THE CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION of SOUTH AFRICA

Proceedings and Selected Papers

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FIRST ISSUE:
Period——— 1927-29
Constitution of the Classical Association of South Africa.

1. **Name.** The name of the Association, which was constituted at a meeting held in Cape Town on the 26th of March, 1927, is "the Classical Association of South Africa."

2. **Objects.** The Association aims at furthering the development and advancing the well-being and prestige of classical studies in South Africa. In particular, it seeks, by means of publications, lectures, addresses and debates in educational centres: (a) to impress upon public opinion the claim of classical studies to an honourable position in the schemes of South African education; (b) to foster co-operation between the Schools and the Universities by initiating and encouraging open discussion of its scope and aims, and of the means of arousing and maintaining keenness of interest throughout school and university courses; (c) to encourage investigations and research, and to direct attention to new works and discoveries bearing upon the languages, literatures, histories and civilisations of Greece and Rome; (d) to promote friendly intercourse, interchange of views, and useful co-operation among students and lovers of the Classics throughout the Union.

3. **Meetings.** The Annual General Meeting of the Association, for electing office-bearers for the ensuing calendar year, for dealing with the financial statement and annual report of the Council, for addresses, lectures or debates, is held at such time and place as the Executive may decide.

4. **Control.** Except for the Annual General Meeting, open to all members, the direction of the affairs of the Association is vested in its Council and office-bearers.

5. **Council and Office-bearers.** The Council consists of a President, Vice-Presidents (nominated, one by each Local Branch), an Honorary Treasurer, two Honorary Secretaries, and in addition ordinary members, of whom one is nominated by each Local Branch. The Treasurer and the Secretaries form the Executive Committee.

6. **Publications.** The Publication Committee of the Association, consisting of the Treasurer, one Secretary, and two other members, has charge of all publishing, editing, and printing undertaken by the Association.

7. **Organisation.** The Association is constituted as a federation of independent Local Branches, each of which manages its own affairs, and arranges its own annual programme of work. Membership of any Local Branch carries with it membership of the Association, and also the right to participate in the activities of any other Local Branch.

8. **Members.** There are two grades of members, (a) senior members, and (b) junior or students.

9. **Fees.** The fee payable annually through the Treasurer or Secretary of each Local Branch to the Treasurer of the Association is 2s. 6d. for each senior, and 1s. 6d. for each junior member.

10. **Affiliation.** The Association is affiliated with the Classical Association of England. It seeks the closest possible connection with similar societies in other countries.
The Classical Association of South Africa.

PROCEEDINGS AND SELECTED PAPERS.

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FOREWORD.

In a country like South Africa, which is steadily progressing in resources and in wealth, and where men's minds are apt to be absorbed in the more material interests of life, any association which appeals to interests which are less practical and material, is not likely to have a large membership or to excite much public attention. Happily or unhappily, according to our point of view, the majority is not always right, and the amount of attention paid to any subject is not by any means a sure criterion of its value to the world. The study of the ancient languages, literatures and art of Greece and Italy has never had a prominent place in South Africa, and seems likely to have even less prominence in the future. Yet it would be difficult to conceive of any subjects more likely to be of infinite value to those who are not altogether absorbed in the more material cares of life. Classical study has now come to have four very different divisions, each of which has its strong appeal to a particular class of mind, and each of which, as it seems to me, has a strong claim also on the attention of a country such as our own South Africa. There is the scientific side of language study; and undoubtedly in South Africa there is a wide field in this direction, not only in the case of the native languages, where classical study may be of less obvious value, but in the case of the two official languages, where such study might do a good deal to remove our bilingual difficulties from the troubled sphere of politics and race into a calmer atmosphere. Then there is the side of literature, and here also, in a country which is aspiring righteously towards the creation of a literature of its own, there can be no more profitable study than the products of literatures which have in many directions given the direction and norm for all the literatures of the modern world. There is the side, too, of archaeology and art, and it need hardly be emphasised how great and enduring is the debt
the nations of the present day owe to Greek Art and Architecture and their Roman developments, and of how much value in a country where Art is beginning to have its rightful claims acknowledged the study of the ancient models may be. There is finally the side of History, and one can hardly stress too much the importance of the lessons of the past given by the history of Greece and Rome in enabling us to judge clearly, with freedom from party-feeling and racial prejudices, on questions involving the general interests of the commonweal.

The chief difficulty of the Association lies in the scattered nature of our population, and the difficulty of bringing together for discussion and mutual help the comparatively small number of those who are keenly interested in classical studies. In the centres of population, especially where there is a College or University, the matter is comparatively easy, but it is very difficult in more remote neighbourhoods. Yet a good deal has been done already, as will be seen by the Secretary’s report, to found local branches of the Association, and it is to be hoped that more will be done in the future. Those who are not within easy reach of a branch are still urged to become members and to attend when they can, and the present publication is intended to reach and to interest those who are so situated. The amount of matter which the Association can afford to publish obviously depends on its funds and the number of its members, and it is hoped that these may materially increase. It has been possible so far to select only a small number of papers for publication. The selection has been guided by the recommendation of the local branches, and it is hoped that the papers published will be of interest and profit to all the members.

Summary of the Secretarial Reports for 1927-28.

Early in 1927, owing to the inspiration afforded by the visit of Dr. C. C. Richards, of Oriel College, Oxford, a movement was set on foot with the object of founding a Classical Association in South Africa. This object was achieved at a meeting held on Saturday, March 26th, at the University of Cape Town, where representatives from Cape Town, Stellenbosch and Wellington met together and passed resolutions with a view to instituting a Classical Association, and framing a suitable constitution for the same. This constitution will be found on the cover of this issue. In accordance with the provisions of this constitution a Council was appointed, consisting of a President—the Hon. J. H. Hofmeyr; Vice-Presidents—the Presidents of Local Centres ex officio; an Honorary Treasurer—Prof. C. S. Edgar; two Honorary Secretaries—Miss Williams, of Johannesburg, and Dr. Rollo, of Cape Town; as members of the Publication Committee were appointed Prof. Edgar (ex officio), Dr. Rollo, Prof. Small, and Prof. Petrie. These office-bearers were re-elected for 1928 and again for 1929, with the exception of the Presidency, which is now filled by Prof. W. Ritchie. During 1927 four Local Centres were established—at Johannesburg, Cape Town, Wellington and Stellenbosch, and in 1928 new Centres were formed at Pretoria, Grahamstown and Bloemfontein. The majority of these Centres have arranged for courses of lectures each year on various subjects connected with the Classics, and the present publication contains papers selected from those sent in by the Local Centres. The following is a short summary of the proceedings of the Local Centres, together with the names and addresses of the Local Secretaries, to whom application should be made for membership.
JOHANNESBURG.

1927. The Johannesburg Branch was formed at a meeting held on the 21st of April, at the University. It was decided that the already existing Students' Classical Association should be merged in the Branch, and that at least seven meetings should be held each year, in which student members should be invited to take part. The inaugural lecture was delivered by the President, Prof. Haarhoff, on "Rome, Past and Present." The other lectures in the course of the year were:

"The Religious Basis of Plato's Philosophy," by Miss M. V. Williams.
An Address on "Roman Imperialism," by the Hon. J. H. Hofmeyr.
A Debate led by Messrs. Currey and Pilkington on "That Slavery was an Essential Condition of the Civilisation of Greece and Rome."

Two papers were also read by student members.

1928. Inaugural address on "Ancient Athens," by the President, Prof. Haarhoff.
"Classical Education in the Schools; Aims and Methods," by Miss McLarty.
"The Classics and Some Native Customs," by J. Lang, Esq.
"Roman Africa," papers by Messrs. Davidson and Jones.
"The Idea of Punishment in Greek Tragedy," by Mr. A. I. Wagner.
"A Sanskrit Drama," by the Hon. V. S. Sastri.

A very successful performance of "Aristophanes' Clouds" was also given.

Secretary: S. Davis, University of the Witwatersrand.

CAPE TOWN.

1927. The Cape Town Branch was formed at a meeting held on the 21st of April, at the University. The Committee agreed to arrange for at least one public and one ordinary meeting per term. The inaugural lecture was delivered by the President, Prof. Ritchie, on "Pompeii," to an interested audience of well over a hundred. The other lectures in the course of the year were:

"The Fourth Aeneid," by Mr. Bourne.
"The Laocoon Group," by Dr. Rollo.
A Lantern Lecture on the "Acropolis," by Prof. le Roux.
"Nominative and Accusative," by Mr. Russell.
"A Cretan Play," by Mr. Farrington.

"Plato's Doctrine of Reality," by the Hon. P. Duncan.
"Simon Leennius; a Chapter from the History of Humanism in Germany," by Prof. Prinz.
"Johann Joachim Winckelmann," by Dr. Bodmer.
"Oedipus in the French Classics," by Prof. Nauta.
"Theophrastus," by Mr. Wilson.

A very gratifying aspect of the work done by the Cape Town Branch is the great variety of subjects and the interest of the outside public, from whom a considerable number of the lecturers have been drawn.

Secretary: Mr. B. Farrington, University of Cape Town.

STELLENBOSCH.

1927. The Stellenbosch Branch was formed in August, and the inaugural address was delivered by Prof. van Braam on "Die Opvatting van Skuld in die Klassieke Tragedie." Two other papers were given in 1927, by Messrs. Thompson and Kotze, the former on "Stoicism," and the latter on "Die Romeinse Vrou."

"Hecate and Moonshine (Magic in the Ancient World)," by the Rev. P. J. Loseby.
"The Influence of Homer," by Mr. Notcutt.
"Pompeii," by Prof. van Braam.
"Miete van die Klassieke Oudheid," by Mr. Loubser.
"Greek Pottery," by Mr. Moller.
"The Religion of Euripides," by Mr. Pistorius.
"Greek Athletics," by Mr. Cronje.

At this Branch the students have taken a very large part, both in the administrative work of the Society and in giving lectures; it is to be hoped that other Centres will follow suit.

Secretary: B. Notcutt, Esq., University of Stellenbosch.

WELLINGTON.

1927. The Wellington Branch was formed in May, and in August a public lecture was given by Mr. Farrington, on "A Tour through Greece and Crete." A very interesting performance of the "Agamemnon" was also given by the students.

1928. At a business meeting of the members, it was decided that the Association should aim at holding one general meeting every month of the Academic year. In the course of the year six papers were read, on the following subjects:

"The Greek Epic and the Bards."
"The Iliad."
"The Odyssey."
"Life in the Homeric Age."
"The Romance of the Excavations."
"Homeric Criticism and the Question of Authorship."
"The Authoress of the Odyssey," by Mr. Farrington.

The performance of the "Agamemnon" was repeated, and was attended by a large and interested audience. At this Centre, too, the students have taken a large part in the proceedings, and were entirely responsible for the production of the "Agamemnon" under the able supervision of Miss Fremantle.

Secretary: Miss M. D. Boshoff, Huguenot University College, Wellington.

BLOEMFONTEIN.

A Local Centre was formed at Bloemfontein on the 18th of October, 1928. At the inaugural meeting Prof. Ross read a paper on "Homer and Prehistoric Aegean Art." The membership of this Branch is at present about 36, and there is every prospect of a successful year, with the support of the outside public.

Secretary: Prof. J. A. Ross, Grey University College, Bloemfontein.

PRETORIA.

A Local Centre has been formed at Pretoria, with a membership up to the present of about 26. Three lectures have so far been held:

"The Classics and Some Native Customs," by Mr. Lang.
"Travels in Greece and Sicily," by Prof. Boxwell.
"Seneca and English Literature," by Prof. Haarhoff.

Secretary: Mr. J. Findlay, T.U.C., Pretoria.

GRAHAMSTOWN.

There has been a Students' Classical Association in existence at Grahamstown for some time past, and it has now applied for recognition as a Local Centre of the Classical Association of South Africa.

In addition to these Centres, there are members of the Association in towns where as yet there is no Local Centre. It is hoped that the various Centres will try to get into touch with the teachers in the schools, by holding debates and discussions on subjects connected with the teaching of the Classics.

M. V. WILLIAMS,
Wm. ROLLO, Hon. Secs.
The Achievement of Roman Imperialism.

"The Classics," said Rudyard Kipling once at University College, Dundee, "though craftily hidden in the decent obscurity of dead tongues, are in essence somewhat more advanced than all the morning papers." And it is to the period of the Roman Empire, perhaps more than to any other period of Classical history, that we go back for the understanding of much in the political institutions of to-day; it is to this period that we may look, at least as confidently as to any other, for light on many of the problems of our modern world. Croce's dictum, "All history is contemporary history," has here a special measure of applicability. And perhaps I may be permitted to quote the comment of Professor Arnold Toynbee on the recent increase of popular interest in Ancient History: "We have felt, for a moment, the cold breath of the destroying angel, and the riddle of our destiny pre-occupies us as it has never done before. Any light on this riddle is welcome, and what better light can we look for than the recorded history of a civilisation not inferior to our own, which is known to us from beginning to end, while our own end is still shrouded in the darkness of the future."

When I speak of Roman Imperialism, it is the Imperialism of Augustus and his successors that I have in mind. In the days of the Roman Republic there was, of course, an Empire which extended over many lands, but it was in the nature of an accidental accretion which rested on no carefully thought-out basis, and the idea of Imperialism as such had not yet found a stable lodgment in men's minds. It is with Augustus that we first get the problems of Imperialism clearly conceived and deliberately tackled; to his work go back not only the form of organisation of the Roman Empire, but also the distinctive characteristics of Roman Imperialism. And so for the understanding of Roman Imperialism we must needs first ask ourselves, what manner of man was its founder.

I suppose one may fairly describe him as one of the least spectacular among the great ones of history. His name is not connected with any of the striking exploits in which our boyhood delighted. True, he doubled the extent of Rome's dominions, but he was the most unwarlike of conquerors. As a man he was one of those whom one would pass in the street without a second glance. About his appearance there was nothing to impress, except perhaps the piercing brilliancy of his eyes. Physically he was never strong—ill-health was a persistent foe, and he came to be a confirmed valetudinarian. His personality might excite respect, it would hardly kindle enthusiasm. As an orator he lacked the facility which commands the applause of listening Senates. Pains-taking, correct and precise—so much so that he used on occasion to write out even the speeches which he made to his wife—he lacked the fire and the enthusiasm which makes the great speaker live upon the lips of men. His writings were essentially ordinary and commonplace, and lacking in distinction. Important as the "Monumentum Ancyranum" is for the historical student, yet, if we knew not that Augustus had written it, we would see in it the work of a second-rate mind. Ordinary and undistinguished—these are indeed the words which best describe the impression he would have made on one who met him casually—he was essentially a plain man. And yet he is one of the few men in history who may rightly be described as makers of an epoch. He determined the course of men's affairs for centuries in advance, he made the world his debtor by giving peace and order where there had all but been chaos before, he built up institutions which showed a tenacity of life to which few parallels can be found, and by giving to ancient civilisation the unity and strength which enabled it to hold its own for four centuries against the threatening forces of dissolution, he conferred a signal service.
on all succeeding generations. His career is a magnificent illustration of the truth that, after all, the world may be moved far less by the intellectual brilliance of what Lord Birkenhead has described as first-class brains, than by unobtrusive qualities of character and personality.

Such a man, then, was the founder of Roman Imperialism. Next we must ask ourselves, what were the main features of the problems to which his Imperialism sought to provide the solution. It is only in the light of the answer to that question that we can appreciate the achievement of Roman Imperialism.

