of the world is illustrated by several striking illustrations. It is a shadow never fixed; a running stream always advancing; an enchanter, who wins your affection to plot against you. It has its several stages from the cradle to the grave. "Each month represents a league; each hour a mile, each breath a step."

But the present world introduces us to the future. "As

Islamism consists essentially in believing and confessing the Lord God and the future world, it becomes our duty to acquire a knowledge of the future world, as far as the thing is possible." The objector against a resurrection is rebuked for creating difficulties where there are none. There is no limit to the power of God. "It would have been nothing to Him to have created without matter, in a moment, a thousand worlds like this which we inhabit." Moreover, "the intelligent and learned know that the body is not annihilated at death, but that the materials of which it is composed are separated, and that it is this separation which they call death." Of spirits there are two classes, the blessed and the cursed. Spiritual torment may begin here, but it is perfected only when the soul, separated from the body, and also separated from God, is left to itself. Here on earth, the body is a shield from it. "The world is the prison of the believer, and the paradise of the infidel." Pain has its home in the spirit, and every wicked man bears away hence within himself the essence of his torment. "The spiritual hell" has three kinds of fire: the fire of separation from the lusts of the world; the fire of shame, ignominy, and reproach; the fire of exclusion from the beauty of the one Lord. Each of these is illustrated by appropriate analogies, in the style of Oriental parable.

The practical bearing of the truths set forth is seen in this conclusion: "Every man ought to take as the subject of his thoughts, the things which concern the future state—the pains of its torments, the joys of its felicity, the delight and ecstacy of the vision of the beauty of the Lord, and finally, the fact that these states are eternal. Now, is it not strange folly and sottishness to be proud of the transitory pleasures of the world in a life which lasts but for one or two days, and to turn our backs upon future eternal joys? If you are wise, you will acknowledge the faults and errors of your soul, and with an understanding of the purpose for which it was created, you will meditate upon your soul, and upon the Almighty power and greatness of God, as far as the human mind can comprehend them. . . . Regard this world as the place to sow seed for eternity."

Such is an imperfect outline of what may well have contributed to render the author's name venerable. There are few traces of Mohammedanism in it. The philosopher looks through nature and Providence to discern the real features of the moral world, the condition and prospects of man, and the hopes which he may dare to cherish, and his conclusion is in striking harmony with the closing lesson of Ecclesiastes, and enforces, like it, the obligations of natural religion.

Avempace, who for a time lived in Grenada, and died 1138 A. D., is said to have written a work on the soul. The soul, he held, rises from the instinctive life which it shares with lower races, by gradual emancipation from materiality, to the acquired intellect which is an emanation from the active intellect or Deity. Ababucer, a native of Andalusia (died in 1185 A. D. at Morocco), insists on the gradual development of man's capacities, till his intellect becomes one with the divine. Positive religion, with its rewards and penalties, is only a necessary means of discipline for the multitude.

The philosophy of the Jews of the Middle Ages was, in part, the Cabala, and in part, the modified doctrines of Plato and Aristotle. In the Cabala, one portion of which dates from the middle of the ninth century, or even earlier, God is represented as more transcendent than in the older Jewish writings. He is more spiritual, more withdrawn from the individual, exalted above space and time, while his active relation to the world depends upon the agency of intermediate beings. The Persian doctrine of angels, the Neo-Platonic scheme of emanations, and Stoic and Platonic influences, are traceable in connection with the philosophy of the Cabala. A middle term was sought between the Deity as transcendent, and the visible world. The later portion of the Cabala (Sohar), reduced to writing at about the close of the thirteenth century, teaches that God, as He truly is, is unknowable. His manifestation is through a series of emanations, fancifully conceived.

Of Jewish writers, some discussed the most curious, if not profound, questions of religious philosophy. They were students of the Talmud as well as the Cabala. Saadja, born in Egypt in 892 A. D., discussed creation and its relation to God,

the duties of man, the nature of the soul, future existence, reward and punishment. He asserts the unity of God, the creation of the world out of nothing, the freedom of the will, and future retribution. Salomo ben Jehuda ben Gebirol, known to the Scholastics as Avicebron, maintained that even spiritual substances are in some sense material. Albertus Magnus says that his work rested on the hypothesis that things corporeal and incorporeal were of one matter, all substances—the soul included, and God alone excepted—being compounded of matter and form.

Passing hastily over Bahja ben Joseph, who, proceeding from the unity of God, sketches out a complete system of Jewish morals, and others who favored or opposed Aristotle, we come to the distinguished name of Moses Maimonides, born at Cordova 1135 A. D., whose influence was felt decisively upon Jewish theology, and who contributed largely to give currency among his co-religionists to the Aristotelian philosophy. In the law of the Jews he recognized the revelation of the highest truths, while his own speculations have a rationalistic character. In the doctrines of creation and the providential government of the world, he departs from Aristotle. The matter of the world was made out of nothing, nor can it be said to be eternal. More accordant with truth is the teaching of the *Timæus*. In the sphere of Ethics, Maimonides asserted emphatically the freedom of the will and human responsibility. His rationalism roused against him Jewish fanaticism, but his doctrines prevailed widely in spite of all opposition.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE SCHOLASTICS.

