THE IDEAL OF COURAGE IN PLATO

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The Ideal of Courage in Plato.

It has been so common for scholars to characterize the Platonic philosophy as "rationalistic" or "intellectualistic" that the reader is inclined to assume that the morality which Plato teaches is far beyond the reach of the ordinary man and is reserved for those highly gifted individuals whom he calls "philosophers". To some extent this opinion is justified. In a large part of his work Plato undoubtedly shows a very great contempt for conventional or common morality. He also elevates the virtue of the philosopher to the highest possible plane. On the other hand, it is undeniable that he recognizes in a very pronounced and definite fashion the value of certain non-intellectual virtues; and in the Republic, as well as in several of the earlier dialogues, there is an acknowledgement of the possibility of good conduct without the possession of that knowledge which is peculiar to the philosopher.

It may be of no small interest, then, to attempt to trace the ideal of courage in Plato from the earlier dialogues to the Republic, to find out, if possible, precisely what this ideal is, and what place it has in his system of ethics as a whole.

I. There are two notable discussions of courage among the early dialogues of Plato. One is found in the Protagoras, the other in the Laches. We shall consider first that in the Protagoras. The theme of the dialogue is, ostensibly, whether the common virtues of wisdom, piety, justice, temperance and courage have separate and distinct meanings, or whether they may not all be comprised

under one single virtue of wisdom. Expressed in Platonic language the problem is: whether the parts of virtue resemble the parts of gold, being mere divisions of a whole which is of identical quality throughout, or whether they may not be likened to the parts of the face, being distinguishablefrom each other both as regards appearance and function, and composing a complex rather than a simple unity. This question as to the unity or plurality of the virtues may, however, be considered as a device on the part of Socrates for getting Protagoras to state clearly his view with regard to the nature of virtue itself. The dialogue is really concerned not so much with the partition of the virtues as with the setting forth of the opposed concepts of virtue as they were formulated in the minds of Protagoras and Socrates.

Protagoras, at the outset, defines virtue to be "prudence in affairs private a s well as public" - the management of one's own household and of the state in the best and most capable manner.* He maintains, also, that the virtues are distinct, like the parts of the face. Courage is not the same as justice, nor wisdom as temperance. Socrates opposes the opinion of Protagoras, and soon forces him to admit that two of the virtues, at any rate, cannot be different. Since one thing has but one opposite, wisdom and temperance must be identical, both being the opposite of folly.**

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* Prot. 319

**Prot. 333.

Influenced, evidently, by this overthrowal of his claim Protagoras modifies his former statement, maintaining now that four of the virtues are very much alike, but that the fifth, courage, is entirely different from the others. It is this section of the dialogue that has direct bearing on the subject in hand, and it must, accordingly, be given careful attention.

'Many men, says Protagoras, are remarkable for their courage who are unjust, unholy, intemperate and ignorant. Socrates again opposes him. He bases his argument for the essential likeness of courage to the other virtues upon two premises, - (1) that the courageous are confident, "ready to go at that which others are afraid to approach"* and (2) that virtue is wholly a good thing. To both of these premises Protagoras agrees. Socrates then asks him who shows most confidence in diving into a well, he who knows how to dive or he who does not. Upon Protagoras replying "the diver", Socrates draws his conclusion - that the reason of the confidence was knowledge. In like manner he cites trained fighters on horseback and men trained to fight in light armour as other examples of confident men whose courage is explained by the fact that they have knowledge. Others, who are ignorant of the skill of the trained soldier or diver, are confident too, but not courageous since their confidence is rashness - a base thing. This latter confidence, there-

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* Prot.349.

fore, is not a virtue, which by the premises was wholly a good and, likewise, it is not courage. Hence, upon this view, says Socrates, courage will be the same as knowledge. Courage and wisdom are not different, but identical, virtues.

It is important to notice, at this point, that the "knowledge" which Socrates here identifies with courage, is a sort of skill or art. It is an empirical knowledge gained by experience and habituation. It is most aptly exemplified in the trained soldier who is courageous because he is practised in the use of weapons. He does not fear dangers because he is certain he can protect himself through his control over the means of defense.

Protagoras objects to Socrates' conclusion that courage is the same as knowledge on the ground that although all the courageous are confident, not all the confident are courageous. In spite of the fact that his argument is somewhat confused, he nevertheless points out a clear distinction between courage and confidence when he says that "confidence may be given to men by art ------ but courage comes to them from nature and the healthy state of the soul."*

Socrates does not reply to this objection but resumes his argument for the identity of courage and wisdom, arriving at his conclusion from a different approach. Practically the entire

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* Prot. 351.

remainder of the dialogue is occupied with the thesis that the pleasurable is the good - "to live pleasantly is a good, to live unpleasantly is an evil."* In the developement of this theory Socrates describes a new sort of knowledge which is not fairly comparable with the skill of a diver, horseman or soldier, but is a sort of "art of measurement." Its function is to measure greater pleasures with smaller, in order to determine those which will bring the greatest happiness to men. Socrates maintains that pleasures differ in no other way than magnitudes differ. Qualitatively they are all the same, but they have quantitative distinctions. Measurement, therefore, is the only means by which one can estimate what pleasures to prefer to others.

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* Prot. 351.

Socrates proceeds to show the bearing of this doctrine of the good upon the definition of courage. He and Protagoras agree in describing fear as "expectation of evil"*, and since each man naturally pursues the pleasurable it follows that no one will choose that which he thinks to be evil. The courageous, upon these premises, do not go out to meet that which they look upon as evil and painful, but rather to that which they consider to be good and pleasurable. So also the coward pursues that which he deems to be a good. In this respect the brave and the cowardly are alike ; but the difference between them consists in the fact that the former knows what is actually pleasurable and good, while the latter is deceived by the appearance of it, being ignorant. Therefore, it is really the coward who encounters dangers and not the brave man. Courage is the knowledge of that which is and is not dangerous, and cowardice is the ignorance of these things.

By this conclusion Socrates again likens courage to knowledge or wisdom, but knowledge of a different sort from that which the diver possessed. This second kind of knowledge embraces a comprehension not only of things dangerous and not dangerous but of all goods and evils. It partakes of the nature of mathematics, since it consists in a reasoned science of measurement. The knowledge of the diver, on the other hand, was wholly experiential and habitual, involving no activity of the reason. However clear the distinction between the two appears upon analysis, Socrates himself, in the

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* Prot. 358

Protagoras, gives no hint that he recognizes it. There exists, therefore, an incompatibility between his theory of courage and his examples of it.

Incidentally it may be remarked that the entire latter portion of the Protagoras, where the pleasure theory is expounded, has been the cause of much perplexity to commentators, since in many of his dialogues Plato seems to oppose hedonism. It is to be doubted, however, whether he is really advocating it here. It has been suggested that this portion of the Protagoras was intended by Plato as a refutation of the ethics of Aristippus. The theory of Aristippus, that all knowledge is relative, consisting only in what is felt by the senses, led to the ethical dictum that the good consists in the pleasure of the moment. Individual pleasures are the ends of all action and are to be preferred to the prospect of a protracted series of pleasures, since the latter involves a future which is not within human control and which certainly can afford no immediate enjoyment, the pleasure from it having not yet begun. Wisdom, in such a scheme, is only one of the virtues and is subsidiary to the end desired. Practical knowledge is of use in so far as it determines the relative values of particular pleasures, but all abstract wisdom is regarded as futile. Aristippus and the Cyrenaics, while declaring the passing pleasure to be the only good, did not think that man should be a slave to passionate desire. On the contrary, the freedom of the individual was particularly stressed. "The best thing," says Aristippus " is to possess plea-

sures without being their slave, not to be devoid of pleasures."*

Plato, in the Protagoras, shows that even on Aristippus' assumption wisdom is the one virtue - that abstract wisdom which he calls the "art of computation", without which a life of pleasures is not possible and by which the pleasure of the moment is given its true value.

If, on the other hand, Plato's theory of virtue as expressed in this pleasure theory be considered as his serious conviction, then the criticism applicable to the theory of courage it embodies is that courage, so defined, is indistinguishable from the other virtues and the word, therefore, becomes meaningless. Such a view seems to be almost entirely at variance with Plato's later treatment of the subject.

