THE DELPHIC MAXIMS IN LITERATURE

WILKINS

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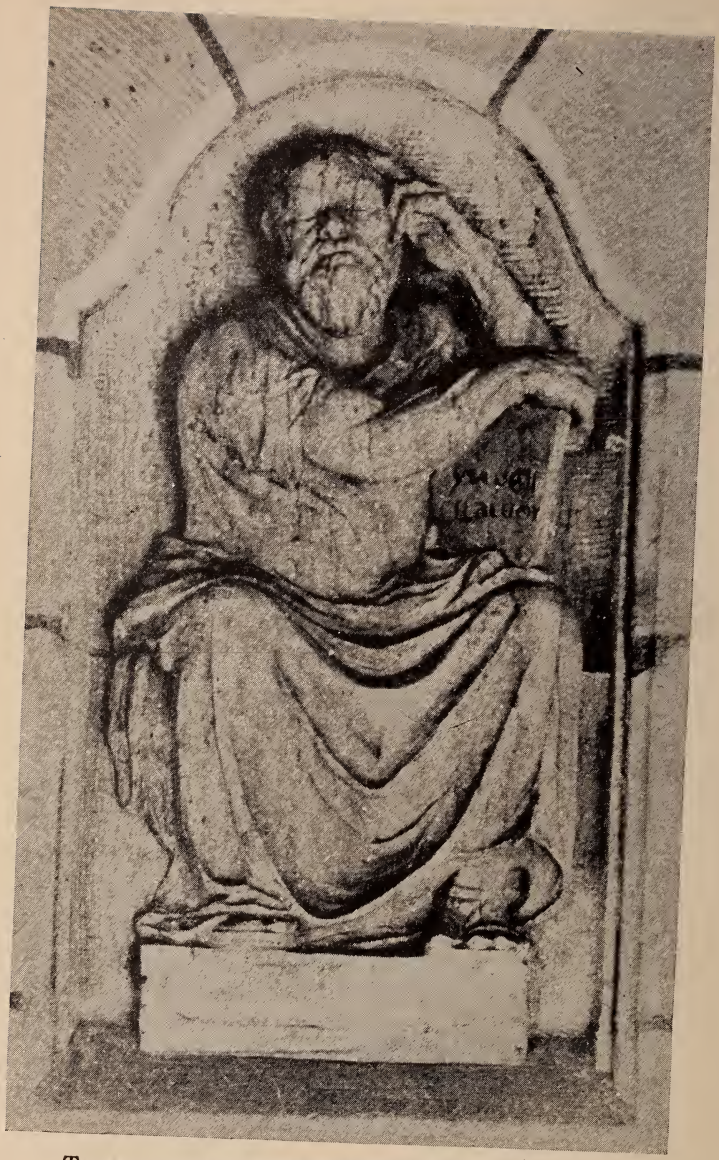

TABLET IN WALL OF HARKNESS MEMORIAL BUILDING AT YALE UNIVERSITY (See p. 213)

THE DELPHIC MAXIMS IN LITERATURE

By ELIZA GREGORY WILKINS

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PREFACE

This little volume is the outgrowth of several years of intermittent browsing in many books, and of a superficial scanning of many more as the quest for the Delphic maxims in literature has become increasingly absorbing. It was γνῶθι σεαυτὸν and its meaning for the Greeks of old that started the quest; and when the results of that study had taken shape in the form of a dissertation on "'Know Thyself' in Greek and Latin Literature," there remained an awakened curiosity regarding what the Greeks and Romans had had to say about each of the other two maxims on the Delphic temple, and regarding the thoughts which the generations since A.D. 500 have expressed in connection with all three. The results of an investigation of μηδὲν ἄγαν and of ἐγγύα, πάρα δ' ἄτη in classical literature have been published in *Classical Philology* for 1926 and 1927, respectively. The results of the further query form the main body of the present work—that is, the greater part of chapter iii and the whole of chapters v–xi. Chapter i contains much of the material of the Introduction to "'Know Thyself' in Greek and Latin Literature," revised and brought up to date; and chapter iv consists of a résumé of the remainder of that work; while chapter ii and the first few pages of chapter iii are merely skeleton condensations of the above-named articles on the other two maxims. This earlier material is included here partly as a background for the later chapters, and partly for the purpose of gathering within the compass of one convenient little volume all that we know of consequence regarding the Delphic inscriptions and the thoughts to which they have given rise in men's minds.

It is obvious that the entire field of literature down the ages is too wide for even a superficial scanning, and consequently whole realms of knowledge, such as those of science and history, have lain virtually untouched; nor have the drama and the novel received more than a partial scrutiny. It is chiefly from poetry other than drama, from essays, and from philosophical and ecclesiastical writings that the passages herein quoted have been gleaned. Doubtless many a passage has been overlooked—some, perhaps, more pertinent than those to which the book calls attention; although it is probable that its main premises would not be affected by any such further discoveries. Moreover, it may appear that natural ramifications of thought extending from a number of the passages under consideration have been passed by too lightly, but it has seemed well to keep the treatment within very limited bounds. The notes at the end of the book contain, as will be seen, sundry material, including such bibliographical information as the presentation demands.

My thanks are due to Professor Paul Shorey, of the University of Chicago, for my initial interest in this theme and for a certain guidance through the stages of the earlier investigation. I am also indebted to President George Norlin of the University of Colorado for his cordial interest and hearty indorsement of the general plan of the work, as well as for some few suggestions toward its improvement, and to several of my former colleagues for criticisms and suggestions: particularly Professor Irene McKeehan and Professor William S. Baur, of the University of Colorado, and Dr. Marjorie Harris, associate professor of philosophy at Randolph-Macon College.

Most of the illustrations are reproductions of pictures in old books now in the possession of the library of Harvard University, made with the generous co-operation of the library au-

thorities and with the painstaking skill of Mr. Robert A. Pearman, official photographer for the Massachusetts Historical Society. The photograph of the Minoan gem in Figure 3, however, was furnished by the Metropolitan Museum; while the picture of the tomb floor in Figure 10 is a reproduction of a photograph by Alinari. The picture of the two coins in Figure 1 was taken from *Hermes*, Volume XXXVI, with the kind permission of Weidmannsche Buchhandlung; and the view of the old omphalos in Figure 2 from *Fouilles de Delphes II* (1915), fig. 64, with the gracious consent of the editor, E. de Boccard.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

On the temple of Apollo at Delphi there were inscribed, of old, three maxims—Γνῶθι σεαυτόν* ("Know thyself"), Μηδὲν ἄγαν ("Nothing too much"), and Ἐγγύα, πάρα δ' ἄτη ("Give a pledge, or give security, and trouble is at hand"). Plutarch tells us, too, that there was also on the temple a letter E. We do not know how early these inscriptions appeared at Delphi, or on which part of the temple they were placed. It is possible that one or more of them were on the stone temple which was destroyed by fire in 548 B.C. It is certain that the three maxims were on the new temple of stone which the Alcmaeonidae adorned with a front of Parian marble toward the last of the sixth, or early in the fifth, century, for testimony to their presence there is abundant in fifth-century literature; and a statement in Plutarch's *E at Delphi* would lead us to think that the E was almost, if not quite, as early.[1] This fifth-century temple was destroyed and rebuilt in the fourth century; and the fourth-century temple in turn suffered partial destruction in 84–83 B.C., and again in Nero's time. It is probable that the inscriptions were renewed whenever they were impaired or destroyed. In the Roman period, they were evidently inscribed in gilt letters, for Pliny speaks of their being written in letters of gold,[2] and Plutarch mentions the "golden E of the Empress Livia." It is observable that the three maxims together form a hexameter verse, if the υ and α of ἐγγύα are treated as a case of synizesis. The placing of such inscriptions on a Greek temple

* Frequently written σαυτὸν in the literature.

was not peculiar to Delphi, for there was a hexameter verse of six words on the old temple of Artemis at Ephesus,[3] and an epigram on the Apollo temple at Delos.[4]

Two modern scholars, Goettling[5] and Roscher,[6] have held the theory that there were originally seven maxims on the Delphic temple—Goettling because of the traditional connection of the well-known three with the Seven Wise Men, and Roscher further because of the prevalence of the number seven in matters pertaining to the Apollo cult. A fragment of Varro says that there was written at Delphi a *Theo Hera*,[7] usually transcribed Θεῷ ἦρα ("Service to God"); and Goettling and Roscher both think that EI, represented in inscriptions by E, and Θεῷ ἦρα may have formed the beginning of another hexameter verse, the remainder of which has been lost. Goettling attempts to restore the lost hexameter by supplying a verb meaning "be helpful" and an oracular saying once given to Diogenes the Cynic, which Suidas erroneously connects with *γνῶθι σεαυτόν*.[8] Other scholars have shown the weakness of Goettling's position as regards this last saying, however; and Roscher has made a fresh attempt at filling out the verse. On the assumption that the four maxims mentioned in a passage in Cicero's *De Finibus*[9] as "old precepts of the Sages" may all have been at Delphi, since the list includes "Know thyself" and "Nothing too much," and a third, *Sequi deum* ("Follow God"), might represent Θεῷ ἦρα, he emends the fourth, *tempori parere*, to *tempori parcere*, thereby securing a maxim, "Spare time," which occurs in a long and late list of so-called "Pythian Precepts." And he finds in that same long list a suggestion of another precept, "Obey the laws," which is connected with a Greek phrase for "Follow God" in Marcus Antoninus.[10] These two maxims, "Obey the laws" and "Spare time," in their Greek form serve to complete the verse metrically.[11] But while this

theory of Roscher's is ingenious, it is not very well supported. "Obey the laws" is rarely mentioned in the literature, and never at all, apparently, in connection with the temple or with any of the three familiar maxims upon it; and neither Cicero nor any other ancient writer tells us that "Spare time" was at Delphi, apart from such long lists as the one just mentioned. In fact, any reconstruction of a second verse of maxims would seem entirely unwarranted, were it not for Varro's statement regarding Θεῷ ἦρα. We may even venture to question the reliability of this fragment of Varro, for the phrase Θεῷ ἦρα occurs nowhere else, as a precept at least, and the maxim which is most nearly related to it in thought, ἑποῦ Θεῷ ("Follow God"), is never connected with Delphi in ancient literature. Hence it is much easier to conclude that Varro may have made a mistake in referring it to Delphi than it is to account for the silence regarding it, if it was really there—especially since the well-known three called forth so much comment, both singly and collectively. Moreover, if there actually were these seven sayings inscribed on the Delphic temple, it seems very strange that neither Θεῷ ἦρα nor any of the other additional ones suggested in these modern reconstructions should appear in the poems or prose passages which assign one maxim each to the Seven Sages—passages which always include the traditional three.

Ancient writers state the location of the maxims on the temple variously. Pausanias says that they were on the pronaos;[12] Diodorus Siculus, that they were on a certain column;[13] Macrobius, in one passage, that they were on the doorpost,[14] and in another, that they were on the temple front;[15] while the scholiast on Plato's *Phaedrus*[16] places them on the propylaea. On two coins of the time of Hadrian, which represent the temple front, the E occupies the central space between col-

umns (Fig. 1). Goettling and Roscher have conceived the idea that they were all written on tablets. According to Roscher, with his theory of seven sayings in all, the E may have been suspended between the two columns of the pronaos, while the remaining six were written three each on two tablets and attached to either column; or they may have been written singly on six tablets and attached to the columns of the front, with the E on the left central column and γνῶθι σεαυτὸν on the right central. This theory that they were placed on tablets may have been true for the E, for, aside from the evidence of the

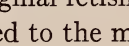
Fig. 1

coins, Plutarch speaks of the old "wooden E" and "the bronze E of the Athenians," as well as of the "golden E of the Empress Livia"; and the existence of the three in Plutarch's day might well be due to the rescue of the earlier two in times of disaster. The theory that the maxims were on tablets has less to support it. Since the three together form a hexameter verse, it seems more likely that they were written continuously; and while the evidence from ancient literature is too confused to admit of any certain solution of the problem, we may perhaps be inclined to agree with Pausanias, who, we are sure, had been at Delphi, and who was used to observing matters of detail, that they were on the pronaos. If they were written as

a single hexameter verse on the wall of the pronaos above the columns, the E may well have been suspended between them, although it is equally possible that it hung between the central outer columns.

The only ancient discussion, and almost the only mention, of the letter E which has come down to us is Plutarch's treatise entitled *The E at Delphi*. This treatise, like his other incidental mention of the E,[17] shows that its meaning was not clear to the men of his day. Seven possible explanations are indicated in the treatise—three based on the understanding that the E is a pure E, rather than the inscriptional representation of the diphthong EI, and the other four based on the assumption that it was meant to represent the diphthong. If it is a pure E, the fifth letter of the alphabet, he says, it must have some significance connected with the number five, indicating that there were originally five sages instead of seven; or it may have the Pythagorean mystical meanings of that number; or again, since E is the second vowel, and the sun—that is, Apollo—is the second from the moon in the order of planets, it may symbolize Apollo. If it represents the diphthong, it may be the conjunction εἰ ("if"), used in asking questions—*if* one should marry, *if* one should go on a voyage, and the like; or, used in combination with γὰρ, it may introduce a wish or prayer to the gods; or it may be the argumentative "if" honored by the patron god of logic; or it may be an εἶ, the second person singular indicative of the verb "to be," thus meaning "Thou art" and expressing the worshiper's recognition of the fact that God alone possesses true being. This last meaning suggested by Plutarch is adopted by Wieland in a parenthetical allusion in his *Aristippus*.[18] Goettling likewise thinks that the E means "Thou art"; but he regards it, not as the worshiper's address to the god, but as the god's address to the worshiper, by which

he says in effect, "As a creative, rational being, thou hast self-consciousness, thou art a man." Schultze, in his article on "Die Sprüche der delphischen Säule" agrees with Goettling's interpretation;[19] but Roscher suggests a new meaning for the diphthong.[20] He thinks that εἶ may be an archaic imperative form of the verb "go"; and he translates it not "go" but "come," making it a word of welcome to the worshiper. Another modern view is that of Lagercrantz,[21] who thinks that the E is not the inscriptional form of εἶ here, but an equally possible inscriptional representation of the verb ἦ ("he said"), and that with Apollo understood as subject, it is intended to introduce the three maxims authoritatively.

The discovery at Delphi in 1896 of the old omphalos (Fig. 2)—probably the original fetish stone—bearing the inscription  , has led to the more recent view that the E was originally not a letter at all, but a symbolic character of some kind which came to be regarded as a letter of the alphabet after its original significance had been lost sight of. The last three letters of the inscription spell Γᾶς, the genitive of Γᾶ (better known as "Gaia" or "Ge"), the great Earth goddess who had a shrine at Delphi prior to the coming of Apollo. If the first character is not an E in horizontal position, what does it represent? Dornseiff, in his *Das Alphabet in Mystik und Magie*,[22] suggests that the  may have been a mystic key or a small model of a temple. A. B. Cook, in his *Zeus*,[23] tells us that he once thought the E might be a relic—the trident of Poseidon kept in the sanctuary—for we know from Pausanias that Poseidon had an altar at Delphi.[24] He now thinks, however, that the character  represents the sky upborne by central and lateral pillars, even as Egyptian signs depict four columns supporting the heavens.[25] More convincing is the theory set forth by W. N. Bates in an article in the *American Journal of*

Archeology entitled "The E of the Temple of Delphi."[26] He thinks that the E (or ⅄) was originally a character symbolic of divinity—of the Earth goddess, who was at first identical with the Mother goddess of Crete, known as "Rhea" in later

Fig. 2

times. The character was thus of Cretan origin, and the omphalos too, if the oval object on a certain Cretan seal stone, which he shows, is an omphalos. In support of this theory the writer calls attention to a Minoan gem of red jasper on which are carved two bulls reclining back to back, with the double

axe, symbolic of Cretan Zeus, over their heads, and a character resembling an E between them (Fig. 3). Stone and symbol both were taken over by the Apollo cult, he thinks, but the Cretan origin and the real significance of the character early passed from men's minds. It is to be hoped that further archaeological evidence will corroborate this theory or make plain the truth of the matter, inasmuch as ancient literature has failed to enlighten us on the subject.

FIG. 3

The original authorship of the three maxims is unknown. Plato says, in a rather playful incidental passage in his *Protagoras*,[27] that "Thales the Milesian, and Pittacus the Mitylenian, and Bias the Prienian, and our Solon, and Cleobulus the Lindian, and Myson the Chenian, and the seventh—Lacedaemonian Chilon—came together and dedicated the first-fruits of wisdom to Apollo at the temple of Delphi, writing these sayings which are on everybody's tongue—*Γνῶθι σαυτὸν* and *Μηδὲν ἄγαν*." This is the first certain mention of the Seven Sages in literature, and some scholars think that the passage marks the starting-point of the establishment of the canon. But the canon never became fixed. Pausanias[28] and Demetrius Phalerius[29] substitute "Periander" for the "Myson" in Plato's list, and other late writers vary the names to such an extent that no fewer than twenty-two different men are classed among the Seven Sages at one time and another.[30] The maxims were variously distributed among them. *Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* is assigned to Thales, to Chilon, to Solon, and to Bias by different authors; *μηδὲν ἄγαν* to Thales, Chilon, Solon, Pittacus, and Sodamus; and *ἐγγύα, πάρα δ' ἄτη* to Thales, Chilon, Pittacus,

and Bias. Diodorus Siculus[31] and Pliny[32] say that Chilon wrote all three. Aristotle apparently thought that they antedated Chilon, and some ancient writers held the theory that they were oracular sayings uttered by the priestess under the inspiration of the god. Dio Chrysostom, for instance, calls them "almost more divine than the oracles delivered by the inspired priestess"; and, in speaking of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν in particular, Cicero says that its force is so great that it is attributed not to some man but to the Delphic god;[33] while Juvenal expresses much of the ancient feeling in his famous verse "E caelo descendit γνῶθι σεαυτόν.[34] The uncertain testimony of antiquity with regard to the authorship of the maxims is well summarized by Porphyry when he says:

> Whether Phemonoe, through whom the Pythian God is said to have first distributed favors to men, uttered this ⟨γνῶθι σεαυτόν⟩ . . . . or Phanothea, the priestess of Delphi, or whether it was a dedication of Bias, or Thales, or Chilon, started by some divine inspiration . . . . or whether it was before Chilon . . . . , as Aristotle says in his work on Philosophy, whosoever it was, ... let the question of its origin lie in dispute.[35]

The sayings begin to appear in extant Greek literature sometime during the latter half of the sixth century B.C. If they were on the old temple destroyed by fire in 548 B.C., their presence there would thus antedate their appearance in literature; but we need not agree with Roscher, who thinks that they originated at Delphi and had at first only a local application in connection with the temple service. They may well have been current "proverbs" long before they were selected for the inscription, although their presence on Apollo's Delphic temple undoubtedly gave them a heightened importance in later thought. Allusions to ἐγγύα, πάρα δ' ἄτη are relatively infrequent both in Greek and later literature, but μηδὲν ἄγαν and especially γνῶθι σεαυτὸν recur ever and again in the extant

literature of the Greeks and Romans, and we are told of many a lengthy discussion which has been lost. "Behold how many questions these inscriptions γνῶθι σαυτὸν and μηδὲν ἄγαν have set afoot among the philosophers," says Plutarch, "and what a multitude of discussions has sprung from each of them as from a seed."[36] And again he says, "If you consider what has been written or said about them by those who wish to understand what each means, not easily will you find longer discussions than these."[37] Plutarch, along with Plato and others, admired the Laconic brevity with which such potent wisdom is expressed; and he compares them to streams confined in a narrow channel. Certainly the stream of their influence did not cease to flow with the close of the Classical period. Μηδὲν ἄγαν ran low, it is true, during the long centuries between A.D. 500 and A.D. 1500, and we find γνῶθι σεαυτὸν chiefly under a somewhat new guise in the literature of the church; but with the coming of the Renaissance both leaped to full tide again, and they are still flowing on with unabated strength. Μηδὲν ἄγαν exhibits in recent centuries not only all of its early Greek applications but others not found in ancient literature. Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν has kept all of its old-time forces, though in somewhat different degree, and has ever taken on new ones in addition, as new thought movements have arisen. To trace the history of these maxims down the ages leads us not only into literature of almost every type to a greater or less extent but into some touch with the thought movements which have characterized each period in the development of mankind. And these words of "potent wisdom," so succinctly spoken, hold us still, with all the fascination of the growing grain and of the meandering river in the summer season.