INCLUDED in the writings of Maximus Confessor (died 662 A. D.), is a commentary on the writings ascribed—falsely, as Laurentius Valla afterward asserted, and others proved—to Dionysius the Areopagite. These writings date probably

from the last decades of the fifth century, although a considerable period intervened, before they became generally known or accepted. They betray unmistakably the presence of Neo-Platonic influences. The Pseudo-Dionysius agrees with Jamblicus and Proclus in the doctrine that the One is exalted, not simply above the idea and fact of being, but also above the idea of goodness. The Deity is thus praised as Monad or Triad, but in either case He is above all knowledge, and may be called the nameless One, the supra-essential, to indicate that he transcends the category of being. In him exist the archetype of all existing things. That which proceeds from Him is the Good. The nature of evil is negative. If evil as evil, positively subsisted, it would be evil to itself, and thus self-destructive. The realm of life is higher and nearer to God than the realm of mere existence, while above it successively are the realms of sensation, understanding and spirits, each in order receiving, in addition to itself, the endowments of all below it.

The writings of Dionysius, the St. Denis of French history, which have been classed, as in their scope, substantially identical with those of Gregory of Nyssa, are important for the repute in which they were held in the middle ages, and for the influence which they exerted upon subsequent speculation, especially after they had received papal recognition. They were translated by Johannes Scotus, or Erigena, the earliest noteworthy philosopher of the Scholastic period. The task was performed at the instance of Charles the Bold (843 A. D.), who called him to take charge of the Court-School at Paris. Here he occupied a position somewhat analogous to that of Alcuin in the preceding generation at the Court of Charlemagne. Alcuin, indeed, prepared the way in more respects than one for his successor. He was the teacher of the Emperor at whose court he resided, and might be called his minister of public instruction. The task imposed upon him, too arduous for accomplishment, was to educate a nation. He had to begin at the very foundations. One of his first anxieties was to procure text-books. In Natural Science, he had to rely on the English Bede and the Roman Pliny. In philosophy, he remodeled the old books, Boethius, Cassiodorus and

Isidore of Seville.* In his own writings he has little to say directly upon natural theology, although he discusses the being and attributes of God, in his book on doctrines takes up the subject of moral virtues, and, like many of his predecessors, produced a work on the soul.

Alcuin was too busy with practical matters—even if he had possessed the taste for it—to give himself up to speculation. Not so with Erigena. The ideas of Origen, Gregory and Maximus, as well as the Pseudo-Dionysius, found in his mind a genial soil. He elaborated and reproduced them under new forms. All our inquiries, he held, must indeed begin with faith in revealed truth; yet, by the aid of reason, the sense of the divine utterances must be discovered. Figurative expressions must be reduced to their literal sense. As Augustine had asserted, true philosophy is identical with true religion.

Thus in Erigena, who has been called *the* metaphysician of the ninth century, some phases of Neo-Platonism are revived. His leading work is a treatise in the form of a dialogue between a master and his pupil, *De Divisione Naturæ.* In this he follows his avowed aim, to found a system of truth which "should repose entirely on rational insight, and approve itself as true by an inner necessity of reason." † Man can rise to the knowledge of God only by following the mode in which God has revealed Himself. But true philosophy rises above all Theophanies, to the Absolute itself. In the order of time, knowledge comes first by tradition, teaching and faith; but in the order of conception, the objective truth of reason comes first. Revelation and tradition presuppose truth, and the apprehension of this truth is that for which reason should strive. The faith that rests on authority alone, is weak: it must be supported and upheld by a rational knowledge of the truth. The first thing to be done is to show what admits of being proved on grounds of reason: it may then be harmonized with ecclesiastical tradition. Here is the rationalistic principle upon which the philosopher reverently builds. His Theism rests upon it. In considering Him, who transcends all sense

* Of Alcuin's writings and his influence as an educator, I have given a summary sketch in an article in the *Presbyterian Quarterly Review*, for Oct., 1862, to which I must refer the [illegible]

† Neander, [illegible]

and intelligence, we cannot limit Him by predicates which imply the possibility of opposites, nor by what is derived from our knowledge of human relations. "The essence of things must be conceived of under local and temporal forms, and God, when He is spoken of, or presented to us, must be presented under such forms, and under such conditions. But they must not for a moment be supposed to belong to His nature." * We speak of Father and Son, but it would be blasphemous to apply our ideas of those relations to the Divine nature. Such modes of speaking are justifiable; they are employed in Scripture. They are necessary to educate our apprehensions; but they are metaphorical. They are the conditions of our intelligence, not of the Divine nature itself. God is Love, vision, motion, and yet He is not these, for He is more. Words cannot express Him. He transcends all relations. Creation is not to be attributed to Him as an act. By the expression, God is the Creator of all things, it is affirmed rather, God is all in all, as He alone truly is, and all true being in everything that exists, is Himself. In His own being, Creation is implied. Whatever is made has in it a divine principle, without which it would not be.

The Christian Platonism of Erigena is manifest in other features of his scheme. He asserts primordial causes, ideas which are primarily created by the one creative cause of all things, and which create those things which are beneath them. They are "what the Greeks called Ideas, that is, species and forms, the eternal and unchangeable reasons, according to which, and in which, the visible and invisible world are formed and governed." By philosophers they are called acts or motions of the Divine will. They are specified as Goodness in itself, Life in itself, Truth in itself, etc. Thus, repelled by anthropomorphism, and all degrading human conceptions of the divine, Erigena falls into what is scarcely distinguishable from pantheism. The absolute has at once veiled and revealed itself under the forms of the finite.

But if the whole universe is thus made a Theophany, every part of it has its place and end; and there is no room for evil. Indeed, it follows that there is no such thing as evil. As it

* Maurice's His. of Moral and Met. Phil., I. 481.

cannot be derived from the divine causality, it cannot be considered as an object of divine knowledge. For God it has no existence. Yet, the good cannot exist without the antithesis of evil, and sin in the individual is subservient to the revelation of good, which becomes known by it. Thus we are prepared to anticipate the final result—"Divine goodness will consume evil, and eternal life will absorb death and misery." This, moreover, will be brought about by the fact, that God has so constituted the order of things that sin punishes itself, and all rational beings find their appropriate place in the universe according to their diverse moral conduct. But punishment is not outward. A sensuous hell was an apprehension to be entertained only by the sensuous multitude. No part of the world was created to subserve the ends of punishment. The light that cheers the sound eye, pains that which is diseased. To the evil, good itself becomes evil and penalty.