The other theory of courage put forth in the Protagoras by Socrates appears to approach more closely to what may, perhaps, be regarded as the genuinely Socratic view. It shows notable similarity with Xenophon's account of Socrates' opinion of courage, which is as follows:** "It is clear, for instance, that Scythians or Thracians would not venture to take shield and spear and contend with Lacedaemonians; and it is equally evident that Lacedaemonians would demur to entering the lists of battle against Thracians if limited to their light shields and javelins, or against

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* Diogenes Laertius - trans. Yonge, p. 87.

**Xen. Mem. Bk.III, Ch.9 - trans. Dakyn Pt.I, p.109.

Scythians without some weapon more familiar than bows and arrows. And as far as I can see this principle holds generally: the natural differences of one man from another may be compensated by artificial progress, the result of care and attention." The likeness of the examples given here to those used in the Protagoras to illustrate the fact that courage depends upon skill in the use of weapons forcibly suggests the conclusion that these accounts give the true Socratic view of courage.

Aristotle also corroborates this conclusion when he speaks* of the "Socratic notion that courage is knowledge." His remarks on this sort of courage form a very pertinent criticism of the theory as it is set forth in Xenophon and in the Protagoras. He rightly points out that trained soldiers on the battle-field are eminently superior, under ordinary circumstances, to untrained men because of their skill in the use of weapons and of their general familiarity with the military environment. The ability which enables them to face dangers with equanimity has been inculcated in them by habit and training. But it is a knowledge of the means of averting danger, not a knowledge which distinguishes between the dangerous and the not dangerous. It is a skill that displays itself as mental control in the quick and precise manipulation of weapons, and as physical control in the absence of bodily expressions of terror. The untrained soldier will tremble and feel inclined to run away when he first faces the fearsome sights and sounds of battle,

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* Eth. Nic., Bk.III, 8, V. trans. Peters, p.86.

but he who has had long experience in such things is not subject to these impulses. Nevertheless, the mechanical nature of such courage is observable when untoward dangers arise - when the enemy attacks with overwhelming force. Then the trained soldier is most likely to turn coward. He is "the first to fly-----fearing death more than disgrace,"* while brave citizen-troops" deem such action base and will be cut to pieces rather than save their lives by fleeing.

This criticism clearly shows that real courage consists in something other than mere skill or ability to avoid danger through knowledge of the use of weapons.

Summing up the difficulties in the Socratic theory that courage is knowledge, it is evident:- (1) that the confidence which accompanies the man trained in a special knowledge of the use of implements of defense is not courage, since when circumstances arise which outride his knowledge his confidence disappears; (2) that if courage is identical with wisdom of this or of any sort, it becomes indistinguishable from all other virtues; (3) that Socrates in the Protagoras confuses the knowledge that is skill with the knowledge that is science and by identifying courage with both of them renders obscure the definition of the term.

II. It is in order, then, in a progressive study of the Platonic ideal of courage to look for a solution of these difficulties in other dialogues. There are two questions to be borne in

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* Eth. Nic. Bk.III, 8, ix - trans. Peters, p.87.

mind in the conduct of this search: (1) is there any suggestion in the Platonic dialogues that courage admits of an internal distinction, i.e. are there grades of courage? and (2) what is the differentia of courage in relation to the other virtues, what constitutes its specific connotation? In answer to these questions reference will be made, first, to the Laches - not with the intention of finding there explicit statements of these distinctions, but rather with the hope that there may be in this dialogue evidences of a more extended conception of courage than the Protagoras contained.

It may be expedient to state at once that it is assumed, for purposes of the subject in hand that the Laches is a later composition than the Protagoras. We are well aware that this opinion has been opposed by many learned and authoritative critics, and that it has also been upheld by several others of like eminence. The chief reason for adherence to it on the present occasion has just been suggested. Other reasons will be forthcoming in the detailed discussion of the dialogue.

Although the Laches is held to be one of the earliest of Plato's works, some declaring it to have been written even before the death of Socrates, it displays practically no evidences of immaturity with respect to the literary and artistic development of its material. The characters are portrayed with notable vividness and precision. In common with many great dramatists Plato concerns himself little with historical accuracy. While the three leading characters of the dialogue were undoubtedly chosen by him because of their well known historical careers, nevertheless he exercises full

dramatic license in the presentation and embellishment of the literary setting. A remark by Laches regarding Socrates' bravery at Delium places the date of the supposed conversation in the dialogue after the year 423 B.C., it must lie and before the year 418 B.C. when Laches fell at Mantinaea. Nicias and Laches are both represented as renowned generals - men who have already acquired military fame great enough to attract the wistful admiration of Lysimachus and Melesias, the two old men who have themselves so pitifully failed to achieve such glory. Socrates, on the other hand, is described as being considerably younger than the two generals and his name is evidently much less widely known. Lysimachus has heard only incidental mention of him and has failed to identify him as the son of his former friend, Sophroniscus. Now within the dates mentioned as the limits between which the conversation of the dialogue must have taken place Socrates would be somewhere between the ages of forty-six and fifty-one and thus scarcely so young either in years or in reputation as Plato here presents him. Nevertheless the inaccuracy, if it exists, is entirely inconsequential to the theme of the dialogue and to its artistic treatment. It is just possible that the contrast between the bickering and undignified repartee of Laches and Nicias, their petty display of temper and their incoherent thinking, with the coolness and serenity and logic of Socrates may be strengthened by the emphasis put upon their disparity in age and reputation, and, if so, Plato's license is entirely justifiable.

A little more detailed consideration of the characters may perhaps serve to show the bearing of the artistic upon the phil-

osophic treatment of the subject of the dialogue.

Laches is represented by Plato as the typical Athenian warrior. He is bluff, honest, good-natured, scornful of inaction and "mere talk", keenly appreciative of the Spartan methods of warfare. He is ready to listen to Socrates because he admires him for his bravery as a soldier. He knows nothing of his skill as a dialectician. He shows towards Nicias' view of courage great intolerance, almost contempt, and displays at the same time quite a marked jealousy of his ability and a rather childish eagerness to show that his rival, like himself, has been "talking nonsense." Nevertheless, Laches has, on the whole, a frank and attractive disposition. This delineation seems to correspond fairly accurately with the character of the historical Laches, as indeed with that of any Athenian soldier of his type. He is the stock example of the natural warrior, that is, of the brave man who fights fearlessly, not primarily by reason of his military experience, but because fearlessness is native to him. It is his nature to encounter the foe with passion and spirit.

Socrates is by no means scornful of such a man. More than once throughout the conversation he manifestly acknowledges Laches' real bravery and his partial agreement with his point of view. He says, "Anyone would say we had courage who saw us in action but not, I imagine, he who heard us talking about courage just now."* ---"Let us, too, endure and persevere in the inquiry and then courage will not laugh at our faint-heartedness in searching for courage which, after all, may very likely be endurance."** Plato undoubtedly realized that Laches and men of

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* Laches, 193.

** Laches, 194.

his type performed great service for the state in the prosecution of the successful military operations in which they engaged, and by his sympathetic treatment of him in this dialogue he does full justice to the merits of his character. Nevertheless, when Laches is placed by the side of Socrates, Plato's dramatic genius demands expression and Laches' limitations cannot but shand revealed.

Socrates is indeed the "true musician",* whose words and deeds are attuned to the best Dorian mode which Laches himself so admires. His character is harmoniously formed, in so far as he thinks and speaks as he acts. Laches admits that though he knows what courage is he finds himself unable to describe it. His words will not conform to his deeds. With Socrates, it is not so. In spite of his lack of ostentation and his careful self-effacement, which stands in such contrast to the marked self-satisfaction of both Laches and Nicias, the reader is convinced that Socrates could, if he desired, define courage as unmistakably and as unerringly as he displayed it at the battle of Delium. This impression is given both by the acuteness and clarity of his questioning and by the perseverence and calmness with which he encounters difficulties in the argument, displaying the same self-control and presence of mind in intellectual warfare as he had on the battle field at Delium. Fighting boldly, he retreats without sharing the wild flight of the others. Laches in the intellectual conflict becomes confused and excited and is far too ready to admit defeat. Therefore, in

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* Laches, 188.

Socrates as compared to Laches is to be found the well-rounded character, the harmoniously developed personality.