The problem with which Augustus was faced was that of what Mommsen has described as the bankruptcy—political, moral, and economic—of the antecedent Greco-Roman civilisation, and that bankruptcy had culminated in twenty years of something very much like anarchy. Of this breakdown, the root cause was to be found in the unsuitability of the city-state constitution of the Roman Republic, which Roman conservatism failed to adopt to changing circumstances, to the task of governing a large state with extensive overseas dominions. Such a constitution could provide neither the necessary continuity of policy nor the machinery which the state’s new diplomatic and military problems required. The result was that, while in theory the democratic constitution survived, in practice the state came to be administered by an oligarchic group of privileged families, with the Senate as its executive organ of Government. This, in turn, had two consequences. The one was that when once the contradiction between the theory of the constitution, with its basis of popular sovereignty and the fact of senatorial rule, was brought home to men’s minds, there commenced the age of the demagogue, who rose to prominence by exploiting the powers of the theoretically sovereign people, which was now the motley mob of a cosmopolitan city, and this brought with it successive revolts and a century of civil war. The second was that, in consequence of the often demonstrated incapacity of an oligarchy to govern an Empire, as shown by its failure to control its representatives abroad, the conquered territories, conceived as estates of the Roman people awaiting exploitation, were subjected to merciless oppression and misgovernment. And so we find—in Rome, turbulence, mob-rule, civil war, and the breakdown of the executive Government; and in the provinces, tyranny, economic retrogression, and the smouldering resentment of oppressed peoples. For these diseases of the State there was but one remedy. Such an Empire at that period of history could be governed only by an Emperor. The republic must be replaced by a monarchy. But if we recall how Rome’s solid conservatism had prevented the peaceful adaptation of its constitution to the needs of its Imperial growth, we shall appreciate the magnitude of the difficulties in the way of so complete a constitutional revolution, and understand that the Ides of March followed all too naturally on Caesar’s attempt to leap lightly over the difficulties. And where Caesar, with his inspiring personality, his oratorical power, his intellectual dominance, his record of mighty conquests for the greater glory of Rome, the prestige of his generalship and the devotion of his obedient armies had failed, where Caesar had failed, who then could succeed? Surely not his eighteen-year-old nephew and heir, who, even in the days of his maturity, was to seem so essentially a commonplace, ordinary man.

And yet Augustus did succeed, and that not least because he grasped so fully the lesson of Caesar’s death. Caesar had flouted Roman conservatism—he had sought to build up for himself a monarchical position outside the constitution, to create a monarchy which was alien to Roman tradition—he had gone too fast and too far, and he had paid the price. His precipitancy is the more readily to be pardoned, if we remember that when he came to power he had no long expectation of life, and that his past career had accustomed him to the cutting of Gordian knots with the sword. But Augustus was still a young man—he could afford to “let time work,” and he was blessed with the supreme virtue of
patience. While he realised, as Caesar had done, that the one cure for the ills of Rome and of the world was the vesting of monarchical authority in one man, he was content to secure that authority by gradually building up for himself within the constitution a position which would develop so as to make him monarch in fact, though not in name. He began his work by restoring the old Republican constitution, which had been suspended in the days of the Triumvirate, but he grafted on to it a shoot which would in time change its character, and transform it into a monarchy. To put it differently, he set out to create monarchy, but as a means to that end he maintained the Republican forms, and setting to work under cover of that disguise he disarmed the hostility which the progression towards monarchy might otherwise have aroused. To Senate and people he gave back, in theory at least, the powers they had exercised before; the Senate in particular he exalted in influence and authority. His own position he secured by the concentration in himself of various executive powers (selected with almost uncanny skill), powers which had previously been held by separate officials, and for each of which, taken by itself, he could quote some Republican precedent, but which, taken together, placed him in a position of dominance, while at the same time lending themselves to extension and amplification, so as to make his control more effective and complete. And so, though he might claim to have restored the Republic and strengthened the Senate, he had without creating the office of Emperor, succeeded in grafting monarchy on to the Republican constitution.

He had not created an office, nor established a throne—he had merely secured the conferment upon himself of a number of powers which virtually enabled him to exercise an Emperor's authority. Time he knew was on his side, as it always is on the side of a permanent full-time official in his relations with a body of men who only give part of their time and attention to the work of Government, and the composition of which is subject to frequent change.

Such were the main features of the work of Augustus on the constitutional side. It has been described as opportunistic, as illogical, even as a constitutional imposture and a fraud. But it did not fail in its immediate purpose. It conciliated traditional loyalties, it smoothed ruffled susceptibilities, it disarmed active opposition, and it provided a peaceful transition from Republic to Empire. Yet, though it solved the immediate constitutional problems, it did not solve the ultimate problem. Along the lines of the Augustan method that problem could not be solved in the lifetime of a single man. The Augustan settlement postulated a succession of Emperors like Augustus. Had that postulate been fulfilled, all would have been well—the transition to an acknowledged monarchy would have been consummated in the course of a few generations. It was not fulfilled, and, as a result, the inconsistencies, the violated logic, the conflict between theory and fact asserted themselves. Their effect was most evident in the frequent struggles for succession to the Imperial position. Augustus had not created the office of Emperor. There was nothing that could be handed down from father to son. Monarchy had not become an integral part of the constitution. Yet it was his aim to found a dynasty. It was a contradiction that wreaked its vengeance in never-ending intrigues and a succession of civil wars. And to this extent the half measures of Augustus were an important element in sapping the vitality of the Empire.

And so while Augustus did great work for Rome and the world, not only in solving the immediate constitutional problem but also in other respects, while, for instance, he put an end to the administrative chaos and set about the task of creating a real public service with an enthusiasm and an efficiency which were characteristic of his remarkable practical ability, while he brought peace and order out of confusion and threatened dissolution, while he restored Hope to a world from which it seemed to have fled for all time, yet the greatness of his work must not blind us to its incompleteness nor to the essential instability of the Roman
Empire as it was when he left it. Great was the achievement of his Imperialism, but greater still was the achievement remaining to be registered by those who followed after.

Let me illustrate my point by summarising the main features of the Roman Empire as it was when Augustus died. It covered the whole of the Mediterranean area, and in addition a considerable slice of Western and Central Europe. It extended from the Atlantic to the mountains of Armenia, from the Sahara to the Rhine. It was, indeed, a large portion of the earth’s surface to administer from a single centre in those days of inadequate facilities for transport and communication. In this area there were many grades of civilisation, many languages, many different racial elements—it might, indeed, seem to be a jumble of potentially discordant elements rather than a homogeneous whole. In many of the Provinces the Roman rulers were either hated as recent conquerors, or were tainted with the memory of the bad times of Republican rule. This Empire, with its long land frontier, was policed and protected by an army which, by modern standards, seems entirely inadequate—some 800,000 men in all. In India alone, after generations of settled rule, and with a frontier mainly maritime, almost as large an army is to-day maintained. It was governed in terms of a constitution which, as a form of government, defies classification, so full was it of inconsistencies and contradictions, and which seemed to make civil wars inevitable, so uncertain did it leave the question of the succession to the position which Augustus had built up for himself. And with all this it suffered from that supreme impediment to its economic welfare, the institution of slavery at the very basis of its structure. Much has been written about the causes of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. It is, perhaps, a more pertinent question, how came it that an Empire, in appearance so essentially unstable, endured so long?

Therein lies the major achievement of Roman Imperialism, and of that achievement I want to indicate two aspects, accounting very largely for Rome’s success as an Imperial power. First there is the manner in which the practical capacity of the Roman people expressed itself in the evolution of a sound administrative system. The Imperial system may have been a jumble of inconsistencies and incongruities. Yet, if we study the working of it, we are reminded of Pope’s couplet:

For forms of Government let men contest, Whate’er is best administered, is best.

The Romans were born administrators. The large measure of efficiency with which they administered their inadequate Republican Constitution for so long is proof sufficient of their administrative genius. Then in the last century of the Republic, politics seemed to go to their heads, and politics can ruin any system of administration. Fortunately it was but an interlude. Augustus deprived the old political issues of most of their significance, and was able to attract the best intellects to the task of administration, which was so congenial to the Roman mind. The result was that the Roman genius for administration was given the chance to express itself, and in the next two centuries it triumphed magnificently over those difficulties of distance and heterogeneity to which I have referred, and gave the Roman Empire good and efficient government of a standard unknown before in the countries which composed it. It is, perhaps, almost superfluous to quote Gibbon’s famous pronouncement: “If a man were called to fix the period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would, without hesitation name that which elapses from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus.” And when every attempt has been made to whittle down the effect of these words, it remains true that if we take the Roman world as a whole, and strike a balance between the age of the Antonines and a time very close to our own, it is not easy to say that in the present century those parts of the world, taken as a whole, have been happier, more prosperous, and better governed than they were 1,800 years ago. As at
once the earnest and the condition of this good government Rome gave the world peace. Professor Haverheld once drew attention to the fact that in all the history of this world we can only point to two longish periods of general peace. The one is in the century before 1914—the other is the period of the Roman Empire. The seemingly inadequate Imperial army substituted settled order for anarchy, and gave to the pas Romana a meaning which makes it one of the significant phases of history. Behind the shadow of this peace Rome gave the world civilisation, transmitting Mediterranean culture to the peoples she governed, and laying truly and well the foundations of their future development. And on peace and civilisation there followed prosperity, diligently promoted by an administration which was inspired by high standards of conduct, and directed from Rome along the lines of a liberal and progressive policy. The Roman Empire succeeded because it demonstrated so conclusively to those who fell within its scope, how tremendously worth while it was to be partakers in the name and the glory of Rome. And this was due in large measure to the personal and sympathetic supervision of the system of provincial administration by a succession of practical-minded rulers, who worked in the spirit of the declaration of one of the greatest of them, the Emperor Hadrian, "that the ruler exists for the state, not the state for the ruler."

There is one aspect of the administrative system of the Roman Empire which deserves special mention. Under the Republic and during the better days of the Empire Rome never sought to apply cast-iron administrative formulas to the people whom she brought under her rule, nor to send hordes of officials to administer their affairs. It became a cardinal administrative principle, one which Augustus heartily endorsed, that the local communities should have the largest possible measure of administrative freedom. Where Rome found city-states in existence in conquered territories, she encouraged them to look after their own affairs; in the newer provinces, to which the city-state system had not previously penetrated, it was effectively encouraged. The Roman Empire was, in fact, for a long period in large measure a federation of municipalities. And that did much to assure the contentment of the subject peoples, and to promote their economic welfare and the welfare of the Empire itself. The completeness and success of Rome's system of local self-government is one of the outstanding features of the achievement of Roman Imperialism. And this success reflects itself in the prosperity of the provincial towns, which was of a depth and a reality which it is difficult indeed for us to-day to realise, and which, just because to the average citizen the successful administration of the affairs of his local community ordinarily means much more than does the efficiency of the system of central government, was an element of great significance in uniting the heterogeneous elements which composed the Empire to that supreme authority which made all this prosperity possible.

I pass on now to the other aspect of the achievement of Roman Imperialism of which I wish to speak, and that is the character and spirit which that Imperialism came to assume. And here I think mainly of the way in which the relation of conqueror and conquered came to be replaced by the bond of partnership in a common task. For us in these days that is the most significant feature of Roman Imperialism. Many of us, I suppose, grew up to think of Imperialism as implying subjection, and subordination, and exploitation, as necessitating inevitably the restriction of liberty, as aiming at the acquisition of an ever-increasing place in the sun by one nation at the expense of the individuality and the rights and the freedom of others. The inadequacy of this conception is admirably demonstrated by the history of the Roman Empire, and the demonstration is the more complete when we view the Empire in the light of other chapters of ancient history. The stark brutality of Assyrian Imperialism, the specious selfishness of the imperialism of Athens, serve to show up in stronger relief the essential liberalism of Roman Imperial policy.
This policy had its roots in Republican days. A careful study of the Imperialism of the first phase of Roman expansion reveals two things. The first is, that, notwithstanding the still current conception that Rome was a merciless conquering power with the consuming desire to make the world Roman, her policy was, in fact, essentially non-aggressive, and much of her expansion took place despite, not because of, her settled policy. And the second is that Rome’s aim in relation to the conquered peoples was to regard them not as subjects but as allies. The defeated Italians were described as socii. She sought, not to bring them within the ambit of her administration, but to make with them a series of offensive-defensive alliances, for the most part on terms of equality, except that Rome controlled their foreign policies, and thus became in fact, though not in theory, the predominant partner. It is true that these did not continue to be the dominant notes of the Imperialism of the Roman Republic—the strong wine of conquest, after a time, went to the head—but Augustus restored Roman Imperialism to its original sanity, and inspired it with the spirit of Liberalism which, thanks to the essential practicality of the Roman character, never degenerated into sentimentalism. And his successors, even those whom the genius of Tacitus has branded for all time as tyrants and despots in their dealings with Rome itself, were never false to that spirit in their administration of the Provinces.

What, then, were the chief features of the spirit of the Roman Imperialism of the Empire? First and most fundamental, I would mention the idea of equality. The Empire came to be conceived as a world-state in which no one national element was to have dominion over any other. It was an ideal which Alexander the Great had adumbrated, and Rome realised. It was, indeed, realised so fully that at the last the world became Roman, and Rome became Provincial. I ask your leave to express the result in language which I used in a paper published some years back: “When Caracalla granted full rights of citizenship to the whole Roman world, the distinction between Roman and Provincial had in practice disappeared. Forty years after the death of Augustus the Empire was committed to the regency of two men, the Spaniard Seneca and the Gaul Burrus. Less than fifty years later, the first non-Roman, the Spaniard Trajan ascended the throne; in the third century the world was for less than twenty-five years ruled by men of Italian family, and from the murder of Gallienus in 268 A.D. until the end of the Empire two hundred years later, save for mere creatures of a day, the Emperors were all non-Roman. What is true of the Emperors is true also of the other officials. In 68 A.D. a Gallic chief was governor of a Gallic province, and an Egyptian Jew, who had previously been governor of Judaea, and chief of staff of important Roman expeditionary forces, was governor of Egypt. At the end of the first century one-eighth of the Senators were from the Provinces, and the number was being doubled every forty years. In the later Empire men of Italian birth play no part. In the history of literature much the same is true. The first century A.D. has been called the Spanish period of Roman literature, the second the African, while in the period of the later Empire we seek almost in vain for a Roman name in literary annals. Claudian the Egyptian, Ausonius, Rutilius, and Sidonius the Gauls, Augustine the African, Prudentius the Spaniard—these are the men to whom the torch of Virgil and Cicero has descended. And at the last even the city of Rome lost her importance. She ceased to be the capital. Ammianus in the fourth century describes Rome as a dreary old provincial town on the Tiber; her Senate, which once had ruled the world, had become a mere Town Council, and she no longer had any history of her own save an architectural history—so completely had she been merged in her Empire. Italy, too, had become a mere province like Africa or Gaul. It is as though the capital of the British Empire had been moved to Ottawa or Calcutta, a succession of Indians had been appointed Imperial Prime Ministers, and a French-speaking Canadian, or a Dutch-speaking South African, held the office of Gover-
nor-Generel of Great Britain, with his seat of Government, not in London, but in Cardiff or Aberdeen. And so at the last the Empire came to be Roman only in the accident of its history, with Rome but as the symbol of its unity—if Empire necessarily means the dominion of race over race, the Roman Empire had ceased to be.” Well might the Gaul Rutilius say that Rome had “made one city what was once a world,” and the Egyptian Claudian write words such as these:

“Allone she gathers to her bosom those
Whom late she conquered; citizens, not foes,
She calls them now. Their conqueror they proclaim
Mother, not mistress. So her general name
Enfellowships mankind, makes fast with bands
Of love devout the far-off daughter lands,
That, wheresoe’er we range, ’tis all one race—
Debtor to her, by whose peace-making grace
No place is strange, but everywhere a home—
One world-wide family all akin with Home.”

It may then fittingly be stated, in the language of Dr. Ernest Barker, that the Roman genius had translated into an organised system of life the conception of the unity of humanity to which the Greek genius had risen in its latter days. The practical idealism of Alexander the Great, who shattered in so resounding a fashion the old dichotomy of Greek and barbarian, and the humanitarian philosophy of Stoic philosophers had met together, and found united expression in the Roman world-state.

I have spoken of the idea of equality as a feature of the spirit of Roman Imperialism. Next I would mention self-government. It is true that the Roman Empire did not develop, as the British Empire has done, into a partnership of self-governing Dominions. But that was merely so because in ancient times the unit was not the nation, but the city-state and, in less civilised lands, the tribe. It was the city-state that for anyone who had grown up in the traditions of an ancient civilisation best expressed the idea of freedom. It was the city-state which, as I have indicated, Rome deliberately sought to maintain and develop in those lands where it had already been established, and to introduce and encourage where the organisation was still on a tribal basis. “The Republic,” wrote Professor Haverfield, “began unconsciously, and the Empire consciously continued a system of extraordinary local freedom. There has never been an Empire which allowed to its subjects such local freedom as did Rome.” And the result was, as we have already seen, that the self-governing local communities were enabled to make a great contribution to the prosperity of the Empire.