Gerbert, raised to the Popedom as Sylvester II. (died 1003), was eminent for his zeal in behalf of learning. Among his works is one on "The Rational and the Use of Reason." His pupil, Fulbert (died 1029), was styled, by his devoted pupils, their Socrates. One of these was the celebrated Berengarius, whose rationalistic position in regard to the Lord's Supper brought him into conflict with Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury. Hildebert, Bishop of Tours, and a pupil of Berengarius, shrank from following in his master's steps. Yet, in his moral philosophy, he followed Cicero and Seneca, and, in proving the existence of God, he argues from the creatureship of man and all [illegible] things which imply the necessity of an eternal cause. [illegible] was manifest in connection with his do[illegible] above, beneath, without and within the wo[illegible]

Roscellinus, who flo[illegible] enth c[illegible] and in 1092 w[illegible] ex- [illegible] the doctrine [illegible] had the cre[illegible] [illegible] at least co[illegible] sys[illegible] ined that al[illegible] expe[illegible]

His [illegible] omin[illegible]

of the Trinity occasioned grave offence. It seemed to make the three persons of the Godhead three individual substances, and brought down upon him the censure of Anselm, who refers to him, in speaking of "those dialecticians of our times, those heretics in dialectic, who think that the so-called universal substances are only emissions of sound by the voice."

William of Champeaux (1070–1121 A.D.), was a pupil of Roscellinus, but instead of accepting his views, became the special champion of Realism in France. He taught that the species inheres in each of the individuals included in it, *essentially*, or, as he was afterward forced by Abelard to say, *indifferently*. In a work on the origin of the soul, he pronounced in favor of Creationism, or that the soul is created at the beginning of its earthly existence.

Anselm, born at Aosta in Piedmont, became, in 1063, Prior of the convent of Bec, in Normandy, and in 1093, Archbishop of Canterbury. He was strenuous in requiring unconditional submission to the authority of the church, and adopted as his motto, *Credo, ut intelligam.* Faith, he held, must precede rational insight. His famous ontological argument, reminding us of Dr. Samuel Clarke's speculations, is an attempt to prove the existence of God from the very idea which we have of Him. In all minds, even that of the atheist, there exists the conception of the absolutely greatest. But this could not be, if it existed in the intellect alone. There might then be something greater. Hence God exists in the sphere of objective reality. He is not simply conceived. He is. The argument of Anselm takes this form: "The creaturely mind can create nothing, but only perceive that which is communicated to it by the revelation of the Supreme Mind. What-
ver is true and good leads up to the primal source of all that
e and good, whose revelation all truth and goodness is.
h supposes an unchangeable, necessary Being, with-
there would be no truth. Without God, no truth;
t presupposes truth of Being. As all other
king presupposes the idea of God, so this
carries the evidence of its reality in
testifies of it, and presupposes it,
m no other source than from an

original revelation to the human spirit from the spirit to whom it corresponds. The idea of God, therefore, is a necessary and undeniable one; the denial of it involves a self-contradiction."

It may not always be easy to reconcile Anselm with himself on this subject, any more than on that of the harmony of Divine foreknowledge and free-will, in which, aiming to follow Augustine, he is yet emphatical in asserting that freedom without which guilt could not be imputed. When he endeavors to mount up to the idea of the Trinity, his ontological argument no longer serves his purpose. Analogy must be summoned to his aid, and the soul's intuitions are appealed to. "We can know God," he says, "not from Himself, but only after the analogy of His creatures. That will best subserve this knowledge, therefore, which presents the highest degree of resemblance to God. If everything, so far as it has being, is an image of the highest being, this must hold good in the most eminent degree of that which is highest in the whole creation; this is the rational spirit. The more then, it endeavors to enter into itself, for the purpose of coming to the knowledge of its own essence, the more will it succeed in elevating itself to the knowledge of God."

But Anselm's predominant tone of thought comes out again when he finds God identified with the highest good. All the good we seek is relatively so. But the relative implies the absolute, and the absolute—the *summum bonum*—must be God.

Yet, on rational grounds, Anselm seeks to demonstrate the necessity of redemption. Repeatedly we recognize in him the Platonist, but the Platonist of Augustine. He would show that the doctrine of the Trinity is a necessary idea of reason. The mental process by which he arrived at his ontological argument, is described in a Platonic strain. It was on the ground of reason that he was met by his opponent, the monk Gaunilo, who denies that the conception of anything, as that of the magnificence of a lost island, or the personality of an unknown man whose name is heard, necessarily proves the existence of [illegible] Other objections are adroitly urged, and Anselm [illegible] with [illegible] reply. In

opposing the Nominalists, Anselm says: "Reason, which should rule and direct over everything in man, is, with them, so beclouded by images of sense, that they cannot extricate themselves from their fetters, and (thus they) look away from that which reason should contemplate alone, and purely in her own spiritual essence."

Opposed fundamentally to the Realism of Anselm was the position of the celebrated Abelard, who died A. D. 1142. Rational insight, he held, must prepare the way for faith; otherwise faith is not assured of its truth. With Augustine, he considered the doctrine of the Platonists, above that of any other schools of heathen philosophy, most consistent with the Christian faith. The authority of the Church Fathers, he neutralizes as far as possible, by ranging them against one another. Submitting only to the Canonical Scriptures, and not to human authority, our duty is to investigate, and for this, doubt may serve to prepare the way. When strict demonstration cannot be given, the moral consciousness must be our guide.