CHAPTER II

'ΕΓΓΥΑ, ΠΑΡΑ Δ' ΑΤΗ IN LITERATURE

We need further light than our present extant literature affords to enable us to determine with certainty the exact original intent of *ἐγγύα, πάρα δ' ἄτη*. This maxim is apparently alluded to first in a brief fragment of Epicharmus,[1] who flourished early in the fifth century B.C., and unmistakably in a fragment of Euripides.[2] The setting in which the latter fragment occurs shows without question that it means "Give surety, and trouble is at hand," and indirect evidence goes to show that it means the same in Epicharmus. Plato merely mentions it as one of the three maxims on the temple.[3] A fragment of Cratinus the Younger, a poet of the Middle Comedy, reads, "Having consented to be one of three sureties, I was caught. So did the inscription at Delphi hold good for once, that suretyship is woe. But I am naturally a compliant friend."[4] These, with the mere notice that Aristotle's school attributed the maxim to Chilon,[5] are our only allusions to *ἐγγύα, πάρα δ' ἄτη* prior to the first century B.C. Among later writers, Plutarch connects the apothegm with suretyship in his *De Vitioso Pudore*,[6] where he says that the timid may meet with loss by giving security for those for whom they do not wish to do so; and Clement of Alexandria,[7] in saying that the Greeks borrowed the precept from the Bible, refers to Prov. 6:1–2, "My son, if thou become surety for thy friend, etc." In Latin literature, while the maxim is quoted but rarely, it is invariably used of suretyship. Ausonius, who has the most to say about it of any Latin writer, remarks, in his *Masque of the*

Seven Sages, that money-lenders do not like the precept[8] and that those who give security and bail are liable to repentance.[9]

Returning to the first century B.C., we find that men were not always satisfied with the idea that the maxim was intended to apply to suretyship alone, and that they were casting about in their discussions for some more satisfactory interpretation. There is an echo of such discussions in a passage of Diodorus Siculus and in Plutarch's *Banquet of the Seven Wise Men*. Diodorus Siculus says:

> Some interpret the maxim to forbid marriage, for the marriage contract among most of the Greeks is called ἐγγύη, and this view is supported by the evidence of common life, in which many great misfortunes arise through the women. But some say that this interpretation is unworthy of Chilon, because human life could not continue if marriage were taken away, and they show that trouble attends pledges given in contracts and in agreements in behalf of others involving money. . . . . But some say that this is not worthy of Chilon, for it is not good citizenship to refuse to meet such needs on the part of one's friends, but that the maxim, rather, forbids strong affirmations and emphatically guaranteeing and determining something in human affairs, as the Greeks did when they contended against Xerxes. For they swore at Plataea that they would hand down their enmity to their children's children to continue as long as the rivers should flow into the sea, and the human race exist, and the earth yield her increase. But while they made such strong asseverations touching matters which so easily change with Fortune, after a time they sent envoys to Artaxerxes, the son of Xerxes, with regard to a treaty of friendship.[10]

Now the foregoing three possible meanings suggested for the maxim really grow out of the three uses of the verb ἐγγυάω and the noun from which it is derived, as we find them in Greek literature from early times. The verb is regularly used in the betrothal ceremony as given by Herodotus,[11] the father pledging his daughter with the active, and the suitor pledging his hand with the middle voice. It is used, regularly in the middle,

of giving surety, from Homer down; and it is used in the middle occasionally, as early as Pindar at least, in making a strong affirmation or promise of any kind. It seems that Diodorus prefers this last-named or general meaning, and that he is illustrating it by a vivid historical instance, actual or traditional, of an affirmation made in terms of an oath, which could not be fulfilled, as matters turned out. The closing chapter of Plutarch's *Banquet of the Seven Wise Men* echoes this or some similar discussion, for he describes the maxim as one which has made many unwedded, many overcautious, and some even speechless—meaning by the last, apparently, that they refrained from strong assertions. He indicates further that it was customary to support the theory that the maxim was connected with suretyship by a passage from Homer in which the verb is used in such a sense; but he jestingly finds Homeric authority for the third or general meaning in the story of Zeus's hurling Ate out of heaven to accompany the oath which Hera had tricked him into swearing when she thwarted his purpose on the day of Heracles' birth.

The only other occurrence of the maxim in ancient literature which sheds any light upon its meaning is in a statement by Diogenes Laertius in his chapter on Pyrrho.[12] He is saying that the principles of the Skeptics were not confined to the Pyrrhoneans, for Homer is said by some to be the founder of Skepticism, since the poet represents a matter sometimes in one way, sometimes in another, without laying down a definite opinion about it; and he quotes passages from Archilochus, Euripides, Xenophanes, and other early writers, to the effect that we know nothing with certainty. "The maxims of the Seven Sages are also called Skeptical," he declares, "such as the *μηδὲν ἄγαν* and the *ἐγγύα, πάρα δ' ἄτη*"; and he adds by way of explanation of the latter, "It is shown that

trouble attends him who affirms anything in strong terms and confidently."

Of the three meanings suggested for the maxim by Diodorus Siculus and by Plutarch, the suggestion that it may refer to betrothal occurs nowhere else. Of the other two meanings, that of suretyship is by far the most common, although the more general meaning, "Commit yourself to some course," is seen to occur in certain instances. The question of which was actually the earlier of these two forces cannot be determined from the evidence at hand. If the general meaning was the original intent of the maxim, then, as far as we know, it was ordinarily applied specifically to suretyship all through the earlier centuries. If it was originally intended as a caution against giving security lightly, it came to take on an occasional wider application later. Among modern critical scholars, some few regard it as being intended to apply to suretyship first of all, while others prefer to regard the general meaning as the earlier. Roscher, however, thinks that both the application to suretyship and the general application were later developments, and that, along with the other maxims, it was intended originally to have to do with the worship at the temple. He fancies that *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* was an exhortation to the worshiper to be clear about himself and what he wanted, that *μηδὲν ἄγαν* was an exhortation to limit the number of his requests, and that *ἐγγύα, πάρα δ' ἄτη* meant originally "Bring to the God thy vows, but also think that thereby thou must fulfil them, if thou dost not wish the punishment or wrath of God to fall upon thee."[13] This theory of Roscher's seems rather fanciful, for, if such were the original intent of the maxims, it was apparently quite lost sight of in Greek literature; and moreover, we find no justification for taking the verb *ἐγγυάω* in the sense of fulfilling one's vows. Still another theory has been proposed by Partsch in

his *Griechisches Bürgschaftsrecht*,[14] based on the observation that the verb is in the active voice in the maxim, whereas the middle is regularly used of giving security. He thinks that the active may have meant originally to make someone else a surety, and that, since the gods were sometimes spoken of as our sureties, the surety indicated in the maxim may be Apollo, and the maxim may be conceived to be a warning against taking oaths lightly. He feels that this interpretation accords well with Roscher's idea of the general purpose of the maxims as a whole, and accepts his two hexameter verses as if the presence of the additional maxims at Delphi were a proven fact. We cannot agree with him in this, nor does it seem likely that ἐγγύα, πάρα δ' ἄτη could have been directed originally against the taking of oaths and then shifted so early to a warning against the assuming of suretyship. The use of the active in either sense is an archaism, for the middle of the verb ἐγγυάω is used in the few passages where the maxim is connected with an oath. While at first these passages may seem to support Partsch's theory, taken in their entire setting they seem quite as likely to serve as merely striking illustrations of its possible general application. If the precept meant originally "Commit yourself to any course and trouble is at hand," its frequent application to suretyship can be readily understood, in view of the large place which the custom held in ancient life. But if it was originally intended merely as a warning against giving security thoughtlessly, it would doubtless be considered sufficiently important for a place on Apollo's temple, so general was the custom, and so common the warning in the proverbs of other peoples.

References to this maxim in modern literature are few and far between. It occurs in a poem by Jacob Camerarius of the sixteenth century, written more or less in imitation of Auso-

nius' *Masque of the Seven Sages*, with a similar title and with a like application of the apothegm to suretyship; and Erasmus adopts Ausonius' rendering for it in his *Adagio*. Erasmus quotes it in connection with a different kind of promise, however, in one of his letters to Ammonius,[15] written on the occasion of his detention for ten days to help the Bishop of Rochester in his study of Greek, when Erasmus was impatient to cross to the Continent. He declares in his letter that he has repented of his promise more than ten times and perceives that the proverb ἐγγύα, πάρα δ' ἄτη is altogether true. His friend Ammonius remarks, in reply to this letter, that he has no doubt but that Erasmus' "promise" will be "without trouble." Andrea Alciati, likewise a friend of Erasmus, an eminent orator and lawyer, and in a sense the father of emblem literature, includes this maxim, of course, in his emblem entitled "Dicta Septem Sapientum."[16] It is illustrated by a picture of two birds caught in a snare, one of which, the poem tells us, became smeared with birdlime and drew his mate in with him (Fig. 4). Hegel and Schopenhauer each quote this apothegm—Hegel in his *History of Philosophy*, where he alludes to it twice; and Schopenhauer in his criticism of Kant's "Doctrine of Conscience." Hegel mentions it first in speaking of the Seven Wise Men, as a saying of Chilon, and renders it, "Stand surety and evil awaits thee." He regards it as "quite a common rule of life and prudence," but thinks that the Skeptics gave it a much higher universal significance, namely, "Ally thyself closely to any particular thing and evil will fall upon thee."[17] And farther on, in speaking of the Skeptics, he says that they "count in their category Bias, with his maxim 'Avoid being surety.' For this has the general sense—do not attach yourself to any object to which you devote yourself, do not believe in the security of any relationship, &c."[18] It is possible, of course,

that the Skeptics did read into *ἐγγύα, πάρα δ' ἄτη* the meaning indicated by Hegel, but inasmuch as the foregoing passage from Diogenes Laertius seems to be the only one in which the maxim is quoted in the ancient literature of Skepticism, we are justified in applying it to their principle of doubt, not to their principle of apathy or indifference. Hegel's further infer-

FIG. 4

ence may be logical, but it is Hegel's own. Schopenhauer quotes the maxim in connection with his attempt to show the fallacy of Kant's use of legal terms to express his idea of how conscience works. The same kind of mental process, he says, may take place without any ethical cause; and by way of illustration he imagines that he has become surety for a friend, and then at evening wakes up to a sense of the responsibility

which he has assumed—a matter which may involve him "in serious trouble, as the wise old saying ἐγγύα, πάρα δ' ἄτη predicts." The Accuser and the Counsel for the Defense rise up within and argue the case; and "last of all comes the Judge, who inexorably passes the sentence, 'A fool's piece of work!' "[19]

These modern citations of passages containing ἐγγύα, πάρα δ' ἄτη, few though they are, corroborate in a measure our attitude regarding the meanings accorded the maxim in antiquity. Schopenhauer, as we see, uses it of suretyship alone. Hegel regards that as its original intent, but thinks that the Skeptics gave it a deeper significance consonant with their philosophy of life; while Erasmus records it mechanically as applying to suretyship, but actually uses it spontaneously in a letter in connection with a promise of quite another kind. That the maxim is capable of both a technical and a general interpretation has been amply demonstrated. Which was its original intent, no one knows, nor can know without further manuscript evidence.

CHAPTER III

ΜΗΔΕΝ ΑΓΑΝ IN LITERATURE

There is no question of interpretation connected with the first meaning of μηδὲν ἄγαν. It has meant "Nothing too much" first and always, although, of course, it is sometimes assumed that it also enjoins the avoidance of too little. Complications arise, however, as soon as we try to determine in how far it was connected with the doctrine of the mean, which it very naturally suggests at once. Is it the "seed" from which not only earlier allusions to the mean but also Aristotle's *Ethics* "sprung," even though it is nowhere referred to in that influential work? Was it in some degree responsible for, or merely an expression of, the Greek sense of measure and harmony in general?[1] If we try to answer such questions as these, we are immediately confronted with the fact that μηδὲν ἄγαν was not the only maxim which suggested the mean, even in the early period. Rather, there were several expressions of kindred purport, two of which—"The half is more than the whole" and "Due measure is best" (καιρὸς—ἄριστος)—occur in Hesiod;[2] whereas μηδὲν ἄγαν appears for the first time in Theognis. There were different ways of saying "The mean is best" in Greek; but one of these, ἄριστον μέτρον, which we find first in a fragment of Evenus,[3] who flourished in the latter half of the fifth century B.C., apparently came to prevail. It was attributed to Cleobulus, and appears regularly, as does μηδὲν ἄγαν, in late poems and other passages which assign a maxim to each of the Seven Wise Men. The Romans cite its Latin equivalent, *optimus modus*, more frequently than they do μηδὲν

ἄγαν, or *ne quid nimis;* and it would seem as if the latter really gained and held its prestige largely through its presence on the Delphic temple. It is even possible that it was selected for that high position, rather than ἄριστον μέτρον or a similar phrase, because of its metrical adaptability. However that may be, the existence of other synonymous maxims in Greek literature from Hesiod down makes it impossible to determine whether μηδὲν ἄγαν is uppermost in the writer's mind when the idea of the mean is mentioned or discussed, unless the choice of words makes it apparent; and since we are concerned primarily with μηδὲν ἄγαν, it seems well to limit our consideration to those passages in which the maxim is either actually cited or apparently indicated by the phraseology. Our interest thus centers upon the various experiences and situations in life to which men have applied the precept through the centuries, and the extent to which it has met with their approval.

As has been said above, μηδὲν ἄγαν occurs first in Theognis, where we meet it four times.[4] In three of these passages the poet exhorts his young friend Cyrnus not to be unduly excited, or vexed, over the state of affairs (at Megara); and in the fourth he bids him not to be too downcast when matters go wrong, or rejoice overmuch when prospects are fair. Pindar says in one of his fragments that the wise (apparently meaning philosophers) praise the "nothing in excess" excessively.[5] Among the tragic poets, the maxim occurs most frequently in Aeschylus, who apparently alludes to it no less than eight times; whereas Sophocles alludes to it but twice, and Euripides once. In Aeschylus it is directed against importuning the gods overmuch in the *Suppliants*,[6] against excessive urging and blustering speech in the *Prometheus*,[7] against excessive fear in three passages of the *Seven against Thebes*,[8] against excessive

anger in the *Eumenides*,[9] and against thinking too highly of mortal things in a fragment of the *Niobe*.[10] In Sophocles it is directed against a stubborn spirit in the *Antigone*,[11] and against excessive grief in the *Oedipus at Colonus*.[12] And in Euripides' *Hippolytus*[13] it is directed against becoming too absorbed in one's devotion to another.

Plato cites the maxim four times—in the *Protagoras* passage quoted in chapter i;[14] in the *Charmides*,[15] where it is mentioned incidentally in connection with a discussion of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν; and in the *Philebus* and the *Menexenus*. We find it also in the pseudo-Platonic *Hipparchus*,[16] where it is said that the tyrant set up herms in every deme, inscribed with epigrams of his own composing, that the people might not wonder at the wise inscriptions at Delphi—the γνῶθι σαυτὸν and the μηδὲν ἄγαν. In the *Philebus*[17] Socrates raises the question as to whether bodily pleasures are greater in sickness or in health; and his interlocutor replies that the μηδὲν ἄγαν restrains those who possess σωφροσύνη (meaning here, "control over their physical appetites") from excessive indulgence, while the excesses of those who lack that virtue make them cry aloud to the point of madness. In the *Menexenus*,[18] Aspasia is setting forth what those who died in the first year of the Peloponnesian War would have wished said to their parents in case they should not return, and the burden of their message is that their parents shall not mourn excessively. She represents them as saying on the eve of battle:

> The ancient precept μηδὲν ἄγαν seems to be, and really is, well spoken. The man who relies on himself for his happiness, and does not cling to others and so become obliged to suffer their vicissitudes of fortune, is well balanced, brave, and wise. When money or children come to him or leave him, he will always obey the maxim, for he will appear neither to rejoice nor to grieve in excess.

And then, applying the maxim to their own case, the young men are made to declare that they are "not distressed or fearful overmuch" if they must die forthwith.

