

reinforced by the syncretistic philosophy of later Greece, which blended the thought of Hellas, the mysticism of the East and the ritual of Egypt in the most charming of mixtures, and in Julian's day it might seem stronger, larger and richer than ever before, especially if the believer willed to believe, as Julian did. His Christianity had been sincere, if emotional merely, and his conversion was genuine, if it too rested chiefly on the emotions. He had communion now with Mithras and the gods, he had the consciousness of being their prophet and of resting on their support, and after all was clear by the death of Constantius, he might freely indulge in the most delightful celebrations.

It will be of interest to read in his own words what his religion meant for him. He had gone to Athens already a Hellen in heart, and thence he was summoned to Milan, to be made Caesar eventually, though this was not quite clear at first. "What floods of tears and what wailings I poured forth," he writes to the Athenians,* "how I lifted up my hands to your Acropolis, when this summons came to me, and besought Athena† to save her suppliant and not forsake me, many of you saw and can testify; and above all the goddess herself, how I asked that I might die there in Athens rather than face that journey. That the goddess did not betray nor forsake her suppliant, she shewed by what she did. For she led the way for me everywhere and set around me on every side angels (or messengers) from the Sun and Moon to guard me. And it befel thus. I went to Milan and lived in a suburb. Thither Eusebia used often to send to me in a kindly spirit and bid me boldly write for whatever I would. I wrote her a letter, or rather a supplication, with language of this nature, 'So may you have heirs, so may God give you such and such, send me home as soon as possible;' but then I thought it might not be safe to send such a letter to the palace to the Emperor's wife. So I besought the gods by night to shew me whether I ought to send the document to the Empress. And they threatened me with a shameful death if I sent it. And

*See note on p. 249.

†The hymn of Proclus to Athena is an interesting parallel. He prays Athena of the Athenian Acropolis for mental light, forgiveness of sin, freedom from disease, a fair gale on the voyage of life, children, wife and wealth, oratory and eminence (*πρὸς Ἀθηνᾶν ἣν ἐνὶ λυοῖς*). Proclus, it may be added, was the philosopher of the 5th century A.D., who won the proud title of *ὁ ἀτάκτορος* the successor i.e. of Plato!