In the character of Nicias are to be seen altogether different qualities from those just described. In the Laches Nicias upholds the thesis that courage is knowledge of that which inspires fear and confidence. It has been generally said, among Platonic critics, that Nicias is here voicing the Socratic view of courage and that Socrates does not disagree with his arguments. At first glance, perhaps, this might appear to be so, but some reflection upon the character of Nicias as well as upon his peculiar misapprehension of the nature of that knowledge in which he declares courage to consist would seem to give grounds for questioning such a statement.

Nicias, as is well known, is one of the generals who brought disaster upon Athens by his inefficient conduct of the Sicilian expedition. Plutarch, in his Lives gives a vivid account of the character and political career of the man, a character and a career which is scarcely indicative of the embodiment of the Socratic theory of courage. Nicias was by inheritance immensely wealthy, and a great deal of his authority at Athens seems to have been due to what Plutarch calls his "generosity". His character was a peculiar one. Naturally timid and ingratiating he obtained popularity by providing pleasure for the Athenians. "He tried to captivate the people by choral and gymnastic exhibitions and other like prodigalities, outdoing in the costliness and elegance of these all his predecessors and contemporaries."* He was equally lavish in

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* Plutarch, Nicias and Alcibiades, trans. Perrin, p.58.

sacrificing to the gods and in the observance of all religious rites. When his ambition was gratified by means of such "ostentatious publicity"* and he found himself one of the great men of Athens, his timidity and ingratiation became remoulded into excessive caution and intense piety and religious fervour amounting practically to abject superstition. As a general, he "made safety his chief aim",** and avoided as far as possible long and laborious commands. Because of this careful selection of military enterprises he was highly successful and acquired considerable fame as a general.

He had, of course, numerous rivals whom he tried to circumvent by every possible artifice of cunning and wariness. For this reason he was extremely modest about his own valour and ascribed his successes almost entirely to the favour of fortune. He saw that the military reverses, so common in his day, which occurred under great Athenian leaders contributed very much to their unpopularity and loss of power and consequently he opposed war and advocated alliance with Sparta as strongly as he dared. The Sphacteria incident brought much discredit upon him. But it was in the Sicilian expedition that Nicias' weaknesses proved most disastrous to the Athenian people. The command was forced upon him, very much against his will, and he along with Alcibiades and Lamachus set out to attack Syracuse and other Dorian cities in Sicily. Alcibiades being recalled by his enemies at Athens soon after he reached his distina-

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* Plutarch, Nicias and Alcibiades, trans. Perrin, p.62.

** Ibid. p.63.

tion, Nicias was left in practically supreme command, Lamachus having very little influence. Instead of making a direct attack Nicias cruised and idled about the island, thinking to frighten the enemy by the display of his fleet. Upon failure to do this, he made a few attacks and gained one or two slight victories, but neglected to make use of them because of his religious superstition. It is not necessary to mention further details of Nicias' command. It was characterized throughout by the same qualities and the ultimate result was complete disaster. Always by his excessive caution and hesitation and calculation he let the time for action slip by and when he finally realized the catastrophe he had brought upon the Athenians he had not the resolution to face them and receive his due reward but, instead, weakly took his own life.

There is, of course, in the Laches absolutely no reference to this expedition, as at the time of the supposed conversation in the dialogue Nicias was at the height of his power in Athens. Yet to Plato as a loyal citizen and to those Athenians who would read the dialogue the name of Nicias could not have been other than loathsome. Is it probable then, or even conceivable that Plato would have intended to entrust to Nicias the advocacy of the doctrine of Socrates, his beloved master and teacher? There is internal evidence in the dialogue which tends to show that Nicias was incapable of understanding the Socratic conception of knowledge. He declares courage to consist in a knowledge of things which inspire fear or confidence, and, upon being pressed, admits that such a knowledge

must include a comprehension of all good and evil. Upon his premises, then, courage must result from wisdom. No man could be brave unless he were wise. The conclusion of such reasoning is that fearless animals and children and ignorant men are not brave, since they have not a knowledge of all good and evil. Laches at one takes sharp exception to this statement and declares, with some bitterness, that Nicias is "seeking to deprive of the honour of courage those whom all the world acknowledges to be courageous."* Nicias evidently feels that he has offended Laches and at once his ingratiatory instinct comes to the fore. He assures him that he considers him and Lamachus and many other of the Athenians "courageous and therefore wise." Nothing could be more out of harmony with what he has just been saying than the order of the words in this phrase. If courage is only wisdom then Nicias, to be consistent, should have told Laches that he considered him "wise and therefore courageous". His remark, whichever way it were put, is eminently false as applied to Laches. Nicias most certainly did not think Laches either courageous or wise, according to his standards. In fact, he openly declares this at the close of the discussion where he says, "I perceive, Laches, that you think nothing of having displayed your ignorance of the nature of courage."** Nothing could be more un-Socratic than the contradiction which this sentence gives to what Nicias has previously said to Laches. Nor could a man capable of such a contradiction have grasped to any measurable extent the significance of the Socratic theory of virtue, as Plato presents it.

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* Laches, 197 ** Ibid. 200

Socrates, himself, attributes Nicias' opinion on courage to Damon, the Sophist. Damon is also mentioned at the end of the dialogue when Nicias remarks that he will go to him for further enlightenment on the subject of the discussion and will then freely impart his knowledge to Laches. Surely no sentiment could be less characteristic of a disciple of Socrates, who emphasized above all, else that knowledge was to be gained by reflection and not by the mere prating of the opinions of others. In formulation or phraseology Nicias' theory of virtue may, perhaps, be considered Socratic. In spirit and interpretation it is at great variance with ~~it~~ the teaching of Socrates.

A more definite consideration of the doctrine of the Laches, is in order, to see if there is contained in it any solution of those difficulties which appeared in the conception of courage as it was presented in the Protagoras.

The Laches opens with the discussion of a problem that was mentioned at the very end of the Protagoras. There Socrates remarked that if courage was wisdom it must be capable of being taught. In the first scene of the Laches Lysimachus and Melesias are found diligently inquiring whether a knowledge of skill in the use of weapons - which is really what the fencing-master taught - should be included in the education of their sons. It is very significant that it is this special knowledge which is the subject of the debate, as in the Protagoras this was one of the kinds of knowledge which Socrates identified with courage. It would seem, therefore, as though Plato were attempting in this dialogue to continue the discussion along the lines of the Protagoras.

Lysimachus and Melesias, and possibly Laches and Nicias, are represented as being unaware of the real problem about which they are inquiring, viz., what is the end which the art of fighting in armour would produce. Socrates hastens to make their position clear by stating explicitly that the advisability of teaching or not teaching youths this art depends upon one's conception of the nature of courage. In other words, he asks whether the possession of the skill of fighting in armour will produce courage.

Before the question has assumed this form, that is, before Socrates has explained the aim of the education they are discussing, Nicias and Laches consider it under the form:- is the art of fighting in armour useful knowledge for a young man to have? Nicias in his reply emphasizes the utilitarian value of such knowledge, giving several plausible reasons in evidence of its value, among others that knowledge of this sort makes a young man more valiant. Evidently, then, at this stage, he adopts the Socratic position of the Protagoras that valour is imparted by experience in the use of weapons.

There is a striking similarity between the replies of Laches and Socrates to this same question. The similarity is to be found in the fact that both question the value of the fencer's art, not from the standpoint of its usefulness, but from the standpoint of knowledge, although Laches is not wholly clear with regard

to this point. He says: "If this art of fence is really a species of knowledge, then it ought to be learned------- for all knowledge appears to be a good, ---- but if not, and if those who profess it are deceivers only, or if it be knowledge, but not of a valuable sort, then what is the use of learning it?" * Socrates, when he is considering this question, declares that it is very necessary that all should realize the nature of the art about which they are deliberating; that the question they are really asking is not, primarily, whether young men should or should not learn the art of fighting in armour, but rather what is that knowledge "the end of which is the soul of youth." **

Both of these replies suggest a doubt, of which no ~~limit~~ hint was given in the Protagoras, whether the art of fighting ~~xxfxxxx~~ in armour is really knowledge. If the Laches had been written before the Protagoras, it would be very singular that Plato should not have taken into consideration this possibility. In the Xenophontic Socrates, as well as in Aristotle's account of the Socratic view of courage, there is no suggestion that the knowledge which was identified with courage might not be considered knowledge at all. Consequently, these words of the Laches seem to imply a departure from the strictly Socratic view and that the Socrates who is here speaking is a different Socrates from that of the Protagoras.