We have said that μηδὲν ἄγαν is not to be found in Aristotle's *Ethics*, but it is quoted in two connections in the *Rhetoric*. He refers to it first in describing the characteristics of Youth and Old Age.[19] "Young men err on the side of excess and violence in everything," he says, "contrary to that maxim of Chilon's. For they do everything too much. They love too much and they hate too much, and everything else in like manner. And they imagine that they know everything, and affirm everything with emphatic confidence. This confidence, in fact, is the cause of their going too far in everything." But the aged err the other way. With them, "everything is stressed less than it ought to be[20]—They always add a 'perhaps' or a 'possibly'—and say nothing with certainty. They neither love too much nor hate too much, but according to the precept of Bias, they love as if they were going to hate thereafter, and hate as if they were going to love." Since Youth and Old Age act contrary to the precept, we are led to infer that Middle Age, which Aristotle next describes as a mean between these two periods of life, observes it; and thus in the *Rhetoric*, if not in the *Ethics*, Aristotle does connect the doctrine of the mean with μηδὲν ἄγαν. In his chapter on the use of maxims for rhetorical effect, Aristotle says, "Maxims may be cited in a spirit of contradiction of those that have become public property (by public property I mean, for instance, the γνῶθι σαυτὸν and the μηδὲν ἄγαν) whenever one's character is to appear in a more favorable light thereby, or whenever they are uttered under stress of emotion."[21] He then proceeds to illustrate the use of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν in expressing strong emotion,

and of μηδὲν ἄγαν in revealing character. Taking up the old precept of Bias, quoted above, he says:

> Our character is put in a better light by saying that one ought not, as the saying goes, to love people with reservation, as if we were going to hate them, but we should rather hate as if we were going to love them thereafter. We must show our moral purpose by the way in which we say it, or else add the reason for our attitude, as if one should say, ". . . . The saying ⟨of Bias⟩ does not please me, for the true friend must love as if he were going to love forever. And the μηδὲν ἄγαν does not please me, either; for one should at least hate the wicked exceedingly."

Most of the allusions to μηδὲν ἄγαν in later Greek literature are largely incidental. Diodorus Siculus tells an unusual story to illustrate the maxim, however, and there are a few passages in Plutarch and in the *Palatine Anthology* which call for mention. Diodorus Siculus' story[22] is somewhat similar in character to the one in which he illustrates the general meaning of ἐγγύα, πάρα δ' ἄτη. Regarding μηδὲν ἄγαν, he says that it means "to be moderate in all things, and not be entirely divided in any human contention"; and then he tells of how the people of Epidamnus in a period of civil strife sunk masses of hot iron in the sea, and swore that they would not lay aside their enmity until the iron was recovered hot. But although they swore so harshly and made no effort to obey the μηδὲν ἄγαν, they later became reconciled perforce, and left the hot iron cold in the depths of the waters.

We have already referred to certain passages in which Plutarch speaks of the importance of the Delphic maxims, and of his admiration for them. In his *Consolation to Apollonius*[23] he declares that γνῶθι σεαυτὸν and μηδὲν ἄγαν are included each in the other, and he evidently applies them to a recognition of our mortal state with its limitations,[24] which should keep us from becoming arrogant in prosperity or giving way to com-

plaint in times of adversity. In his *Banquet of the Seven Wise Men*,[25] he not only attempts in a spirit of jest to connect the three maxims severally with passages in Homer, but he applies μηδὲν ἄγαν to the matter of credulity regarding the stories which the guests have been telling—such as the tale of Arion and the dolphin, for instance. Pittacus is speaking, and declaring that these stories are not past belief, and presently he turns to Solon and says:

> In a word, if one should know how to distinguish the impossible from the unusual, and what is beyond reason from what is beyond one's expectation, especially if he chances to be neither too credulous nor too incredulous, he would keep your commandment, the μηδὲν ἄγαν.

In one of the late epigrams in the *Palatine Anthology* the precept is quoted as a rebuke to a certain Gessius, whose undue ambition has brought him to his death, even as Bellerophon met his doom when he soared too high on Pegasus.[26] In another,[27] an arrogant lover who has been brought to his knees by his sweetheart's recent assertiveness, applies it to his former folly. A third epigram, by Alpheius of Mitylene, merits quotation here:

> No deep-soiled fields I crave to own,
> Nor wealth of Gyges rich in gold;
> Enough to meet the needs of life
> Is all I wish, Macrinus mine:
> Μηδὲν ἄγαν o'er pleases me.[28]

The maxim is applied to one's style of living in Hierocles' commentary on μέτρον ἄριστον in the *Golden Verses of the Pythagoreans*,[29] where we read that we might avoid the ill-will which arises toward those who excel, if with the help of μηδὲν ἄγαν we should give no occasion for criticism by living too delicately or too rudely.

The earliest quotation of the maxim in Latin literature is

found in Terence's *Andria*.[30] The old man Simo tells his slave Sosia of his gratification over the way in which his son engages in the pursuits common to the young men of his day—the training of horses, or of dogs for hunting, and the attending upon the philosophers—in a similar and moderate degree, and Sosia assures him that he has reason to be pleased, for *ne quid nimis* is of prime value in life. The maxim is next cited in a fragment of Varro,[31] which advises men to act as becomes mortals. It does not occur in Horace at all, and it plays a negligible part in the philosophical essays of Cicero and of Seneca, despite the large place which all three writers give to the doctrine of the mean. Cicero merely quotes the "Menexenus" passage in his *Tusculan Disputations*,[32] and mentions *nihil nimis* in his *De Finibus*[33] among the precepts of the philosophers which would have little force without natural philosophy. Seneca mentions it in one of his *Moral Epistles*[34] among the precepts which "fall upon our ears with a certain blow"; and he may have it in mind in his essay on *Tranquillity*[35] in the passage in which he questions the value of an extensive library, for he says that "what is excessive is everywhere a vice," although the real text of the whole passage is the *optimus modus* which he definitely expresses. It is Pliny who tells us that the three maxims were written in letters of gold, but he says nothing of their application to life. Hieronymus quotes the maxim in two letters as an admonition against excessive grief;[36] and in a third,[37] addressed to a "Christian virgin, first in rank and wealth in the Roman world," as a caution against immoderate fasting, "by which delicate frames become broken in health." The only other discussion of the maxim of any consequence which we have been able to find in the Latin literature of the Classical period occurs in Ausonius' *Masque of the Seven Sages*, where Cleobulus the Lindian treats it as virtually identical

with his own *optimus modus*, and says that "both signify moderation in speaking, in keeping silence, in sleeping, in staying awake, in benefits, in favors, in wrongs, in study, and in toil—in fact, in all of life."

A consideration of these passages in Greek and Latin literature, taken collectively, indicates the fact that the maxim was applied to mental states much more frequently than to conduct, and that its direct applications to one's physical desires is limited to the passage in the *Philebus* where it is connected with that cardinal virtue σωφροσύνη. As applied to mental states, it is directed most frequently against excessive grief, whether over the loss of a friend or the loss of property; but it is also directed against excessive joy, fear, anger, love, and hatred. And again it is directed against excessive pride and ambition in several passages. In the late period especially we find it applied to one's outward manner of living, and there is a tendency to connect it with ἄριστον μέτρον. The idea that men may go too far in their esteem for the maxim and the philosophy of life which it represents is as old as Pindar, apparently, and is implied by Aristotle as well as by one of the epigrams in the *Anthology*—a criticism which becomes more pronounced in later literature. The ancients, as a rule, however, reverenced their μηδὲν ἄγαν; and whatever their practice in common life, they rarely spoke of it in their literature in other than a dignified connection.

As we have already indicated, this maxim is seldom found in the literature of the Middle Ages. It occurs, however, in St. Bernard's treatise on *Consideration*, in two letters by Peter Cellensis, and in the *Polycraticus* of John of Salisbury; and it is probable that a more thorough combing of ecclesiastical writings might reveal a few more instances of the kind. St. Bernard of Clairevaux quotes it in a chapter in which he shows

that from piety and contemplation there arises a beautiful harmony of the four cardinal virtues,[38] and he introduces the maxim in connection with his definition of *temperantia*. "It seems to me," he says, "that he is not giving a bad definition of *temperantia* who says that it means neither to fall short of what is necessary, nor to exceed it, in accordance with that saying of the philosopher *ne quid nimis*." One of Peter Cellensis' letters,[39] addressed to Father Berneredus and the brethren of the convent of SS. Crispinus and Crispianus, advises them to forget the past and press forward, but to avoid straining too much and stretching the rope so hard that it breaks. "*Est modus* in things," he adds, "*ne quid nimis*." In his other letter,[40] addressed to the same "Father," he takes him to task for

living *intemperanter*, exceeding due measure in living not *supra* but *infra*. For the precept which says *nequid nimis* is directed against the less as well as the more. To eat too much is the part of a greedy man, too little the part of a hypocrite or a miser. The Apostle knows how to abound and to suffer want. That man is equipped to live after the rule in all things who neither stoops toward the lower nor stretches up toward the higher, but makes his way well in a straight line.

John of Salisbury[41] in his *Polycraticus*, Bk. I, c. iv, is speaking of hunting and saying that one should know where he can exercise the sport legitimately and without disturbance, for

he who rushes into another's preserve with rash usurpation is held in the toils of the law for punishment. In truth, that principle of measure is praiseworthy when it is exercised with due moderation prudently, and as far as possible, usefully, so that one conforms to the advice of the comic poet, *Ne quid nimis*.

He says further that nothing is more disgraceful than to make people laugh at us for insisting on practicing an art of which we know nothing, without proposing to learn, as if we should facetiously attempt to speak a language which we did not know.[42]

The forerunner of the Renaissance in Italy, Petrarch, cites the maxim in his dialogue on "A Copious Supply of Books,"[43] the main thought of which he owes to Seneca.[44] Reason (Ratio) and Pleasure (Gaudium) are talking, and Reason says that in the case of books, as in that of meals, their use should be limited to one's capacity to digest them. In all things, what is too little for one is too much for another. And so the wise man does not wish for an abundance but for a sufficiency. Pleasure remarks that the supply of books is *immensa*, and Reason replies:

> *Immensa* means without measure, but there is also an *optuma*. In this case also we must distinguish between what is without measure and what is best. Immoderation is to be avoided, and we should always hold before our eyes that saying of the comic poet, *Ne quid nimis*.

With the coming of the Renaissance in France and England and Spain, the sluggish interest in the Delphic maxims leaps up afresh; and the literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries may almost be said to abound in comments upon them. As in the Classical period, of course, γνῶθι σεαυτὸν receives much wider attention, but μηδὲν ἄγαν comes in for a reasonable share. We find it several times in the works of Erasmus, for he cites it in his *Adagio*, in one of his *Letters*, and more than once in the *Colloquies*. In the *Adagio* it is given under the title "Modestia Modusque," where it is referred to Terence and illustrated by a Latin rendering of a passage from the *Odyssey*[45]—the passage in which Menelaus tells Telemachus, when eager to start for home, that he will not detain him, adding, "I feel annoyed at another host even who welcomes overmuch and hates overmuch. It is better that all things be in fitting measure (αἴσιμα)."

In a letter to William Blount, Lord Mountjoy,[46] in which Erasmus devotes several pages to a discussion of proverbs,

he says, near the close, "You have a letter *verbosam et proverbiosam*, naturally in dealing with proverbs—a letter in which I fear that I have been unmindful of that very old adage *nihil nimis*." In the *Colloquies*, the maxim is cited first in the "Game of Ball," where the boys exclaim toward the end,

Fig. 5

"Night is already at hand, and we have sweat enough. It is better to cease from playing. *Ne quid nimis*. Let us reckon our winnings." At the close of the "Unequal Feast," the would-be host is bidden not to be too anxious to please everyone with his after-dinner entertainment, "or in fact, in life as a whole, for so he will the sooner please all. For it is best in life ⟨to observe⟩ *Ne quid nimis*." And again in the "Lover of Glory,"[47]

one of the interlocutors says, "Remember in everything *ne quid nimis*, but *mediocriter omnia*. Be easy in bearing with the manners of others, shutting your eyes to lighter faults; and be not too tenacious of your own opinion, but adapt yourself to the eager attitude of other people."

Μηδὲν ἄγαν, like its companion maxims, occurs in the *Masque of the Seven Sages* of Joachim Camerarius, where it is assigned to Pittacus[48] and to Thales;[49] and we find it variously illustrated in the emblem literature of the Renaissance. Camerarius himself wrote an emblem entitled "Nothing beyond One's Strength,"[50] illustrated with a picture of a loaded camel lying down (Fig. 5).[51] The verse reads: "Do not imprudently place too much on tender shoulders, and bring the brave man low with an unjust weight." In the explanation which follows we learn that it is characteristic of the camel to kneel while being loaded, and that when it has enough of a load, it rises and goes forward with alacrity; but if overloaded, it lies down or shakes off the load. We are warned by this to keep the golden mean in all things, the author tells us, adding, "The Delphic saying μηδὲν ἄγαν, which Terence expresses in Latin by *ne quid nimis*, teaches us this."

Andrea Alciati includes μηδὲν ἄγαν, of course, in the emblem entitled "Dicta Septem Sapientum" (Fig. 4, p. 17).[52] He represents the *optimus modus* of Cleobulus by a pair of scales, but *ne quid nimis* is illustrated with a sprig of gith—a plant which is described as very dark and excellent, with a stimulating fragrance. If added to food in very small quantities, it gives a pleasing taste, it is said; but if too much is taken, it acts as a poison. Most commentators think the plant a diminutive pepper. Jacob Cats has an emblem in his book entitled *Proteus*,[53] which is illustrated by a picture of Pan clasping the flames of a vigorous fire. At length there comes a poem entitled "Nequid

Nimis," which begins as follows: "Enough, Pan! Let thy frame grow warm from the fire with due measure. Why, wretch, dost thou rush into the flames to thy ruin? All excessive love is bad: A wife can love too much, and so can a child, and a father and mother." Another emblem, by Box-

Fig. 6

horn,[54] bears the title "Nequid nimis" and is illustrated by a picture of a barrel bursting its hoops (Fig. 6). In the commentary we read that a king who is about to attack an enemy should not close him in on all sides, for he will be forced to exercise greater valor. Likewise, after a victory the people should not be treated cruelly, for cruelty makes them unwill-

ing to submit. The more you press a serpent, the more poison it discharges.

Perhaps, next to the emblems of Alciati, none were more famous than the hundred "symbols" of Saavedra Fajardo, each

FIG. 7

of which is accompanied by an essay under the general title *Idea de un Principe Cristiano-Politico*. One of these symbols is entitled "Ne quid nimis,"[55] and the illustrative picture represents a field of ripe grain with the heads broken under the force of a heavy rain storm (Fig. 7). Fajardo says in his essay

that this motto was celebrated in antiquity and was attributed to Pythagoras, Bias, Thales, and Homer, but it is to be referred to the Delphic oracle with better reason, because it is divine and worthy to be inscribed on the crowns and scepters and rings of princes. He quotes from one of Seneca's epistles about preferring *mediocra* to *nimia*, and explains his picture, and then he goes on to indicate certain matters in which a ruler should apply the maxim. He should not oppress his subjects, or resort to excessive punishment; he should moderate his desires and follow his reason rather than his wish; he should curb his ambition for more power, as did Cyrus when, after conquering Lydia, he gave it back to Croesus and so avoided war with Greece; he should govern more as a father than as a master, but he should avoid being too lax as well as being too severe. Excessive wealth on the part of some citizens, he adds, causes ruin, as at Florence, or unrest, as at Genoa; and only the prudent ruler who governs in fear of the law, without abandoning his privileges to his inferiors or deferring to the rich, can save the state under such conditions. He should guide the state as the charioteers of old drove their chariots—so that the wheels might pass as near the goal as possible without grazing it. Emperor Ferdinand II was such a ruler, he says, and his son has some of the same qualities.

Two other emblems which refer to μηδὲν ἄγαν occur in a collection by an unknown author, published at Amsterdam in 1704. One of these has for its motto "The Happy Keep the Mean," and is illustrated by a picture of a boy climbing a ladder.[56] Quotations from Hesiod, Pindar, Plautus, and Horace follow, and the citation of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, which is said to commend "modesty and mediocrity" (apparently under the influence of Erasmus' *Adagio*), as well as μηδὲν ἄγαν. The other emblem is entitled "Every Excess Becomes a Vice," and is

illustrated by a picture of the sun's rays beating violently upon a tree[57]; while among the quotations from ancient authors, in the discussion which follows the verses, is the last line of the epigram by Alpheius of Mitylene, which we quoted above, to the effect that μηδὲν ἄγαν is overpleasing. Another emblem in the same collection[58] has a picture of a snail climbing up the branch of a vine, and the couplet:

> Do not ascend too far (ne nimium ascendas). High places are not safe.
> The road which is less steep is better suited to thee.

Among the many pictorial representations which illustrate some phrase expressing the mean, though without any accompanying mention of μηδὲν ἄγαν, doubtless the best known is one of the *Emblems of Q. Horatius Flaccus* by Octavio van Veen,[59] illustrating "Virtus est medium vitiorum in utrimque reductum" (*Ep.* i. 18. 9) and "Est modus in rebus . . . ." (*Sat.* i. 1. 106). The picture (Fig. 8) represents three women in the rôle of Avarice, Liberality, and Prodigality, respectively, standing on the diameter of a circle, with Liberality in the center. Avarice is an old woman with a large sack of gold at her feet, hugging a wallet to her bosom. Prodigality is young, and throws handfuls of gold lightly over her head. Liberality, with a cornucopia in her left hand, and an instrument which a Spanish edition[60] tells us symbolizes "rule and measure of distribution," in her right, looks neither to right nor left. In the sky overhead Daedalus and Icarus are flying, with Icarus perilously near to the large sun and already beginning to fall. The poem makes the comment that Icarus would not have fallen so far if he had not flown so high.[61] Icarus is again pictured falling from the sky in an emblem by Sambucus under the title "Nimium sapere"[62]; while in an *imprese* of one Gabriel Zaias, which bears the motto "Medio

tutissimus ibis," Phaëthon is seen on the point of setting out on his perilous journey.[63]

We find Icarus and Phaëthon also represented in Baltasar Gracián's *El Criticón*,[64] in his description of the column erected

Fig. 8

at the point where three roads meet. The *El Criticón* is the story of a man named Andrenio, who lived until manhood in a dark cave on the island of St. Helena. Then one day an earthquake burst the cave open, and he came forth into the

light. At length he rescues a man from the sea, Critilo by name, who later turns out to be his father, and together they embark on a passing steamer bound for Spain. Once in Spain, they set out on foot to find men; and as they travel on, they come to a crossroad where a stone pillar has been erected, bearing the inscription "In all things there is a mean. Depart not to the extremes." Not only are Icarus and Phaëthon represented on the column, but Cleobulus is also there, of whom it is told that in answer to three epistles which a certain king wrote to him demanding his advice, he replied each time with the single word, *Modus*. Cleobulus is eternally known, Gracián says, "for that one sentence, *In all things avoid excess*, as if to exceed were always more dangerous than to be deficient." All of the virtues have been inscribed on the column in order, each between its two extremes, and at the top is Prudence, saying, "For him who knows a mediocrity in wealth." Most people rush to the outer roads, but Andrenio and Critilo take the middle way, which leads upward. Farther on in the *El Criticón*,[65] Andrenio and his companion visit a great fair—the Fair of the World—where all sorts of things are sold, among them works without words, sold by Thales. Pittacus is there, too, but he does not sell anything; rather, he "makes prices more moderate, balancing the scales, and recommending everywhere his *Ne quid nimis*."