And, lastly, in this connection I would ask you to notice Rome’s sympathy with national aspirations. Did the Roman Empire crush national feeling? Did the world become Roman because of a deliberate policy of denationalisation? The answer must be an emphatic negative. So far from crushing nationalism, Rome encouraged ideals of culture and government other than her own, and made possible the growth of national feeling where it had not existed before, so that in several cases it became the basis of new nationalities. In the East, Rome found that Greek ideals had preceded her. The Hellenisation of Asia was already far advanced. Rome did not seek to check that process — on the contrary, she encouraged it and extended its scope. The civilisation of Asia was continued on Greek lines. Rome won the East, not for herself, but for Greece. In the West the position was different. There Rome had to deal with disorganised tribes, to which neither Greek nor any other culture had penetrated. It was inevitable that she should have introduced her own institutions. But she did not force them upon unwilling peoples. She never sought to make her subjects go any further than they themselves wished. And at the last there emerged under her auspices new Gallic and Spanish nationalities, which became the basis of the nation-states from which the salvation of European civilisation was to come. And so equality, self-government, and sympathy with national aspirations were the dominant notes of Roman Imperialism. What wonder, then, if Rome—I quote Haverfield again — “amalgamated its national dominions to itself; if it missed some unessentials of Empire, it won solid loyalty. Individuals might revolt against
an Emperor, no province ever revolved against Rome.

From this account of the achievement of Roman Imperialism I would pass on to the attempt to suggest something of its meaning for us in these days. But before I do that it seems only right that I should point out that in three important respects the task of the Roman was very much simpler than the task of the modern Imperialist. In the first place Nationalism as a political force had, one might almost say, not yet been discovered in Roman times. The East, when Rome conquered it, was denationalised as a result of Alexander's conquests. In the West national feeling only came into being in the last stages of the Roman Empire. In the one case where Roman Imperialism had to deal with a strong sense of nationality—the case of the Jews—the result was a signal failure. But in that case the situation was complicated by the not unnatural difficulty which a people like the Romans felt in appreciating the Jewish religious point of view. Rome might have succeeded in dealing with the Jews as a nation. All her traditions incapacitated her for dealing with a church-state.

Next, Rome was fortunate in the matter of language. In modern times language problems have been amongst the most difficult that have presented themselves to Imperial powers, for language and the sense of nationality go closely together. For Rome there was little trouble with problems of this kind. For the most part the conquered peoples were eager to learn Latin, and there was no need for Rome to force her language upon them.

And last, there is the matter of colour prejudice. Among peoples of the stock to which we belong colour antipathy has come to be almost a law of nature. In Roman times it was non-existent. Lord Cromer has demonstrated that in those days it was no bar to social intercourse nor to inter-marriage, and has made it clear that such antipathy is a plant of comparatively recent growth. Rome therefore had the great good luck not to be called upon to deal with those many thorny problems which spring from this source, and beset with so many pitfalls the path of the modern Imperialist. In this, then, as in the other two matters which I have mentioned, Rome was undoubtedly fortunate; and yet, when all allowances are made, we may still contemplate with admiring wonder the greatness of her imperial achievement and the liberalism of the spirit which characterised her work.

And so I come back to the question, what is the meaning of all this in these twentieth century days for us who have part and lot in that British Empire, which is most naturally to be compared with the Roman Empire of which I have been speaking? There are but three points on which time permits me to remark, and on those briefly. The Roman Empire of Republican days was brought very close to chaos and disruption because of the fixity and unadaptability of the city-state constitution. It derived new vitality and an amazing faculty for resistance from the reforms whereby Augustus so skilfully gave to that constitution, not indeed logical perfection, but certainly the power to grow and change and adapt itself to meet the demands which its task made upon it. To this the British Empire provided a significant parallel. The first British Empire was brought to an unhappy close because the British constitution was an insular constitution which, while adequate enough for domestic requirements, was so interpreted as to make no provision for the needs and aspirations of men of similar traditions and outlook in the growing British colonies beyond the sea. But the second British Empire has prospered and flourished, and grown into the fine flower of what Zimmer has called the third British Empire, just because of its wonderful capacity for adjustment so as to satisfy the needs of changing times, and march with the growth of freedom and responsibility in men's minds. In both cases logical fixity led to failure; in both cases an almost opportunistic adaptability yielded brilliant results. In the records of the Roman Empire there is a great message of hope and encouragement for those who desire prosperity and continuance for the British, and an effec-
tive answer to those who find in its constitutional loopholes and inconsistencies the portents of an early doom.

Next, I would suggest that in the achievement of Roman Imperialism we have a magnificent vindication of the value of that principle of co-operation to which it gave embodiment. Deep and real was man's indebtedness to the Roman Empire. To the individual it brought all the spiritual and material advantages which expressed themselves in the phrase *Civis Romanus Sum*; to the communities within its orbit it gave peace where there had been centuries of jangling discord, and all the prosperity which that gift made possible; for the generations of men that were to succeed it, it laid the firm foundations of their civilisation, and by stemming for several centuries the rising tide of barbarism it kept aflame the torch of civilisation until those who were to take it up were ready to receive it. Great indeed in the light of that achievement, and worthy to be desired after is the ideal of co-operation, which is fundamental to Imperialism.

And once again the British Empire provides significant parallels. For the individuals in the lands that compose it, it provides those solid advantages of British citizenship to which our Prime Minister recently drew attention; for the constituent nation-states it ensures security and prosperity, and an enhancement of status and of dignity far above that which each severally would enjoy if it trod the path of isolation; while to the world as a whole it is an impressive bulwark of peace, and so a safeguard to our modern civilisation against those threats of ruin which a war on a similar scale to the last one implied. But, and this is the point which I would chiefly emphasise, other Empires also have sought to give expression to that ideal of co-operation, which the facts that I have mentioned prove to be of such outstanding value to the human race. Not all have succeeded. The success of those of which I have been speaking springs from the realisation that unity, that co-operation is not enough. In the words of Lord Balfour, "Law without loyalty cannot strengthen the bonds of Empire, nor can we co-operate in handcuffs." The co-operation must be a willing co-operation, a hearty co-operation, a co-operation which is broad-based in freedom and self-determination. It is not without good reason that the reconciliation of freedom and unity has been described as the fundamental problem of Empire.

And that brings me to my third point. The greatest, the most significant achievement of Roman Imperialism was its demonstration of the truth that the ideal of Imperial unity is not incompatible with the ideal of liberty. Forgetful of the lessons of history, many have in the intervening centuries denied that Imperialism and freedom can ever be reconciled. It has been left to our own day and generation to repeat this achievement of Rome, to harmonise the two conceptions of the essential equality of status of the nations of the British Commonwealth, and their no less essential unity in cordial association and common allegiance to the Crown. And to us as South Africans it is of special interest that, as has recently been pointed out, it was a South African, Cecil Rhodes, who in the old Cape Parliament first foreshadowed the principles of this harmonisation, when he looked forward to the day when each of what were then called colonies would be an independent republic, while all should have the privileges of the tie with the Empire. We must, of course, not forget that there is a difference between the Roman and the British methods of reconciling these two principles—the diversity of the respective contexts was sufficient to necessitate that difference. The British Empire has been described as a League of Nations; the Roman was rather a league of Municipalities. The British Commonwealth is an association, a partnership of sister nations; the Romans created a world-state on a basis of equality, with no suggestion of superiority of a dominant race. Yet the principles which have been reconciled are the same; and in both cases that reconciliation represents a supreme achievement of the human spirit. It remains to say one thing more. I said that unity and co-operation in themselves are not enough. They must be
based on freedom. But so also freedom is not enough. "If freedom," to quote Mr. Amery's telling phrase, "is our birthright, unity is the moral law by which that freedom is directed." The free acceptance of and compliance with the obligations of co-operation is ultimately the highest freedom. Rome did not merely free the citizens of the Roman Empire from the sense of subjection. She caused them to think of the Empire in terms of a great co-operative enterprise, and made of that co-operation a partnership of the spirit. And so with us, the freedom which we have secured points compellingly to the task that awaits us of strengthening the bonds of co-operation which unite us to our sister-nations, and to that end of emphasizing at all times the concept of association no less than the concept of freedom in the historic Balfour formula of 1926. "A century," I quote Mr. Amery again, "a century of building up freedom has been completed; a century of effective co-operation is now before us."

And here I must bring these remarks on the achievement of Roman Imperialism to a close. It is, perhaps, not without significance that in the volume recently issued on "The Legacy of Rome," "the conception of Empire" is given pride of place in the presentation of that legacy. In some ways the Roman conception of Empire is the most impressive creation of the Roman genius; to its evolution the finest elements in the Roman intellect made their contribution; and the spell which it cast over men's minds gave to it an amazing vitality. The very barbarians who brought the Empire to its fall sought to give continued expression to its constitutive ideas. From the Cyclopean blocks which endured after the massive structure had been shattered, men built the fabric of Western civilization as we find it today. The survival in men's minds of the vision of Rome's Imperial greatness made it possible for Charlemagne to revive the idea of the Roman Empire, and to create an institution which endured until the nineteenth century. And in Catholicism we have what Dean Inge has described as "the last volume in the history of the Roman Empire." But greater even and more abiding, and of richer significance for us in these days, is what I have described as the main achievement of Roman Imperialism, its success in conjoining the two things till then so incompatible, imperium et libertas, and the impressive evidence which it has thereby given the modern world, that it is the encouragement of the sentiment of freedom which is, after all, the best basis of co-operation and of unity.

The Religious Basis of Plato's Philosophy.

We have all been accustomed, on the authority of our teachers, to regard Plato as the "master of those who think," and, however unfamiliar we may be with philosophers and philosophical doctrines, we all realize in some fashion that philosophy and science and theology, too, owe to him a very great debt. The debt is so great that it can hardly be calculated: so many of his phrases and ideas have become a part of our everyday mental equipment, while poetry and religion are permeated with his thoughts. Yet when a man sets himself to the task of describing Plato's system as a whole, a curious uncertainty comes over him. There is so much difference of opinion among his interpreters as to what his ultimate system was. Prof. Burnet\(^1\) has recently said that the time has not yet come for an attempt to expound the Platonic philosophy as a whole; many riddles have still to be read, many gaps in the evidence to be filled up. Under these circumstances it would be impossible in a brief paper to try to deal with Plato in any comprehensive way. My aim here is much simpler. I wish to indicate one of the paths by which a modern reader may seek to approach the study of Plato.

To follow this avenue of approach, it will be essential to have a clear understanding of the terms we are going to use, viz., Religion, Philosophy, and, in a minor degree, Science. Many scholars have noted with surprise that the Greek language, in spite of all its wealth of vocabulary, possessed no word for Religion. On enquiry, too, one finds that the Greeks had no precise equivalent for Science in the modern sense. Yet we know that both Religion and Science flourished among them. A parallel case might be found in a phenomenon of the economic world, where there arises, as time goes on, a greater and greater division of labour, a more and more extensive differentiation of crafts. In the primitive village the blacksmith is plumber and cutler, as well as smith, the carpenter is also the undertaker: whereas in the complex modern town each is distinct. So, in the life of a language, there comes, with the lapse of ages, a greater differentiation in the usage of words, and at length the need is felt for a new symbol to express something that has nevertheless always existed. It would seem, therefore, that in the ancient Greek world, during the period that we are considering, one word had to do duty for Religion, Philosophy, and Science, and that word was Philosophia, "Love of Wisdom." The gossip Diogenes Laertius tells us that the first man to use the word Philosophy was Pythagoras, and that he coined it in a spirit of great humility, believing that Wisdom itself could never come within man’s reach, only the "Love of Wisdom," for Wisdom was the possession of God alone. We know what Philosophy was for Pythagoras. It consisted chiefly of what we should call Religion. It was a "way of life," a way of life that involved a ceaseless purification of the soul, the soul being entombed in the body, and seeking release from the wheel of birth. For the rest, Pythagorean philosophy was exactly what we call Science, more particularly mathematical, musical, and medical science. At a later date Aristotle applied the term "philosopher" to the predecessors, as well as to the successors, of Pythagoras, and made "philosophy" describe the activities of the Ionians, who were just scientists, with no religion at all, as well as those of the Eleatics, who devoted themselves more to what we should call pure philosophy. Hence it was that the word "philosophy" in the time of Plato was a word of complex meaning, embracing more than one branch of wisdom. To Plato the word meant all the three things we have spoken of—it was religion, philosophy, and science in one. It is doubtful whether he ever separated in his mind Religion and Philosophy. That he did, to some extent, think of Science apart is plain, not only from the famous passage in the "Republic," where Mathematics is assigned to a lower section of the line than Dialectic, but also from the "Timaeus," where the scientific portion of the work is called a "probable account," the product of a lower form of Intelligence than that which creates Philosophy. Yet Science must have come to her own at last, even with Plato, for out of the cloud of legend that surrounds his teaching in the Academy and the "Unwritten Thoughts" of his later life, at least this gleam of truth has penetrated to us, that his last years were concentrated on the study of mathematics.

But what is Religion, and what is Philosophy, and what is Science? Where is the dividing-line? Most of us would agree that Religion is that by which we live—a set of concepts or beliefs which supply the motive-force for life and conduct. Galloway has defined it thus: "Religion is man’s faith in a power beyond himself, whereby he seeks to satisfy emotional needs and gain stability of life, and which he expresses in acts of worship and service." Religion is of personal value to the believer. But Philosophy, according to our view, does not involve all this for its possessor; it is not a matter of life and death. It springs rather from the instinct of curiosity,
being a serious endeavour to understand the world and man, and their interrelation-
ship, for the sole sake of understand-
ing, and with the aid of reason
alone. In its general attitude towards
its material Philosophy resembles
Science: it differs from Science in its
subject-matter, and in its method of
approaching that subject-matter. Where-
as Science deals with a particular portion
of the world, that portion varying from
science to science, Philosophy treats of
the world as a whole, so far as it may be
understood by man; it seeks to see in the
universe a single co-ordinated system of
things, and there is no region of the
universe that it does not question. It
investigates the principles of Science,
whereas Science takes its subject-matter
for granted, and regards it always as an
object, external to the mind, not, as
Philosophy, in relation to the mind.

My suggestion, therefore, is that the
work of Plato should be considered in
these three aspects—as Religion, as
Philosophy, as Science; and in the pre-
sent paper we shall be concerned with
the first two only. If we can see clearly
for ourselves what part of his doctrine is
definitely a religious datum, what part
philosophical, even although we may not
succeed any more than others in finding
in Plato one coherent system, we shall at
least understand better how he came to
hold his particular views.

No reader can study Plato without
receiving the impression that he was an
intensely religious man, and when I
speak here of "Plato," I mean the
writer of the dialogues, without entering
at all into the famous controversy as to
whether in these dialogues he was
expressing the views of Socrates or of
himself. One historian says that it is a
question that is interesting only to anti-
quarians. Without taking as extreme
a position as that, I think one can main-
tain that the chief thing is to have the
philosophy, whether it was that of
Socrates or of Plato. When, therefore,
I speak of Platonic doctrine I shall mean
the doctrine of the Platonic dialogues,
for although nearly all the views I shall
mention were put into the mouth of
Socrates, I have no doubt that Plato held
them as much, or more than, his master.