Christian ethics were regarded by Abelard as a reformation of the natural law of morals. He exhibited the doctrine of conscience, emphasizing its subjective aspect. Ethics should point out the highest good, and show the way to it. But the absolutely highest good is God, and for man the highest good is to love, and the highest evil to hate Him. The importance of habit is recognized, and guilt is credited to the intention instead of the act. Sin is violence to the sinner's own consciousness.

Abelard found an unrelenting adversary in Bernard of Clairvaux (died 1153 A. D.), the saint of his age, a mystical supernaturalist and Realist. Bernard could not appreciate, and in all probability, did not even understand Abelard. He asserted of him, that while he labored to prove Plato a Christian, he showed himself a heathen. Abelard was forced to recall those views which were pronounced contrary to the teachings of the Church; yet his influence on succeeding generations was great and lasting. In conjunction with Anselm, he contributed powerfully to the development of Scholasticism.

Bernard of Chartres (born about 1080 A. D.) was one of many, who, grounding their teachings on Plato, sought, in order not to come in conflict with Aristotle, to harmonize the two philosophers. "We stand," he said of himself and his contemporaries, in respect to the ancients, "like dwarfs on the shoulders of giants." His view of natural theology harmonizes quite closely with that of the *Timæus*. Gilbert de la Porrée, a pupil of Bernard, held that in God, who is pure form without matter, the archetypes of material things exist as eternal immaterial forms. No one of the categories can apply in its literal sense to God. Theological speculation, which relates to the immaterial—to abstract existence, cannot conform altogether to the laws of natural concrete things.* Peter Lombard (died 1164) was not influenced by Abelard, for a time his teacher. In his first book of "Sentences," he treats of God as the absolute good; in the second, of creatures. Hugo of St. Victor (died 1141), famous for his erudition, laid down the principle that the uncorrupted truth of things cannot be discovered by reasoning. John of Salisbury (died 1180) held that all virtue, even that of the heathen, is derived from Divine illumination and grace. Alanus (died 1203) sought to confirm the principal Christian doctrines on rational grounds, following for the most part the scheme of Peter Lombard. Amalrich of Bena (died 1207) and his followers, among whom was David of Dinant, betrayed pantheistic tendencies. All that was divisible and changeable would return finally to God.

At the commencement of the thirteenth century, the works of Aristotle had become extensively known in Western Europe. This result had been brought about, not only by the communication of Arabian learning and philosophy, but by the transmission of the Greek text of Aristotle, soon translated into Latin, from Constantinople. The triumph of the Stagyrite over all his rivals was assured, although not immediate. As the theistic character of his genuine works became known, he rose in favor. There was, however, decided and strenuous opposition to be overcome. The study of his physical works, as well as those of Erigena, was prohibited by ecclesiastical decrees. In 1169, a provincial council at

* Ueberweg, I. 399.

Paris forbade the reading, publicly or privately, of the books of Aristotle on physical philosophy, or of commentaries upon them. His metaphysical works also were burned, and their study prohibited. The prohibition, however, was removed in 1237, if not before, and Robert Grostête, Albertus Magnus, and Thomas Aquinas, labored to secure purer texts, derived by direct translation from the Greek.

Here commences the second period of the Scholastic philosophy. Alexander of Hales, a native of Gloucester (died 1245), is one of its earliest exponents. In his *Summa Theologiæ*, he demonstrates syllogistically ecclesiastical dogmas. He was a Realist, regarding the *Universalia ante rem*, as being in the mind of God. William of Auvergne (died 1249) taught theology at Paris, where he was afterward bishop. In his ideology and cosmology, he follows Plato, with whose *Timæus* and *Phædo* he was acquainted. He held that, as sense perceptions force us to believe in material objects, so, through intellectual cognition, we must recognize the existence of intelligible objects. The soul exists independent of the body, as a separate substance, and needs it only as its instrument.

Robert Grostête, for a time Chancellor of Oxford University (died 1253), distinguishing three forms as immanent in matter, classed together God, the soul, and the Platonic Ideas as immaterial, and not simply separated in reflection from matter. John Bonaventura, named by his admirers *Doctor Seraphicus* (died 1274), followed Plato as interpreted by Augustine, while yielding somewhat to Aristotelian influence. Hence, he taught that God was not only the beginning and end of all things, but their archetypal ground. He gives his iew of the source of Aristotle's error in ascribing to God no vidential care of earthly things. It was that he had not ideas" by which he could take cognizance of them. He fault with Aristotle also for his opposition to Plato, and making the world eternal. Aristotle's ethical mean holds in common life, but there is a supersensual life of a rder. All heathen philosophy, even that of Plato, lly to the mystic wisdom manifest in Bonaventura's m, or dialogue between man and his soul.