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* Laches, 183

** Ibid. 186

A further indication of this new Socrates who is appearing in the Laches is given at that point in the dialogue where the endeavour is made to have Laches give a general or universal definition of courage. Socrates has been giving examples of what he means by the common qualities in things and he tells Laches that he would like to ask " not only about the courage of heavy armed soldiers ------- and not only who are courageous in war, but who are courageous in perils by sea, and who in disease, or poverty, or again in politics are courageous, and not only who are courageous against pain or fear, but mighty to contend against desires and pleasures." * There seems to be an effort here at widening the concept of courage, so that it includes a struggle that involves not only dangers in war, but dangers in civil life and dangers in one's own character in the way of desires and pleasures. The mere mention of such dangers is perhaps indicative of a developing ideal in Plato's mind and of further reflection upon the nature of courage than was to be found in the Protagoras.

To turn to a more precise consideration of the doctrine of the dialogue, we find Laches defining courage, after several attempts, as "a wise endurance of the soul". * He is unable to uphold his definition because he does not know in what sense he uses the word "wise". Socrates, by his questions, forces him to admit that all wise endurance is not courage. The bravery of the soldier who endures because he is sure that he has the advantages of superior forces and arms on his side is not

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* Laches, 192 ** Laches, 192

nearly so great as the bravery of his opponent who remains at his post, though well aware that he is inferior in these respects and destined to defeat. Yet such endurance as the latter's is called "foolish" and foolish being the opposite of wise, this means courage cannot consist in a "wise endurance". Socrates again uses the three illustrations of the trained fighters on horse back, of the soldier experienced in the use of weapons, and of the skilled diver, as examples of men who endure with a wise endurance; but unlike the Socrates of the Protagoras, he depreciates their bravery.

A comparison of this set of examples in the Laches with that given in the Protagoras is useful, in that it brings out the distinction between the two views of courage upheld on the two occasions. In the Protagoras illustration the diver is brave from the standpoint of appearance. He is an accomplished performer and does a feat of daring with skill and aplomb, The man who does not know how to dive, on the other hand, makes a very poor display of himself. His confidence surpasses his capacity and the show of self-control which was so admired in the expert is lacking in him.

In the Laches illustration the diver is seen from a different standpoint. The spectator is looking not at the appearance of the man, but at his state of mind. He is given an "inside" view. He again sees the expert and the inexpert diver performing, and the one who knows how to dive is confident, quite as unafraid mentally as he previously appeared physically. The "rash" ignorant man who goes down into the well feels his assurance deserting him as he encounters the unexpected and unthought of dangers of the

water.In spite of this he determines to hold out as long as he can and though outwardly he may make a very poor showing,averting very clumsily those dangers which had been so easily overcome by the more skilful ~~one~~ man,yet when he accomplishes his purpose in the face of these difficulties,or even if he fails to accomplish his end and is overcome,struggling,he is the braver man of the two.

The element entering into this illustration which was passed over in the former one is that endurance which consists in a dogged determination to hold on.The untrained diver of the Protagoras is merely rash.He is a blustering miscalculating fellow who collapses when the circumstances prove more difficult than he expected.This is not the case with the parallel character in the Laches.He is just as unskilled as the other,just as untaught in the devices for defense against thedanger of drowning;but he shows himself potentially capable of the self-control and precision of the trained diver, and possessed in addition of a peculiar enduring quality which is more resourceful and more reliable than mere expertness.The essential characteristic of courage as seen in this example of the Laches is endurance.In new and unknown dangers the trained man's knowledge is of no avail and unless he have endurance he will be overcome.The brave man,on the other hand, is not so entirely helpless in an emergency,but forces his endurance to create for him a knowledge more or less adequate for the needs of the moment.

In the context of the Laches in which this illustration

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx occurs, these points are by no means explicitly stated. On the contrary, their implication is so carefully hidden that it escapes the notice of Laches himself entirely. Accordingly, when Socrates suggests to him that they are now regarding as courage the foolish endurance which they had previoudlyargued was base, he is unable to see the necessary distinction to be put upon the word" foolish" and weakly submits to defeat in the argument. Laches' contribution to the dialogue is, nevrtheless, of significance in so far as he declares courage to be some sort of endurance. This principle is not contradicted by Socrates. Indeed, it is admitted by him to a certain extent. The reader is also prepared by what has gone before to investigate further the concept of a wise endurance.

Nicias' definition," that courage is the knowledge of that which inspires fear or confidence in war or in anything"* seems at first sight to be far removed from the conception of Laches. As Nicias himself remarks, this definition applies to a courage that is distinct from fearlessness, something that requires intelligence rather than a blind disregard of danger. Socrates at once points out two important conclusions that are to be drawn from such a definition: (1) that no creatures destitute of intelligence are brave, which excludes as we have already seen, fearless children and animals from the category; (2) that the truly brave man is wanting in neither knowledge nor virtue of every kind. Both Socrates and Laches press this second conclusion with considerable force, declaring that

*Laches, 195

Nicias' brave man must be, upon his premise, either a "god" (Laches' word) or "perfect" (Socrates' expression). These two conclusions point out that courage, as Nicias defines it, is extremely rare among individuals, being confined exclusively to those men who have the knowledge of all good and evil. What Nicias is defining is, in a sense, really courage. It is the courage of the highest degree, that sort which is entirely the product of intellectual control. But Nicias, in the dialogue, fails to grasp the full meaning of such courage. His conception of it is partial, in so far as he does not appear to recognize that it includes the endurance which Laches has been speaking of, as well as wisdom. He also, as has already been pointed out, does not comprehend what that knowledge is which he identifies with courage.

In reality the definitions of Laches and Nicias are not contradictory but supplementary. Each man recognizes one element in courage, but neither understands the complete connotation of the word. Both definitions are suggestive in so far as they indicate a possibility of grades or degrees of courage - a differentiation within the concept itself. Laches' is the superior definition of the two in that he names the essential or common quality in all degrees of courage; endurance. Nicias' wise man would necessarily have endurance as well as all the other virtues of a "perfect" man. Laches' brave man might be enduring without this wisdom.

It will be seen that Laches has supplied a partial solution to the problems left at the end of the Protagoras. He has distinguished, more or less adequately, courage from the

other virtues by the word " endurance". He has also given some intimation that there are stages or degrees of courage. To neither stage is full justice done; had this been the case the dialogue would have forfeited its right to be called a dialogue of search and would have assumed, rather, the positive character of the Republic. In fact, the treatment of courage in the Republic seems to be an expansion and systematization of the suggestions in the Laches. For this reason also there would seem to be grounds for believing the Laches to be a later composition than the Protagoras.

III. Before passing on to the treatment of courage in the Republic it is necessary to make a brief review of several of the intermediate dialogues, for the purpose of getting a glimpse of Plato's developing ideal of virtue, as it is presented both in the teaching and in the personality of Socrates, and of finding out, if possible, the place of courage in this development.

In the Gorgias Socrates appears as the defender and representative of the philosophic life. Callicles, who is his chief opponent, jeers at the character and occupation of the philosopher as weak, puerile and useless. He assures Socrates that the continued study of philosophy robs a man of that energy and self-assertion which are necessary for happiness and, in particular, for defense against one's enemies. No man is happy or virtuous who exercises restraint over his desires. Complete self-indulgence, with the power and liberty to obtain it, is the happiness that nature intended for man.

Laws and restraints, external and internal, are not for the good of the stronger and the superior and the better, but are for the protection of the weak and incapable. The really superior man, that is, the man upon whom nature has bestowed energy and ability beyond the portion of his fellows, loses the happiness that should be his when he submits to the restraint of any of his desires.

Socrates' refutation of this sort of reasoning turns upon the principle that the good is not identical with the fulfillment of all the desires of the soul. He upholds his thesis by pointing out that anything which is said to be good maintains a certain definite proportion of its parts. Excess in one part involves defect in another. So it is with the soul. If one set of desires is indulged to excess, some other part of the soul will be neglected and there will result a disturbance of that proportion which makes it good - the harmony of the parts is lacking. There appears here the idea of the soul as having a definite constitution. The parts are not named, but the relation which obtains between them and which is necessary for virtue is named. This relationship is harmony, or a certain "geometrical" proportion.