Now, both Socrates and Plato probably
came under Pythagorean influence, i.e.,
a deeply religious influence, which had
its roots in Orphic and Dionysiac beliefs.
The first and most important belief for
such a man would be that his soul (mean-
ing by "soul" in this context the con-
scious personality) was his most precious
possession. This soul, as the Orphics
taught, was of divine origin; so Plato,
in the "Timaeus," says: "It is a heav-
ently, not an earthly plant." One of
the passages in which this belief is
uttered most impressively is that final
portion of the "Phaedo," where Crito
has asked Socrates: "But how would
you like to be buried?" "Just as you
please," said Socrates, "if you can but
catch me, and I do not escape you."
And at the same time, gently laughing,
and addressing himself to us: "I cannot
persuade Crito," said he, "my friends,
that I am that Socrates who now disputes
with you, and orders every part of the
discourse; he thinks that I am he whom
he will shortly behold dead, and asks
how I am to be buried. And all that
long discourse which some time since I
address to you, saying that after I had
drank the poison I should no longer
remain with you, but should depart to
certain joys of the Blessed, this I seem
to have declared to him in vain." 2

That this recognition of the soul as an
entity apart from the body, and the
assumption that it does not perish with
the body, were acts of religious faith, is
proved by all the words and deeds of
Socrates on that last day of his life.
When his friends doubted his belief in
the immortality of the soul, he had
recourse to three different metaphysical
arguments to prove it, none of which
succeeded in producing complete convic-
tion in his hearers. It was proved,
if at all, by the superb confidence of
the believer himself. With his latest
breath, when the greater part of his body
was already numbed by the poison, he
uncovered his face, and said: "Crito,
we owe a cock to Asclepius; pay this
debt for me, and do not forget it." 3

1 Plato, "Timaeus," 90A.
2 Plato, "Phaedo," 115C-D.
3 "Ibidem," 118A.
last offering this to the God of Healing, who had cured him of Life's fitful fever, and brought him to true Health in the next world.

The divine nature of the soul, and its immortality, then, were articles of religious faith with Socrates, and with Plato. Whether their belief was in a personal or an impersonal immortality, it is difficult to say. If the doctrine of transmigration of souls, which occurs in so many of his myths, is to be taken seriously, it would seem that the soul retains a certain reminiscence of its previous personality, or, at least, retains the influences of its previous incarnation, when it comes to the choice of a new life, after its intervening period of reward or punishment. But such continuity cannot, of course, be regarded as equivalent to the soul's immortality as held by many of the Christian churches. Sometimes, too, one comes across a passage which leads one to feel that the ultimate destiny of the soul is its union with the great impersonal soul of the All. This would imply that the soul does not persist in the sense of separate "conscious personality." In the "Theaetetus," for instance, we read:

"But it is not possible that evils should cease to be—since by reason of necessity there must always be something contrary to the good—neither can they have their seat among the gods, but of necessity they haunt mortal nature and this region of ours. Wherefore our aim should be to escape hence to that other world with all speed. And the way of escape is by becoming like God in so far as we may. And the becoming like is in becoming just and holy by taking thought—God is never in any wise unjust, but most perfectly just, and there is nothing more like to him than one of us who should make himself just to the limit of man's power."

This leads us on to the question whether Plato's religion included a belief in God. We have noticed the use of the word "God" in the above quotation, and there are many others, where it occurs in the plural, as well as in the singular. A doubt has been expressed as to whether Plato does not always use "God" in a popular, mythical sense, without believing the dogma literally. In the "Timaeus," for instance, where the world is described as being created by God, we know beyond dispute that a literal creation was not meant, that Plato was imparting philosophical truth in a myth or story, and hence no literal belief in God can be deduced from that dialogue. But there is abundant evidence that Socrates, and Plato too, believed in some good power at work in the world. Socrates, at the end of the "Apology," affirmed that "there is no evil for a good man, either living or dead, and his concerns are never neglected by the gods."

There is, too, a famous passage in the "Phaedo," where Socrates is represented as relating his early experiences in the study of the World and Man. He tells how he had at first been greatly attracted to physical science, and had heard someone reading from a book of Anaxagoras a new doctrine, which was, that Mind was the disposer and cause of all things. Socrates, in great joy, thought that he had found the pearl of great price which he had been seeking, namely, some means of explaining that everything in the universe was ordered for the best; for, if Mind disposed everything, surely it followed that it had all been done for the best, and he expected that Anaxagoras, in describing the causes and nature of physical things, would at the same time prove that it was best for them to be so. In short, he wanted from Anaxagoras a demonstration that the world had been constituted as it was for a good end, and was under the control of a beneficent power. How great was his disappointment when, on reading the book, he found that Anaxagoras, like a true scientist, talked chiefly of air and ether and other material causes, assigning to Mind quite a secondary importance, as if it were a material force merely, possessed of no moral character. From that time, says Socrates, he gave

2 Plato, "Apology," 41D.
3 Plato, "Phaedo," 97C-E.
up the pursuit of physical science. Who can doubt that this desire for a good first cause, which was to make the world seem desirable and purposeful, was the expression of a religious emotion, a religious instinct, upon which Socrates wished his science to be based? If this view be correct, his wish was that Reason should be set to work upon a major premise that was provided by Religion. Some may say that this passage refers to Socrates alone, without involving Plato himself. But the same kind of thought recurs frequently in other places, where Socrates is not the speaker. For instance, in the "Sophist" (248E) the Eleatic stranger is made to exclaim: "By Zeus! What is this? Are we going to believe out of hand that the Highest Being has in fact no motion or life or soul or intelligence—a thing that neither lives nor thinks, but remains for ever fixed in solemn, holy, unconscious vacuity?" And Theaetetus answers: "That would indeed be a terrible admission, Stranger!" In his religious moods, then, Plato really speaks as if he believed in some spiritual and personal being, a something not ourselves that makes for righteousness, and, from the point of view of Religion, I do not think we can go far wrong in calling that something "God."

We find, therefore, that the Platonic discourses make constant reference to certain convictions of this kind, which the speakers are quite unable to prove, but to which the hearers are always exhorted to be loyal. Some of the most important of these convictions concern the soul: that the human soul is of divine origin, and that it has an eternal destiny, is immortal, and further, that the good of the soul must take precedence of every other good. This doctrine involves, of course, a distinct dualism, owing to the sharp antithesis that is made between the things of the soul and the things of the body, and to the recognition of the evil that is inherent in material things, as opposed to the good will of God. Another great conviction is that the order of the Universe has been disposed by a perfectly wise and righteous God, so that no evil can befall a good man in this world or in the next. The corollary to this conviction is the belief that a man's future happiness or misery depends precisely on the manner of his life in this present world.

I wish now to pass on to what I consider to be more distinctly the philosophy of Plato, that is, not the faith by which he lived so much as the positions he arrived at in his effort to understand the world, and to attain to knowledge of it and of man. As already stated, one cannot see that Plato himself drew any such distinction, all for him was philosophy. But we shall be able to relate and to evaluate the various dogmas more intelligently if we draw some such distinction for ourselves, if, following Kant, we regard the great Ideas of God, Soul, Cosmos, and the like, as postulates of the spiritual life, which require no demonstration, and are incapable alike of proof or refutation, while we consider the philosophical propositions to be postulates required for the advancement of knowledge.

There is every reason to think that Plato's religious postulates influenced to some extent his philosophical doctrine and his philosophical language. The dualism which we noticed in his separation of the soul from the body, and in the opposition of the interests of the one to those of the other, is repeated, as it were, in his consideration of the world as an object for philosophy. The world of Sense is rigorously separated from the world of Thought or Ideas, and this great division pervades all the strictly philosophical dialogues, from the "Phaedo" onwards. Even in the late "Timaeus" it is repeated: "First there is that which is eternally and has no becoming, and again that which comes to be and never is, the first is comprehensible with the aid of reason, ever changeless, the other is opined by opinion with the aid of reasonless sensation, becoming and perishing, never truly existent." The connection in thought between this view, which is part of Plato's Theory of Knowledge, and the other religious postulate of an unseen world, where the

1 See "Phaedo," 79C-D.
2 Plato, "Timaeus," 27D-28A.
soul spends the intervals between its incarnations, is indicated in many places, very strikingly in "Meno," where Socrates calls upon a slave who has had no instruction in geometry, to answer his questions regarding a square described upon the sand. The slave is led, purely through questions, to admit that the square on the diagonal will be double the original square. Socrates concludes that the knowledge thus elicited from the slave must have, in a sense, been his always, although he had never had instruction. True opinions regarding geometry have been aroused within him while he was, as it were, asleep and unconscious. His recovery of them from within himself has been a recollecting, and the recollection must have been of True Opinions that were learned or imparted in some previous existence. The soul's knowledge is thus independent of the human body and independent of death.

This fancy is developed even more in the poetical myth of the "Phaedrus," in which the souls of men are likened to a charioteer with two-winged steeds, one noble and the other unruly, whose aim it is to be carried round in the revolution of the upper heaven in the company of the blessed gods. Many souls fail to keep to the path by reason of the plunging of the unruly steed, or the ill-driving of the charioteer, but those who follow the course of the gods behold far above, in the plain of Truth, Justice Itself, Temperance Itself, Knowledge Itself, the Forms. Further, "the soul who has never beheld this vision cannot pass into a human form, for it is a necessary condition of a man that he should apprehend according to that which is called a Form (Eidos), which, proceeding from a variety of perceptions, is by reasoning combined into a unity. And this is nothing more nor less than a recollection of those things which in time past our soul beheld when it travelled with a god, and, looking high above what we now call real, lifted up its head into the region of Eternal Essence."

No one can fail to detect the ecstatic note in this description of the Forms of Ideas, for which the name of Plato is perhaps chiefly famed. The picture of the Forms as eternal essences seen on the plain of Truth has been rightly interpreted by Prof. J. A. Stewart as an experience common to the artist or the seer. The artist and the seer have the power of isolating an object and contemplating it by concentration of interest. Psychologically that is known as a dream-state, in which mental images take the place of sense-presentations, a state of reverie. Such reverie comes to the artist in his moments of inspiration; it comes to the onlooker, who sees the product of art, and enters into its spirit; it comes, above all, to the seer, the prophet, and the religious visionary, who by ascetic practices attain to contemplation of Divine Being. In that reference of Plato to Recollection, there is something of the experience of the artist and the religious devotee. All artists and people of ecstatic temperament have had times when the sight of a beautiful object, or the mere sound of words, will give them that sure, irrepressible conviction that they are seeing or hearing again something known long ago in the past. Prof. Stewart calls this feeling Transcendental Recollection. Some such experience as this Plato had undoubtedly had, and it is significant that one of the early expositions of the doctrine of Forms is given in the language of aesthetic and religious experience. In all probability he first arrived at the doctrine by this path, and this side of the doctrine, as Prof. Stewart has pointed out, was ever the most influential aspect with his followers. But there was another side, the side that had the greatest influence on subsequent philosophy, namely, the theory of Forms as a basis for the progress of science. Their inevitability in science may be realised by merely reading again one sentence from the "Phaedrus" myth: "The soul that has never beheld the heavenly vision can never pass into human form, for a human being must inevitably apprehend according to that

1 Plato, "Meno," 82C, seq.
3 See Stewart's "Plato's Doctrine of Ideas," p. 135, seq.
which is called a Form, which, proceeding from a variety of perceptions, is by reasoning combined into a unity.” There is obviously a logical process here, a unity is obtained by reason working upon different sense-presentations. Our own traditional psychology would have said that general concepts are formed by a mental abstraction of the qualities common to groups of similar objects. Plato had not all these technical terms at his command, and, though he makes it plain that a logical process is being considered, he prefers to indicate that process in language that was, strictly speaking, applicable to the artist or the seer. Various terms have been suggested by moderns as equivalents for the Forms. Lotze described the Form as “the Validity of Truth as such,” others made it represent “A Law of Nature.” Prof. Taylor says that the Form is the “signification or intension of a class-name, as distinguished from its extension.” The term “concept” can only be used with the understanding that the Form is not an act or process, but the thing which is known, and that it exists quite independently of the mind which knows it. Socrates, we are told by Aristotle, had gone a long way towards the formulation of this doctrine by his investigation of the meaning of moral terms. He insisted on exact definitions of “universals,” only, according to Aristotle, he had never reached the point of regarding the universal terms as distinct from the particulars to which it applied. The Pythagoreans may have regarded the subject-matter of mathematics as distinct from the numbers and figures of everyday sense impressions; Aristotle, at all events, believes that their theory that things “resemble numbers” had a profound influence on the doctrine of Ideas. Plato’s advance, according to him, was to extend the word Form (already employed probably by Socrates) to include both mathematical terms and also the ethical, moral and aesthetic terms, such as Socrates had investigated, and ultimately all terms that are used in predication of any sort. Further, Plato made an attempt, at least, to connect the two worlds of Sense and Thought, and to explain the kind of interaction that goes on between them. To understand this interaction, it would be well to repeat some of the actual language used by Plato in his “Phaedo” and “Republic” to describe the doctrine of Forms. First, we have the affirmation that there are two different worlds. “Besides pluralities of phenomena, transient, mutable, and imperfect, which become and are objects of opinion, there are unities, eternal, immutable, perfect, which really exist, and are objects of knowledge.” These are called Forms or Ideas. Secondly, “wherever a plurality of particulars are called by the same name, there is a corresponding Form or Idea.” Thirdly, “it is the presence, immanence or communion of this Form or Idea which makes particular participants what they are.” All members of the class “black,” for instance, are black in virtue of their participation in the Form of Blackness. Sometimes the relation of the particular to the Form is expressed by the simile of “imitation” or “reflexion,” the Form is the pattern, of which the sensible thing is an image. Both “imitation” and “participation” are, of course, imaginary, employed in default of technical language adequate to explain a logical idea. In the “Phaedo” it is made clear that the Forms have to be suggested to the thinker through the medium of the senses. A perfectly straight line is never seen in actual fact, but the sight of various approximations to straightness in the sensible objects around suggest a standard of perfection of “straightness.” The Form is discovered by Thought, but it is Sense-experience that furnishes the data for thought. Hence the world of sense is in the end as essential to philosophy as the world of thought, although Plato, because of his religious bias, no doubt, denies all reality to the former, for the Form itself, to be known, must have a reflexion in some sensible object, just as

1 Aristotle, “Metaphysics,” A, 6, 987b, seq.
2 “Phaedo,” 100B, etc.
3 “Republic,” 506A.
4 “Phaedo,” 100C; “Republic,” 476A.
every sensible object is a complex, as it were, of imperfect reflections of various forms. This theory roused much criticism both within and without the school of Plato, and the unsatisfactoriness of the explanation of the interaction between Forms and Sensibles was never overcome. But one can realise that the doctrine must have given a great impetus to Logic, which, some time before, had received a very crushing blow from the activities of Zeno the Eleatic and Gorgias and the Cynics, who denied the possibility of making any universal proposition at all, except that of Identity. One could say that A is A, but not that A is B. Their difficulty arose from their inability to distinguish between the verb "to be" as a copula, and as denoting existence. Hence both Socrates and Plato made a great contribution to the progress of logic by affirming in this striking way the possibility of predication and reasoning.