Albertus Magnus (died 1280) was the most thorough master of his time in the Aristotelian philosophy. He was also eminent for his acquaintance with natural science. Availing himself of the labors of the Arabian philosophers and of the Jewish Maimonides, he searches constantly for rational arguments to support the articles of faith. What is specifically biblical and Christian could not be known by reason, for the human soul is capable of knowing only that, the principles of which it has in itself. From the experimental knowledge of nature, we must rise to the knowledge of God as the author of nature. Not the Ontological, but the Cosmological argument makes us certain of the divine existence. God is not fully comprehensible by us, since the finite cannot grasp the infinite. Yet He is not altogether unknowable. He is the universally active intellect, emitting intelligence from itself. The world was not created out of pre-existing matter. The soul is immortal by virtue of its community with God. Albertus opposes the error—derived from the speculations of Averroës—then somewhat prevalent, that the unity of the immortal Spirit is in the plurality of human souls, constantly springing into being and perishing. He holds that the law of reason which is to govern choice, is conscience, which is inborn and imperishable, so far as it is the consciousness of principles of action. He agrees with Augustine in his definition of virtue. Albertus shows no jealousy of reason, while he firmly holds that man's condition requires supernatural help. As a churchman, no less than a philosopher, he feels himself called upon to extend as widely as possible the realm of law, and leave a minimum to chance and chaos. This is manifest especially in his doctrine of Providence. "The primal ground and original type of all that is done, or can be done, whether by men or by angels, is the Divine Providence. Fate is that orderly arrangement, originating in Providence, which is stamped on the whole series of created things, and reveals itself in the connection of natural and voluntary causes. Providence and fate are distinguished from each other, as type and anti-type—formative cause, and the form actually incorporated in things." Contingent causes—as free-will—do not lose their causality, though subordinated to fate, and the same

effects may spring from providence, fate and free-will alike. By fate, evil itself is ordered for good, and, in relation to the universe, it is evil no longer. As to creation and providence, one implies the other.

Thomas Aquinas (died 1274) was a native of Italy, but studied under Albertus Magnus at Cologne, at which place, as well as at Paris, Bologna and Naples, he afterward taught philosophy and theology. Of his voluminous writings, the principal are his "Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard," four books *De Veritate Fidei Christianæ Contra Gentiles*, and his unfinished *Summa Theologiæ*. He brought the Scholastic philosophy to its highest state of development, accommodating Aristotelian philosophy to ecclesiastical orthodoxy. Like some of his predecessors, he distinguished specifically revealed and church doctrines from those which could be justly established on rational grounds. With Aristotle, he agrees in regarding knowledge, especially the knowledge of God, as the supreme end of human life. In the moderate Aristotelian sense, he is a Realist. The existence of God is demonstrable only *a posteriori*, that is, from the contemplation of the world as the work of God. There must be a first mover, or first cause. The chain of causes cannot have an infinite number of links. Moreover, the order of the world presupposes an orderer. God is uncompounded, immaterial, the efficient and final cause of the world, which has not existed from eternity, but has been called from nothing into existence by His almighty power. Still, the non-eternity of the world in the past is not strictly demonstrable, but only probable. The immortality of the soul follows from the immateriality, which, from its very nature, must be ascribed to the human intellect. Unlike the soul of a brute, it thinks not the individual, but the universal. Moreover, immateriality must be predicated of the whole soul, inasmuch as the sensitive, motive and other faculties belong to the substance which possesses the power of thought. This power it may exercise independent of bodily organs, yet it does not exist anterior to the body, nor did it derive its knowledge from recollections of a previous state. Innate conceptions are rejected by Aquinas. And yet he says: "The knowledge of God is, in a certain

general and confused way, implanted in all, in that man is so created that he can find his happiness only in God, and the craving after happiness resides by nature in all men; yet, although the longing after the highest good can find its satisfaction only in God, many do not attain to this consciousness." * Thought, however, rests on the basis of sensuous perceptions and representative images, which are the raw material for the intellect. That which appears good is necessarily sought, but necessity—arising from internal causes and reposing on knowledge—is freedom.

These truths, demonstrable to reason, are antecedent to faith, and prepare the way for it. The truths of faith are above reason, but not opposed to it. They cannot be demonstrated, and in accepting them the intellect bows to the will; but they are not refutable by reason, and philosophy, in showing this, subserves the cause of religion. Anselm's proof of the existence of God from the concept of Him, is rejected by Aquinas. Yet His being is *per se* certain, His essence being identical with His being. So that the predicate of the proposition "God is," is identical with the subject.

Aquinas follows Albertus in refuting the pantheistic doctrine of Amalrich, that God is the essence of all things. All beings, except God, were created by Him. Of all possible worlds, He chose the best, and called it into being. It had its existence in time, and not from eternity. Indeed, the creatureship of the world is not a matter of mere faith. It may be scientifically proved, and yet its actual beginning is an object of faith.

Aquinas accepts Aristotle's definition of virtue. He asserts the freedom of the will. He argues the immortality of the soul, not only from its immateriality, but its longings, which are natural, and all natural longings are designed to be satisfied. Indeed, from the very idea of the soul, life is inseparable from it.

Among the disciples of Aquinas were Thomas Bradwardin, strongly anti-Pelagian; Bernardus de Trilla (died 1302), who wrote *Quæstiones de Cognitione Animæ*; John of Paris, and numerous others.

* Neander's [illegible] IV, 444.

Duns Scotus (died 1308 at Cologne) was a Franciscan, and taught at Oxford, Paris and Cologne. He differed from Aquinas on some points, and excelled in acute criticism of others, rather than in constructive elaboration of his own views. He left less to the sphere of reason than Aquinas had done. He remitted to the exclusive sphere of faith, the doctrines of the creation of the world from nothing, and the immortality of the soul. He stopped short, however, of asserting the absolute antagonism of faith and reason, nor did he dispute the truth of dogmas which, he asserted, the reason could not prove. The being of a God does not follow from the concept of Him. It cannot be proved *a priori*. This would be reasoning to Him from a cause, but he has no cause. The proper method of proof is *a posteriori*. With Aquinas, Duns Scotus will not admit of inborn knowledge. The former had taught that God commands what is good because it is good; the latter makes the good what it is, that is good, because God commands it. The human will is not determined, in his view, by the understanding. It has power in itself to choose, without any determining ground. Duns Scotus is less disposed than Aquinas to submit to the Aristotelian dictum. His leanings and sympathies are far more Platonic.