It is not a very far cry from some of the emblems described above to one of the *Fables* of La Fontaine, likewise illustrated with a picture, and bearing the title "Rien de Trop."[66] The fable tells us that in the whole creation we look for moderation in vain. There is a certain mean which the Lord of Nature wanted all to keep, but it is never kept. Grain, if overgrown, exhausts the ground, and if it has too many leaves, it detracts from the harvest; and the same is true of a tree. To keep the

grain within bounds, the Lord let sheep in to eat some of the leaves; but the sheep ate it down and spoiled it. Heaven then sent wolves to prey upon the sheep; and the wolves killed them all, or tried to. Then Heaven let men come and punish the wolves, and they in turn abused their orders. Of all ani-

Fig. 9

mals, man is the most prone to carry things to excess. This is true of high and low, and there is not a living soul who does not sin in this respect. *Rien de trop*, the fable concludes, "is something of which men are continually talking, but they do not observe it at all." The illustrator of this fable has tried to get the whole story into his picture, for he has the grain, the dead sheep, the wolves, and the men shooting them with their arrows (Fig. 9).

Other works of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in which reference is made to μηδὲν ἄγαν include the *Ethica* of the Belgian philosopher Geulincx; Pascal's *Pensées;* three essays by the Italian moral philosopher Speroni; a treatise by Dona Oliva Sabuco de Nántes Barrera, a sixteenth-century Spanish scholar whose main interests were philosophy and medicine; Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy;* Milton's *Paradise Lost;* and a work on *Christian Moderation* by Joseph Hall, of which the maxim may be said to form the keynote.[67] In eighteenth-century literature, the apothegm occurs chiefly in a humorous poem by the German poet Seume, in *The Spectator,* and in one of Lord Chesterfield's *Letters to His Son.* In the more modern period we find it in the philosophical works of Hegel and Schopenhauer, and in the writings of Nietzsche; it serves as the title of poems by Ferrucci[68] and De Spuches,[69] and as a chapter heading in Thomas Hughes' *Tom Brown at Oxford;* it occurs in the works of Oliver Wendell Holmes, James Russell Lowell, the present-day poet, Reginald Robbins, and in the valuable essay by Paul Elmer More, entitled *Delphi in Greek Literature;* and there is, besides, an allusion to it, though more or less incidental, in various critical works.[70] The applications given the maxim show no real development with the passing of the centuries, although it is occasionally applied to some situation or experience not connected with it hitherto, and we may therefore classify the above mentioned passages topically to some extent, rather than attempt to recount them chronologically.

The application of the precept to physical desires, so exceedingly rare in Greek literature, occurs more frequently in the centuries since the Renaissance. The earlier chapters of Hall's *Christian Moderation* deal with "Pleasures of the Palate" and with other bodily desires; and we find the maxim

used of the "pleasures of the palate" in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, in one of Lord Chesterfield's *Letters*, and, along with other physical activities, in Holmes' *Over the Teacups*. Hall's allusion to μηδὲν ἄγαν occurs in his opening chapter, in which he tells a tale so similar to the one told of Cleobulus in Gracián's *El Criticón* that it is evidently borrowed. He says that Bromiard relates the story of how King Louis of France once required his clerk to write down the best word he had ever learned, and he wrote *mesure*. The king was angry at first, but when he was shown that all virtues and all religious and worthy actions are regulated by this one word, he rested satisfied. Hall adds the comment:

> And so he well might, for it was a word well worthy of one of the Seven Sages of Greece; from whom indeed it was borrowed, and onely put into a new coat. For, whiles he said of old (for his Motto) *Nothing too much*, he meant no other but to comprehend both extreames under the mention of one: neither in his sense is it any paradox to say, that too little is too much; . . . . in every defect there is an excesse; and both are a transgression of Measure.

Then, as we have said, Hall presently discusses moderation in the matter of eating and drinking. In Milton's *Paradise Lost*, XI, 530 ff., Adam asks Michael if there is no way by which man can die without pain, and Michael replies:

> There is . . . . if thou well observe
> The rule of *not too much* by temperance taught
> In what thou eat'st and drink'st, seeking from thence
> Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,
> Till many years over thy head return.
> So may'st thou live, till like ripe fruit, thou drop
> Into thy mother's lap, or be with ease
> Gather'd, not harshly pluck'd, for death mature.

Lord Chesterfield counsels his son, who is in Verona, against the use of cold liquors when he is very hot, and against eating

too much fruit, and he adds, "*Ne quid nimis* is a most excellent rule in everything; but commonly the least observed, by people of your age, in anything."[71] Holmes in *Over the Teacups*[72] is talking of longevity and the way to attain it, and he says:

> One of the Seven Wise Men of Greece boiled down his wisdom into two words, μηδὲν ἄγαν—nothing too much. It is a rule which will apply to food, exercise, labor, sleep, and in short, to every part of life. This is not a very difficult matter, if one begins in good season and forms regular habits.

Succeeding chapters in Book I of Hall's *Christian Moderation* deal with other forms of desire, such as love, and with other topics with which the apothegm is connected in Greek literature—namely, wealth, honor, sorrow, fear, and anger—while Book II contains twelve rules for moderation in matters of judgment. Geulincx, in his *Ethica*,[73] applies the maxim to several of the virtues in Aristotle's catalogue, asking, for instance, "Have you decided to be liberal? Ne quid nimis, Avoid being prodigal. Have you decided to be frugal? Ne quid nimis, Avoid being miserly." It is always *Ne quid nimis*, he says. Another work which applies the maxim specifically to several of the experiences of life is the second of J. G. Seume's *Zwei Gereimte Episteln*,[74] a humorous poem in doggerel rhythm. The first part is written in German, but it changes to Latin with the lines:

> Nec ipsum citavi
> Ac plene probavi,
> Attendas imprimis,
> Ne umquam quid nimis!
> Audisti forsan,
> Μηδέν τι ἄγαν!

The theme continues for a little, applying the "golden norm" to physical features, to eating and drinking, to controlling one's anger, etc. Schopenhauer considers μηδὲν ἄγαν as virtually a

succinct expression of Stoic ethics, for he says in his *Criticism of Kant's Philosophy*:[75]

> Somewhere near the end of the first book I have explained that in my opinion the Stoic ethics were originally nothing else than an injunction to lead a properly discreet life. Such a life also Horace praises repeatedly in very many places. Therein is understood also his *Nil admirari* and therein likewise the Delphic μηδὲν ἄγαν.

Returning to applications of the maxim to single experiences, it is applied to love, not only in Hall's book, but in the *Coloquio del Conocimiento de sí Mismo* of Dona Oliva Sabuco de Nántes Barrera, a physiological work in which she says that while a person should not be too much alone, since the solitary life tends to become melancholy, excessive love is very bad too; and she advises the reader, in accordance with the saying of Chilon, not to love or desire anything excessively.[76] It is to the experience of love, too, that the precept seems to pertain in chapter xi of Thomas Hughes' *Tom Brown at Oxford*. In two other modern works it is directed against undue ambition—in a Greek poem by Guiseppe de Spuches, which has Μηδὲν ἄγαν for its subtitle; and in Nietzsche's *Dawn of Day*. De Spuches applies the precept to certain real or imaginary individuals, one of whom is so swollen with ambition that he is ridiculous, while another is proud of his newly made poem—all too patently new—and while still another delights in his four-horse chariot and in a train of flatterers and debtors, not realizing that the finger of scorn awaits him and the poverty of a clamoring fishmonger. "Excess always watches its opportunity in human affairs," the poet says, "and all that extends beyond due measure is fraught with ridicule and woe."[77] Nietzsche apparently questions the merit of such statements as Browning's "A man's reach should exceed his grasp,"[78] for he writes:

"Nothing in Excess!"—How often is the individual recommended to set up a goal which it is beyond his power to reach, in order that he may at least attain that which lies within the scope of his abilities and most strenuous efforts! Is it really so desirable, however, that he should do so? Do not the best men who try to act according to this doctrine, together with their best deeds, necessarily assume a somewhat exaggerated and distorted appearance on account of their excessive tension? And in the future will not a grey mist of failure envelope the world, owing to the fact that we may see everywhere struggling athletes and tremendous gestures, but nowhere a conqueror crowned with the laurel, and rejoicing in his victory?[79]

In *The Will to Power*, however, Nietzsche says that μηδὲν ἄγαν applies to men of overflowing powers—not to the mediocre.[80]

With the exception of certain works which criticize the maxim, the remaining passages in which it occurs give it varied specific applications which are essentially new. In the long Preface to the sixth edition of Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*,[81] "Democritus," who is weary of his repeated revisions, says to the Reader, "I am now resolved never to put this treatise out again. *Ne quid nimis*, I will not hereafter add, alter, or retract; I have done." There is also an application of the maxim to writing in Ferrucci's little poem entitled "Ne quid Nimis,"[82] and in Holmes' work on *Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Ferrucci is pestered by the Muses day and night, he says, and he exhorts them to betake themselves to the shaded mountains or to the desert and leave him in peace, for he has resolved to write no more "nugas." And Holmes says of Emerson's style, "Μηδὲν ἄγαν,—*ne quid nimis*,—nothing in excess, was his precept as to adjectives."[83]

Pascal, who is continually deprecating too much of anything in his *Pensées*,[84] applies the maxim to over-specialization. He says that we should not be able to say of a man "He is a mathematician," or a "preacher," or "eloquent," but that he

is "a gentleman"—that it is a bad sign when on seeing a person, you remember his book; and he continues, "I would prefer you to see no quality till you meet it and have occasion to use it, ne quid nimis, for fear some one quality prevail and designate the man. Let none think him a fine speaker, unless oratory be in question, and then let them think it."[85] Addison makes a similar application of the precept in his article in *The Spectator* for June 30, 1711,[86] which has for its heading the "Ne quid nimis" passage from Terence's *Andria* and the old English proverb, "Too much of anything is good for nothing." Will Honeycomb, Addison says in substance, counts the excesses of his youth a part of his education, and calls a knowledge of the town "knowing the world," while he looks with scorn upon the scholar's seeming pedantry. But as a matter of fact, the term "pedant" should be applied to everyone who cannot "think out of his profession and particular way of life." We have the mere-man-of-the-town pedant, the military pedant, the law pedant, the state pedant or politician; and on the whole the book pedant is really the most endurable of them all.[87]

Hegel, in his *Introduction to Greek Philosophy*,[88] treats μηδὲν ἄγαν as identical in meaning with μέτρον ἄριστον and interprets it in his characteristic metaphysical fashion:

> Cleobulus says μέτρον ἄριστον, another μηδὲν ἄγαν, and this has likewise a universal significance which is that limitation, the πέρας of Plato as opposed to the ἄπειρον—the self-determined as opposed to the undetermined—is what is best; and thus it is that in Being limit or measure is the highest determination.

Lowell cites the maxim twice, each time in a unique connection. In the first of the "Leaves" from his *Journal*, written while on the ocean, he speaks of the impression of monotony which the sea makes upon him. "Even at its best," he muses,

"Neptune, in a tête-à-tête, has a way of repeating himself, an obtuseness to the *ne quid nimis*, that is stupefying. . . . . There is nothing so desperately monotonous as the sea. . . . ." The other passage is in the poem which he tells us he originally called "A Day at Chartres," but whose title James T. Fields, to whom it is dedicated, persuaded him to change to "The Cathedral." In the introductory verses he speaks of certain memorable days in the past when Nature suddenly took on new meaning for him, and then he reflects that what we call Nature

> Is but our own conceit of what we see,
> Our own reaction upon what we feel.
> The world's a woman to our shifting mood.
> Feeling with us, or making due pretense.

He keeps up the figure of the world as a woman, and at length speaks of her as a princess who sometimes deigns to illumine his garret, and declares that he will bring to her

> The invitiate firstlings of experience
> Vibrations felt but once and felt life long.

Then, as if his anticipations were thrilling him too much, he seeks to restrain his eagerness, and adds:

> O more than half-way turn that Grecian front
> Upon me, while with self-rebuke I spell,
> On the plain fillet that confines thy hair
> In conscious bounds of seeming unconstraint,
> The *Naught in Overplus*, thy race's badge!

We have seen that the Greeks themselves occasionally felt a certain inadequacy in the maxim as a rule of life, if we may so construe Pindar's fragment[89] and the thrust in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*.[90] In modern literature this feeling grows into direct and more or less extended criticism of the precept on the part

of certain authors. The longest criticism of the kind is by Speroni in his *Discorso Sopra le Sentenze Ne quid nimis e Nosce te ipsum*.[91] He says in substance that if this maxim were observed, no one would die for his country or his honor or his friend, and that people would be merely indifferent—indifferently good. If the maxim means to be prudent, the wording is defective, because it excludes the too-little. It may mean to put a restraint upon our passions and not allow ourselves to go into ecstasies, but there again we need to guard against too little as well as too much. It is scandalous to have this sentence on a temple, of all places, telling people not to be too virtuous, too religious, and pretending that excess only is forbidden.[92] Moreover, if we were to apply it to length of life, a certain M. Luigi Cornaro,[93] aged ninety-five, would have lived too long! Besides, it would be considered a bad thing to know too much, just as Themistocles once blamed himself for having a good memory.[94] The maxim would ruin *Nosce te ipsum*, because it is bad to know one's self too well, just as any too-much is an evil, like too much love of self. But this phrase has nothing to do with wisdom and the like, he says. The authors of these precepts may have had too much confidence in themselves in giving their mortal opinion as if it were something divine—as if these were laws from God to the whole world. If you say they studied to be brief, they broke their own rule by being *too* brief. And why did they not write the maxim in the market-places instead of on a temple where men seldom went? Surely there is a *quid nimis* in the ambition of the author, in the brevity and obscurity of the phrase, and in other points mentioned above! In his essay on *Self-Love*[95] Speroni expresses his disapproval of both maxims still more strongly, for he not only repeats his statement that they are not worthy of Apollo or his temple but says that they are

"sophistries which make a loud noise and have a little reputation, but are unworthy to adorn even a hostelry." And again, in his *De Vario Argomento*,[96] he speaks disapprovingly of the *Ne quid nimis* especially. The man who is wise, just, brave, and temperate in all things," he argues, "possesses civil virtue. . . . . He truly knows himself, but he does not exemplify entirely that other maxim *Ne quid nimis;* rather, he is *nimis sapiens*, as it were. In such a man, virtue does not consist in mediocrity, but in excellence."[97]

A little later, in England, we find Sir Thomas Browne saying in his *Pseudodoxia*[98] that *Nosce te ipsum* and *Nihil nimis* are "but vulgar precepts in morality, carrying with them nothing above the line or beyond the extemporary sententiosity of common conceits with us." And there is a more reasoned criticism of μηδὲν ἄγαν on the part of two authors of our own day. Reginald Robbins' poem on "Sophocles"[99] is fairly dominated by the apothegm. It begins with the words:

> Nothing too much!—My prosperous old-age
> Were proof sufficient of the paradigm.
> Nothing too much: gnomic of my career!

Aeschylus, he says, found

> Too much of meaning in the mighty myth
> For man to master and make art of it.

And for Euripides,

> . . . . the too-much lieth in a zeal
> To reconstruct, make something new of truth,
> . . . . . .
> A zeal too much to substitute for myth
> The lore of merely men.

And then Sophocles goes on to ask if, after all, his way of calm is best, while Athens totters on the brink, and other men at-

tempt something high only to be broken in the attempt; or whether

> . . . . faileth not the gnoma where I fail
> By sympathy unwonted, proving so much
> Of meaning to our life that none should be
> Of golden mediocrity who live?

But his Oedipus, Sophocles reflects, by reason of his excessive failure became a valued possession for Attica, and even if he has failed himself, in exercising "too-much of artistry" at the expense of creation, surely Colonus will one day rejoice in the possession of his bones also, because of the honor he has shown to Oedipus.

The other fairly recent discussion of the maxim is in the essay on *Delphi in Greek Literature* by Paul Elmer More.[100] He discusses μηδὲν ἄγαν and γνῶθι σεαυτὸν both, and regards one as the counterpart of the other, for he says that "Nothing too much is the rule of outward conduct," while "Know thyself" may be taken to express the inner spiritual phase of Greek life: that the two apothegms "express the inner and outer faces of the same truth." He thinks further that μηδὲν ἄγαν is the key to the Pythagorean doctrine of harmony in numbers, that Plato's idea of justice is the application of the precept, and that it received its ultimate expression in the *Ethics* of Aristotle. But he thinks that the Greeks carried the principle of moderation too far—that with them nothing was absolutely right or absolutely wrong, and that in the fact that they were too tolerant of evil may be found a cause for the decay of their civilization.

These criticisms of the maxim reduce themselves to two points—one touching the inadequacy of the phrase as an expression enjoining the observance of the mean, a criticism which is justifiable but of relatively little consequence; the

other touching the value of the maxim as an ideal, as a rule of life. This last goes much deeper, and is likely to be increasingly insistent on the part of those who see an antithesis between a well-rounded, well-balanced, harmonious life on the one hand, and great enthusiasms, engendering superior attainment, but attended by the loss of certain worthful values, on the other. In the last analysis it all depends upon what constitutes *too much* in each particular as it is related to the whole —upon the criterion of judgment which determines values, and the nice adjustment between them. And this brings us ever and again to the spiritual tribunal for which Delphi stands.

CHAPTER IV

ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ IN GREEK AND LATIN LITERATURE

Important as was *μηδὲν ἄγαν* to the Greek mind, and perennial as is men's interest in its possible applications to life, by far the most significant of the three maxims, both in ancient and in modern times, is *γνῶθι σεαυτόν*. The earliest suggestion of it in literature occurs a little later than that of *μηδὲν ἄγαν*, in a fragment of Heracleitus,[1] of the early fifth century, which reads: "It is the part of all men to know themselves and be sober." This is too fragmentary a passage to make clear what Heracleitus meant by knowing one's self; but in the next reference to the apothegm, in Aeschylus' *Prometheus*, the setting enables us to determine the author's thought. Prometheus has persisted in his course of serving mankind contrary to the will of Zeus; and when Zeus has punished him by having him impaled on a beetling crag at the edge of the world, his pride is in no way curbed, but rather intensified by the seeming ingratitude of Zeus, who gained the throne of Heaven through Prometheus' aid. Oceanus comes to offer his services in effecting a reconciliation, and he pleads with Prometheus:[2] "Know thyself, and make compliant thy youthful ways: for young to power is the king among the gods." The plea is evidently that Prometheus shall know the measure of his strength when pitted against that of Zeus, and that he shall know his place as subject of the new king.