When the doctrine of Ideas had thus been employed to solve the problem of predication, it was expanded to include a scheme of Universal Science. We hear, in the "Republic," that at the head of all the ideas there stands the Idea or Form of the Good. There is, in fact, a hierarchy of Forms, the Forms that compose the concepts of the special sciences being dependent on Forms of a more and more ultimate and general character, until finally every other Form is shown to be a manifestation of the chief Form, the Good. Prof. Taylor has suggested that Plato was attempting to devise for Science as a whole some such scheme as has been developed so successfully by modern mathematicians, in reducing the postulates of mathematics to a few ultimate, self-evident principles of Logic. This kind of intellectual activity was named by Plato Dialectic, and it proceeds by the assumption of hypotheses. First, a provisional hypothesis is made; it is tested, revised, perhaps, reconstructed, and leads finally, as a stepping-stone, to something more ultimate, something that is not a hypothesis, something whose truth is not challenged, which is self-evident. When some such principle is attained, the dialectician may descend again to his hypothesis, which is now confirmed, as being a deduction from his first principle. The first principle of all is the Good. This scheme of Dialectic remained for Plato, at best, a vision, a hope which the philosopher might set before himself. In the dialogues he never made an attempt to work it out in its completeness. But it has, nevertheless, remained the ideal for scientific method, as many scholars have pointed out. The postulates of Science must be subjected to an increasingly rigorous scrutiny, if Science is to go forward. False assumptions have to be discarded, inconsistencies eliminated, no step should be omitted which would aid in the realisation of Science as a self-consistent body of truth. Such an end may never be quite attained by human beings, but the whole interest of the philosophic life is concentrated in the attempt. To express the vast magnitude of the philosopher's task, the late Dr. Adam aptly quoted the following lines of a modern poet:

"Nay, come up hither........
Unto the furthest flood-brim look with me;
Then reach on with thy thought till it be drowned—
Miles and miles distant though the last line be,
And tho' thy soul sail leagues and leagues beyond,
Still leagues beyond those leagues there is more sea." ¹

In describing the Form of the Good, which is the goal of every human effort, in which Truth and Beauty coincide, though it is far beyond both in glory and power, Plato admits that he can explain it only by way of a parable, for

its real nature will never be adequately known. So he likens the Good to the Sun, which in the visible world is the cause both of growth and of vision, though in itself it is neither of these. Just as the Sun, by giving light, enables objects to be seen, and enables the faculty of sight to see, so the Truth, imparted by the Good, enables the Forms to be known, and gives the knower the power of knowing them. It is obvious that the Good here has not merely a moral significance, it is the general end or purpose of the cosmic scheme. It is only in virtue of serving some end or purpose that either a Form or a sensible object can possess any reality. There has been a disposition among certain interpreters of Plato to equate the Idea of Good with God, but as Professors Burnet and Taylor have often said, it is impossible to equate a Form with God, who, if He does exist for Plato, is not a form, but a living soul. In the myth of the "Timaeus," in fact, God, the creator, is represented as fashioning the world after the pattern of the Form or Idea, showing that the Idea is prior in thought to God. If, then, it is impossible to equate God and the Good, interpreters say that Plato has failed to explain satisfactorily the relation between the two. One may be compelled to make this admission, understanding at the same time that they could not be related satisfactorily. The one conception, God, is a datum of the religious consciousness, the other, the Form of Good, is a postulate, rather of Plato's philosophy, of his endeavour to understand the world.

But, as we have said all along, Plato saw no cause to sunder Religion from Philosophy, and perhaps it would be truer to say that it was his religious instinct which led him to Philosophy, and that his Philosophy in turn influenced his religion. For there can be no doubt whatever that even in his most religious moments it is the intellectual side of experience that counts with him most. When in the "Republic" (513E) he is comparing education to a process whereby the eye of the Soul is turned round so that it may behold the Good, he says that all the other virtues of the soul, such as Temperance, Courage, and the like, resemble the virtues of the body, Wisdom alone "seems to be something more divine, and to unite men with the gods, and with the life of the gods." Plato's saints have to be trained in the school of Philosophy. Only the man who has subjected himself to stern mental labours can see the vision, and go down into the cave and help the poor, blind prisoners who sit there in the darkness. In the "Republic," when the ideal city of the philosopher's dream has been duly described and discussed, Glaucow asks Socrates whether the wise man will ever take part in politics. Socrates answers: "Yes, he will, but only in his own city, not in his native land, except by some divine chance." "I understand," replied Glaucow, "you mean he will do so in the city which we have just now organised in our talk, the city of our speculations—for I do not believe that it is to be found anywhere on earth." "Perhaps," says Socrates, "a pattern of it is laid up in heaven for him who wishes to behold it, and, beholding it, to found a city in himself. And it is of no moment whether it exists anywhere, either now or hereafter. For the wise man will follow the laws of this city, and of no other." One could hardly conceive of a more perfect fusion of Religion and Philosophy than this. The philosopher founds the ideal city within himself. While he lives, he is already a citizen of heaven, for the Kingdom of Heaven is within him.

All the Platonic doctrines thus far considered are those which are familiar to the ordinary reader. It would be irrelevant to our present purpose to try to

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1 "Republic," 508A, etc.
2 Plato, "Timaeus," 30D, etc.
"Republic," 592A-B.
penetrate to his later, more abstruse work. But we have gone far enough to realise that Plato was, above all, a seeker, one who was trying seriously to reach the goal of truth. It seems to me that he started out on his quest with certain firm religious convictions which no theorising could shake, and he called in the aid of Reason to help him to interpret the material work in the light of those religious convictions. It was a noble experiment, and the experimental nature of his work, perhaps, explains to us why we find no carefully-balanced, self-contained scheme of philosophy, such as is found in the works of later philosophers—of Hegel, for instance, or of Bradley; but I think we can understand the mental history of such a man, and, using this thought as a clue, we may, perhaps, be able to thread our way with greater understanding through the wonderful maze of the Platonic dialogues.

The Platonic Doctrine of Reality.

I feel that an apology is needed for offering an address under such an ambitious title. To some it will suggest a dull and forbidding disquisition on metaphysics—and they will have stayed at home. To others it may hold out hopes of hearing something new on one of the most fascinating questions in the history of philosophic thought—and they will be disappointed. All that I mean to attempt in this paper is to express in very general terms and as far as possible in simple language what was the characteristic contribution of the Platonic dialogues to the development of philosophy. I shall not touch upon the difficult question of how much of what we find in the dialogues was Socrates and how much was Plato. That is a question which we cannot now hope to solve. The dialogues themselves throw no light upon it. We look in vain for any dramatic unity in the pictures of Socrates as he appears in the various dialogues, still less for any systematic unfolding of philosophic doctrine. On the contrary, in the Parmenides—one of the later dialogues—we find him represented as a young man at the beginning of his philosophic career, sitting at the feet of the elders and listening to a criticism of what is known as the theory of ideas or forms. In the other dialogues we find this theory expounded as the most characteristic feature of his teaching—and even in the Phaedo, which records the last day of his life—without any trace of the criticism which in the Parmenides he is represented as being driven to accept. This criticism is fatal to the so-called theory as a logical system. It came after, and not before, the doctrines which are given to us in the dialogues as the characteristic teaching of Socrates had been made to assume definite and systematic form. That we should find Socrates represented—as he is in the Parmenides—as listening to this criticism at the opening of his career is a warning to us not to try to build up out of the Socratic dialogues of Plato any consistent pictures of Socrates as he lived and taught. It is not to be found there. Plato combined in himself in the supreme degree gifts which are rarely found together in the soul of man. He was a great dramatic artist, and a profound thinker. He could approach truth and beauty with the inspired ecstasy of the poet, which he says the world calls madness, and also along the longer but safer path of logical and mathematical analysis. It is clear that he looked upon Socrates as his master and spiritual father, but what he inherited from him was the spirit of search and not a system of doctrine. The Socrates whom he pre-
sents to us expressly disclaims the possession of any system of knowledge. If he was wiser than other men—as the God had said through the oracle of Delphi—it was because he knew that he did not know, while they thought they knew but did not. His mission therefore was that of criticism, of testing what passed for knowledge, by the light of principles which could not be shaken by analysis, and were founded in reason itself. But the criticism was not intended to be merely destructive. Its object was to clear away from the mind of his hearer an overburden of beliefs and opinions, which had been accepted without real inquiry, and were held without reasonable ground, and so to enable him to advance along the path of inquiry in the light of his own reason. He was fond of describing himself as the midwife—bringing to fruition the faculties of the soul of his hearer itself, but not presenting it with some ready-made product of his mind or of some other person's mind. Truth for him was not something to be grasped in concrete form and handed out in portions to disciples. It was a search, a way, and his gift to men who were willing to receive it was to get them on the way, to train them in discerning the true from the false, the real from the illusion, and to prevent them from resting satisfied in any halfway house, as if they had attained the end. This, as we know also from other sources, was the Socratic method. Speaking of that philosophy which aims at understanding that which is the ultimate truth and reality, that of which all that moves and is around us is the more or less illusive manifestation, he says that it is not to be expressed in words, and therefore no treatise upon it has ever been written by him nor ever will be. It passes, he says, from one soul to another after long companionship in a common search, like light kindled from a leaping flame. So in the second Epistle he says: "I have never written a word on these matters; there is no treatise of Plato's nor will there be, what are now called his belong to Socrates made beautiful and young." That is his description of the dialogues, and his warning against
attempts to find in them an exposition of a philosophic doctrine. What we do get from them is a marking out of the way along which the soul of man must go in its search for what is true (or real), and beautiful and good, an indication of the way, and the spirit of the search. The attainment is a union of the soul with the object of its desire, not to be described in reasoned propositions, because it is not a satisfaction of the reason alone but of the whole being, but only to be indicated if at all in the veiled language of myth and allegory.

The introduction of the myth, which we find in several of the more important dialogues, is not an accident. It is devised for the express purpose of avoiding the positive statement of a truth which cannot be stated in terms of reasoned deduction. Thus at the close of the argument in the Phaedo we find it established as an abstract proposition that the idea of the soul does not admit of the idea of death. But the personal immortality of the individual soul, the nature of the life beyond the grave, and its relation to our life on earth are beyond the scope of any analytical reasoning. At this point Socrates is made to pass into a myth, depicting in allegorical form the other world and the mysteries of judgment and retribution. He warns his hearers that these tales are not to be taken as true by any reasonable man, but that they are a semblance of the truth, which is not susceptible of other methods of statement.

I have thought it necessary to give this amount of time to a description of the nature and method of Plato's writings, because they are essentially related to the message which he intended to convey. They are an expression of his conviction that philosophy or the search for truth and reality is not an exercise of the intellect alone, but something in which all the faculties of the soul must join—the reason with its demand for analysis and consistent statement, the love of beauty the aspiration after goodness and unity. They must all be joined in the search, and be satisfied in the attainment.

We describe the object of the search as truth, or as the apprehension of the real, the finding of a meaning or purpose satisfying to our nature in our own life, with its conflicting passions and impulses, and in the infinitely changing world outside us as it is disclosed to our perceptions. The demand for a meaning, a rational and moral explanation of the Universe, may be said to have begun with the Greeks. They appear on the stage of the world's history with a new outlook—that of enquiry. Like children, they would insist on asking "why?" and "what?", and they would not be satisfied with the answers which the older religions and civilisations had to offer. They would not be content with any answer which did not stand the test of the critical reason, and satisfy their sense of beauty and order. Out of these questionings and attempts at answers have grown the science and philosophy of to-day. What was, perhaps, really new was not so much the spirit of inquiry as the assumption underlying it—the assumption that the universe in which we are is an ordered whole, that in all its variety there is a unity, and that that principle of order and unity is something akin to and capable of being grasped by the reason which is in us. This assumption, and the inquiry to which it gives rise, open a new chapter in the history of man. Bound up with them is the new conception of the value of the individual—or, in other words, of personality. Under the older civilisations society was held together by rigid bonds of convention resting on the immovable sanctions of traditional religion. With the Greek came the new idea of the citizen, and of the state as a community of free men. In the older philosophies and religions of Asia the supreme good for the soul of man was the extinction of action, of desire, and of existence, by absorption in an irrational nothingness. For the Greek, life meant action and knowledge, and the end and goal of his philosophy was that the soul should find itself completely realised in the ordered system of a rational universe. Science, ethics, philosophy had begun. As a recent writer says: "The idea of personality implies—the notion of an
intelligible universe, common to all, both to the reason of the scientist and that of the sage; the end and aim of which are one and the same" (Massis, "Defence of the West," page 154).

The earliest attempts of the Greeks at finding a rational explanation of the universe were crude. They took the form—very naturally—of looking for some primal substance out of which everything that is has come to be—water (as Thales said) or air, or a blending of a few primary elements. The search for a purely material principle of explanation, however, was soon abandoned. Life and motion appealed to the Greek mind as the dominating features of existence, and it sought in them for a key to the structure of the world of things. Modern scientific enquiry, divorcing itself from philosophy, carried away by its marvelous triumphs of observation and invention, has taken the other course. It has sought to build up out of a supposed original inorganic matter a process of evolution into motion, life, and mind. But science, in its latest developments, seems to be going back upon its original assumption of a primal substance of elements. Below and within matter it is finding motion, and is feeling after organised motion. The early Greek enquirers had no such resources as we have for the observation and analysis of the actual phenomena and processes of nature. Their theories of the origin of the world and explanations of the processes going on around them—of the movements of the heavenly bodies, of growth and decay, of life and death, were largely—as they have been called—inspired guesses. But they were founded on the principle that the universe in which we live is an ordered whole, and that the order which is its ultimate explanation is intelligible to the mind of man. No doubt they often saw simplicity where we have since found complexity, they looked too often for an exact reflection in nature of the passions and faculties which they found in themselves. They were familiar only with a small portion of our earth's surface, and knew nothing of the vast stellar spaces which the telescope and the spectroscope, and the calculations of the mathematician have opened before us. But they made the claim which, once made, man will never abandon—that in his mind is the measure of these vast spaces and these complicated processes, that they are the outward and visible manifestations of an underlying order, to the understanding of which we may in some degree, perhaps in full, hope to attain. That claim remains as the fundamental assumption of philosophy, and—even if it sometimes would disown it—of science.

Among the early Greek enquirers we find in Heracleitus an advance of far-reaching importance. Others had sought for the explanation of things in the motions of material elements, their attractions and separations, their love and strife, the varying combinations of heat and cold, of moist and dry. In Heracleitus we find for the first time the announcement of the Logos, the word or reason as the creating and governing principle of things. Heracleitus, even to those who had access to his writings, was known as "the obscure," but to us, who have nothing but disjointed fragments by which to interpret him, the obscurity is almost impenetrable. I mention him, however, because, however imperfect may be our knowledge of the system which he taught, he was and was recognised as the forerunner of the teaching of Socrates and Plato, or at any rate of Plato. The doctrine by which he is most generally known both in ancient times and now, is that which resolves all existence into an endless and universal flow of change. There is no moment of arrest in which a thing can be said to be; before it can be said to be it is already different—you cannot step into the same river twice or even once. There is no sameness or permanence anywhere. On this doctrine of the unreality of all sensible appearances—that is, of all the world around us which we perceive through our senses—Aristotle tells us that Plato, under the influences of Socrates, built up his theory of ideas or ideal forms. Unfortunately, as I have said, it is impossible, from the scattered fragments attributed to Heracleitus, to construct with any certainty a coherent
explanation of the world as he saw it. But the two main features of his teaching, the principle of Reason materialised as Fire, as the basic element of all existence, and the doctrine of endless and universal change or motion underlying all appearances in the world of sense made an ineffaceable impression on all subsequent thinkers, and was one of the great revolutionary moments in the history of human thought.

