

year will see at once that the only known author who conceivably fulfils these conditions is Plato. The circumstantial evidence thus collected is strengthened by a perusal of the work. Indeed, the title alone will carry conviction to many ardent Platonists. It is entitled "The Philosopher," and has, like most Platonic dialogues, an alternative title "*πραγῆς ἢ θεωρίας*," that is, "The Practical *versus* the Intellectual Life."

Now, it is remarkable that in two (2) dialogues of Plato we are promised a work of this kind; a work which is to deal with the character of the philosopher and the philosophic life. It is yet more remarkable that in the second of these dialogues, that one upon which "The Philosopher" is to follow immediately, Plato has, as it would seem, paved the way for a dialogue, the scene of which should be in Egypt; for in the *Politicus* one of the interlocutors is not indeed an Egyptian, but a next-door neighbour, a Cyrenaean, and he, like the Egyptian pork-dealer, in "The Philosopher," recognizes in his oaths only the Egyptian god Ammon.

But this promise to write a dialogue on "The Philosopher" is nowhere redeemed in our authorized version of Plato. The conclusion follows irresistibly that here, at last, from the library of the Egyptian priest, we have recovered the missing link in the Platonic system. Nor will the negative character of the conclusion reached in "The Philosopher" be a stumbling-block to any one who has realized how deeply that system is penetrated with the negative spirit of the historic Socrates.

Finally, it is permissible to conjecture that Plato, during those Egyptian travels, which left such traces on his philosophy, was entertained by Herodotus' friend, the bursar of Neith, now in his old age, nay—if we may venture, without harshness, to read between the lines of our dialogue—almost in his dotage; that upon leaving he was asked by the bursar, or, more probably, by his wife, to write his name in her autograph book, or some memorial of his visit in her register of her friends' birthdays; then, with the natural blending of simplicity and vanity which runs through the literary character, he would at once exaggerate the meaning of this conventional courtesy, and would sit down to compose an elaborate dialogue. His good hostess would, in alarm, rescue her tiny, gold-edged, red-lettered volume and furtively substitute one of her husband's (in her opinion) worthless papyri, the back of which Plato would patiently cover; no doubt intending at some later season to take a copy of this dialogue for himself. But something—perhaps the tragic incident already conjectured—intervened; and Plato—unlike Carlyle—had no heart to re-write his masterpiece.

INTRODUCTION.

The characters of the dialogue are: (a) Socrates, as usual; (b) The Egyptian bursar-priest, the friend of Herodotus, for whom Plato wrote; (c) an Egyptian pork-packer, or sausage-seller of the hereditary caste of pork-packers (4); his name is not stated: he appears simply as *ἀλλαντοπωλῆς*; (d) Chaerephon, Socrates' Boswell; (e) the bursar's wife (as women figure rarely in the other Platonic dialogues, Diotima alone receiving marked honour, we must assume that the introduction of this lady here was the philosopher's return for the compliment she paid him. But there is something of irony, in that case, in his method of expressing his gratitude to her).

The scene is obviously laid in Sais, where Socrates, with his train, including Chaerephon, are staying, and where they have received some hospitality from the bursar. The time is afternoon.

DIALOGUE.

SOCRATES.—Hail, reverend Sir! I have sought you about the house for many hours, but you have, no doubt, been sacrificing some special sacrifice which it is not lawful for strangers to behold.

BURSAR.—You conjecture well, O Socrates; for I have been sacrificing all this morning and noon to the god whom you Hellenes call Morpheus; and at this service no one is present with me, if not the woman (5).

SOC.—Is it lawful to enquire the ritual, what it is?

BUR.—It is the same with that which you recommend for the attainment of true philosophy: the votary closes his ears and eyes and other senses, and, little by little, attains to un-

consciousness of all things visible and perishable, and ascends by Pure Thought to the world of Pure Ideas (6).

SOC.—Truly a divine ascent you describe; your eyes, too, testify how closely they have been closed, as still blinking and half shut.

BUR.—For, after the splendour of that ideal world, they cannot see clearly in this darkness (7).

SOC.—And therefore I suppose it is that you have put on your tunic this afternoon inside out, and have escaped your notice, thrusting your legs through the arm holes?

BUR.—For the philosopher and the practical man, your Chaerephon says, are not the same. But enough of this: what have you been doing, Socrates, since last evening?

SOC.—Since last evening! but you are like one joking. For you know well that last evening we lay down at the table together, and there remained till the sun was high in the heavens this morning, passing the bowl from left to right: but after that you held it fast and told me to keep the other.

BUR.—What other?

SOC.—I do not know; for I did not see it. But you said there were two bowls, and it seems likely that I was slow of sight.

BUR.—Of this hereafter: what were we saying, Socrates, then? for my memory, as being now old, is not strong.

SOC.—I was asking you, relying on what evidence you had told Herodotus, as he reports also in his history (8), that the Nile rises between Mount Mophy and Mount Crophy: and you were saying that you had told him this during a banquet: and I, having heard, was further asking whether you did so, as being then most fitted yourself to impart esoteric doctrine, and your listener to receive such, and you—

BUR.—Stop, Socrates, here is the woman, and our enquiry is deeper perhaps than in accordance with women's minds.

SOC.—Here, too, is Chaerephon coming: but what is the matter, and who is this stout man he is dragging along with angry looks, as though about to tear him into pieces? and the other seems out of breath. Hail, Chaerephon: but thee, O stranger, as the poet says, addressing by what name shall I address thee rightly?

ALLANTOPOLES.—Pheu! Pheu!

CHAEAPHON.—There, Socrates! you see yourself he cannot speak for shame.

BUR.—Or, perhaps, for fat, O cruel Chaerephon.

CHAE.—This, Socrates, is an hereditary swineherd and pork-dealer of those of the country; and he sells sausages. Moreover, he has recently returned from that voyage (9) of the Phœnician ship which went to Atlantis. And I found him boasting in the market place, to a large crowd, about the marvels of that land: and, supposing him to be discussing, as you also are wont, the nature of justice, I listened, and I heard that the richest cities and men of that land do nothing but make sausages, and that these sausage-sellers value all things in heaven and earth according to their usefulness; and I, being very pleased, said that Socrates also had the same thoughts: for that he thinks the useful thing is beautiful and the useless thing is worthless; but, chancing to enquire whether they agreed with Socrates about other things also, and especially about virtue, that it is knowledge, the man answered grossly, that, as for Socrates, he had never heard his name, never having tasted his sausages, nor had the Atlanteans, to conjecture; but if this Socrates meant that sausages, as being more useful than anything else, were also more beautiful, and that the man who was most knowing to make and sell his sausages was also most virtuous, then let him be conscious to himself being so fortunate as to agree with the Atlanteans. But I, being very indignant on behalf of philosophy, bade him hush, for that Socrates was a philosopher, not a sausage seller; and he, retorting that he and the Atlanteans did not value philosophy at one obol, I seized him and dragged him here to you, for you to refute him, and to show him that the philosophic life is by far more blessed than the trading life.

SOC.—You have ever been a valiant champion of philosophy, O Chaerephon, and I rejoice hearing what you say; for I have lain awake many nights wondering what sort of a place Atlantis is, and why it is so named: and it seems likely to be named from *ἀλλας*, and to have been formerly called Allantis (10), which would mean sausage-land: but this is alien to our present discussion. Perhaps this stranger, having now recovered breath, will answer a few questions?