This use of the maxim in the sense of knowing one's measure was not only early but persistent. We find a possible sug-

gestion of it in Pindar,[3] and clear instances in Xenophon and Plato, as well as in later authors. Xenophon tells us in his *Hellenica* that the patriot Thrasybulus began his speech to the City party, after concluding the peace terms consequent upon the victory over the thirty tyrants at Eleusis, with the words: "I advise you, Men of the City, to know yourselves. And you might know yourselves best, if you would take account of the qualities upon which you ought to pride yourselves in attempting to rule over us." Then he asks them if they can claim to be more just, or brave, or intelligent, than the patriots, and makes it evident throughout all this part of his speech that by "knowing themselves" he means that they shall measure themselves carefully in comparison with those over whom they have tyrannized, and recognize their limitations in character and power of attainment.[4] The allusion to the maxim seems unmistakable, and that it should form the text of such an address on such an occasion indicates both its widespread familiarity and the instinctive interpretation put upon it by a man of affairs.

Again, in the *Cyropaedia*,[5] Xenophon relates the story of a conversation between Croesus, king of Lydia, and Cyrus, after the capture of Sardis, in which Cyrus asks the king how his responses from Delphi have turned out. Croesus tells of how he sent men to consult the Oracle on several occasions and how it once responded, "If you know yourself, you will pass your life in happiness." That seemed simple to him at first, but he allowed himself to listen to flattery and at length to accept the command of the army, thinking that he was capable of carrying on war against a man like Cyrus, "not knowing himself, forsooth." His defeat has now brought him the requisite self-knowledge, however, and he appeals to Cyrus to know if Apollo's saying that he will be happy in consequence is to come

true; whereupon Cyrus' generous treatment makes him content. An indirect implication of this connotation of the maxim occurs in Plato's *Philebus*,[6] where Socrates refers to the γνῶθι σεαυτὸν at Delphi in connection with a description of the man who does not know himself—who fancies that he is richer, or better looking, or more virtuous, or wiser, than he really is. So Aristotle's Conceited Man is ignorant of himself; and likewise, his Little-minded Man, who has great qualities but does not appreciate his own worth; whereas the mean between these two, the High-minded Man, is both worthy and estimates himself at his true value.[7]

Alcibiades and Alexander both figure as types of young men who do not know themselves in this sense—the one in the *Alcibiades I*, which might well have Γνῶθι Σεαυτόν for its title, the other in a dialogue of Dio Chrysostom. Socrates reminds Alcibiades of his real ignorance of politics and justice in the face of his great ambitions, and suggests that he compare himself with the superior Spartan and Persian kings and heed the Delphic precept. Alexander is represented in conversation with Diogenes,[8] and asks from whom he can learn to be the best kind of king. Diogenes refers him to Homer, where kings learned the art from Zeus; and presently, when Alexander baldly states his ambition to conquer the world, the Cynic tells him that even if he does, it will not make him a king, for his worst enemy, himself, will still remain, and to know one's self, as Apollo enjoined, is the hardest thing of all. In another dialogue of Dio Chrysostom[9] Diogenes says that the philosopher differs from other men in that he brings everything to the test of truth, whereas people generally are affected by what men say to them about themselves, and a man cannot obey the Delphic maxim if he measures himself by that standard. Flattery is thus seen to be the foe of self-knowledge, as it is often

regarded elsewhere in Greek literature, and the maxim in this connection patently means to "take one's measure."[10]

The earliest apparent reference to γνῶθι σεαυτὸν in Latin literature is in a passage in Plautus' *Stichus*,[11] where the question is asked, "What woman seems to you by far the wisest?" and the interlocutor replies, "She who will be able to know herself in prosperity, and will endure adversity with a calm mind." And again there is an apparent allusion to the maxim in this sense of knowing one's measure in one of Cicero's *Philippics*,[12] when Cicero reminds Antony that in occupying Pompey's house he can hardly feel at home, for he must "know himself and his own household" in comparison. The best instance in Latin literature of the use of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν with this original force, however, is in the Satire of Juvenal from which we quoted in the Introduction. The poet approves of the well-laden table of the wealthy, he tells us, but it is not becoming for the man in moderate circumstances to live extravagantly. And he continues:

> I am right in despising the man who knows how much higher Atlas is than all the mountains of Libya, but does not know how much difference there is between a little purse and an iron-bound chest. From Heaven descended γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, and it ought to be fixed in the heart, and practiced, whether you seek a wife or wish to be a part of the august Senate. One should know his own measure, and look to it in matters of great or of little importance—even when you buy a fish, that you may not desire a mullet when you've only a gobio in your pocket.[13]

Knowing one's measure is capable of various phases of specific application, among which knowing what one can and cannot do, knowing one's special bent, knowing one's place, knowing the limits of one's wisdom, and knowing that we are human and mortal are the most conspicuous in the literature of the Classical period. Knowing the limit of one's ability is the prevailing force of the maxim in the fourth book of Xeno-

phon's *Memorabilia*,[14] where Socrates leads Euthydemus, who is aspiring to become a statesman, to see that only as men know their ability, and do what they understand, may they hope for success. In the passage in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* to which we referred in connection with *μηδὲν ἄγαν*, the *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* is quoted in the sense of knowing one's "own incapacity," as Cope puts it. Aristotle is illustrating the use of maxims in a spirit of contradiction for rhetorical effect; and he says that one can do this under emotional stress, as if, for example, an orator should say in a burst of indignation against some incompetent general: "It's all a lie that one must know himself! At any rate, if that fellow had known how incapable he was, he would never have claimed the office of general."[15] So, too, Epictetus warns the would-be Cynic that he must make sure of being equal to the exactions of the Cynic manner of life, just as the athlete at the Olympic games tests his muscles. He must know himself, and be truly superior to others, if he would teach them.[16] And Plutarch says, in his *Life of Demosthenes*,[17] that he intends to compare his deeds and political measures with those of Cicero but that he cannot discuss their relative merit as orators, as Caecilius[18] has attempted to do. In that case, he would be like a dolphin on dry land; while as for Caecilius, "If everyone had the *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* ready at hand, it might not seem to be a divine command!" A historical character who did not overestimate his own ability is the Emperor Julian. When he ascended the throne, he received a letter from Themistius, urging him to exercise industry in combating evil, and expressing great hope in what he might accomplish.[19] The emperor's reply reveals the fact that he not only finds the career before him contrary to his tastes but that he feels inadequate for the task. He would not have Themistius question his industry, but remember the *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* and not expect too much. He has

no superior ability, he feels; whereas a king ought to have more than human powers.

While the maxim is more frequently applied to cases in which a person overestimates his ability, it is occasionally quoted in an attempt to rouse the man who belittles himself—a person like Aristotle's Little-minded Man, for instance; or the mature Charmides of Xenophon's *Memorabilia*,[20] whom Socrates rebukes for avoiding his duty to come before the assembly in an effort to help make the city better; or like Cicero's brother Quintus, whom Cicero reminds of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν in two letters. In one, "On Standing for the Consulship," he urges him to recognize his oratorical gifts; in the other, he chides him for dillydallying with his pen, and implies that he has more literary talent than he is exercising. "Do not think that γνῶθι σεαυτὸν was spoken to diminish arrogance alone," Cicero writes, "but it means that we should know our good points also."[21]

Knowing one's special bent, which is a prominent idea in Plato, and which is emphasized by Cicero and by Seneca, is first connected with γνῶθι σεαυτὸν in Plutarch's essay on *Tranquillity*,[22] with the observation that one must obey the Pythian inscription and "direct his efforts toward the single pursuit for which he is naturally fitted." Ovid also applies the maxim somewhat in this sense in his *Ars Amatoria*,[23] where Apollo appears to him, playing his golden lyre and singing:

> Preceptor of wanton love, come lead to my shrine thy disciples. For everywhere all through the world has gone the fame of the maxim which bids that each shall be known to himself. The man who knoweth himself alone shall love wisely, and adapt all his effort to directing the powers which he has. He to whom Nature has given beauty of face shall display it; and let him whose skin is fair recline with an oft-exposed shoulder; he who can please with his converse avoid all taciturn silence; he who can sing well should sing; and he who drinks artfully, drink.[24]

It was partly as a warning to know his place that Oceanus addressed Prometheus in words suggestive of the maxim, we remember; and this connotation occurs in a few other passages in Greek literature—notably in Plato's *Charmides*,[25] where *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* appears as a possible definition of *σωφροσύνη*, a virtue which includes not only a due sense of proportion and of control over one's physical appetites but a sense of fitness or knowing one's place. Later instances of the use of the precept in this sense are found in Philo Judaeus' *Embassy to Gaius* and in one of the Emperor Julian's letters to Iamblichus. Philo Judaeus is telling about the murders perpetrated by Gaius Caesar, and of how he put to death a certain Macro who had aided him in securing the throne but gave too freely of his advice afterward. The people, whose ill-will toward Macro Gaius had taken pains to instigate, said, on the occasion of his death, that he had not "thoroughly grasped the Delphic inscription *γνῶθι σεαυτόν*. . . . . For what could have made him change the relative position of Gaius and himself so as to virtually make himself ruler and Gaius his subject?"[26] In contrast to this story it is pleasant to read the playful tribute which the Emperor Julian pays to Iamblichus' superior wisdom:

> We ought in obedience to the Delphic inscription to know ourselves and not have the face to behave boldly toward a man of such great fame—a man whose mere glance it is hard to return, to say nothing of meeting him on equal terms when he rouses the harmonious strains of all wisdom; for if Pan were to echo his shrill song, every one would stand dumb, even Aristaeus, and if Apollo should play on his lyre, every man would keep silence, though he knew the music of Orpheus.[27]

The connection of *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* with the virtue *σωφροσύνη* in the *Charmides*, together with Plato's doctrine of the unity of the virtues, at length brought about a tendency to make the

maxim include the other cardinal virtues also. In the spurious Platonic dialogue, the *Erastae*, it is made to include both σωφροσύνη and justice; in Porphyry,[28] σωφροσύνη and wisdom; in Philostratus' *Apollonius of Tyana*[29] it is connected with courage; and in Olympiodorus[30] it is connected with each of the four. Self-knowledge is thus a part of every virtue, according to Olympiodorus. Conversely, the lack of virtue indicates a lack of self-knowledge; and so it is that the tyrant, whom Plato makes the type of the most degenerate state, is unknown to himself. This idea occurs in Apuleius' discussion of Plato's teaching;[31] and also in a chorus of Seneca's *Thyestes*,[32] which has often been imitated in later literature:

> Death lies heavily on the man
> Who, known too well to all beside,
> Dies unknown to himself (alone).

In a significant passage in Plato's *Phaedrus*[33] Socrates tells us that he has no time for rationalizing the myths, for he is still unable to know himself, according to the Delphic inscription. Plato would have us believe that Socrates made the pursuit of self-knowledge a lifelong quest, and that he came to the conclusion that the greatest obstacle to its attainment on the part of most men is a false conceit of wisdom. Wisdom is the virtue which most people have a conceit about, he says in effect in the *Philebus*[34] when declaring that ignorance of self is the opposite of what the maxim enjoins; and he made it the mission of his life to try to rid men of that conceit.[35] Regarding himself, he says, near the close of his life, that if Apollo was right in calling him the wisest man, it is because he knows that he knows nothing;[36] and so it is that Plato leads us to look upon Socrates as the one man who most nearly fulfilled the god's behest. In Xenophon's *Memorabilia*[37] Socrates says that not to know one's self in the sense of not knowing what one thinks he knows is

really a form of madness, although most people do not recognize it as such. Aristophanes hits upon this prominent phase of Socrates' teaching in the *Clouds*,[38] where, in answer to Pheidippides' query as to what good anyone can learn in Socrates' Thinking-Shop, his father replies, "You will know yourself—how conceited you are in your ignorance and how dull of wit." Isocrates also gives the maxim this connotation in his *Panathenaicus*.[39] The oration contains a historical essay on Athens' greatness, which Isocrates says he read to a former student of his who was familiar with an oligarchical form of government and was wont to praise the Spartans. The man naturally took exception to the way in which Isocrates had represented Sparta, saying that Greece ought to be grateful to her because she had discovered and taught the noblest pursuits. Whereupon Isocrates proceeded to show the ends of Spartan education in such a light that his critic went away "with the sails of his opinion furled, experiencing that which is written at Delphi."

Under the influence of the Stoics, apparently, knowing one's measure was at length extended to include knowing our human and mortal limitations.[40] The injunction to think mortal thoughts—to realize that we have only human powers and that death awaits us—is a commonplace of Greek literature from Archilochus down. We find it frequently in sepulchral inscriptions also, and in the words of the slave who stood behind the Roman general in his triumphal car, saying repeatedly, "Look behind you. Remember that you are human."[41] The first passage in which this thought is related to the maxim is a fragment of Menander:

> When thou dost wish to know thyself—what thou art, look at the tombs as thou dost pass along the street. In them lie the bones and the light dust of men—of kings, and tyrants, and wise men, and men greatly exalted by reason of their birth, or fame, or personal beauty. And then

the time for enjoying these proved all too short. A common grave claimed them all, mortals that they were. Looking to these things, know thyself—what thou art.[42]

The maxim is quoted, too, in Seneca's *Consolation to Marcia*[43] in a passage in which he dwells upon the frailty of man and the inevitableness of death, in a somewhat similar passage in Plutarch's *Consolation to Apollonius*,[44] and in two of Lucian's *Dialogues of the Dead;* while we find the words of the apothegm inscribed underneath the figure of a skeleton wrought in the mosaic floor of a small Roman tomb (Fig. 10).[45] In one of Lucian's *Dialogues of the Dead*[46] Croesus, Midas, and Sardanapalus lament the loss of all that their wealth brought them in life; and Menippus the Cynic, who is continually reproving them without apparent effect, finally says, "Very well, keep it up. Wail away, and I'll chant the γνῶθι σεαυτὸν without ceasing. It is a refrain that fits in well with laments like these." In the other Dialogue,[47] Philip greets Alexander upon his arrival in the Lower World with the words, "This time, Alexander, you cannot deny that you are my son: for you would not have died, if you had been Ammon's." Alexander, however, is not yet ready to admit that he is a mere mortal, and he boasts about his achievements until Philip finally asks him if he will not learn to drop his bombast and know himself for the corpse that he is.

To continue the passage in Plato's *Phaedrus* from which we quoted above, Socrates declares that he bids goodbye to questions of speculative theology in order to obey the precept and consider himself—whether he happens "to be some beast more intricate and full of passion than Typho, or a simpler and gentler creature, sharing in some divine and less monstrous destiny." This is the first instance of the use of the maxim in the sense of knowing one's soul, and it is probably the starting-

point of several later developments of the theme. In one sense, knowing one's soul includes a knowledge of one's disposition;

Fig. 10

and through the influence of the Stoics, knowing one's faults came at length to be one of the definite specific meanings attached to *γνῶθι σεαυτόν*. Galen says[48] that those who allow

others to tell them their opinion about what sort of people they are "make the fewest mistakes, but those who take it for granted that they are good, without leaving it to others to judge, stumble most seriously and most frequently"; and he adds: "And so, while as a lad I thought that the Pythian command was needlessly praised, and that it was not such a great saying, I later found that men's praise of it was just." The flatterer always acts contrary to the γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, according to Plutarch;[49] for he makes a man ignorant of both his good and bad qualities to the extent of degrading his good points into failures and imperfections, and his bad ones into something irremediable. That we are prone to see other people's faults rather than our own is indicated by one of Aesop's fables, which reads:

> Jupiter placed upon us two sacks: the one laden with others' faults he hung before our hearts; the other, filled with our own, he placed behind our backs. So it is that we cannot see our own evil deeds, but condemn others when they fail.[50]

The thought which this fable expresses is connected with γνῶθι σεαυτὸν in the *Magna Moralia* and in Plutarch. The author of the *Magna Moralia* writes:

> Since it is very hard, as some of the Wise have declared, to know one's self, we are unable to contemplate ourselves from within ourselves; and because we are unable to know ourselves, we evidently do unwittingly the very things for which we find fault with others.[51]

And Plutarch says that "upon no one is the God so likely to have enjoined the γνῶθι σεαυτὸν as upon him who is going to find fault with another."[52] Seneca, moreover, glances at the maxim in the passage in which he asks:

> Do you observe another's pimples when you are covered with numerous sores? . . . . Will you not look at your own faults? . . . . Are human conditions such that while you know your own state too little, you have time to wield your tongue to the reproach of your betters?[53]

Aesop's fable is alluded to by several Latin poets; and it is virtually connected with *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* in Persius' fourth satire,[54] although the maxim is not expressed in so many words. "No one tries to descend into himself, no one," the poem reads, "but we watch the back of the man who goes before us"; and the poet's closing advice is, "Dwell with yourself, and know how sparsely your dwelling is furnished."

Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν with the connotation of knowing one's soul in the deeper sense becomes the main theme of the *Alcibiades I*. In the first part of the dialogue, as we have observed, Socrates tries to make Alcibiades realize how far his attainments fall short of his ambition and alludes to the maxim by way of emphasizing the necessity of his taking his own measure. Alcibiades is at length brought to acknowledge his ignorance, and then Socrates goes on to show him that self-knowledge is essential to improvement and that it is the soul which is the real self, as distinguished from the body and one's possessions. But "How can the soul know itself?" is the question. Alcibiades is at a loss for an answer, but Socrates explains that he thinks that the maxim may mean that as the eye can see itself by looking into another eye, so the soul to know itself

> must look at soul, and especially at the part of it in which the virtue of soul exists, namely wisdom. . . . . This part of the soul is like to God, and anyone looking to this, and knowing all that is divine, God and Wisdom, would in this way especially know himself. . . . . Looking to God, we would use him as the fairest mirror, and looking also into the virtue of the human soul, we would in this way see and know ourselves best.[55]

The antithesis between soul and body indicated above is a common Platonic idea; and we find the apothegm applied by later writers to a knowledge of each separately, and again to a knowledge of the relation between the two. Philo Judaeus applies it in certain passages to a knowledge of the body as an

important preliminary to a knowledge of the mind and soul. For instance, in his symbolic interpretation of the life of Jacob,[56] he says that Charran, the land in which Jacob sojourned with his Uncle Laban, is the land of the external senses. The word "charran" means "holes"; and the man who wishes to know himself should go into the holes and caverns of the body and investigate his eyes, ears, nostrils, and other organs of sense. Accordingly Rebekkah says to Jacob, "*γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* and the parts of thy frame, what each is, and for what it was born, and how it derives its energy, and what unseen force moves these marvels." Jacob was not to stay in Charran all his life, however, but to go on to the City of the Mind. Porphyry tells us in his work on *Γνῶθι Σεαυτόν*[57] that Plato was "zealous to know himself in every way, that the immortal man within might be known and the outer portrait not unknown"; and the Emperor Julian says[58] that *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* means a knowledge of the body—that he who knows himself will know about the soul, and he will know about the body also—"he will reflect about its harmony, and how it is affected, and about its powers, and, in a word, about everything which it needs for its continuance." Nemesius, also, says that in the Garden of Eden God did not want man to eat of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge and so know his own nature before he attained perfection, for he did not wish him to realize his bodily wants and come to care for them without forethought for the soul. But man in his disobedience came to know himself and became the prey of his physical need, for he straightway sought a covering, knowing that he was naked.[59]

Touching the relation between soul and body, Plutarch asks:

> What is this that I happen to be? Am I made up of soul and body mixed, or does the soul use the body as a horseman uses a horse, without the two being a mixture of horse and man? Or are we each most authori-

tative in that part of the soul with which we think and reason and act, and are all the other parts of the soul and body instruments of this power? Or is there no essence of the soul at all, but is the body itself a mixture, with the power of knowing and living? . . . . These are those dreadful and perplexing questions in the *Phaedrus*, where Socrates thinks that he ought to consider whether he is a monster more intricate and passionate than Typho, or whether he shares in a certain divine and less monstrous destiny.[60]

Cicero in his *Tusculan Disputations*[61] says that the maxim means "Know your soul" and that the body is, as it were, a vase or some receptacle thereof. Porphyry expresses the thought somewhat similarly in writing to Marcella, "Unless thou dost keep thy body joined to thee only as . . . . the sheath is joined to the sprouting grain, thou wilt not know thyself."[62] And in another passage likewise Porphyry speaks of the duty of the soul to know itself existent in another substance and bound together with a different essence.[63]

In the *Alcibiades I* we find the idea that the soul is the real self further expressed by the phrase "The soul is the man."[64] Hence the maxim was sometimes taken as a command to know man; and according to Porphyry, some people asserted that since man is a microcosm, a small universe, it is a command to be a philosopher.[65] The Stoics regarded γνῶθι σεαυτὸν not only as the beginning of philosophy but as its very sum and substance. The idea that philosophy begins with self-knowledge occurs in Philostratus' *Apollonius of Tyana*,[66] where some Indian sages tell Apollonius that they know all things, since they first know themselves, for no one approaches that philosophy without first knowing himself; and the thought is also expressed by Epictetus,[67] by Seneca,[68] and by Julian.[69] That γνῶθι σεαυτὸν tended to embrace all the philosophy of the Stoics is indicated by several passages in Cicero,[70] and the idea is expressed with especial fulness in his *Laws:*

Philosophy alone teaches us . . . . that which is most difficult—that we know ourselves; and so great is the force and thought of this precept that it is attributed not to some man, but to the Delphic God. For he who knows himself will perceive first of all that he possesses something divine, and he will think of his spirit within him as something consecrated, like a sacred image, and he will always do and think something worthy of so great a gift from the gods. And when he has perceived himself and tested himself fully, he will know with what natural equipment he came into life, and what means he has for obtaining and acquiring Philosophy, inasmuch as he will conceive first of the knowledge of all things shadowed, as it were, in his mind and soul; and with this made clear, he will see that under the leadership of Philosophy he will be a good man, and for that very reason, happy. . . . . And when he has observed the sky, and the earth, and the seas, and the nature of all things, and whence these were generated, and whither they return . . . . and when he shall see himself regulating and almost ruling them, and shall comprehend that he is not surrounded by the walls of some one place, but shall recognize himself as a citizen of the whole universe as if it were one city—in this splendid conception of things and in this grasp of a knowledge of Nature, ye Immortal Gods, how he will know himself! In view of the precept which the Pythian gave, how he will condemn, how he will despise, how he will count as nought those things that are commonly called most important! . . . . And when he perceives that he has been born for civil society, he will think not only that he ought to use that careful reasoning for himself, but also that he ought to diffuse more widely the power of speech by which he rules peoples, establishes laws, chastises the wicked, gives recognition to the Good . . . . consoles the afflicted, and records the deeds and counsels of the brave and wise . . . . in eternal monuments. These are the powers, many and great as they are, which those who wish to know themselves see to be in man; and the parent and nurse of these is Philosophy.[71]

While the Stoics thus developed the idea that the maxim means "Know your soul" until it came to include the main tenets of their philosophy of man and his relation to the universe and to society, the Neo-Platonists concerned themselves with the possible metaphysical implications of the apothegm. With them, the soul's knowledge of itself included a psychologi-

cal analysis of its faculties and functions, and they connected the maxim also with the idea of self-consciousness and applied it to certain of the soul's activities. The psychological analysis of the soul began in Plato and was carried on by Aristotle, but it is the Neo-Platonists who link it with the maxim. Plotinus says, in his first chapter on the "Difficulties about the Soul," that in investigating these difficulties we would obey the command of the God which bids us know ourselves;[72] and again he says:

> *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* is spoken to those who on account of the number of selves have the task of counting and learning to know how many and of what sort they are, for they do not know all, or in fact any, nor what rules, nor according to what they exist.[73]

The connection of the idea of self-consciousness with the apothegm really begins with Plato's *Charmides*, where, after discussing *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* as a definition of *σωφροσύνη*, Socrates takes the epistemological point of view and argues that, unlike other sciences, the science of self-knowledge has its object within itself. Critias thinks that such a science would include both a knowledge of itself and other knowledge, and Socrates adds that it would involve the absence of knowledge also. But such an inclusive science is shown not to exist in the realm of sense, and it needs some great man to determine if it exists at all. The *Charmides* leaves the question there; but the puzzle as to whether if a thing knows itself, it does not combine within itself the qualities of subject and object, of knower and known, is brought up again in the *Parmenides*[74] and discussed in Aristotle's *De Anima*. Plotinus and other Neo-Platonists take up the theme and argue that thinker and thought, knower and known, are identical, in phraseology which is often suggestive of the maxim. Plotinus regards the soul as a mean between the world of sense and the Higher Intelligence, or Nous, and possessing three faculties—the faculty of sense perception, the

faculty by which judgments are formed in relation to sense impressions, and pure reason or intelligence, which he calls the "Nous in the soul," because of its likeness to the Higher Nous. The self-knowledge of the Higher Nous and of the Nous in the soul is a purely intellectual self-knowledge—the self-consciousness of the individual and of the general mind, the turning of the mind in upon itself until thinker and thought are one. He says:

> The self-knowledge of the Nous of the soul consists in knowing itself no longer as man, but as having become altogether different, in hastening to unite itself with the Higher alone, and drawing on the better part of the soul, which alone is able to be winged toward intelligence, that it may deposit in the better part of the soul what it has seen.[75]

Thus, as Brett writes in his *History of Psychology*,[76] "the self-knowledge of the Nous in the soul represents with Plotinus an intermediary stage between consciousness of objects and the final unity, which has no distinction of subject and object." In that "intermediary stage," then, self-knowledge and self-consciousness are one.

The Neo-Platonist commentators on the *Alcibiades I*, Proclus and Olympiodorus, relate γνῶθι σεαυτὸν to the activities by which the soul abstracts itself from the realm of sense and gives itself to pure speculative thought and contemplation —the cathartic, or purifying, and the theoretic, or contemplative, activities. Proclus says[77] with reference to the cathartic activity:

> As an inscription at the entrance to the precinct at Eleusis forbids the uninitiated to enter, so the γνῶθι σεαυτὸν at Delphi shows the way of approach to the divine and the most effectual road to purification. It says that he who knows himself "beginning at the hearth"[78] is able to be united with God, the revealer and guide of universal truth and of the purified life.[79]

Olympiodorus[80] describes the theoretic activity—that of pure contemplation—in his discussion of the figure of the eye in the

Alcibiades I. Both of these activities, the cathartic and the theoretic, are implied in the words of Julian, that to know one's self and be like the gods "one must stand completely out of himself, and know that he is divine, and keep his own Nous untiringly and unwaveringly fixed on divine and undefiled and pure thoughts, and he must disregard the body altogether."[81] This thought, which is also voiced by Macrobius in his *Commentary on Scipio's Dream*[82] and elsewhere, indicates that while perfect self-knowledge is the possession of the Higher Nous alone, the more fully man exercises the theoretic activity, the nearer is his approach to the entire fulfilment of the God's command and, according to Porphyry, to the attainment of true happiness.

While heedless youth and unthinking men of maturer years sometimes construed the maxim lightly, as if it meant merely "Know who you are" in a superficial sense, men who gave it deep consideration were ever impressed with its difficulty. The poet Ion exclaims: "This *γνῶθι σαυτὸν* is a little word, but the task—how great it is Zeus only knows!"[83] In fact, so common was it to speak of the maxim in some such way that "*γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* is hard" became a sort of proverb in itself. Just what was meant by its difficulty would depend, of course, upon how it was construed in given instances; and so would the question of which is harder—to know ourselves or to know others.[84] But hard as it was, the maxim in its simpler ethical forces was not thought to be beyond the possibility of a reasonable degree of attainment on the part of the average man; taken in its philosophical sense, however, it came to be regarded as unattainable by all except the philosopher, and even he could know himself neither continuously nor perfectly, for that is the prerogative of God alone.

The difficulty, and at the same time the desirability, of

obeying the Delphic command led naturally to the question, "How can a man know himself?" Answers to that question in ancient literature again depend to a considerable extent upon what a given writer means by self-knowledge. In Plato, Socrates regards dialectic as the remedy for a false conceit of wisdom; and his teaching implies that this method is a help to the man who would know his soul. In the chapter on "Friendship" in Aristotle's *Ethics* it is suggested that, since our friends are attracted to us by similar qualities, we may assume that the characteristics which they exhibit are ours also, in accordance with the old saying, "A friend is a second self." The author of the *Magna Moralia*,[85] who cites the maxim in this connection, adds that just as when we wish to see our face, we do so by looking in a mirror, so when we wish to know ourselves, we would acquire that knowledge by looking at our friend. Aristotle, however, is speaking of a friendship between people of lofty ideals, and with him the self-knowledge gained from observing our friend would lead to a realization of our own worth. The author of the *Magna Moralia* does not so qualify the characters concerned, and it is a knowledge of our faults to which he refers. Galen would make use of a friend to this end in a little different way, for he proposes that an unbiased friend tell us of the faults which he sees.[86] The figure of the mirror, which is ever recurring in later literature, is elaborated by Seneca, who says that mirrors were invented that man might know himself;[87] and Olympiodorus compares the γνῶθι σεαυτὸν on the temple of Apollo to the mirrors placed on Egyptian temples.[88] The thought that the stage is a kind of mirror in which a man may recognize himself occurs in Lucian's essay on *Pantomime*. "The Delphic γνῶθι σεαυτὸν is thereby realized," Lucian says, and people "go away from the theatre cognizant of what they ought to choose and what to

avoid, instructed in what they did not know before."[89] And there is a hint in one of Martial's epigrams that the reading of certain types of literature may reveal man to himself.[90]

Philo Judaeus saw a means to self-knowledge in the Hebrew rite of sprinkling candidates for purification with a mixture of ashes from the sacred fire and water—reminders, he says, of man's humble origin.[91] The Stoics' doctrine that man is a part of the soul of Nature led them to regard a knowledge of the universe as a means of attaining knowledge of one's soul. This is what Cicero means when he says in his *De Finibus* that without a knowledge of natural philosophy we cannot see the force of certain maxims such as *nosce te;*[92] and he expresses the thought in other passages, including the one from the *Laws* quoted above. This idea occurs frequently, too, in the writings of the Church Fathers. Clement of Alexandria, for instance, says, in speaking of the maxim, that "we must concern ourselves with the origin of the world, as through a knowledge of this it will be possible to understand the nature of man."[93] And Minucius Felix says:

> Man ought to know himself . . . . what he is, and whence and why—whether collected from the elements, or formed harmoniously from atoms, or rather made, fashioned, and animated by God; and we cannot investigate and draw forth this knowledge without inquiring into the universe, since all things are so closely connected and bound together that unless you examine diligently the methods of divinity, you cannot know humanity. . . . .[94]

So the Stoics said virtually that the way to know one's self is to know God, and this truth is ever recurring in the literature of the church. The converse of this thought—that to know God one must know himself—is likewise suggested by Greek philosophy and fills many a page of church literature. But it is the illuminating power of God which reveals us to our own

hearts. As St. Augustine puts it in the chapter of his *Confessions* entitled "Man Does Not Wholly Know Himself": "What I know about myself, I know by thine enlightening me, and what I do not know about myself I shall not know until my darkness become as noonday in thy sight."[95]

The theme of self-knowledge, which is so generally linked with the Delphic γνῶθι σεαυτὸν in Greek and Latin literature, came to play an important part in the doctrines of the Christian church; but allusions to the maxim are comparatively infrequent, and they grow even fewer as the Classical period passes into the Medieval. We scarcely ever find either maxim or theme in the literature of the Apostolic age, and we find it only in certain authors in the centuries immediately succeeding. Clement of Alexandria cites the maxim repeatedly, however; and it occurs in the writings of Irenaeus and Hippolytus of the Eastern church, and in those of Minucius Felix and Tertullian of the Western. Clement follows the Jewish tradition of trying to refer the origin of much in Greek literature to the Hebrews, and declares that the Greeks borrowed γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, as well as ἐγγύα, πάρα δ' ἄτη, from the Old Testament.[96] He connects it with a phrase from the Pentateuch—"Give heed to thyself."[97] Clement's pupil and successor, Origen, connects it with a clause in the Song of Songs—"If thou know not (thyself), O thou fairest among Women."[98] Later writers, following Clement and Origen, usually discuss the theme of self-knowledge in connection with one or the other of these texts. Basil, for instance, wrote a homily entitled *Give Heed to Thyself;* and expositions of the verse in the Song of Songs are numerous. But discussions and allusions to the theme occur in other connections also, for there are suggestive passages in Eusebius, and in a number of ecclesiastical works of the fourth and fifth centuries, especially in those of Ambrose and Augustine.

Many of the more prominent Fathers were familiar with Greek literature, and their writings reflect conceptions which the Stoics and others connected with the maxim, although more of them drew largely upon the works of their predecessors in the faith and the literature as a whole is characterized by a great deal of repetition. Of the conceptions which the Greeks connected with γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, those which occur most frequently in the writings of the Fathers are Stoic tenets; but there are echoes of Plato and of the Neo-Platonists also. The most recurrent Stoic theme is that of man's knowledge of himself in relation to the universe. Basil, for instance, calls the City of the Universe our first native country, wherein we see the origin of man;[99] and again he says that we may trace the Creator in ourselves as in a microcosm.[100] The direct influence of Plato is seen in Ambrose's *Hexaemeron*, where he says,

> We are one thing, ours is another, what is around us is another. . . . . Attend to yourself, therefore, and know yourself—that is, not what sort of limbs you have nor how much physical endurance, nor how great possessions, nor how much power, but the character of your soul and mind.[101]

And there is something of the Neo-Platonist spirit in one of Ambrose's comments touching the verse in the Song of Songs:

> Know yourself, therefore, and what becomes of your nature; put off the chains from your feet, as it were . . . . that you may not perceive your fleshly integuments, and that the bonds of the body may not entangle the footsteps of your mind.[102]

Origen would make the soul's knowledge of itself include a knowledge of its place in the order of spirits[103]—a limited hierarchy of whom came into Christianity through Philo and the old Hebrew faith. Self-knowledge is thus predicated of the Trinity severally and collectively,[104] and of the angels.[105] That self-knowledge is a necessary aid to the apprehension of God

is repeatedly expressed, sometimes in passages where the maxim is cited.[106] But the Church Fathers did not limit man's apprehension of God to the philosophically minded. Only the select few could know him by that road—by knowledge, by metaphysical abstraction—but others could know him by faith; and Augustine even indicates that the way of faith is in a sense superior to that of knowledge, for in this way God can actively reveal both himself and man's nature to man's soul.[107]

The self-knowledge revealed by faith and by the teachings of the Church included in the main two ideas which, though essentially Hebraic, are in a measure peculiar to Christianity as distinguished from Greek and Roman conceptions—that God created man in his own image and that man is by nature sinful and in need of repentance. Both of these ideas are more or less directly related to γνῶθι σεαυτὸν in the works of the Fathers. The first is expressed by Clement of Alexandria, who says that the maxim means, "Know whose image thou art, what is thine essence and what thy creation."[108] Hippolytus also says, "This is the γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, the recognizing that God has made us";[109] and Ambrose asks, "What is *se noscere* except for each one to know that he is made after the image and likeness of God?"[110] The other meaning is apparent in a further statement of Clement's:

> He who knows his life to be sinful will loose it from the sin by which it is drawn away, and when he has loosed it, he will find it, according to the obedience which lives again to faith and dies to sin;—this it is to find the soul—to know one's self.[111]

And Ambrose construes the verse in the Song of Songs, "Unless you know that you are mortal . . . . and confess your sins . . . . unless you know yourself . . . . the grace of your fathers will avail you naught."[112]

It is likely that this last meaning for the maxim is really an outgrowth of the Greek connotation "Know you are human." In like manner, it would seem that "Know you are mortal" was extended by certain of the church writers to mean "Know that you have a mortal body, but that your soul is immortal." Basil, for example, says in his *Give Heed to Thyself:*

> Know thine own nature, that thy body is mortal, thy soul immortal, and that thy life is somehow two-fold—thine own life after the flesh which quickly passeth, and the inborn life of the soul which knoweth no bounds.[113]

And Tertullian connects the doctrine of immortality with the maxim, although he taught the resurrection of the body also. He is speaking of the renewal of the seasons and of other emblems of the resurrection, and he says: "Thou man, ... if thou dost know thyself, in accordance with the Pythian inscription, thou lord of all things that die and rise again, shalt thou die to perish ⟨evermore⟩?"[114] But while these connotations of the maxim and of the theme of self-knowledge are largely peculiar as such to the literature of the church, the ideas themselves were not confined to Christianity. The essential divinity of the soul and a kind of immortality formed a part of the teachings of Plato and some of the later philosophers; and the idea of the hindrance imposed by the flesh led to the indifference of the Stoics to carnal desires, and to the asceticism of the Pythagoreans and the Neo-Platonists. The line of demarcation between Greek philosophical tenets and those of Christianity, which really grew up under their influence, cannot be drawn too sharply; and however little they may have realized it, the Church Fathers owed much of the thought which they associated with self-knowledge to Apollo's *γνῶθι σεαυτόν.*

CHAPTER V

THE THEME OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE IN MEDIEVAL LITERATURE

Direct allusions to γνῶθι σεαυτὸν are comparatively few in the period from A.D. 500 to A.D. 1500. Yet the theme of self-knowledge, which was so definitely related to the maxim in the writings of the Church Fathers of the first centuries of the Christian era, persisted. It was still discussed somewhat in commentaries upon, or allusions to, Song of Songs 1:8,[1] and occasionally in other connections,[2] with the connotations found in the works of the earlier Fathers; and it was given a heightened importance in the writings of the later medieval Mystics.[3] Self-knowledge for the Mystics, as for their forefathers in the faith, was prerequisite to the knowledge of God; and as the consuming aspiration of their hearts was to achieve a merging of their souls with the Eternal, the way thereto was of paramount importance in their thought.