Socrates as a young man was deeply interested in the scientific thought of his day. His devotion to investigating the causes of the ordinary phenomena of nature made him the butt of the comic poets of the day. Aristophanes, in his play "The Clouds," introduces him swung aloft in a basket in order to study the sun, and as teaching his associates a burlesque parody of what we should now call natural science. A certain latitude of exaggeration must, of course, be allowed to the caricaturist. But his picture must also be near enough to life to enable the crowd to recognise and laugh at the original. There is no trace in the Socratic dialogues of Plato of any interest of Socrates in what we should now call scientific observation. On the contrary, he is made to disclaim any interest in the works of nature, and to concern himself only with man. The same thing is true to a large extent also of Plato. He was a great mathematician, and made the study of mathematics an indispensable part in the training of the truly educated man. But there is hardly any indication in his dialogues, or in the traditions of his teaching, of any interest in the investigation of the phenomena of nature. Indeed, he discourages actual observation of the heavenly bodies as a means of understanding astronomy. It is all the more significant, therefore, to find Socrates, at the beginning of his philosophic career, engrossed in the observation and investigation of nature. The famous passage in the Phaedo, in which Socrates is made to describe his abandonment of the scientific mind, and his awakening to the true principles by which any seeker after truth and reality must guide his course, has more than a merely biographical interest. It marks a definite turning-point in philosophy, comparable in its way to the new direction given to thought by Kant. It was meant to record the abandonment by Socrates—or more probably by Plato himself—of the search for ultimate truth or reality in the investigation of material causes. The new voyage of discovery was to be by way of enquiry into the nature of thought, an analysis of those propositions by which we apprehend, and express in rational form the perceptions which we receive through the senses, of the order which we find in them, and which is their real and true nature and being. Plato in that passage makes Socrates relate how, when his efforts at finding any satisfying reason in things by seeking for the immediate causes of particular events seemed to lead him nowhere but to hopeless confusion, he heard one day someone reading from a treatise of Anaxagoras, who declared that Mind was the ordering and controlling force in the universe of things. This came to him as a flash of revelation, and he hurried off to get the book, eager to follow this new light. But a bitter disillusionment awaited him. If Mind is the ruling and ordering principle, he had expected to find the phenomena of Nature demonstrated not by linking them up with other phenomena, which are called their causes, but on grounds of reason, by showing how it is best for them to be, or, in other words, how they must be so as to fit into a rationally ordered scheme of the universe. For example, the question whether the earth is flat or round, whether it is the centre of the universe or not (these were questions which were engaging the attention of the scientific men of that day) must be settled not by considering movements and densities of air, and aether, and so on, but by showing which solution is the better—i.e., more consonant with the good purpose of a reasonable mind. The other so-called causes are only concomitant events—necessarily associated, perhaps, with the event to be explained, but not in themselves capable of giving a real explanation of it.
I have dealt with this episode at some length, because it seems to me to illustrate very clearly Plato’s attitude to the methods of scientific observation and research, to which we owe so much in knowledge of the world in which we live. He has often been criticised for his disparagement of what we call the scientific method, and the criticism gains point by the example of his great pupil Aristotle. But in such criticisms we are apt to lose the true historical perspective. We are apt to forget what scientific methods and knowledge were, before the world-embracing genius of Aristotle brought system and logic to its aid. The problem for Plato was to demonstrate the possibility of knowledge, the capacity of our reason for finding principles of permanent validity, in a world of ceaseless change and motion, and on that to demonstrate the existence of the moral and spiritual life of man, based on principles of permanent values governing the endless play and conflict of particular desires and emotions, which look only to the needs and pleasures of the moment. His aims were, to use our modern phraseology, ethical and metaphysical, rather than scientific. He looked to mathematics as the medium through which the world of nature could be seen as created by and moving in harmony with the eternal principles of order and beauty which reason apprehends. His mathematical teaching, and his demonstration of the supreme principle which he calls the Good were of set purpose never committed by him to writing, even in the form of notes for his lectures. The scattered fragments of notes of these lectures taken by Aristotle and other hearers are all that remains to us, and they convey no adequate conception of what that teaching was. In any case, we shall do well to regard the two lines of speech, laid down by Plato and Aristotle respectively, the one of (as we should now call it) philosophical or metaphysical reasoning, the other of that of the observation and analysis of particular phenomena, as mutually complementary rather than as antagonistic. It is only when Science refuses to examine the assumptions on which her reasonings are based, that she can regard the metaphysician with hostility or contempt, or otherwise than as a fellow-worker in the same field.

In the passage from the Phaedo which I have mentioned, Socrates is represented as saying that the new direction which his inquiries took, after his disappointment with the work of Anaxagoras, was to study things not in themselves, but in the propositions which we make about them. The study of propositions or of judgments, by which alone things can be rationally known to us, brings him at once to the contrast of the thing as an object of knowledge with the succession of constantly changing impressions of it which come to us through the senses. Knowledge implies the universal term, which is valid of an infinite number of particular instances, or valid of an individual which is the object or field of a ceaseless process of change. When, for example, we use the word “man” we apply it to an indefinite number of particular instances, each of which lays claim to the word, although each is different from all the others. When we use it of an individual we seem to be applying it to something which we perceive through the senses. But these give us nothing but succession of constantly varying sense impressions—colours, touch sensations, sounds. What is the unity underlying them which justify us in combining them in one object which we call man? Or, again, we call particular things or acts beautiful or just although they vary indefinitely amongst each other in degree of beauty or justice, or may sometimes cease to be beautiful or just. Must there not, then, be some norm or standard of beauty and justice and the like, existing independently of the endlessly coming and going particular instances of beauty and justice, and so on? If there is to be knowledge at all, must it not be of objects which have real existence, and permanent characteristics, not mere indistinguishable moments in an infinite flux of sense perceptions, which cannot be said to be or not to be, or to be anything? To know we must apprehend the real thing which gives meaning to these fleeting appearances, by showing them as
related in an ordered series to an inner unity. It is that meaning or unity which is the real man, the real beauty, the real justice, not the individual man or the particular things or acts. The question for knowledge therefore is, "what is this?", and the answer must be not a mere enumeration of particular instances in which it occurs, but a reasoned account of what it is in itself. This "thing in itself"—by which is meant the thing in its real and perfect nature—we have come to know, by a mistranslation of the Greek, as the "idea" or "form," and we consequently speak of this line of thought as the Platonic theory of ideas. But if we use these terms we must clear our minds of two misconceptions about them. One is that the word "idea" in this usage has any such significance as the ordinary English word, and the other that Plato ever held or taught that there is laid up in heaven, or some other inaccessible place, a replica of the things of this world called "ideas." Such misconceptions have existed both in ancient and modern times. It is possible that some such theories grew out of the Platonic dialogues, or were current when they were written, but the main principle of the criticisms of them which we find from Aristotle downwards is to be found in the dialogues themselves, as e.g. in the Parmenides and others of the later dialogues. We are told by Aristotle that one of the great contributions to philosophy made by Socrates was the discovery of definition, but that he concerned himself only with matters of human life and conduct, and not with theories about the nature of things. In this I think we may find a key to the doctrine of what we must call, for want of a better word, "ideas" which we find in the Socratic dialogues of Plato. Socrates discovered or was the first to lay stress on definition. That is to say, he gave a new direction to philosophic enquiry by looking for an explanation of things or concepts not in the material conditions attending their appearance, but in the principle which constituted their real nature. This to him was the "real" thing, permanent and abiding amid all the changing manifestations in which it is apprehended by our sense perceptions. This reality is not seen by us or made manifest by any of our senses. They deal only with the outward appearances, changing with every moment, in the perpetual flow up and down, this way and that, to which, as we have seen, Heraclitus had reduced the universe of material things. It is to the mind only, through the eye of reason, that the real world is disclosed. But, having found this new key to the meaning of the world, Socrates was not concerned to enquire how this reality, which is revealed to the reason, is connected with the appearances which come to us through the senses in and among which we live and act. His interest was in what we should now call the ethical and spiritual life of man, and he cared for this new view of things only in so far as it threw light upon what he called the soul of man.

What Plato himself taught to those who gathered round him in the Academy is, as has been said already, largely a matter of conjecture. But we know that his teaching was largely mathematical, and Aristotle describes him as having identified the "ideas" or "forms" which constitute the real nature of things with numbers. We know, also, that he lectured on the Idea of the Good, by which, as will be seen later, was meant the supreme end and final cause from which all existence takes it origin, and in which is found its complete attainment and explanation. But nothing has come down to us of these lectures, except fragmentary allusions to the writings of his students.

To us now, having access only to the dialogues, with what light we can throw on them from outside sources, there is no consistent body of doctrine that can be called the philosophy of Plato.

Socrates, as we have said, was concerned only with ethical and spiritual problems, and it is easy to see what a new way was opened up for him by this new conception of reality. How far he worked it out in detail in his talks in the market-place and the playing-grounds of Athens we do not know. But
the light which shone in the mind of Plato was kindled from the spark which Socrates struck out. With him also, as with his master, the ruling interest was not scientific, but ethical and spiritual, and what we get in the dialogues, put into the mouth of Socrates, are the ethical and spiritual values of this new doctrine of reality—not the implications of it as a scientific or logical or metaphysical explanation of existence.

Just as the reality of the world around us is to be found not in the endless stream of conflicting sense impressions, but by looking for the meaning or underlying principle which informs each subject or thing, and makes it what it really is, so that the real man is to be found not in the body, which is every moment being built up and broken down, but in the soul. The physical needs of the body, the desires to which these give rise, and the pleasures associated with their fulfilment, are a part of the endless flow and change of the world of appearance. There is nothing real or permanent in them, and those who seek to fill their lives with such things are pouring water into a vat that is full of holes. The real man is the soul, and the master principle of the soul is reason. Now the reason which is in man—or to put it more correctly which is man—bound up as it is with a material body, fettered as it is by the desires and needs of that body, can yet find its counterpart or its source by study of the world around it. This study, rightly conducted, is philosophy. Its object is to look for what is true, real and permanent amid conflicting appearances and warring desires, to find order and purpose explaining what seems to be chance and confusion. The true meaning and reality of the world is not in the sights and sounds around us, but in the order underlying it, and the true life for man is to grow into an understanding of that order, and—which will follow as a matter of course—to bring his own life into harmony with it. In the apprehension by the reason of this order, which is the real being of the world, there lies not only the satisfaction of what we should now call the intellect of man, but also the complete fulfilment of what we should now call his moral and aesthetic nature. Truth, Justice and Beauty are, according to the dialogues, only varying aspects of the same ultimate principle. "It is a saying of the wise man," so Socrates is made to say in the Gorgias, "that the heavens and the earth and Gods and men are held together by community and love and orderliness and control and justice." Above everything, as the moving principle and final explanation, is the Idea of the Good. That is the conventional translation of the words, but it should never be used without the warning, which I repeat here, that the sense conveyed by the English word "idea" is quite different from that of the Greek word which it is meant to represent. What Plato meant to convey by it is not so easy to explain. The accounts of it which we get in the dialogues are veiled in the language of myth and allegory. He tells us, in the passages I have already quoted from his letters, that the knowledge of it could not be conveyed in words only, and that for that reason he never had written and would not write any account of it. His lectures on it to his students in the Academy were probably given without written notes, and are entirely lost to us. But, using the dialogues as far as we can, and giving a rational interpretation to the images of myth and allegory and poetic fancy, we can see in this conception of the Good as the ultimate and creative principle of things an assertion of reason as the supreme principle and ultimate reality in the universe of things. Man and living things, which exercise direction over their movements, are guided by what they conceive as Good.

In like manner the ordered movements, which the enquiries of science disclose to us in all nature, inorganic or organic—can only be understood through the same principle of the Good at which it aims, or, in other words, the purpose to which it moves. This not to say that we must seek in the infinitely extended and complicated life and movement of the Universe any purpose or design comparable to those by which our human actions are directed. It means, so far as we can grasp the idea, that the real truth and meaning of the world around us is not in
the material elements to which our analysis can reduce the things in and among which we live, but in a principle of reason and order, which we are capable of apprehending, and in which the reason that is in us finds its affinities and its complete realisation. The way by which our soul is led by reason to find itself in the order which governs the universe is philosophy, by which is meant the search for knowledge and truth. This is the way which he calls, in language borrowed from the mysteries, "the facing round of the soul away from a sort of twilight life into the true upward path of the real."

By following it the soul builds up for itself true knowledge among the conflicting and ever-changing impressions of the senses, and learns to control the impulses and desires which are associated with the body.

As we have already seen, we must not look in the dialogues for scientific theories of the material world in which we live. Except in the Timaeus, one of the latest dialogues, in which he tries to exhibit the creation of the world on the lines of geometrical constructions, he gives no attention to the tracing of what we call natural laws, or the exploration of the immediate causes of natural phenomena. The time for that department of enquiry had not yet come. Much work had to be done before Science could disengage herself from here purely material investigations so far as to look back, as she is now doing, at the foundations on which all her enquiries rest—the primary assumptions on the faith of which alone she is justified in going forward. Sir Oliver Lodge has well said: "In science, as a rule, we concentrate on one aspect, and try to get that clear. Hitherto science has mainly concentrated on the purely material aspect of the universe, while the philosopher is left to group all aspects together, if he can. But there are gaps, which he must depend on Science to fill up. And sometimes he has to wait, not always knowing what he is waiting for; not always knowing that there is a great deal to wait for"—("Ether and Reality," page 20).

It may be truly said of Plato that he did not know how much there was to wait for in the elaboration of scientific research into the world around us. But it must also be said that he gave to the spirit of man a new conception of its value and place in the Universe in which it finds itself, a new outlook on the quest for truth, beauty and goodness which eternally confronts it.


INTRODUCTORY. A comparison between N.T. and the Classics has not often been attempted. The N.T. fortunately not so "incomparable" as it was.

A. TECHNICAL. The MSS. of the N.T. Their great number. The study of them. Codex W. Leaf-books.

B. CRITICAL. N.T. literature the product of non-literary circle. Characteristic problems—(1) The Formation of the Canon. (2) The Synoptic Problem. The assistance of classical scholars needed in these questions.

C. AESTHETIC. (i.) The Vocabulary. (ii.) The Syntax. (iii.) The Gospels the masterpiece of N.T. (a) Their classical detachment and objectivity; (b) Their design or pattern; (c) Their presentation of a Tragedy, Tragedy, etc.; (d) Their effect when read entire.

The collection of First Century memoirs, letters and pamphlets which the Christians call their New Testament is at the present day far better known and more widely read and discussed than anything else that has survived from the literature of Greece and Rome. And one would be inclined to suppose therefore that the subject of this paper must have been dealt with over and over again, at any-rate at meetings of Classical Associations. Yet I fancy this has not actually been so, and the reason may be that until rather recently the New Testament has been regarded as something apart, incomparable to be sure, but in the most literal and unfruitful sense of that word.
To old-fashioned scholars there seemed to be something profane in trying to place these sacred books in any historical connection with the pagan writers of antiquity, and at the same time there was also a sense of something unseemly in comparing what was called "mere New Testament Greek" with the splendid elegance of Sophocles or Plato. Looking back on it, however, we may perhaps think it strange that Christian scholars should have regarded these writings as immune from error through verbal inspiration, and yet as written in a wretched lingo which had no history and deserved no imitators.

To-day, at any-rate, a new view has been accepted. On the one hand it is seen that the writers of the New Testament were not free from the errors to which every human author must from time to time fall a victim, nor wholly independent of the tendencies and chances of the age in which they lived. It is seen also that the text has been liable to accidents of transmission, which only scientific method and human industry can detect and rectify. It is also asserted by many that the inspiration which guided the authors of the various books was not different, in kind at any-rate, from that which worked in Aeschylus or Lucretius. And although this is still an unsettled question, and one, indeed, which cannot be settled till the various problems it entails have been more precisely stated and more closely investigated, still indisputably the general attitude towards the contents of the books has somewhat changed, and they are not in the literal sense of the word so "incomparable" as they were.

On the other hand, the language in which they are written has also been seen in a new light. Thanks to the breaking-down of the old rigid study of what was called "classical" Greek, that is the Attic Greek of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., and thanks also to the immense accessions of knowledge made available in the papyri of Egypt, the Greek of the New Testament is now found to be the everyday language of the civilised world of the early Roman Empire, and we are able to see how it fits into its place in the history of Greek culture as we trace that history without a break or any serious symptom of decay from the age of Pericles to the Attic revival and the catechetical schools of Alexandria.

From this new and more historical point of view we can look back upon the New Testament not with less respect than of old, but certainly with additional interest as being in the truest sense a precious part of the Legacy of Greece. It is as such that I wish to treat it in this paper, and the treatment will fall into three parts—technical, critical, and aesthetic. With these three I shall deal in order.

By the word technical I mean all that would at the present day fall under the heading of printing and publication. And in this sphere the Greek Testament has quite a definite interest. In the first place, for the science of Textual Criticism it affords far more material than any other ancient Greek or Latin author. Not only that, but owing to the importance which has been attached to every word of the Scriptures as such, the material has been very completely worked over. The consequence is that the handbooks to the Text of the New Testament exhibit the whole science of palaeography more abundantly than any other books of the kind. I shall try to substantiate this by some statistics.

It is not, as a matter of fact, very easy to find out what manuscripts there really are of the classical authors. Probably the information is in some learned German work, but unfortunately I do not know where to lay my hands on it. But I will take for purposes of comparison two great Greek authors, Homer and Euripides. It is said that there are some 200 MSS. containing the "Iliad" or "Odyssey," or both. Their quality is good, but not one is earlier than the tenth century. Papyrus fragments of the first century exist, and also two sixth century MSS. of a fragmentary character; these are valuable because they confirm the text of the complete copies. Of Euripides there are said to be a great number of manuscripts, yet not one contains all the extant plays, and not one
was written before the twelfth century. For seven of the plays we depend on two manuscripts of the fourteenth century, for three of them, the "Helena," "Hercules Furens," and "Electra," we have only one authority.