Roger Bacon (died 1294) is one of the most noted names of the age of Duns Scotus. But his fame rests on scientific rather than theological eminence. He preferred the study of nature to scholastic subtilties. His orthodoxy was suspected, and he paid the penalty of his free speculations by years of confinement. Raymond Lully (died 1315) was a student of the Cabala, and boasted an art of invention, certainly curious and peculiar to himself. He is noteworthy in this connection for the extension which he gave to the sphere of the demonstrable. He blamed Aquinas for excluding from the sphere of rational proof the doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation. He may be regarded as in some sense the representative or precursor of not a few others, who, to escape the dilemma of a conflict of reason and faith, asserted that truth was twofold, a proposition that was branded by Papal censure. Scholasticism, indeed, had here reached that point of development at which it could venture, while protesting its orthodoxy, to put

forth paradoxes to be proved, sometimes heretical, and sometimes absurd.

William of Occam (died 1347) was styled *Venerabilis Inceptor*. He was an English Franciscan, and a pupil of Duns Scotus, and to him Nominalism owed its revival. On the principle that entities must not be needlessly multiplied, he set himself in opposition to Realism. Knowledge may depend on universal conceptions, but this does not prove that the universal has reality. The hypothesis of the real existence of the universal, so Occam taught, leads to absurdities. It makes the universal an individual object. But the universal does not exist in things; it exists only in the thinking mind. It exists as a sign of several objects which it represents. Ideas do not exist in God, as parts of the divine essence, any more than in us. They are simply the knowledge which God has of things. But abstracted knowledge justifies no judgment in a question of existence or non-existence. This belongs to the sphere of intuition. And yet the most certain knowledge is not obtained through the senses. Science is the evident knowledge of the necessarily true.

Between the sensitive and intellectual soul, Occam makes a distinction. The former is extended with the body, through its several parts. The other is present in all parts of the body, yet separable from it. The proof of the Being of God does not follow from the conception of Him, nor is it cognizable by intuition. It is indeed rendered probable on rational grounds, but that, from a finite series of causes, we can conclude that God is implied as the first cause, is by no means demonstrable. Even the precepts of morals are not in themselves necessary, since God might have sanctioned other principles than those on which we now base the just and the good. Evidently the point was here reached where those who declined to yield their assent, had the alternative before them of scepticism or mysticism. Both tendencies had already a latent existence.

In both France and Germany we find them in operation. In France were the celebrated (Cardinal) Peter D'Ailly, and the no less famous John Gerson. They were avowed, if not bigoted Nominalists, and their opposition to John Huss at

the Council of Constance (1415), which doubtless sealed his fate, was due largely to the fact that he was a Realist. D'Ailly (died 1425), in proving Occam's proposition that self-knowledge is more certain than the perception of external objects, argues that he cannot be deceived in regard to his own existence, while he can conceive that God by His Omnipotence should produce in him the sensations from which he would infer the existence of external objects, though these objects did not exist. We postulate the uniformity of the course of nature on the divine agency, and the conviction of the truth of this, suffices for us. With Occam, he regards the ordinary proofs of God's existence as not logically binding, and yet sufficient to establish a probability.

Gerson was a close friend of D'Ailly, and somé of the writings of the latter are included in the works of the former. They were co-laborers in church reform, and sympathized together in their philosophy. Gerson (died 1429), as a Nominalist and a follower of Occam, was led to distrust the conclusions as well as limit the sphere of reason, and thus to insist on submission to the decisions of faith, or of the Church. All human inquiry leads less surely to knowledge, than repentance and faith. Neither Plato or Aristotle is a safe guide to him who seeks salvation.

Gerson's career was clouded by adversity. The depravity of the age confronted him on every side. At different times his life was in danger, and, a fugitive from Constance when the famous Council was dissolved, he found a retreat at Lyons, where he died in exile, possibly of a broken heart. The last years of the Great Chancellor of Paris were spent in teaching little children, and his humility is reflected in the inscription which he directed to be carved on his grave-stone—"Pray for poor John Gerson." *

Gerson's character was that of a reformer, but his plan of reform was far different from that of John Huss. He would legislate peace and purity. He would make faith authoritative, and yet few men ventured more boldly in the use of reason. Immorality of all kinds, whether that which he had seen with

* A sketch of his character and career, I have given in the Pres. Quar. Review for October, 1858.

indignation at the Papal palace at Avignon, or that which was inculcated by the class of literature represented by the "Romance of the Rose," found in him a fearless critic and an unsparing opponent. In him the scholastic is sometimes swallowed up in the mystic. When we connect this and other facts that evince his speculative tendencies with his devotional life in exile at Lyons, we shall see that it is not without a show of plausibility that he has been credited with the authorship of "The Imitation," by Thomas à Kempis.

In 1402 Gerson delivered several lectures on "Vain Curiosity in Matter of Faith." Nominalist as he was, he would allow of nothing in derogation of faith. His system of mysticism was intended to supplant the dry book-knowledge of his time. "Neither identifying the intelligence with the Absolute Spirit, nor reveling in fanatical feelings, he never overstepped the boundary that divides the uncreated from the finite, and made use of the understanding to work into a scientific theory the experience of the soul. Scholasticism was thus to be the form of mysticism, the object being, to use his own language—"*Concordare theologiam mysticum cum nostra scholastica.*" His system consists of two parts—the one, *De mystica theologia speculativa*, having to do with the capacities of the spirit in its relations to the mystic state; the other, *De mystica theologia practica*, with the means to elevate one's self to contemplation. The first principle of his psychology was the nominalist maxim, that "the powers of the soul are simply different names of one and the same substance." There is first simple intelligence, and then reason; the first receiving immediately from God a certain natural light, and by intuition perceiving the truth of the original principles; the second answering to understanding in the modern sense. Beside these, the presence of the power of knowledge through sensation, and of the will and appetites, was recognized. Love is the experimental perception of God, and through it the eternal word is born in the soul, and union with God is effected. Gerson "made it an essential point never to identify the Creator and the creature, and thus stood opposed to the pantheism of Amalrich of Bena, and his school."