The Mystics describe the approach to oneness with God as a difficult and carefully graded process, which consists, broadly speaking, of three general stages—the purgative, the illuminative, and the unitive.[4] It is with the purgative process that self-knowledge has chiefly to do, although it continues to some extent through the illuminative process;[5] and the third or unitive stage becomes possible only as perfect self-knowledge has been acquired. The beginning of purgation is reflection, and the consequent recognition of our sins, which leads to exceeding sorrow and confession. In the illuminative stage all of the faculties are concentrated upon the contemplation of God. This further

reflection upon the goodness of God usually leads to the detection of hitherto unsuspected faults, followed by further sorrow and confession; while penance and fasting and even self-inflicted bodily torture are frequently resorted to in order to free the soul from the trammels of the flesh. Trances and visions, though not peculiar to mysticism, are commonly experienced by those who lead the contemplative life. In the third or unitive stage, sometimes called "ecstatic," the soul is conceived to have lost all sense of self—to have become nothing, as it were, in its oneness with God;[6] or, to use a figure of Master Eckhart's, the divine spark at the apex of the mind has been reached, and the whole being is bathed in its light.[7]

The maxim is not often quoted in mystical literature, but its indirect connection with mysticism is obvious. Much has been written to show the influence of Plato and the Neo-Platonists, through Augustine, and especially through Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, upon the development of the mystical concept. The first of the three stages indicated above—namely, the purgative—corresponds essentially to the Neo-Platonist cathartic activity, while the illuminative and unitive stages are comprised in the theoretic activity of the Neo-Platonists; and we have seen how these processes or activities are related to γνῶθι σεαυτόν.[8] Modern writers, moreover, have been quick to connect the self-knowledge of the Mystics with the inscription on Apollo's temple. Rudolf Steiner in his *Mystics of the Renaissance*[9] quotes from the opening words of Valentin Weigel's little book entitled Γνῶθι Σεαυτόν,[10] and adds, "A similar path to insight and a like relation to the saying 'Know Thyself' may be ascribed to a series of deep-natured thinkers, beginning with Master Eckhart (1250–1327) and ending with Angelus Silesius (1624–77)." And Maeterlinck says in his essay on Ruysbroeck:[11]

We are dealing here with the most exact of sciences. We have to explore the most rugged and least habitable promontories of the divine 'Know Thyself'; and the midnight sun hangs over the tempestuous sea, where the psychology of man mingles with the psychology of God.

The most striking characteristic of the treatment of the theme of self-knowledge in medieval literature is its presentation in the form of an allegory or figure. With St. Bernard of Clairevaux self-knowledge is a door, the entrance to the most intimate chamber;[12] or again it is a ladder by which the soul may ascend to the heights. He says in his treatise *On the Interior of the House:*

Enter into thine heart; learn to form an estimate of thy spirit. . . . . This is the door, this the ladder, this the entrance, this your ascent. Do you see how much the full knowledge of self avails a man? From this indeed he advances to the knowledge of all things in the Heavens, on the earth, and in the World Below.[13]

Richard of St. Victor treats of self-knowledge in his *Preparation of the Soul for Contemplation, the Book Called Benjamin Minor*, which serves as a sort of preface to his *Benjamin Major* in which he discusses the contemplative life. Benjamin is the allegorical type of contemplation. His mother Rachel,[14] or Reason, has an older son Joseph, or Discretion, by whom the soul is instructed in the knowledge of itself. Benjamin is necessarily born long after Joseph,[15] and at his birth Rachel—that is, Reason—dies.[16] Self-knowledge is presented under the figure of a mountain:

The soul which strives to ascend to the top of the mountain of knowledge should have as its first and chief pursuit the knowing of itself. To perfectly know one's self is the high mountain peak of knowledge. It is a large and high mountain—the full knowledge of the reasoning spirit. That mountain is higher than the peaks of all worldly knowledge; from its height it looks down upon all the philosophy and all the knowledge of the world. . . . . As far as you progress each day in the knowl-

edge of yourself, so far do you ascend toward the higher regions. He who arrives at the perfect knowledge of himself has already apprehended the top of the mountain.[17]

It was on this mountain top that Christ was transfigured, he says further, and if we wish to see Christ transfigured, we must ascend it by learning to know ourselves: "For he descended from Heaven when he uttered γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, that is, *Nosce teipsum*."[18] St. Bernard has been made familiar to us in Dante's *Paradiso*,[19] where he serves as guide after Beatrice returns to her throne. Richard of St. Victor's *Benjamin Major* probably furnished much of the mystical material of the *Paradiso*,[20] and that his mountain of self-knowledge was in Dante's mind when he wrote the *Purgatorio* has been well demonstrated by Edmund Gardner in his book entitled *Dante and the Mystics*.[21]

When St. Catherine of Siena, at the age of fifteen, was forced by her family to fill her days with menial labor that she might have no time for prayer and devotion, she resolved to form a "cell of self-knowledge" within her own heart and dwell therein.[22] So completely did she live in that cell, both then and after her family yielded to her desire for a cell in her home, that she continually recommended the exercise of self-knowledge to others under that figure in her letters and in the *Dialogo*. For instance, she writes to Sister Eugenia, her niece, "I command thee, dearest daughter mine, that thou abide forever in the cell of self-knowledge."[23] In her chapter on "Prayer" she says that when the soul has arrived at the house of self-knowledge and entered therein, it remains barred in with watching and constant prayer,[24] although it may come out at intervals with virtues to meet a neighbor's needs.[25] In another passage in the *Dialogo* she pictures self-knowledge as a stable where one must be born again, as Christ was born of old.[26] St. Angela de Folgino represents self-knowledge as a prison

from which we must never depart.[27] Self-knowledge is a highway leading to contemplation in Walter Hilton's *Scale of Perfection*,[28] and in a little treatise by an unknown Mystic entitled *A Very Necessary Epistle of Discretion in Stirrings of the Soul* it is the haven into which a ship sails through storm and calm.[29]

The meaning of self-knowledge for the medieval Mystics has already been indicated. For them, as for their predecessors, to know one's self meant to come to a knowledge of one's sins,[30] to humble one's spirit,[31] to seek out the faults to which we are prone,[32] and to recognize the fact that while our bodies are made of the dust of the earth, our souls are made in the image of God.[33] The Mystics go farther than the early church writers, however, in their exaggerated contempt for the flesh as something utterly vile,[34] and in a consequent endeavor to free the soul from its defilement by neglecting and afflicting the body. St. Catherine of Siena says that there is a sword in the cell of self-knowledge with which to cut self from self and come to hate sin and frailty;[35] and this is no idle figure from the pen of a woman who, like many of her brethren, unfalteringly applied the steel to her own flesh. In its attempt to attain self-knowledge, the soul is said to be aided by temptation, which is sent that man may recognize his frailty and need of God in the face of it.[36] Suffering and adversity are also an aid,[37] and, of course, the study of the Bible[38] and prayer.[39] With the help of these means, coupled always with reflection and contemplation, the soul comes to see itself and God with its inward eye; for, since the soul is the image of God, we are told, the soul which looks into itself sees God and is itself reflected by God as by a mirror. But as it sees itself reflected in the mirror of God's purity, its own remaining defects are revealed. Says St. Catherine:

As a man more readily sees spots on his face when he looks in a mirror, so the soul who with true knowledge of self rises with desire and gazes with the eye of the intellect at herself in the sweet mirror of God, knows better the stains of her own face by the purity which she sees in him."[40]

Accordingly, Richard of St. Victor exhorts us to cleanse the mirror, else we can see nothing clearly; for if the mirror is not clean, we cannot see ourselves nor God.[41] So it is that in the doctrine of the Mystics there is a point at which knowledge of self and knowledge of God merge into one. St. Catherine represents them as together forming the circumference of a circle, of which Humility is the diameter.[42] But while they are so identical that a full knowledge of the one predicates a full knowledge of the other, they are yet separate entities, as Master Eckhart tries to show in an oft-quoted passage:

I take a cup of water and lay therein a mirror, and set it under the disc of the sun. The sun casts out its shining light on the mirror and yet doth not pass away. The reflecting of the mirror in the sun is sun in the sun, and yet the mirror remains what it is. So it is about God. God is in the soul with His very nature and being and Godhead and yet He is not the soul. The reflecting of the soul in God, is God in God, and yet the soul is still that which it is.[43]

The preachers of the Middle Ages liked to enliven their sermons occasionally with a story to which could be given an allegorical meaning with a moral application. In the collection of stories of this kind known as the *Gesta Romanorum*,[44] the following story occurs:

There was a certain king who decreed that the victor returning from war should have a threefold honor and three annoyances. The first honor was that the people should go out to meet the victor with rejoicing. The second, that all the captives should follow his chariot bound hand and foot. The third, that clad in the dress of Jupiter, he should sit on a chariot drawn by four white horses, and be taken to the Capitoline temple. That

he might not forget himself with these honors, he must needs bear three annoyances. The first, that there be placed with him in the chariot a man of servile rank, that hope might be given to anyone, no matter how lowly his condition, of arriving at such an honor, if his uprightness should merit it. The second annoyance was that the slave should keep striking him, that he might not be too proud, saying, "*Nosce te ipsum*, and be not proud of such a great honor. Look behind you! Remember that you are a human being!" The third annoyance was that on that day any one whosoever could say whatever he wished—all sorts of abuse, of course—against the person of the man who was holding the triumph.[45]

In the "Application" of this story, the king is made to represent the Heavenly Father, and the triumphing general represents Christ, who has obtained a glorious victory over sin. The first honor typifies his entry into Jerusalem; the second, those enslaved by sin; and the third, Christ's divinity. The four white horses are the four evangelists. The slave is the worst of the two thieves crucified with the Lord; the second annoyance is the scourging by slaves; and the third is the opprobrium and abuse to which Christ was subjected.

This story, with its patent medieval characteristics, finds its origin, of course, in the customary proceedings at a Roman triumph; for the dress after the manner of Jupiter,[46] the four white horses,[47] the jests of the multitude,[48] and the accompanying slave saying, "Look behind you, Remember that you are human,"[49] are well-known features of such an occasion.[50] It apparently remained for the unknown author of this tale, however, to insert *Nosce te ipsum* in the slave's injunction, even though the maxim was easily implied in the phrase which was actually used.[51] Gower's description of a Roman triumph in his *Confessio Amantis* may have been influenced by this tale, for he says that a "ribald" fellow addressed the triumphator, saying:

Take into memorie
For all this pompe and all this pride
Let no justice gon aside,
But know thy self, whatso befalle.
For men seen ofte time falle
Thing which men wende siker stonde.[52]

A few of the other poems of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries also echo the teaching of the church about self-knowledge. When Jean de Meung extended Guillaume de Lorris' poem *Le Roman de la Rose*, he dragged much of his own erudition into his verses; and in discussing destiny, necessity, and free-will, he says:

For Free-will hath such potent might
For him who knows himself aright,
That he his path may guarantee,
If true unto himself he be;
For casting from his heart all sin
He victory o'er the stars may win.[53]

And again he represents Themis as saying to Deucalion and Pyrrha:

For those who know themselves may spurn
Ill ways, and toward fair virtue turn.
Let them unto their God address
Their prayers, and He their hearts will bless,
For those most wisely love, I trow,
Who their own hearts most throughly know.[54]

In the Prologue of *The Prick of Conscience*,[55] sometimes attributed to Richard Rolle, we read that the right way to bliss is the way of meekness, and dread, and love of God Almighty, that may be called the way of wisdom; and it behooves a man to know himself within, else he may have no knowing of wisdom's way,

For he that knows well, and can se
What himself was, is, and sal be,
A wyser man may he be talde
Wether he be yhung man or alde,
Than he that can alle other thyng
And of himself has na knawying.
For he may noght right God knaw ne fele
Bot he can first himself wele:
Tharfor a man suld first lere
To knaw himself propely here;
For if he hymself knew kyndely
He suld haf knawyng of God almyghty.
And of his endyng thynk suld he
And of the day that last sal be.[56]

Chaucer in the *Person's Tale* defines humility as a "vertue thrugh which a man hath verray knoweleche of himself, and holdeth of him self no prys ne deyntee as in regard of hise desertes, consideringe evere his freletee."[57] And in the *Wif of Bath's Tale* he represents poverty (a phase of adversity, of course) as an aid to self-knowledge:

Povert ful ofte. when a man is lowe,
Maketh his god and eek him self to knowe.[58]

On the borderland of the Renaissance we find that reckless and dissipated, yet original songster, François Villon, writing a ballad with the refrain, "Je cognois tout, forsque moy-mesmes." We wish that we knew its actual mood. Is Villon flouting the solemn insistence of the church upon the duty of self-knowledge, we wonder; or is he merely pensive when he sings:

Flies in the milk I know full well:
I know men by the clothes they wear:
I know the walnut by the shell:
I know the foul sky from the fair:

I know the pear-tree by the pear:
When things go well, to me is shown:
I know who works and who forbear:
I know all save myself alone.

. . . . . .

I know how horse from mule to tell:
I know the load each one can bear:
I know both Beatrice and Bell:
I know the hazards odd and pair:
I know of visions in the air:
I know the power of Peter's throne
And how misled Bohemians were:
I know all save myself alone.

ENVOI

Prince, I know all things: fat and spare
Ruddy and pale, to me are known;
And Death that endeth all our care:
I know all save myself alone.[59]

And lastly for this period, we have the *Narrenschiff* of Sebastian Brandt. This satire, so famous in its day, was first published in German in 1494, and through almost immediate Latin translations, it spread over Europe and passed into other languages. It is best known to us, doubtless, through the very free translation of Alexander Barclay, published in 1509. Brandt tells us in his Prologue that the work is a mirror in which men can see themselves.[60] In one of the following sections of the poem we are told that the wise man endeavors only to know himself;[61] and in another that the fool cannot know himself, although he wants to know precisely about alien matters.[62] The *Envoi* which Barclay contributes to the section last mentioned is a pertinent expression of both Brandt's conviction and his own:

Ye people that labour the worlde to mesure
Thereby to knowe the regyons of the same,
Knowe firste your self, that knowledge is moste sure,
For certaynly it is rebuke and shame
For man to labour onely for a name.
To know the compasse of all the worlde wyde,
Not knowynge hym selfe, nor howe he sholde hym gyde.[63]

CHAPTER VI

ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ AND THE THEME OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE IN THE LITERATURE OF THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

The Renaissance, which had started in Italy in the fifteenth century, came to flower in France and England a century later; and its influence continued well on into the latter half of the seventeenth century. These centuries, the sixteenth and seventeenth, mark the Golden Age of Spanish literature also; for while the terrors of the Inquisition stifled free thought, there was abundant encouragement for works of the imagination, especially poetry, during the heyday of Spain's glory. In Italy, however, the repressive influence of Spanish domination was more deadening; and while literature continued to flourish in the sixteenth century, the seventeenth century became a period of stagnation—of inferior and lessened production. German literature was small in quantity and inferior in quality during these centuries, owing to the religious dissensions following the work of Luther and the sufferings entailed by the Thirty Years War. Yet the interpretation of *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν*, and the treatment of the theme of self-knowledge generally, was much the same throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the different countries. The maxim again assumed a place of some importance in secular literature; while discussions of the theme of self-knowledge, some of them of considerable length, occur rather frequently in ecclesiastical writings.

The apothegm is quoted in the works of the earlier spirits of

the northern Renaissance, Erasmus and Budé, and it is discussed by prominent prose-writers of the period—in England by Sir Thomas Elyot, Roger Ascham, Sir Francis Bacon, Thomas Hobbes, and Sir Thomas Browne; in France by Rabelais and Montaigne; in Belgium by Geulincx; in Germany by the great jurist Pufendorf; in Italy by Speroni, and by Boccalini, author of the much-admired *Advertisements from Parnassus;* and in Spain by Baltasar Gracián and Cosme Gomez de Texada. The theme of self-knowledge is discussed more or less at length, usually with some allusion to the maxim, by eminent divines—by Luther and Calvin; by Richard Baxter in his little book, *The Mischiefs of Self-Ignorance and the Benefits of Self-Acquaintance;* by Pierre Charron, friend and disciple of Montaigne, in his *De La Sagesse;* by Bossuet in his treatise *De la Connaissance de Dieu et de Soi-Même;* and by the Spanish mystics, Fray Luis de Granada and Juan d'Avila. Other lengthy prose discussions of the same theme are the *De la Connaissance de Soi-Même* by Pierre Nicole, one of the Port-Royal group, and the *Coloquio del Conocimiento de sì Mismo* of Dona Oliva Sabuco de Nántes Barrera. When we turn to the poets, we find *Nosce Teipsum* used as the title of a long philosophical poem by John Davies, and as the title of shorter poems by John Owen, vice-chancellor of Oxford under Cromwell; by the seventeenth-century German poets, Jacob Balde and Christian Wernicke; and by the Dutch emblem-writers, Schoonoven, Heyns, and Kreihing. The word "self-knowledge," or its equivalent, serves as title for other poems, whether it be the long Spanish *canciones* of Gregorio Silvestre and Fray Luis de Leon or the two-verse epigrams of Friedrich von Logau, the best German didactic poet of the period. Ronsard quotes the maxim, as does Andrea Alciati; likewise Torquato Tasso, although in a prose work. La Fontaine evidently had it in mind in one of his fables; and

Donne and Milton seem to show the influence of discussions of the theme of self-knowledge, whether current or ancient.