Upon this foundation Socrates shows that death is really not the worst ill that can befall a man. Indeed he is not sure but that a certain kind of dying is necessary for the production of that happiness which only the philosopher possesses. The dying that he refers to is the supression of those desires, the indulgence of which would disturb the harmonious

balance of the soul. The means of attaining to this harmony is the exercise of a peculiar kind of disciplinary knowledge. Just as the art of medicine has for its aim the correction of the ills of the body, so the art of the restoration of the soul, which is called "politics", has for its aim the corredtion of the ills of the soul.

Socrates goes on to describe himself in the role of one who is truly exercising the art of politics. His desire is to improve to the utmost of his ability the characters of his fellow-citizens. The man who possesses "soundness of soul" will possess all virtue; He will be just and pious and temperate and brave, "for certainly temperance or self-control consists not in pursuing or avoiding what one ought not, but in pursuing or avoiding what one ought, whether things or men or pleasures or pains, and in steadfast endurance at the call of duty".*

This is the only specific mention of courage in the dialogue. It is to be seen that it is here identified with temperance and the two are shown as present, along with all the other virtues, in an harmonious soul. The character of Socrates himself is illustrative of the courage described in this passage, insofar as he plays the part of a reformer among his fellows. He is fully aware that in attempting to correct their vices, he is incurring their hatred and enmity: that it is altogether likely, if he continues this policy, he will be cast into prison and condemned to death through some

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* Georgias, 507.

false accuser. But if he pursued any other course he would not be "pursuing or avoiding what one ought, but what one ought not," and he would be lacking "in stedfast endurance". In submitting to the fear of death he would be displaying himself as ignorant of those ills of the soul which are greater than death, and, in consequence, he would fail in the pursuit of the philosophic life.

Such is the virtue and character of Socrates as he describes himself in this dialogue. It is to be noted that in the Gorgias Socrates as a person is known only by his description of how he would act in time of peril and danger. The account of his actual conduct at such a time is given elsewhere and will be noted later. Here we have only a forecast; but the forecast is sufficient to show that the courage of the philosopher consists in a resolution to adhere to his way of life in the face of taunts and insults and death. It manifests itself in a characteristic calmness and composure and freedom from passion. It is controlled, entirely, by that intellectual discipline which brings about harmony in the soul. The type of courage displayed in Socrates, in the Gorgias, belongs, therefore, to that higher grade which was partly indicated in the Laches. Socrates is courageous because he is wise.

All that the Meno contains of direct importance for the subject in hand is involved in the distinction between the virtue that is knowledge and that which is merely right opinion. Right opinion differs from knowledge in the respect that it is less abiding, "not being bound by the tie of the cause"*, but so long as it per-

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* Meno, 91

sists it is "no whit inferior" to knowledge as a guide to right action. This distinction between right opinion and knowledge is more fully explained in the Republic and its bearing upon the nature of the virtues is there disclosed. The mention of it in this dialogue is important, as being the first indication of a possibility of good actions resulting from some other control than knowledge. Right opinion is not taught, neither is it given by nature. The statesmen who perform good actions, having no understanding of the good, act through divine inspiration, from "an instinct given by God to the virtuous."* If a good statesman be possessed of that other virtue, which is dependent on the understanding, he will be capable of educating others. What is of positive significance for our present purpose is that the good man may be guided by a standard of "right opinion", which is irrational so far as he is concerned, and externally bestowed, with equally as much profit to others as though he possessed that precise "science of measurement" which previously had alone constituted virtue.

In the Symposium the philosopher is shown to be a lover, that is, "one who desires the eternal possession of the good." Although the phraseology of this dialogue differs considerably from that of the Gorgias and the Meno, the description of how to attain to true virtue is substantially the same. Love, being akin to the mortal, is desirous of the immortal. It can achieve immortality only by "birth in beauty". It is ever appearing in new forms, being born and re-born. Love, therefore, is in constant flux. In this respect

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* Meno, 100

it closely resembles the "science" of the Meno. "For what is implied in the word 'recollection' but the departure of knowledge that is ever being forgotten and is renewed and preserved in recollection and appears to be the same although in reality new, according to that law of succession by which all mortal things are preserved?"*

Therefore the two roads of science and of love are in reality one. They partake of the same nature and lead to the same end - "true virtue."

In Diotimas' description of love there appears a development in the theory of virtue (beyond that given in the Gorgias and the Meno) in the description of an ascending scale of virtues by which the philosopher proceeds from the perceptual love of beauty in fair bodies to the love of beauty absolute. "And the true order of going or being led by another to the things of love, is to use the beauties of earth as steps along which he mounts upwards for the sake of that other beauty, going from one to two, and from two to all fair forms, and from fair forms to fair actions, and from fair actions to fair notions, until from fair notions he arrives at the notion of absolute beauty, and at last knows what the essence of beauty is."**

The two kinds of virtue mentioned in the Meno find their place in this scale. The "good deeds" which are there controlled by "right opinion" here corresponds to the love of "fair

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* Symposium, 208

**Ibid. 211

actions"; while that higher virtue which comes from knowledge is nothing else than the love of the essence of beauty. The two kinds of virtue are not incompatible; nor are they of diverse origin. One is simply a later stage than the other.

It will be seen that the theory of virtue which is presented by the Gorgias, the Meno and the Symposium adds considerably to that contained in the Protagoras and the Laches. In the earlier dialogues, it is true, virtue was said to be knowledge, but the way to attain that knowledge was not described. The philosopher was the wise man, but how he came by his wisdom was not disclosed. The three later dialogues give some account of his development from apparent to real knowledge. This development proceeds from an admiration of the good, or the beautiful, in the things of sense, in concrete forms and practises, to that complete apprehension of the nature of the good, which constitutes adequate knowledge. In the passage from one stage to the next in the acquisition of this knowledge a concomitant series of virtues appears, so that the philosopher first performs good deeds in an unreasoning fashion, without understanding the nature of the good, and then, with the progress of his development, guides his conduct by knowledge, with greater and greater surety. From such a development it becomes apparent that an irrational and external sort of virtue is prior to that which depends upon true knowledge.

In the light of this theory of virtue it is to be expected that the separate virtues, such as courage, temperance, etc., should show varying degrees of perfection in accordance

with the particular stage of development in knowledge of the individual who displays them. The courage of the man who is guided by right opinion should be inferior to that of him who has actual knowledge. A corroboration of this inference is to be found in Alcibiades' description of Socrates, which appears at the end of the Symposium.

Alcibiades has arrived late at the banquet and upon being informed that the other guests have been speaking in praise of love, he proceeds to add his contribution. Instead of discussing love abstractly, as the others had done, more or less, Alcibiades praises Socrates. The connection of this speech with the rest of the dialogue is not, at first sight, very clear. Nevertheless, upon reflection, its relevancy becomes most apparent. Alcibiades, in describing the character of Socrates, is giving to the company a picture of the ideal lover who is also, necessarily, the ideal philosopher, in accordance with the thesis of the Symposium.

The form which this description assumes has considerable significance. It takes account both of the physical characteristics and of the character of Socrates. Alcibiades emphasizes the fact that the outward appearance of Socrates is deceptive. He is far from beautiful. But in reality he is very similar to the masks of Silenus, which, when opened, disclose "images of gods inside them".* Alcibiades declares his desire to give a "fluent and orderly enumeration"** of all the "wonderful qualities" of this man. He surpasses all others in "wisdom and endurance", yet he is ever disclaiming the possession of knowledge and talking of

* Symposium, 215 ** Symposium, 215

his ignorance. ~~Yet~~ Actually, his knowledge is so powerful that temperance and self-restraint and courage have attained in him their highest excellence.

Alcibiades gives two vivid pictures illustrative of the temperance and courage of Socrates. We shall consider only the second, although it may be mentioned in passing that that "endurance" which Alcibiades sets out to describe comprises, in accordance with the enlarged concept of courage given by Socrates in the Laches, a contending against dangers in the desires of the body and in pleasure, as well against those dangers indicated by fear and pain. Consequently, the account of Socrates' perfect temperance and self-restraint bears witness to his courage as forcibly as does the tale of his endurance in battle.