With the Greek Testament the situation is markedly different. Caspar René Gregory himself catalogued and numbered more than 4,000 MSS. containing a substantial part of the Greek text. Of these more than 500 contain the Acts and Catholic Epistles, more than 600 the Epistles of Paul, and nearly 250 the comparatively rare text of the Apocalypse. Of the Gospels there must certainly be more than 2,000 hand-written copies. Not only are the copies numerous, however; many of them are ancient. The Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus were probably written within 200 years of the original appearance of the later books of the New Testament, and altogether some 160 Uncial MSS. containing some part of it have been catalogued by Gregory. I name Caspar René Gregory honoris causa. He had a greater knowledge of the MSS. of the New Testament than any man has now or ever has had, and he gave his knowledge to the public in several most attractive and some very learned and scrupulously accurate works. An American by birth he migrated as a young man to Germany, became the acknowledged successor of Tischendorf, and at the age of 70 years and 5 months was killed by shell-fire on the Western front in April, 1917. That he was fighting on what seems to me to be the wrong side was, after all, only an accident.

One pagan author alone seems to have come down to us with a MS. authority comparable with that of the New Testament. This author is Vergil. It is true probably that there are many more manuscript copies of Cicero than of Vergil. There are said to be 188 MSS. of Ciceronian works in the Laurentian library, and apparently only 33 of Vergil. But no MS. of Cicero appears to be earlier than the ninth century, whereas of Vergil two good copies appear to belong to the fourth or fifth century, and some important fragments in the Vatican, in Berlin, and elsewhere go back probably to the second century. We are, in a sense, nearer to the autograph of Virgil than to those of the New Testament. Yet the New Testament is superior in two ways. In the first place the early Virgil MSS. are crudely written, while the great early Bibles, on the other hand, are most beautifully written. It is worth recording in passing that for the first and most splendid of all printed Greek Bibles, the Complutensian Polyglot of Cardinal Ximenes (A.D. 1514), a type was specially cut which was copied from ancient Codices. The ancient copies of the New Testament are also superior to those of Virgil or any classical author, because of the immense use that has been made of them. In the Oxford Classical Texts, new series, the apparatus criticus refers in the case of Thucydides to 7 MSS., in the case of Demosthenes to 10, in the case of Vergil to 14 MSS., and 3 scholiasts. In Souter's edition of the New Testament, which belong to the same series, there are references in what he calls his short apparatus criticus to 11 papyri, 74 Uncial MSS., just over 200 cursives, about 60 copies of ancient translations; and to quotations occurring in some 150 different authors.

The work on the subject has been immense. Something of the way in which this great mass of material has been handled may be seen in Hort's Introduction to Westcott and Hort's Greek Testament, or in the handbooks of Kenyon, Gregory, or Nestlé. Shorter and slighter, but very capable is Professor Kissopp Lake's little book, "The Text of the New Testament." And at a Classical Association meeting I ought not to forget to mention the work of the Corpus Professor of Latin at Oxford, Dr. Albert Clark, who has turned from the rhythms of Cicero to Greek Testament studies, which he has embodied in his slender but valuable work, "The Primitive Text of the Gospels and Acts," a book which a few months from now is to be followed by a fuller textual study of the Acts.

The three most important copies of the Greek Testament are Codex B (in the Vatican), Codex Aleph Sinaiticus (in Pet-
rograd), and Codex A or Alexandrinus (in the British Museum). Almost equally valuable are Codex Bezae (D) at Cambridge, containing Gospels and Acts, and Codex W, the Freer Codex, in America, containing the Gospels only. Each of these five has a romantic history and a peculiar beauty of its own. I must not stop to describe them here, but I will just say a few words about the last-named, partly because it is a comparatively recent discovery, and partly because I have done some work upon it, or rather, upon the facsimile, and know it well.

Codex W was bought in 1906 from a dealer in Cairo. The purchaser was acting on behalf of Mr. Freer, a wealthy business man of Detroit, who has, I believe, loaned it to the Library of Congress at Washington, where it will eventually find a permanent lodging. The book contains the Four Gospels in the order associated with the much-debated Western Text, namely, Matthew, John, Luke, Mark. This order is frequent in copies of the old Latin text, but in Greek it was previously only known in Codex Bezae. The writing, which is of the fifth, or possibly the sixth century, is an odd sloping Uncial. Curiously enough, on the top margin of an extant non-biblical papyrus a few words can be seen in what is unmistakably the same hand. The Greek text is composite in character, but largely supports the Western readings. Appended to Mark is an alternative ending to that Gospel, never before seen in the Greek, though St. Jerome gives part of it in Latin, and says he had met with it in a few Greek manuscripts.

The Codex contains so much that scholars would desire to find, that one might almost suspect it of being a forgery, were it not for the physical impossibility of producing a convincing forgery of this sort. It probably lay for centuries in an Egyptian monastery, where it would have been surreptitiously sold to the dealer from whom Mr. Freer’s agent had it. We ought, in any case, to be glad that America gets this important book, since the Roman, Orthodox, and Anglican branches of the Christian Church already have each their own princely treasure after this kind.

One other point about the Greek Testament on the technical side deserves mention. It is now generally thought that it is to the Christians that we owe the invention of the leaf-book as a substitute for the roll. The early “Sayings of Jesus,” the “Logia,” are certainly in leaf form and not on rolls. We also know that the Christians at a very early date possessed collections of Testimonia, that is to say extracts from the Old Testament, bearing upon the Messianic aspects of Christ’s life. This implies looking up references, and we can easily see that looking up references in a book in roll form would be extremely tedious. Moreover, the New Testament, when once it came to be regarded as a single whole, would be very cumbersome if written on rolls, even for use in church. A roll was seldom more than 30 feet long, and the New Testament would require at least seven rolls of this length. In leaf-book form it became more manageable, not larger than many a Bible we see in church to-day. In Codex Alexandrinus, for instance, the New Testament, with the two so-called Epistles of Clement, filled 174 pages of thin vellum, 12½ inches by 10½, written on both sides in two columns. Codex Sinaiticus, on a larger page, written in four narrow columns, gives the New Testament, with Barnabas and Hermas, on 147½ leaves. The introduction of fine parchment certainly made the leaf-book sooner or later inevitable; but it was, perhaps, the Christians who first actually produced books in this form.

I have spent some time on these external features of the Greek Testament because there are no antiquities so beautiful or so historical as the ancient MSS. copies, and I do not think any student of Greece or the Roman Empire should be ignorant of their appearance or the causes of their varied importance. But I pass now to the contents of the books, and proceed to discuss the New Testament from the critical point of view, that is to say, from the point of view of the literary problems which it raises. This is the sphere in theology for which the word Introduction has become almost a technical term. It would be inappropriate here, however, to deal with the ordinary Prolegomena, the date, authen-
ticity or method of compilation of the different books. What I do want to say something about is, first, the Formation of the Canon, and secondly, the Synoptic Problem. These are the two critical questions which belong peculiarly to the New Testament, and most clearly indicate its special characteristics.

The history of the Canon tells us as far as is possible why certain books found their way into the New Testament, while others were rejected. It tells us, also, how the Christians came, almost without realising it, to make a collection of sacred writings to match, and eventually to surpass, the Old Testament as an essential part of the Scriptures. This is, of course, of first-rate importance in the history of Christianity, but it is also a phenomenon without a parallel in the history of literature. For we have in these books compositions which have had an immense circulation, but are the product of a comparatively small and certainly a quite unliterary circle. A further interest in the Canon exists for us in the fact that the word canonical is in theology the precise counterpart of the word classical in other branches of learning.

The conditions under which these works were produced and circulated are worth analysing. In the first place we have to take into account the fact that the earliest Christians had the Old Testament in Hebrew and in Greek. Thus they had a high standard of religious literature set before them. Secondly, we know that a religious impulse is apt to make people without literary training develop a latent talent for literature in a remarkable way. The works of John Bunyan and William Blake testify to this. Thirdly, the New Testament movement, if one may call it so, was started by the sheer practical needs of the Church. Paul the missionary, travelling to Corinth from Salonica in the year 51 A.D., must needs satisfy his rather restless temperament by sending a word of grace and peace to his new converts in the north. This was our First Epistle to the Thessalonians. Another letter followed soon afterwards, and thenceforward for some twelve or fourteen years Paul continued to send round his epistles, as we call them, to meet the various needs of the Churches from Rome to Asia Minor. It was no new thing, of course, to write letters which were intended for publication, but such letters were usually of a somewhat detached and literary type. Paul, who had unquestionably a streak of genius somewhere, gave his letters a tone all their own, partly because his writing of them all arose out of some definite occasion, partly because he wrote about life in one of its most varied and curious phases, and partly because he was a man who did not mind giving himself away, a trait which often secures literary immortality, as it has done for Borrow and Pepys and Boswell.

The letters, at any-rate, were good reading and full of common-sense too, emblazoned sometimes with a patch of splendid eloquence. They were read in church, and passed about from one church to another. Most of them, perhaps, but not all, have survived. Anyhow, the epistle became an accepted literary form among the Christians. But the form was capable of being greatly varied, as anyone can see who will examine the variety of method exhibited in Galatians, Hebrews, Philemon, and the Epistles of St. John.

This brings us to the fourth stage in the growth of the New Testament. It was, perhaps, a fortunate chance which caused the first literature of the Christians to come from the pen of one who had never been a personal disciple of Jesus. This resulted in there being very little of the life or teaching of the Master in the Epistles. And this again led, I think, to a natural demand for some systematic account of the Lord's work and ministry, as opposed to theological treatises about it. Thus the demand for written Gospels to be read in church arose before it was too late to satisfy it with authentic information. Mark may have composed the earliest Gospel before the death of Paul in 64 A.D. Those of Matthew and Luke followed not long after. Of their value as literature I shall not say anything just now. The point here is that they made their appearance to
satisfy a practical need felt in church. Luke, I fancy, was the first New Testament author to have some idea in his mind that his writings would one day form part of Holy Scripture, for he seems to have been at particular pains to employ the vocabulary of the Greek Old Testament.

A fifth and final element in the growth of the New Testament is to be found in the way it was used: for this led to the survival of the fittest. Some early Christian scriptures are extant, which are not in our Bibles, and some which are there had a struggle to gain admittance. I mentioned just now that one ancient bible contains I. and II. Epistle of Clement and another the Epistle of Barnabas and the Shepherd of Hermas. These works and others like them failed, however, to find admission to the Canon, for the very good reason that they were not canonical, in other words not fit to be regarded as standard authors. The Epistles of Jude and II. Peter nearly met with the same fate, and perhaps deserved it. The II. and III. Epistles of John, and the last two chapters of Romans are, perhaps, in the New Testament by accident. We naturally ask what principle of survival was at work? Was it likely to retain the writings of highest literary value? The answer is that on the whole it was likely to retain the writings of highest literary value, though it did not consciously aim at doing so. The test that was imposed upon the new scriptures was, in fact, the test of being read repeatedly in church. It was rather a good test. It was a literary test, because it is characteristic of good literature that it bears repetition. It was a non-literary test, because no doubt there was a certain atmosphere or tone in the church, and what was read had to match that tone. As to the fact that the audience was not consciously literary, that need not in the long run have prevented their collective judgment on the matter from being correct.

At any-rate, the actual working out of this test of being read in church was striking. By the end of the second century, and perhaps a generation earlier, it was found that all the churches in the various parts of the world had independently come, as a matter of practice, to use the same books, and that almost without any propaganda or proclamation the Canon had settled itself. I suppose the process was something like that which is now going on among English-speaking Christians in regard to hymns. The hymn in the vernacular is quite a modern form in literature. There has been a great, I might almost say a fearful outpouring of it for a century. There are hymn-books for each denomination. The great denominations have more than one apiece. Yet in a hundred years' time I expect that it will be found in practice that all the churches are actually using the same hymns, with some very incon siderable exceptions. These will, as I hope, form a truly catholic collection, numbering perhaps about 300 in all. It will be a survival of the fittest, that is to say, a survival of the most proper to be sung in churches. In a very true sense, it will be a classical collection. And in the same sense, but at a higher level, I think the New Testament is not only a canonical, but a truly classical collection of Greek authors.

I pass on to the Synoptic problem, but I shall not detain you long over it. Still, I could not altogether omit such a striking series of phenomena. Mark writes a gospel. Matthew writes another in which he incorporates almost the whole of Mark, but with some variations in order and constant variations in the wording. Luke writes a gospel in which he introduces rather more than half of Mark, almost exactly in Mark's order, but with his own variations in the wording. Furthermore, Matthew and Luke have almost 200 verses which are shared by them in common, but are absent from Mark. Then, again, Matthew and Luke each have considerable sections peculiar to themselves. What are the sources which underlie these phenomena? What light do they throw on the authenticity of these Gospels?

The questions have been canvassed and studied with incredible zeal, and in minutest detail. The general result has been to enhance the credit of Mark after eighteen centuries of neglect, and to
make it seem probable that at least three
earlier compilations were used by Mat-
thew and Luke, as well as reminiscences
which they collected personally, or heard
as part of the tradition of the Church.
Criticism has undoubtedly strengthened
the fame of the Synoptic Gospels as his-
torical documents, and has incidentally
given an interesting exhibition of scien-
tific method in action upon literary
problems.

But much is still undecided, and clas-
sical scholars could make some valuable
contributions to the work. New Testa-
ment students badly need a history of
Plagiarism in ancient times. It is often
asserted in commentaries on the Gospels
that Matthew and Luke did nothing
unusual in taking over Mark's work in
such a wholesale manner, yet I have
never seen a really apt parallel adduced.
We want, also, some immensely detailed
studies of two or three classical works
which seem to have been mainly compila-
tions. A detailed comparison of some
parts of the "Nicomachean" and "Eu-
demian Ethics" of Aristotle might serve
the purpose. Professor Burnet, in the
introduction to his edition of the
"Ethics," suggests that the problems
which the two versions raise are in some
ways the same as those of the Synoptists.
One would like to see the methods which
have been adopted in the study of the
Gospels applied to some other authors,
in order to test the validity of those
methods. Finally, it is much to be
desired, from the point of view of biblical
learning, that scholars trained in clas-
sical studies should, like Bentley and Mat-
thew Arnold, and in our own day Dr.
Percy Gardner, turn their attention to
the Greek Testament and Christianity.
Men with such a training have always
striking things to point out to the theo-
logians. To get a view of the whole field
of investigation, one could not do better
than look at Streeter's book, "The Four
Gospels," a most clear and attractive
exposition of the whole problem, and an
eminently readable book.

I come now to the third and last part
of this paper, the aesthetic value of the
New Testament. Are many, or, in fact,
are any of its books first-rate works of
art? Do they reach the standard set by
the classics? To answer these questions
is no easy matter, for it is difficult to
apply to the New Testament what one
may call "the Art for Art's sake point-
of-view." It was not written from that
point of view, and is not so very often
read from it. At the same time it should
be possible to appreciate the language to
some extent, and to say something of the
quality and design of the more striking
works. To this task I address myself.

The language of the New Testament
has usually been called Hellenistic
Greek, a name first given it by Joseph
Scaliger. But as this expression rather
begs the question of its origin, it is per-
haps better to call it the Koiné, because
it is the common language of the period.
It is certainly very far removed from the
expressiveness and the refinements of the
Attic. It exhibits many of the features
of a language in decline, revives obsolete
literary and poetical words for instance,
makes outlandish compounds, affects
diminutives, and uses vulgar abbrevia-
tions, of which the most interesting is
ἀγάπη for ἀγάπης. Lists of such words
may be seen in Thayer's article on the
"Language of the New Testament," in
Hasting's "Dictionary of the Bible." No
good purpose would be served by repro-
ducing them here.