Clemengis (Nicolaus de Clemangiis) was a warm friend of Gerson, and the finest classical scholar of his time north of the Alps. Ecclesiastical prejudices forced him to seek shelter in obscure exile, where, disgusted with the empty honors of the world, he laid aside his Cicero, Virgil and Horace, in order to devote himself to the unmolested study of the sacred Scriptures. Here he professes to have found in all its richness and abundance the wisdom that he had sought in vain in classic lore.* His writings, dictated by a spirit at once refined by classical pursuits, and illuminated by the familiar study of the Scriptures, betray little of the barren subtleties of Scholasticism on the one hand, or the gloomy speculations of a false mysticism on the other. Without entering into any elaborate discussion of theological doctrine, he is frequently presenting views of providence, of truth and justice, which, in loftiness of thought and elegance of expression, remind us of our own Milton. Such a man, indeed, writing on the "Benefits of Adversity" (*De Fructa Rerum Adversarum*), could scarce fail to present much illustrative of the design manifest in the elements essential to human probation. The trials and calamities of life should afford lessons of grace and spiritual benefits. In another treatise, ascribed, whether correctly or not, to Clemengis, he is emphatic in asserting that all true peace is impossible, in church or state, except that which is based on righteousness.

The German mystics of this period were represented by Eckhart (died 1329), who attained high ecclesiastical dignity, but at length was removed from his offices, brought before the inquisition at Cologne, and forced to recant. His youth was contemporary with the development of that paradoxical license growing out of scholastic arts, to which reference has been made. A wide-spread rationalism, with the distinction between truths of reason and faith as its starting-point, had advanced to the conclusion that only what could be scientifically demonstrated, could be accepted as true, and that the peculiar dogmas of Christianity could not endure this test. Pantheistic and antinomian views were also

* For a full sketch of Clemengis, see my articles in the Presb. Quar. Review for Dec., 1856, and March, 1857.

prevalent. Against all this, in the interests of Christianity rather than the Church, Eckhart appealed on almost all points to the doctrines of preceding thinkers, especially to the Pseudo-Dionysius, Augustine, Albertus Magnus, and Aquinas. Familiar with Aristotle, and the scholasticism based upon his authority, as well as the Platonic and Neo-Platonic speculations of writers who preceded him, he wished to raise a barrier against false philosophy. He would elucidate religious truths by the methods of reason, and hence asserted that they were all included within its sphere. In opposition to Duns Scotus, he made the will subordinate to intellect, and discovered in the divine nature the element of rational necessity. Out of God, the creature is nothing, but out of this nothingness, man, as a moral being, must rise, and by direct intuition place himself in immediate union with the Absolute. Thus, by means of the human reason, all things are to be brought back to God. Reason is the head of the soul, and knowledge is the ground of blessedness. But to know an object, is to become one with it. There is implied a knowledge suprasensible, inexpressible by words, the foundation of all essence, the ground of love, the determining power of the will.

Of the speculations growing out of these fundamental principles, and expanding into a comprehensive mysticism, it is unnecessary to dwell. We may note, however, that God, the first cause of the world, is said, in things, to have externalized His innermost essence. If He were to withdraw what belongs to Him, all things would fall back into their original nothingness. He is in all things, in all places; the intelligible principle in all. The soul is the best of created things. God has made it like Himself, communicating to it His own essence. As God moves heaven and earth, so the soul vitalizes the body, of which nevertheless it may be independent. All things were created for it, but it can never rest itself till it comes to God. This coming, this restoration of the soul to the Absolute, constitutes morality. Man must let go all else, and surrender all to God. He must be silent, that God may speak. Virtue is perfected when the soul has risen above all desire, when its will is lost in God's, when no reward is needed, or any longer sought. Short of this, there is

no virtue. It does not admit of degrees. That state must be attained in which sin is impossible. As to evil, it has the character of privation. It is a negative, and not a positive. Regarded from a higher stand-point, evil is not evil, but only a means for the realization of the eternal end of the world.

Of Eckhart's disciples, John Tauler of Strasburg (1300–1361), Heinrich Suso of Constance (1300–1365), and others, some have been widely and favorably known. Their influence may be traced on to the next century.

The writings of the Scholastics present us with the speculations of a select and not very numerous class. In their time, however, they constituted nearly all that could be called literature. And yet the songs of the Troubadours and the productions of the chroniclers and poets, which constituted the reading or the amusement of the common people, should not be entirely overlooked. Here we meet occasionally with sentiments which lie more level to the intuitions of the common mind than anything which presents itself in Scholastic treatises. From the mass of material, much of it scarcely worthy to be rescued from oblivion, which is preserved in the remains of Provençal literature, the writings of Pierre Cardinal, of an illustrious family at Puy in Velay, and who must have died before 1200 A. D., are perhaps most deserving of mention. He has been designated as the Juvenal of his time, and the boldness of his satire justifies the epithet.

Rudely assaulted for his invectives, he vindicates himself by a pertinent fable, in which the citizens of a town, represented as incurably mad, criticise the single man among them who is not bereft of reason. The fable, he says, is very applicable to the world at large. This present age represents the city, which possesses so many madmen. The highest wisdom of man is to love God and to keep His commandments. But that wisdom is now lost. If any still retain it, they are regarded by others as madmen, while the friend of God knows that they are senseless. The facts which stand out prominent in the description, are those of universal human depravity, and the folly which fails to discern the path of safety, as well as duty, in obeying God." *

* Sismondi's Lit. of South of Europe, I. 143.