Alcibiades relates how conspicuous for bravery Socrates was at Delium and at Potidaea. He speaks of his "extraordinary power of sustaining fatigue",* telling how he marched with bare feet over ice better than others who had their feet "swathed in felt and fleeces".** His bodily strength was evidently much superior to that of the common soldier. Socrates had also another remarkable bodily quality. He was capable of drinking great quantities of wine, without getting drunk. No human being had ever seen Socrates drunk, yet on occasion he indulged in wine freely. During the flight of the army after the battle of Delium, instead of being seized by panic, like the others, Socrates was cool and composed, "stalking like a pelican and rolling his eyes----and

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* Symposium, 220 ** Symposium, 221

making very intelligible to anybody, even from a distance, that whoever attacked him would be likely to meet with a stout resistance." He was, says Alcibiades, superior even to Laches in this respect.

The physical characteristics of Socrates in this account are very prominent. There is evident in him an impressive bearing of defiance and great physical power, as well as calmness and composure in the midst of panic. What seems to be implied in this emphasis upon bodily qualities is that the wise man will be superior in every respect - mental, moral, and physical - to him who has not knowledge. The true philosopher must not have a weak or inferior body. He is to be as vigorous physically as he is mentally. This accounts for his extraordinary powers of endurance. He does not get drunk because his body is stronger, more capable of withstanding the effects of excess, than that of more ignorant men. The reason for the physical superiority of Socrates appears in the Republic, where the character of the ideal philosopher is analysed.

The theoretical implications in respect to the courage of the philosopher as compared to that of the ordinary soldier have been fulfilled in this illustration. Socrates has greater physical endurance; he has more presence of mind; he has greater self-control. In a word, his courage is more perfect; that is, it is indicative of a higher stage of development.

The Apology is the defense of a man summoned to trial by false and ignorant accusers. In it Socrates maintains his usual mode of speech, refusing to give an oration or indulge in

words and phrases "duly ornamented".* He expresses a contempt, in this refusal, of the devices of rhetoric, which is quite in accord with his forecast of this occasion given in the Gorgias. Socrates here does what he there declared he would do. His defense consists in a clear and uncompromising statement of the upright purpose of his life. He is not dumb before his judges, neither is he confused. He carries on his defense in a half-defiant, half-ironic fashion, as though the preservation of his own life were a subject not quite weighty enough to demand his altogether earnest effort. Nevertheless, he is careful to impress upon his judges the fact that if they unjustly sentence him to death, it will be a very grave and serious matter for them. His attitude, in this respect, exemplifies the theory stated in the Gorgias that it is worse to do than to suffer wrong.

Socrates in the more serious part of his defense puts into the mouth of his fellow-citizens the following charge against him: "And are you not ashamed, Socrates, of a course of life which is likely to bring you to an untimely end?"** It is not himself, but the philosophical life that is to be defended. This is exactly the task which he assumed in the Gorgias, and his reply in this case is substantially the same as in the former:- "A man who is good for anything ought not to calculate the chance of living and dying; he ought only to consider whether in doing anything he is doing right

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* Apology, 17 ** Apology, 24

or wrong - acting the part of a good man or of a bad."*

It is notable that in answering this charge Socrates compares his present position to that of Achilles who feared dishonor rather than death. He also compares it to his own stand at Potidaea and Delium, and scorns to commit an act which would overthrow the reputation he acquired on those occasions. It is evident from these references that Socrates sees in this adherence to the philosophic life an opportunity for the display of courage, and he relies, on this occasion, upon the patterns of heroism which he finds in Homer as well as in his own military experience. Indeed, he expresses this reliance when he says: "For wherever a man's place is, whether the place which he has chosen or that in which he has been placed by a commander, there he ought to remain in the hour of danger; he should not think of death or of anything but of disgrace."**

He pictures himself as a soldier of philosophy under the command of God, and any renunciation of his opinions or ways of living would be a desertion of his post through fear of death. He would no longer be courageous, but a coward. The ideal of courage exhibited in this decision of Socrates is, surely, the military ideal of sticking to one's post. It is almost, if not entirely, identical with Laches' conception of an endurance of the soul. Displaying itself as it does in the character of Socrates at this critical moment in his life, it is strikingly indicative of one aspect of the ideal of courage in the Platonic philosophy.

Immediately afterwards Socrates proceeds to an account of a more rational basis for courage in the philosophical life. The fear of death, he says, is a fear born not of wisdom, but of a

* Apology, 28 ** Apology, 28

pretense of wisdom. No man knows the nature of death, nor whether it be good or evil, but the wise man does know that injustice and disobedience entail injury to the doer. In giving up his way of living he would be disobeying the gods, deserting the search for truth and his function as a philosopher and thereby necessarily bringing harm upon himself. "Wherefore, O men of Athens, ----whatever you do, know that I shall never alter my ways, not even if I have to die many times."*

This is the most earnest part of Socrates' defense. It shows him protesting against giving in to the fear of death, because in so doing he would be acting contrary to his rational conviction of the right. The courage that he displays, consequently, is the courage that necessarily belongs to the philosopher; but at the same time it is shown to contain an enduring stubbornness of purpose, a determination to stick to his post, because this is what he has been commanded to do. The standard of control seems to be partly external, partly internal. He has been ordered by God, and he has also determined by his own reason the wisdom of his course. In other words, there is a blending here of the two elements, endurance and knowledge.

The courage which belongs to the Socrates of the Crito is essentially the courage resulting from a reasoned theory of virtue. Crito has been beseeching him to escape from prison and betake himself to Thessaly, so that he may avoid the death with

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* Apology, 30

which he has been so unjustly sentenced. Socrates replies to this plea by stating his desire to be guided now, as he has been at all times, by reason. Let us not be influenced, he says, by the opinion of the many, but let us act according to our conviction of what is right. Such a conviction is based upon an understanding of the just and the unjust and it states that "not life but a good life is to be chiefly valued."* Socrates then proceeds to show that in escaping from prison he would be disobeying the law, and doing injury, therefore, to the state. Upon the premise that it is never right to commit injustice, such an act would be a violation of the principles of duty and contrary to the conduct of a good man.

It is plain that this endurance results from rational standards. It is consequent upon a knowledge of the truth. It is the courage that must necessarily inhere in the character of a wise man - a virtue dependent upon and resulting from a sovereign reason.

In the Phaedo we are given a final presentation of the courage of Socrates as illustrative of the Platonic ideal. Never has Socrates appeared more typical of the philosophy which he professes than he does in this dialogue. We see him on the day of his death, discussing immortality with his friends, not only with cheerful fortitude and calmness and composure, but with keen intellectual force. He meets the objections of Simmias and Cebes with the utmost openness of mind, exhorting them to "think of the truth and not of Socrates,"** to avoid "partisanship" and a personal

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* Crito, 48

** Phaedo, 91

interest in the outcome of the argument. In the final refutation of Cebes' points Socrates displays extraordinary skill in the development of his proof of immortality and in the presentation of his conclusions. He is genial and gentle - a little more gentle than usual, perhaps, and most anxious that his friends refrain from excessive indulgence in grief. His one purpose seems to be to impress upon them the fact that death has no terrors for the wise man; that it is indeed an advantage rather than a hardship, for it permits the soul to pursue truth unhampered by bodily impediments.

Throughout the dialogue Socrates maintains towards himself and his own fate a peculiar objective or impersonal attitude. This is apparent on several occasions. When he is rubbing his legs, after they have been freed from the iron chains, he whimsically remarks how singular are pleasures and pains; how unlike and yet how curiously related they are to each other; "for they never come to a man together, and yet he who pursues either of them is generally compelled to take the other."* Such a remark, upon such an occasion, is particularly illuminating in that it vividly discloses the disposition of the man. His mind is unperturbed and apparently unconcerned with the change in his life that is so near at hand. The dignity and pathos of the death scene in the Phaedo is unsurpassed in all literature. In it Plato does full justice to the greatness of his master. It is inconceivable to think that Socrates could have died otherwise than is here described.