Nor are these defects important, for in
spite of them the Koiné served its pur-
pose well. The extensive vocabulary
which characterises the Greek language
as a whole had not been lost, and the
borrowings from other languages are not
numerous, considering that the back-
ground of early Christian thinking
was mainly Jewish and Roman. In the
vocabulary of Mark's Gospel, which is
generally believed to have been intended
for Christians in Rome, there are some
1,330 distinct words, but hardly ten of
them, apart from proper names, are from
the Latin, though of course, in estimat-
ing the significance of these figures, we
have to take into account that the ear-
est Roman Christianity touched only
the Greek-speaking lower and lower-
middle classes. The Hebraisms are
more numerous, but nearly all of them
are just the names of Jewish things and
institutions, the Sabbath for example, and rarely serve as means of expression. The Greek of the New Testament is at least as pure as the written English of South Africa. Its distinctive features are to be found not in its importations, but rather in the numerous words that Christianity coined to express the virtues it valued and the vices it censured. Of these a typical example may be found in προσωπολημβία, respect of persons, which has the added interest of being, quite probably, the earliest definitely Christian coinage. In this connection, however, we should perhaps remember that Plutarch, whose writings are almost exactly contemporary with the New Testament, exhibits the same interest in moral qualities, and has a large vocabulary with which to describe them. Moral psychology is certainly characteristic of the New Testament, but it is, perhaps, also characteristic of the whole age.

Apart from its own inventions and adaptations, it is remarkable to observe how closely the New Testament vocabulary coincides with that of Polybius and of the Septuagint. Polybius handled the Koine to great effect; his influence deserves to be studied. As to the Septuagint, no doubt the debt of the authors of the New Testament to it was something more than unconscious. Their task was to present a Hebrew teacher's message to a Hellenised world. For this purpose the Alexandrianised Greek of the Septuagint was admirably suited. So much, indeed, had Greek and Hebrew modes of thinking and expression coalesced that in the case of those books of the Apocrypha which have only survived in Greek, scholars confess themselves unable to decide whether the Greek is an original or a translation from the Hebrew.

So much for the vocabulary; and next the syntax of the Koine. This is certainly less elaborate than that of the Attic. The genitive absolute is rare, the optative much limited in use. The present tense in narrative, and direct or vivid constructions in subordinate clauses are normal. The perfect and aorist are often indistinct in meaning; the negatives οὐ and μὴ in many cases interchangeable. The co-ordination is simple, and particles are usually meagre. We must not, however, underrate the resources of the syntax or exaggerate its simplicity. English-speaking students of Greek will nearly always tell you at a fairly early stage that they find the Greek Testament easy, yet as a matter of fact a man requires to be a good scholar to translate it precisely, unless he knows it well. What the young student means by calling it easy is that in comparison with the Attic the construction seems familiar to him. And there is a reason for this. For the English we speak and write is the result of much conscious and unconscious imitation of the English Bible. Now, the English translation of the New Testament down to and including the Authorised Version was decidedly literal, and therefore a speech that has been moulded by the English Bible will have a definite syntactical affinity with the Greek Testament. This is what makes the Greek Testament seem easy when the student comes to it after reading some of the pagan classics. In itself it is far from easy. It contains almost as many cruces as Aeschylus, and many more important ones. In modern times all the great classics have been re-translated successfully, but the New Testament in modern English has yet to win acceptance.

I should be curious to know whether other than English-speaking students get this impression of the New Testament being easy. French and Italian translations of the Bible, I confess, always seem to me to be moving about in worlds not realised. But how do young Dutch or German-speaking students find the Greek when they come to translate it into their mother tongue? And how fare the translators into Afrikaans?

This Afrikaans undertaking ought to be tremendously interesting to a classical scholar. For the original Greek was written in a bilingual, if not a trilingual, environment, in a language which had a classical tradition behind it, though at a distance of two centuries or more, in an idiom which belonged distinctly to the spoken rather than to the written word,
though an idiom in which a few successful attempts at literature had already been made. These conditions are almost exactly reproduced in the case of the language into which the Greek has now to be translated. The New Testament in Afrikaans, if the work is done with a pure heart, may easily prove to be a masterpiece.

I have, perhaps, wandered away rather far from my attempt to discuss the syntax of the Koine as we find it in the New Testament. But to analyse it in detail would have been insipid, and perhaps vain. I thought it better in this place to suggest its contacts with some characteristics both of English and Afrikaans. I pass on now to the form of the various books that the New Testament contains, with a view to seeing something of their art and artistry. And here, although I suppose the Acts of the Apostles is the most artistic of the books, I shall, nevertheless, confine myself almost entirely to the Gospels. I shall only remark about the Acts that, thanks to the researches of Sir William Ramsay, it has become an important secondary source for our knowledge of Roman Provincial Government in the first century, and that in a Clarendon Press publication of 1920, the Flosculi Graeci "quos ex optimis auctoris decerit Arturus Blackburne Poynton," St. Paul's shipwreck from Acts 27 appears under the title "A voyage in the Levant."

The Christians regard the Gospels as the crown of the New Testament, and their judgment is right aesthetically, as well as spiritually. Paul wrote more elaborately, and no doubt with more originality than the evangelists, yet they have produced the greater works of art. Paul seems incapable of a sustained effort or of systematic thinking; in these qualities he is decidedly inferior to the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews; consequently he is at his best, perhaps, when a bright idea strikes him as he writes; and so he is deficient in design. The design or pattern of the Gospels, on the other hand, is at once simple and sweeping. Characterising them briefly, we may say that the first Gospel is the most popular; ordinary references to Gospel incidents usually have Matthew's version for their source. Modern taste, however, finds Mark more satisfying. He is vivid and simple, almost to the point of being uncouth, and indubitably primitive. Luke is felt nowadays to have polished up the Marcan outline too much. The Fourth Gospel has reverted to Mark's design and its simplicity, and yet has altered the atmosphere of the narrative so much that it seems to come from a different world. Clement of Alexandria hits the nail on the head when he says that, after the other evangelists had delivered a bodily or somatic gospel, John wrote a spiritual gospel. It is certainly a tremendous work of art, though I daresay the author was quite unconscious of this.

But although all the Gospels have their individual characteristics, yet they all possess in common some features which we generally associate with the classics. I think we should admit that they all exhibit the classical detachment, impartiality, objectivity. The authors do not, on any occasion, exhibit their own feelings or suggest to the reader what his feelings should be. The incidents are left to make their own effect, and the effect is proportionately great. The events which lead up to the Crucifixion, for instance, are much more powerful just because we are not asked to consider how dreadfully feeble Pontius Pilate was. And the accounts of the Infancy and Childhood of Jesus are arresting, just because the Gospel does not pry into the feelings of the Virgin Mother. There is classical art and reserve in this. Then, again, the authors do not take sides. Jesus of Nazareth is undoubtedly the hero of the Gospels, and the Scribes and Pharisees certainly come off badly, but they come off badly not at the hands of the Evangelists but at the hands of Jesus. The situation is made clear by the course of the action, and there is no need for comment or explanation. When we come to the Passion narrative this quality is seen at its highest. The execution is described, even by Luke, in the briefest terms: "When they were come to the place that is called Golgotha, there they crucified
him, and the malefactors, the one on the right hand and the other on the left." The Gospels contain no expressions of horror at the Crucifixion, and there is no talk of blood until the crucified are dead.

Then, again, the Gospels are thoroughly objective, by which I mean that accidental circumstances are omitted, and the purpose of the authors is to get the events or the spoken word across to the reader, and not any particular aspect of them. There is no background, no setting of the scene except the bare minimum which is necessary to make it intelligible, no description of people's appearance, no landscape, no delineation of character, except as it emerges from the action. There is, in fact, a complete absence of those theatrical properties and effects which happily we have learned in recent years to regard as totally inappropriate to the effective presentation of a tragedy.

I spoke just now of the design or pattern of the Gospels. This is most apparent in those according to Mark and John, and the design is the same in both. Rather more than the first half of each is occupied with a number of miscellaneous episodes, depicting first the success of Christ's ministry, and then the growing opposition to it. Peter's confession marks a critical point in this part, and leads on to the last days. But before the account of the last events in the life of Jesus, both Mark and John put into his mouth a long discourse out of all proportion to anything else which they have to record. In the case of Mark its subject is eschatology, and the coming of the Son of Man. In the case of the Fourth Gospel the subject is really the Ascension and the coming of the Holy Ghost. Both are distinctly supernatural in character. The last events are then described in some detail, and in greater detail still the last hours and death of Jesus. The narrative concludes with the account of the Resurrection, but it is to be observed that of Mark's account only a fragment has survived, the last twelve verses in our ordinary copies being a summary from some other hand. And the last chapter of John is, likewise, almost universally regarded as an appendix and an afterthought.

Now, without wishing to press the matter unduly, I think it is worth noticing that this design tends to correspond to that of the greatest literary masterpieces of Greece, the "Symposium" of Plato, and the "Oedipus Coloneus."

The "Symposium" is meant to give the teaching of Socrates about Love. It is not in the very least like the Gospels in form or substance, but that makes it all the more surprising that it should be similar in design. It starts off with a number of detached episodes or expositions, which present the experience of love from different points of view. It then brings the matter to a head with an inspired description of Love as the contemplation of absolute Beauty, and this is put into the mouth of Diotima, the prophetess, and has thus distinctly a supernatural air. The dialogue is, after this, more abundantly dispersed with action, and the narrative of Alcibiades concentrates attention on the person of Socrates. In the end night intervenes, and finally Socrates, without having slept, goes out to the Agora to begin the new day.

In the "Oedipus Coloneus" we observe the same arrangement. The traditional πραγματεία fill the first part, and tend towards creating a certain impression of Oedipus and his situation. Then, in trance-like mood, he tells the fate of Thebes and his own destined hour; then, guided by his own sightless vision, he goes forth from the garden enclosure to the place of death. A messenger comes in and describes the death, and the tragedy closes with the thought that somehow Oedipus's life of sorrow needs no words.

In things that display such fundamental differences, to make much of similarities may seem to border on the fanciful. But all the same it does rather look as if there was a certain design to which the highest literary art must approximate, and as if the Fourth Gospel, the "Symposium," and the "Oedipus Coloneus," all admittedly in the forefront of literature, do all display this classic design. And the explanation would lie in human character. The greatest literature in prose and poetry
deals in themes which harass and trouble the spirit, and it would not be surprising if a certain process were necessary in order that that troubling and harassing of the spirit might be accompanied by an over-balance of pleasure and satisfaction. First, the spirit must be prepared by comparatively mild events with cumulative effect, then it must be elevated by some touch of inspiration: thus it is prepared to face the pity and terror of the great event, and to find in the end that justification, without which there can be no true tragedy.

And I suppose we should all be prepared to admit that the Gospel story, in its general outline, is a classic example of tragedy, and I shall conclude this paper by mentioning three points in which it may be compared with Greek tragedy in detail.

In the first place there is a good deal of irony in it. This is specially noticeable in the Fourth Gospel. Take the words put into the mouth of Jesus, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men to me. This he said," so the evangelist comments, "signifying by what death he should die." Yet this signification could hardly have conveyed itself to the hearers any more than the thought of Ajax's death is conveyed to the chorus of Salaminian sailors when Sophocles makes him say, "But I will go to the bathing-place and the meadows by the shore, that in purging of my stains I may flee the heavy anger of the goddess. Then I will seek out some untrodden spot and bury this sword, hatefullest of weapons, digging in the earth where none shall see." Yet Ajax, too, said this signifying by what death he should die. Again, there is a similar irony where Mary anoints the feet of Jesus, and he says, "Let her alone; against the day of my burying hath she done this." In another case the author is at pains to point out the unconscious irony; it is where Caiaphas, in the council of the chief priests and Pharisees, is made to say, "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. This," adds the writer, "he spake not of himself; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation." I have noted ten other places in this Gospel where, I think, there is an indication of irony; and in the other Gospels it may be found also.

A second trait which reminds us of Greek tragedy is to be seen in the story of the Crucifixion, for in the way the Evangelists tell it it has very much the air of a messenger's speech. In the first place, it has the air of being a recital. No doubt from the very early days the story had been regularly told in church, and it was, perhaps, thirty years old when it was first written down. It bears, in consequence, more than most stories the mark of the folk-told tale, that is to say, it gives the impression of being told for its own sake. In the second place, it comes in the Gospel just where the messenger's speech most often comes in the tragedy, it is the recital of the hero's passion and death towards the close of the piece. Realism would not here be the best medium or the highest art. A narrative by a rather unimportant and therefore somewhat detached spectator is all the hearer can hear. Of course, if we take into account the report that when Jesus was arrested all the disciples forsook him and fled, the story of the Crucifixion must have been first told to the Christians by some such more or less detached spectator. Thirdly, for liturgical reasons, the story was kept strictly free from all unnecessary detail, and the very simplicity and bareness of the narrative, while it stimulates the vividness of the imagination, at the same time gives the idea that the events are taking place off the stage, so to speak. Thus, again, it has the air of a messenger's speech. Of course, there is a wide difference between the ἀγαγμησία and the εἰκασμησία, between the messenger and the evangelist. But just as there is something common to their names, so there is something common to the method and intention of the narrators. For a comparison of the method one might read the 27th chapter of Matthew and the later speeches of the messenger in the "Phoenissae" of Euripides. The passage in Euripides is more ornamental, more perhaps of a set piece, as such items are bound to become in the excited atmo-
sphere of theatrical representation; it also strikes a personal note which is entirely absent from the Gospel. But both aim at fulfilling something of the same purpose, and for my part I think the tragedy does it far less well.

A third and final point of similarity between the Gospels and the Greek tragedy. I think we must all feel that the Risen Lord of the Gospels, although he may be much more, is certainly no less than a *deus ex machina*. The complete disgrace and apparent failure of the hero, after the mighty claims he has made, need a dramatic resolution if the Gospel is to be a tragedy and not merely a satire. Such a resolution is found in the Resurrection, but the resolution in this case was not merely dramatic, in the mind of the first Christians it was, of course, actual too. Here, however, there is no more to be said about it than that an Athenian audience would, perhaps, not have found it dramatically unsatisfying or at all surprising. Modern readers, too, would, I believe, find it fit much more naturally into the Gospel history, if they would read the Gospel through at a sitting. Owing to a bad tradition this is rarely done, yet the second Gospel hardly takes more than an hour to read. I once read it through in an audible voice in sixty-six minutes. One cannot help thinking that if ministers of religion would occasionally get their congregations together for the particular purpose of reading one of the Gospels through from beginning to end, the effect would be very impressive, and even converting. As it is, the Churches have the plan of presenting their great tragedy in daily excerpts of five minutes or less, and they then profess surprise that somehow it has not made a particularly deep impression.

But I am again straying from my subject. It would be more to the point to enquire what the Athenians would have thought if, at one of their Dionysiac festivals, instead of a tragedy, a single actor had read out to them one of our Gospels. I fancy they would have listened with rapt attention, with more attention certainly than the Areopagus gave Paul when he tried to preach to them on the basis of their own philosophy. They would have been puzzled, but I fancy they would have thought it worthy of the festival of the god. Perhaps they would have observed that the hero did not speak in the style of their tragic heroes, for scholars have remarked that in the words which the Gospels attribute to Jesus himself there is no single sign of Hellenisation. Nevertheless they would have found something which appealed to them, not only as men, but as Greeks. I think their feelings after the reading had proceeded a while might be very precisely expressed by the words in which Mark, in his second chapter, describes the first impression made by Christianity—[ὅστε] ἔκτασαται πάντας καὶ ὀδόξασεν τὸν θεὸν λέγοντας ὅτι Ὁ Ὀμοίως αὐξάποτε εἰδαμεν. They were all in an ecstasy, and glorified the god, saying, “we never saw anything like this.” And perhaps at the end, as they went away a little more silent than usual, one or other would have been found anticipating the judgment of the pagan at the Cross, as Mark records it in his last chapter but one,—‘Ἄρα ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅ ἀνθρωπος ὃς θεὸς θεοὶ ἦ—”Truly this man was the son of a God.” What a strange accident that both these comments could have fallen so naturally from Athenian lips in the great theatre of Dionysus!
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Suggested Constitution for a Local Branch of the Classical Association of South Africa.

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