In the fabliaux of the "Trouvéres" we find the original of Parnell's *Hermit*, used before him by Henry More, of the *Zadig* of Voltaire, and of the tale of *Renard*, which Goëthe has expanded into *Reinecke Fuchs*. Here, too, are graceful pictures of the virtures that commend themselves by their beauty, and portraits of vice that betray its native odiousness, and remind us of the impersonations of qualities in Spenser's "Fairy Queen."

In the *Trois Pelerinages* of Guilleville (about 1350) we have depicted the pilgrimage of man, which is human life, and the pilgrimage of the soul after it has left the body. But even before this work appeared, the great Italian poet, Dante, had given utterance to his sublime conceptions, the most terrible and impressive of which are those that picture the retribution which overtakes the guilty, and which no power can resist and no art evade. It is needless here to specify particular passages, or dwell upon particular scenes. The descriptions, even when confessedly allegorical, seem to glow with all the colors of life, and betray the intensity of that conviction, to which each heart responds, which asserts the necessity of justice, the sovereignty of a universal providence, and that law of accountability under which all men are born.

In the writings of Petrarch there is little to detain us. He was an enthusiast for elegant literature and the revival of ancient learning, while the great mass of his poems reflects his loves and tastes, without stirring the soul to its moral depths, like the grand visions of Dante. Yet in his prose, his letters for instance, in describing the vices of the Papacy at Avignon, we discern the evidences of a moral earnestness which gives force to those implications of the moral order of the world, which meet us in his pages.

The revival of ancient learning which had already commenced, and to which Poggio Bracciolini and Leonardo Aretino had lent the impulse of their enthusiasm, was helped forward by the long-dreaded capture of Constantinople by the Turks, in 1453. The manuscripts of old Greek authors were scattered among the Western nations, Italy securing the largest share. There, in universities established within the preceding century, Greek professors unfolded the mysteries and treasures

of the language of their ancestors. Patrons were found to invite and encourage them. At Florence, Cosmo de Medici proved himself the Mecænas of his age. His vast wealth was poured forth at the demands of learning. His banks, which were extended over Europe, and even to the Mohammedan States, were devoted to literature as well as commerce. His agents in the East collected Greek, Syrian and Chaldæan manuscripts, and the aroma of learning was commingled with the fragrance of spices. He opened public libraries at Venice and Florence. His counsellors were illustrious in the republic of letters. Schools were formed to gratify the eager craving for ancient learning.

At Naples, Alfonso V., of the race of Arragon, vied with Cosmo in his devotion to science. Under his patronage, Laurentius Valla (died 1457) prosecuted his studies, and daringly produced his exposure of the false donation of Constantine—an open defiance of the Papacy. Even the Popes, after 1440, when Eugenius IV. wore the tiara, so far imbibed the new spirit of the time, as to relax their censure of heathen authors, and to take their place among the patrons of learned men.

The result of all this was not only an enlarged activity of mind, but the intrusion of the Platonic philosophy into the sphere so long monopolized by Aristotle. Platonic schools were formed; Platonic thought was diffused. Lorenzo de Medici, successor of Cosmo, was not content merely to patronize the studies of others: he would be a Platonist himself. As a poet he acquired distinction, but his poems embody his philosophy. "His *Altercazione* is a philosophical and moral poem, in which the most sublime truths of the Platonic philosophy are displayed with equal clearness and sublimity." * Thus the ruler of the state himself might be considered as the ripe fruit of the policy that, under Cosmo, had established an academy for the very purpose of cultivating Platonism, had called the learned Gemisthus Pletho from the East to take charge of it, and had educated the distinguished Marsilio Ficino in the works not only of Plato but Plotinus, that he might be fitted to bear up its reputation, and secure it larger fame. Lorenzo was a pupil of Ficino.†

* Sismondi, I. 315. † Roscoe's Life of Lorenzo de Medici, 85.

The spreading zeal for classical studies bore fruit in the recovery of many works that had been regarded as lost to the world. The discovery of the art of printing rendered these treasures accessible to scholars all over Europe. Editions of the several classics after 1465 indicate the directions which the currents of literary taste and enterprise were taking. Two editions of Cicero de Officiis appear in 1465 and 1466. Virgil, Valerius Maximus and Terence, as well as several works of Cicero, date probably anterior to 1470. Of the 1,297 books published in Italy during the next ten years, 234 were editions of ancient classical authors. Already Lactantius, Augustine's *City of God*, and other productions of Christian philosophers, had been multiplied by the press, but the stream of literature, as a whole, bore much of a classic hue.

All this was not without effect upon susceptible minds. At Rome, a society mainly of young men, who had been seized by the passion for classical literature, in imitation of their leaders, and under the influence of their enthusiasm, gave themselves Greek and Latin names. This was not much after the middle of the fifteenth century, while the fall of Constantinople was yet a story of fresh interest. The practice spread; ere long it extended beyond the Alps. The religion of antiquity threatened to become the rival of the Christian faith. The Pope, Paul II., took the alarm. The enthusiasts were arrested, imprisoned, consigned to torture, and one perished under it. But the next Pontiff relaxed this severity. The society was reconstituted. Steadily, and even rapidly, considering the circumstances of the age, the influence of this Italian revival of learning was felt over Europe. Scholasticism yielded its place to the intruder. The new age of the world felt the impress of heathen as well as Christian thinkers. So far as intellectual development was concerned, we might link the fifteenth century upon the age that followed Seneca and Plutarch.