Socrates' fearlessness in facing death is not dependent upon his conviction of the truth of immortality. If the argument in the Phaedo had resulted in a negative rather than in a positive con-

* Phaedo, 60.

clusion, it can be safely asserted that Socrates would have met death with equally as much fortitude. Socrates is courageous because he is wise - wise not in the sense of knowing with absolute certainty that death will not destroy him, but wise rather in the assurance that in living as he has done he has lived in the best possible way, in the way which is most conducive to happiness, or, to what is identical with it, the good. It is in this sense that Socrates can be said to have knowledge of the truth. By the power of this conviction, Socrates' courage is the inevitable result of his wisdom, that is, of his theory of living. His spirit is entirely subservient to his reason, and because his reason is developed and supreme, his courage is simply an evidence of its power.

In the early part of the Phaedo there is a reference to the courage of the philosopher which demands attention. Willingness to face death on the part of the ordinary man, says Socrates, results from the fact that he is afraid of evils greater than death. Willingness to face death on the part of the philosopher is directly consequent upon his desire to obtain truth. Therefore all but the philosophers are courageous only from fear.* The latter are brave not because of fear but because of their assurance that by death they will make a great step forward in the attainment of wisdom. The philosopher, therefore, is courageous because he knows death to be a good and does not look upon it simply as a lesser evil.

In this passage Socrates hardly does justice to the courage of the ordinary man. It is not because the ordinary man fears

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* Phaedo, 68

other evils that he chooses death, but it is because he is determined to stick to his post, whether death be good or evil. The spirit of endurance seems to be lost sight of in a criticism of the opinion that courage consists in a knowledge of pleasures and pains and a preference for the pleasurable. It is quite plain that he is criticizing the statements made by the Socrates of the Protagoras and possibly of Nicias in the Laches. The Socrates of the Phaedo declares that "the exchange of one fear or pleasure or pain for another fear or pleasure or pain, which are measured like coins, t the greater with the less, is not the exchange of virtue."* He advocates, rather, a knowledge superior to that which consists in a mere counting or reckoning of the proportionate values between pleasures and pains. The knowledge with which he associates courage does not consist in a numerical aggregation of goods and evils, but in the desire for an absolute good without quantity and without degree. The courage that is mixed up with fears and pleasures upon any other conception of knowledge than this "is a shadow of virtue only"** and does not pertain to the character of the philopopher.

As we have just said these statements do not do full justice to the courage of the ordinary man or to the knowledge that controls it. They contradict the conclusions found in the Meno and in the Symposium, viz. that virtues based upon right opinion constituted an early stage in the philosophic life. The shadows of virtue have value when they truly reflect a higher kind of virtue which comes from knowledge. They are inferior to the latter as far

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* Phaedo, 69

** Phaedo, 69

as practical purposes are concerned only in so far as they are apt to be less constant.

IV. The first mention of courage in the Republic appears in the description of the nature and education of the warrior. It will be remembered that the need for the warrior class resulted from the increased wants of a luxurious or "fevered" state. When the desires of a nation become so numerous that the resources of the country are no longer able to satisfy them, then will that nation try to seize a strip of its neighbour's territory. For the successful execution of this purpose a strong warrior class is necessary. This class will also exercise the function of defense. It will protect its own state from the desires and greedy aspirations of similarly inflated nations and, lastly, from greedy individuals within its own borders. Such are the origin and first functions of the warrior class.

The character and training of the warriors are next described. In a state in which every man is engaged in but one occupation it is very plain that he who engages in the occupation of war must be a true artist - eminently suited to the performance of his business both by nature and education. The guardians, therefore, shall be carefully picked in accordance with their natural gifts and trained so that they may possess the skill necessary for the successful carrying on of their duties as defenders of the people. Socrates then states the natural gifts of the guardian. He is very like a good watch-dog in so far as he is quick, swift, strong and spirited. He is both gentle and valiant, being friendly to his acquaintances and dangerous to strangers. He who is to be a good and

noble guardian of the state will have in him a combination of these physical and mental qualities.

Provided with them, the guardian must be educated. His education is for the purpose of fitting him to be a good soldier. But the good soldier, he who distinguishes himself in battle, is above all else brave. Therefore the education of the warrior is primarily and essentially for the purpose of producing courage. The spirited youth is to be trained from his earliest childhood in music and gymnastic. Music shall include literature and music proper. The first stories that are to be told to the child are to be "models of virtuous thoughts."* Such stories shall be severely censored in order that all that is bad may be rejected and the good retained. Those tales which deal with the doings of the gods must be true to the divine nature. God is to be represented as good, not hurting others. Evil is not to be attributed to him, neither is he to be pictured as a magician, capable of changing from one form to another. God is perfection; and if he were to change, the change would be for the worse, since the perfect cannot become more perfect. God is also incapable of deception; he shall not be represented as telling lies. In a word, all of the traditional myths are to be carefully revised before they shall be put in the hands of the child who is to be educated as a warrior.

The kind and object of this education is plain. The youth by having continually put before him the images of perfect deities, "true both in word and in deed," is stimulated to act like them. He is provided with the mould or pattern after which his own conduct shall be shaped.

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* Republic II, 378.

If he is to be brave, all fear of death must be abolished. For this purpose those stories of the world below where the dead endure nameless terrors, must be repressed. Great heroes shall not be represented as weeping or giving way to excessive grief upon the death of their friends. Excessive grief and excessive laughter are both to be condemned, for both are indicative of lack of self-control. The warrior who has such examples before him "will be always whining and lamenting on slight occasions."* Instead, he must be trained to bear any misfortune with the greatest equanimity. The child is to hear of deeds of endurance on the part of heroes and of the refusal, by them, of all gifts pertaining to the love of money, or of anything other than honour.

In gymnastic the youth is to be given such training as shall minister to the nurture of his soul. He is not to be trained like the common athlete for the sole purpose of producing a strong body, but he shall perform such physical feats as shall tend to stimulate the spirited element of his nature. The gymnastic is supplementary to the music and is to prevent the warrior from becoming too softened by culture. Its real purpose is identical with that of music - the improvement of the soul.

There are several things to be said regarding this education of the warrior. In the first place it is seen that at no stage in the process is the soldier given an analysis of the nature of courage. Instead, he is provided with pictures of the gods and of the characters of heroes. From these he learns to recognize beautiful forms. He becomes a lover of beauty as it exists concretely in the virtues of temperance and courage. He also, in time, is

* Republic III, 388.

capable of distinguishing the contraries of beautiful forms and exhibits his repulsion towards them. It is very necessary that the guardian should not grow up "amid images of moral deformity", but that the artists shall be "those who are gifted to discern the true nature of beauty and grace" which "will insensibly draw the soul even in childhood into harmony with the beauty of reason."

The standard here is rational, but it is external. The artist has to know the "true nature" of beauty; but the learning of it by the youth is "insensible", i.e. its true nature is not explained nor understood but unconsciously imitated.

The emphasis upon beauty, existing for the warrior in discrete forms, for the artist in the "beauty of reason", reminds us of the philosopher's scale of development given in the Symposium. Can it be said that Plato thought that the love of beauty possessed by the warrior would ultimately lead, if pursued, to a knowledge of beauty absolute?

It is to be remarked that in the education which shall inculcate bravery mathematics does not enter. There is no mention in the parts of the "Republic" that have been reviewed, of the youth being taught any geometry or science proper; and yet these parts are supposed to contain the ideal education for the production of courage. The significance of the omission for the Platonic conception of courage is considerable. It would seem to show that the knowledge which is science, that is, that which is obtained only by the exercise of the reason, need not be possessed by the brave man. The definition of courage given a little later on*

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* Republic, IV, 430

substantiates this conclusion. "And this sort of universal saving power of true opinion in conformity with law about real and false dangers, I call and maintain to be courage." This "true opinion" is given to the warrior by men wiser than he.

To sum up: the ideal of courage contained in the description of the warrior-class demands two conditions, (1) a nature that is spirited and (2) a training of that nature through the impression upon it of a permanent opinion concerning real and apparent dangers. This opinion is gained through the unconscious and habitual inculcation of "laws" or standards, which are themselves rational but which are not rationally apprehended.

The similarity of this concept of courage with the ideal contained in the Laches is very striking. The peculiar excellence of the disciplined spirited element corresponds closely if not completely with Laches' "endurance." The nature of the "wise endurance" over which he was so puzzled is here made plain.

In the tripartite division of the soul which immediately follows upon the account of the threefold state, the place and function of courage in the human system is indicated. It was seen that in the development of the state the need of a warrior class arose from the increased demands of a luxurious people; that in the education and training of this class a purging took place, within it, of the very luxuries which had brought about its genesis; that as the state returned to a more healthy condition the function of the warrior changed from a defender or aggressor of others to a guardian and ruler of his people. At this stage the auxiliary became separated from the guardian proper and attached himself to the

latter for the purpose of assisting him in the orderly control of the whole state. It is in this latter position and with this latter function that the spirited element in the individual appears. Spirit lies half-way between reason and appetite. It differs from reason in that it is sometimes present when the former is absent- as in the case of passionate children and fearless animals - and that it is, in the healthy soul, always subject to and dependent upon reason for its activity. Spirit differs from appetite in the nature of its desires. Its desires are to follow as closely as may be the objects of reason. Appetite desires those objects to which reason is opposed. Spirit, therefore, becomes the ally of reason against appetite. It is the medium and the only means which reason has of controlling appetite and so producing harmony and justice throughout.

From this analysis, spirit, as the true warrior naturally possesses it, appears as the basis of courage, which when impressed by reason achieves the complete fulfilment of its potentialities. Its function as intermediary between reason and appetite is very important. Without it reason would be helpless and would be overwhelmed by the manifold appetitive desires, and therefore justice and wisdom and temperance would cease to be.

In the express account of the character of the philosopher which occurs in the Republic, explicit mention is made of practically all of those qualities which have been found in the character of Socrates as the embodiment of Plato's ideals. Like the warrior the philosopher must have certain natural qualifications which when subjected to education and training fit him to assume

his proper position in the state. There is given a description of the ideal philosopher at the period when he is fit to govern the state. His first and most important characteristic is that his soul is capable of knowing "true being". As a lover of knowledge, he will be a lover of trugh and will shun falsehood as it exists both in false ideas and in false deeds. Being absorbed in the pleasures of the soul he will have little time or inclination for the pleasures of the body. The ideal philosopher is, therefore, temperate. Engaged in the contemplation of "all time and all existence", he will not think much of human life, i.e. he will assign to it only the importance due to its proper proportion as a part of eternal time and being. Death will have no particular terror for him. The philosopher is thus not a coward. By the same reasoning he is shown to be gentle and sociable.

What is here portrayed is an harmonious soul of the sort attributed to the philosopher in the Gorgias. The ideal good man must partake of that peculiar proportion or harmony which characterizes the good in all forms. The more closely he realizes perfection the more apparent this proportion becomes. Now reason is the excellence of man. When, therefore, reason takes up its abode in the soul it must have an harmonious setting.

Not only is the setting for reason to be as perfect as possible in the mental nature of the philosopher but it demands a fit dwelling place as well in his physical characteristics. In the description of the education of those who seem to possess the natural qualifications for the philosopher-guardians, it is said that "the trial of who is first in gymnastic exercises is one of the

most important tests to which our youth are subjected."* Again, the philosopher must be "an unwearied solid man who is a lover of labor in any line; or he will never be able to endure the great amount of bodily exercise or to go through all the intellectual discipline and study which we require of him."** It is evident, in this connection, that the philosopher must be as perfectly equipped as possible, physically as well as mentally, and being so equipped the purpose of his education is to train both body and mind in the way most conducive to the complete development of his soul towards true being.

The education of the philosopher differs from that of the warrior in that it includes a study of the sciences, beginning with arithmetic and continuing until dialectic, the only true science in the strictest sense, is mastered. The study of mathematics has value in helping to turn the soul in the direction of being, away from the things of sense and of appearance. The education of the philosopher is a series of tests-- "tests in labours, lessons, dangers"-- which make trial of every part of his nature, physical, mental and moral. From his early childhood until he is well past middle age he is subjected to such training. The purpose of the tests is two fold: (1) they eliminate all who have not sufficient natural qualifications to entitle them to become true philosophers and rulers of the state; (2) they develppe the capabilities of those who are naturally qualified in such a fashion that their char-

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* Republic VII, 537.

**Republic VII, 535.

acters become well-rounded - as perfectly proportioned as they can be made under mortal conditions.

From this account of the character of the ideal philosopher it becomes evident that if a man is going to show himself a philosopher reason will be revealed in the lower as well as in the higher impulses of his soul. Courage and temperance involve the functioning of reason and display its power as unmistakably as does the comprehension of pure science. Before reason has developed sufficiently in the philosopher to be capable of understanding and loving knowledge, it shows itself in the non-defective or perfect functioning of the appetitive and spirited elements, and when its full development is attained it continues to maintain this functioning. While it is undoubtedly true, upon Platonic premises, that courage is a transient virtue, arising from the conjunction of body and soul, it must not be forgotten that the ideal philosopher as he appears in the Republic does not lose his mortal nature. Plato has emphasized, with extreme care, the fact that the philosopher must have a perfect body as well as a perfect mind. But his physical perfection is the result of the presence of reason in him.

This fact is stated again and again throughout the Republic. This is what is implied when it is said, in connection with gymnastic education, that after all too much attention need not be devoted to physical training since a rational soul must have a good body. The mind is more powerful than the body and it will be able to give of its own accord and without much instruction that degree of perfection to the body which it needs in order to contribute as far as possible to the nurture of the soul.

The assumption underlying the entire description of the character of the philosopher is that reason wherever it resides impresses upon its environment something of the excellence of its own nature. When it takes up its abode in man it makes for itself surroundings which will most facilitate its functioning. Hence it is that where reason is, in that place also will there be every other excellence. It is because of this fact that the philosopher will excel in gymnastic, that he will be temperate, courageous, magnanimous.

It is not to be supposed, on the other hand, that reason, as it exists in its undeveloped state in man, can of its own accord create and maintain its proper environment. If such were the case education would be unnecessary. Plato recognized no such power in the human reason. The whole purpose of the education of the philosopher is to permit the unimpeded development of his natural potentialities by directing them into their proper sphere of activity. Such direction can only be given by other philosophers who have travelled over the same course.

It requires only a brief comparison of the virtue of the warrior and that of the philosopher to understand finally the nature of the Platonic ideal of courage. In the analysis of the Warrior's courage it was found that it was a virtue inherent in a character controlled by reason from without rather than from within. The warrior had no need of science nor of dialectic in his education. The natural bases of his virtue were the qualities of the good watch-dog - a combination of passion and gentleness. There was also in him as in the watch-dog a peculiar "insensible"

liking for knowledge. In consequence of these qualities and of the training which was imposed upon them, courage was produced - a courage whose standard was "rational but external".

In the courage of the philosopher-guardian we see the same natural qualities but with one profound alteration. He, too, shall be gentle and spirited, but his liking for knowledge is not "insensible" or blind, but acute and keenly conscious. The philosopher has need of a vigorously active reason in order that he may understand the nature of true being; and in understanding true being he understands the nature of courage and of all virtue. His courage, too, is rationally controlled, but the control comes from within. It results from the power of his own reason, not of another's.

Nevertheless, it is not to be forgotten that the brave man, as such, does not require for the realization of his excellence that comprehension of reality which the philosopher must have. Provided that he has been properly educated and that he is able to hold fast to his true opinion, his courage, in its outward appearance, will be no whit different from the courage of the philosopher. The statements in the Meno and in the Republic uphold this inference. The description of Socrates' courage by Alcibiades seems at first sight to contradict it, since Socrates was so superior to Laches and the other soldiers. But it is to be remembered that Laches did not hold fast to the "true opinion" when he fled at Delium, if, indeed, it can be said that he ever possessed that "true opinion" which results, according to the Republic, only from the ideal education of the warrior. When the philosopher

and the warrior have each reached the summit of their respective developments, they should be equally courageous on the battle-field. The wise man must be brave, the brave man need not be wise.

It was said at the outset that the philosophy of Plato has been generally characterized as "intellectualistic". The truth of such an assertion is undeniable when the full significance of the word is realized. There can be no doubt that Plato thought of reason as the supreme power of the soul and of wisdom as its greatest virtue. When, however, "intellectualistic" is interpreted in a rigidly exclusive fashion, when it is thought of as taking account of no other virtue than wisdom, then the use of the term as descriptive of Platonic ethics is unfortunate. Plato clearly acknowledges a virtue, the natural qualifications for which do not include the presence of the philosophic reason in the individual. Courage cannot be said to be essentially "intellectualistic" in so far as the brave man is not by nature nor by education fitted to be wise.

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