That the contemporary emphasis upon *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* was well recognized by writers of this period is indicated by Sir Thomas Browne in his *Pseudodoxia*[1] when he says, "Our orations cannot escape the sayings of the wise men of Greece. Nosce teipsum . . . . nihil nimis." Baltasar Gracián tells us that the aphorism of knowing one's self was talked of early and late.[2] And that prominent, though somewhat vacillating and controversial English divine, Robert South, says in one of his sermons, "Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν still lives and flourishes in the mouths of all, while many vast volumes are extinct and sunk into dust and oblivion."[3] There is a suggestion, too, of the popularity of the maxim in Richard Baxter's words, "Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν is many a man's motto that's a stranger to himself, as the house may be dark within that hath the sign of the sun hanging at the door."[4] We are told repeatedly that the precept was written in letters of gold and was of divine origin;[5] but the tendency to regard pre-Christian Greeks as heathen makes Sir Thomas Browne call this maxim the "counsel of the Devil himself";[6] and John Davies speaks of it similarly in his *Nosce Teipsum:*

> For how may we to others' things attaine,
> When none of us his own soul understands?
> For which the Divell mockes our curious braine
> When 'Know thy self' his oracle commands.[7]

Nicole fails to connect the apothegm with Apollo's temple at all, but declares that our aversion to the truth which discovers us to ourselves makes us think that *Nosce teipsum* did not arise from a common light, persuading men that it is for their good, but in the wickedness of heart which feels inconvenienced by

other men's lack of self-knowledge and so orders others to seek what one does not desire to seek for himself.[8]

While no unbroken line can be drawn between the interpretation given the maxim in the secular and in the religious literature of these centuries, it is observable that secular writers use it more often in its earlier sense of knowing one's measure and in the closely connected ideas of knowing what one can do and knowing one's place. Sometimes this interpretation is quite general, and the reader is merely exhorted to form a true estimate of his capacities and virtues. So Erasmus defines *Nosce te ipsum*, *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν*, as a saying in which is involved humility and moderation (*modestiae mediocritatisque*).[9] Bacon says in his discussion of the maxim[10] that men ought to take an impartial view of their own abilities, virtues, and helps; and again of their wants, inabilities, and impediments. And Richard Baxter in *The Mischiefs of Self-Ignorance and the Benefits of Self-Acquaintance* says,[11] "To have taken the true measure of our capacities, abilities, infirmities, and necessities, and thereupon to perceive what is really best for us and most agreeable to our case is the first part of true, practical, saving knowledge."[12]

In other instances, knowing one's self in the sense of taking one's measure is used as a warning against pride and vainglory and a general overestimate of one's self. Sir Thomas Elyot, in his *Book Named the Governour*,[13] declares that a gentleman's body is made of no better clay than a carter's, and that God has given as much liberty of will to the poor herdsman as to the great and mighty emperor. "If thou be a governor," he continues, "or hast over others sovereignty, know thyself, that is to say, know that thou art verily a man, composed of soul and body, and in that respect all other men be equal unto thee." He calls dignity or authority "but a weighty or heavy

cloke" which may soon be taken away. "Therefore whilst thou wearest it," he says, "know thyself. . . . . Ye shall know always yourself if . . . . ⟨ye⟩ remember that in nothing but only in virtue ye are better than any other inferior person." Montaigne thinks that no particular quality can make any man proud if he puts his weak qualities in the other scale; and that "because Socrates had really only nibbled on the precept of his God 'de se cognoistre,' and by reason of that study had reached the point of despising himself, he alone was esteemed worthy of the name of Wise."[14] So also John Davies says in his *Nosce Teipsum:*

> Take heed of overweening and compare
> Thy peacock's feet with thy gay peacock's train:
> Study the best and highest things that are,
> But of thyself an humble thought retain.[15]

Davies' figure of the peacock, which he apparently owed to John Lydgate's "Poem against Self-Love,"[16] may be the source of the emblem of Zacharias Heyns entitled "Nosce te ipsum,"[17] which is illustrated by a picture of two peacocks, one with tail widespread, and the other with drooping feathers looking at its own feet (Fig. 11). The accompanying poem explains that the peacock was strutting about displaying its feathers, but when it saw how ugly its feet were, it ceased its ostentation.

On the other hand, the ancients sometimes construed "knowing one's self" to mean avoid thinking too meanly of one's self; and it is in this sense that Vincent Voiture, that distinguished literary favorite of the salons of Paris, alludes to the precept in a letter to Balzac.[18] The letter is written in answer to one from Balzac in which Balzac has expressed his affection for Voiture in warm phrases, and Voiture replies that he thinks too highly of Balzac to admit that he can care so much for an inferior person. Then he adds, "This precept 'de

se connoistre soy-mesme' which is for all others a lesson of humility, ought to have quite the contrary effect where you are concerned, and oblige you to think lightly of all that is outside yourself." It is probably somewhat in this sense of the

FIG. 11

duty of recognizing one's high capacity and responsibility that Milton speaks of self-knowledge in his *Paradise Lost*, although he does not refer to the maxim. In the tenth book, when Adam has accused Eve of tempting him, the Almighty asks:[19]

> Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey
> Before his voice? Or was she made thy guide,
> Superior, or but equal, that to her
> Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place

Wherein God set thee above her, made of thee,
And for thee, whose perfection far excell'd
Hers in all real dignity? Adorn'd
She was indeed, and lovely, to attract
Thy love, not thy subjection; and her gifts
Were such as under Government well seem'd
Unseemly to bear rule, which was thy part
And person, hadst thou *known thyself* aright.[20]

That the maxim was used rather commonly in the sense of "Know thy high worth," and could be carried too far is indicated by Hobbes in the Introduction to his *Leviathan*, where he says that "Nosce teipsum . . . . was not meant, as it is now used, to countenance either the barbarous state of men in power towards their inferiors; or to encourage men of low degree to a saucie behaviour towards their betters." A further indication of the current use of the maxim in this sense is found in Speroni's *Discorso Sopra le Sentenze Ne Quid Nimis e Nosce Te Ipsum*. While his opposition to the precept, which we mentioned in an earlier chapter, is really only partial, he is strongly opposed to what he seems to consider its usual connotations. He claims that if it is taken to imply that men are equal—that the powerful should humble himself and the lowly exalt himself—it will work disastrously upon society; and he argues at some length for the superiority of a monarchy to a republic[21]—a line of reasoning which was natural for Speroni, Venetian nobleman and friend of Pope Pius IV as he was, during this period when the spirit of democracy was stirring in the North.

What Speroni really does approve is taking the maxim in the sense of knowing one's place, for he thinks[22] "it teaches us to live and work in as much agreement with what is fitting as possible; since by a man's knowing himself, he will work at that

which accords with his condition and not pass beyond."[23] Thomas Elyot, likewise, says in *The Governour*[24] that while the person of inferior rank ought to consider that he is equal to his superiors in the substance of his soul and body, men are not endowed with equal powers and rulers are needed.

The specific application of the apothegm in the sense of knowing one's special bent occurs in Roger Ascham's *Toxophilus*.[25] He points out the fact that if a man has two sons, one of whom is frail, he fits the frail one for the ministry, and so this perverse judgment results in many unfit ministers. This could be remedied, he thinks, "if fathers would bestow their children always on that thing whereunto Nature hath ordained them most apte and fit," and he pleads:

> Whan this is done, then muste every man beginne to be more ready to amende hym selfe than to checke another, measurying their matters with that wise proverbe of Apollo, *Knowe thy selfe:* that is to saye, learne to knowe what thou art able, fitte, and apte unto, and folowe that.

Montaigne says:

> This great precept is often quoted in Plato, "Do thine own work and know thyself." Each of the two generally includes our whole duty, and likewise includes its companion. He who will do his own work will find that his first lesson is to know what he is and what is suited to him: and he who knows ⟨himself⟩ will never mistake another's work for his own.[26]

And again, Bacon says regarding self-knowledge that men ought to consider how their natures fit in with the professions and kinds of life which are in use and valued, and of which they have to make a choice.[27]

There is a modern application of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν in the sense of "Know the limits of your wisdom" in Guillaume Budé's treatise *De Transitu Hellenismi ad Christianismum*.[28] He declares that in attempting discussions of free-will, predestination, and the like, the human intellect ought to recall the Pythian γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, and asks what mortal judgment has to

do with matters which God wishes to remain unknown to us; and he reiterates the thought, again quoting the maxim, in saying that this is what St. Paul advised in the Epistle to the Romans when he forbade us to inquire into the justice and providence of God and to discuss the laws of selecting and rejecting souls.[29]

We rarely find the maxim in modern literature with the old connotation of "Know you are human and mortal,"[30] for under the influence of Christianity the ancient fear of offending the gods by thinking "thoughts too high for mortals" gave place to the fear of eternal punishment if one died unrepentant; while "Know thyself" in this connection came to mean, as we have shown, "Know that you are a sinner and repent." Occasionally a writer exhorts the overweening or the overambitious to remember that they are but human, but the words have more of a modern import and had better be regarded as merely a strong expression for knowing one's measure. It is in this sense that the words of Thomas Elyot, "Know thyself, that is to say, know that thou art verily a man. . . . ," have been taken above; and this is what Nicole means when he says:

> When one sees these ambitious people who pile enterprise on enterprise . . . . who never think of the death which threatens them every moment . . . . who does not feel disposed to recall them to the knowledge of their frail and mortal condition and make them remember that they are human?[31]

Yet there is a little more of the ancient flavor, perhaps, in the words of the Chorus at the end of Act II of Montchrestien's *Aman*. The soul which has come to fancy that great honor is due it demands something which cannot be granted, they claim, and ask:

> Is it not an extreme error to dare presume upon the honor which the great God commands to be given to Him alone? The man who knows

himself well will not esteem himself so highly. One never sees the creature take the place of the Creator without this madness encountering a sad mischance.

Discussions of self-knowledge in the sense of knowing one's faults occur rather generally in the ecclesiastical literature of these centuries, and we occasionally find this meaning given to both the maxim and the theme in the works of more secular writers as well. That the natural man is not aware of his own faults is beautifully expressed in an "Ode" by John Donne:

> Vengeance will sit above our faults: but till
> She there do sit,
> We see her not, nor them. Thus blind, yet still
> We lead her way; and thus, whilst we do ill,
> We suffer it.
> . . . . . .
> Yet we, that should this ill we now begin
> As soon repent,
> (Strange thing!) perceive not; our faults are not seen,
> But past us; neither felt, but only in
> The punishment.
>
> But we know ourselves least; mere outward shows
> Our minds so store,
> That our souls, no more than our eyes, disclose
> But form and color. Only he who knows
> Himself, knows more.

But, however unwitting, man has an aversion to seeing his faults and tries to escape from the unhappiness involved in a knowledge of them. So Davies says that as Io shrank from seeing herself in the water in the form of a cow, the soul

> impatient her own faults to see,
> Turns from herselfe and in strange things delites.[32]

Pascal maintains in one of his fragments on the "Misery of Man"[33] that man is ever seeking diversion because he cannot

bear the unhappiness consequent upon being left alone with his own thoughts. Nicole refers to this passage of Pascal's in his *De la Connaissance de Soi-Même,*[34] and says further that man's inclination to escape from seeing himself, and yet to see himself in a favorable light, makes him cover his faults and blot them out of the image which he has formed of himself. Yet we are fully alive to the faults of others and prone to criticize especially those faults of which we are most guilty ourselves.[35] We are even so shocked at other people's blindness that we want to say to them *Nosce te ipsum.*[36]

Jacob Balde did address a poem entitled "Nosce Te Ipsum" to a certain Leontius Crinallus, the purport of which is an injunction to pause in his interest in the world's affairs and in judicial cases, and look into himself with piercing eyes, for "there is nothing worse than a man who can bear to be evil himself but cannot bear to have others so." An epigram by Christian Wernicke, critic and satirist, likewise entitled "Nosce te ipsum,"[37] applies the maxim to himself, and assures the reader that he does not hold himself for an angel while he censures many crimes with daring pen. In similar vein with Balde's poem, though in far briefer compass, is the little epigram entitled "Selbsterkenntniss" by Friederich von Logau:[38]

Willst du fremde Fehler zählen, heb' an deinen an zu zählen,
Ist mir recht, dir wird die Welle zu den fremden Fehlern fehlen.*

Von Logau also wrote a short poem entitled "Kenne Dich,"[39] which echoes Aesop's oft-quoted fable of the two sacks:

Kannst du dem, der für sich geht, seine Mangel bald erblicken,
Wird dir deine sehen auch, wer dir nach sieht auf den Rücken.†

*Wouldst thou others' failings reckon, start to reckon up thine own:
If I'm right thou'lt fail the while to see the failings of another.

†Canst thou now see the faults of him who goeth before thee,
He will thine also see who, next thee, seeth thy back.

The similarity of this fable of the two sacks to the New Testament figure of the beam and the mote is obvious, but it apparently remained for Rabelais to connect the beam and the mote with γνῶθι σεαυτόν. In a chapter of his *Pantagruel*,[40] Panurge goes to see Her Trippa, a necromancer of repute; and on the way his friend Epistemon tells him of how one day while Her Trippa was talking sublimely to the great king, the lackeys of the court were sporting with his wife, whom he esteemed highly.[41] When Panurge consults Her Trippa, he learns no good of himself; and in his anger he calls Her Trippa names and says of him, "He has not known the first precept of philosophy, which is 'Cognoy-toy.' And while he boasts that he sees a mote in the eye of another, he does not see a great beam which puts out both his eyes."

The use of the maxim as enjoining a knowledge of the soul in the ancient philosophical and metaphysical sense is somewhat rare in the literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[42] There are a number of passages, however, in which knowing one's self is interpreted as knowing our dual nature—that we are composed of body and soul—and in which obedience to the maxim involves the fullest knowledge of both. Sir Thomas Elyot says in his discussion of the maxim, "For man knowing himself shall know that which is his own and pertaineth to himself. But what is more his own than his soul? Or what thing more appertaineth to him than his body?"[43] A little epigram by John Owen, entitled "Nosce te Ipsum," reads:[44]

> Ethica jungatur Physicae, te noscere si vis,
> Haec docet anatomen corporis, illa animae.*
>
> *Let Ethics be joined to Physics, if thou dost wish to know thyself;
> The one teaches the anatomy of the body, the other that of the soul.

And John Davies writes in his *Nosce Teipsum:*[45]

> I know my bodie's of so frail a kind
> As force without, feavers within can kill;
> I know the heavenly nature of my mind,
> . . . . . .
> And to conclude, I know myself a MAN
> Which is a proud and yet a wretched thing.

Likewise, Baxter in his *Mischiefs of Self-Ignorance* says,[46] "There is a physical self-knowledge: when a man knows . . . . what his soul is, and what his body is, and what the compound called man." There is no suggestion of the maxim in Bossuet's *De la Connaissance de Dieu et de Soi-Même*, nor in the long introspective, and often obscure, poem by Gregorio Silvestre entitled *Conoscimiento de sì Mismo*. Bossuet, however, begins his work by declaring that wisdom consists in knowing God and knowing ourselves, and goes on to say that we are composed of two parts—soul and body—and the three things to consider are first the soul, then the body, and then the union between the two[47]—topics which he discusses in his first three chapters, respectively. In Gregorio Silvestre's poem also man's dual nature is emphasized, and the constant and inevitable warfare between his carnal and his spiritual self forms the main theme.

The discussion of man's physical anatomy and functions which we find in the philosophical works of Bacon and Descartes —themes which are *ipso facto* considered an essential part of his self-knowledge—is an indication of a renewed sense of the dignity of our physical selves, which is in strong contrast to the utter contempt for the body in medieval mystical literature. The connection of the theme with the maxim is shown in Bacon's *De Augmentis*.[48] "Let us come now to the knowledge to which the ancient oracle leads us," he says, "of course to

the knowledge of ourselves. . . . . But before we follow particular divisions, let us constitute a general science of nature and the state of man. . . . . This, however, is deduced from those things which are as common to the body as to the soul." The physiological treatise of Dona Oliva Sabuco de Nántes Barrera, which introduced a new system of physiological thought, based on the theory that our bodies are nourished not by the blood but by nerve force derived from the brain, and are thereby impaired by vice and affected by sensation and passion, is, as we have seen, entitled *Coloquio del Conocimiento de sì Mismo*, and the maxim is quoted as a text.[49] And Sir Thomas Browne, physician that he was, insists that self-knowledge is the greatest knowledge in man, and adds, "For this do I honour my own profession: . . . . had He ⟨God⟩ read such a lecture in Paradise as he ⟨the Devil⟩ did at Delphi, we had better known ourselves."[50] The effect of this renewed interest in the physical side of man's nature, and the difficulty of attaining to such self-knowledge, is reflected in John Donne's *Anatomy of the World:*

> Thou art too narrow, Wretch, to comprehend
> Even thy selfe: yea, though thou wouldst but bend
> To know thy body. . . . .
> . . . . . .
> Know'st thou but how the stone doth enter in
> The bladder's cave and never break the skinne?
> Know'st thou how the blood, which to the heart doth flow,
> Doth from one ventricle to the other go?
> . . . . . .
> What hope have we to know ourselves, when we
> Know not the least things which for our use be?[51]

There is an interesting instance of the application of the maxim to an exalted conception of the body in Baltasar Gracián's *El Criticón*. In the ninth "Crisis" of Part I, which

is entitled "The Moral Anatomy of Man," Andrenio, but recently emerged from his cave, tells of how he saw himself in a crystal fountain and of how delighted he was with his appearance. He then proceeds, with the help of his interlocutors, to attach a moral significance to the various parts and characteristics of his physical self: his head is the fortress of the soul; his eyes its windows; etc. The connection with the maxim is made by Gracián in the introductory paragraphs of this chapter, in which he says that the ancients had *conócete à ti mismo* engraved on the temple walls at Delphi in letters of gold, and the wise philosophers had it imprinted on their hearts in still larger characters; but man's free will makes it possible for him to miss the mark, and through ignorance of himself he often becomes a captive to vice. Andrenio, however, seems to be exempted from such a course of folly.

The maxim is applied to a knowledge of one's soul in the *Γνῶθι Σεαυτόν Sive Ethica* of Geulincx.[52] He tells us in his Preface[53] that the Gentiles had the divine *Ipse te nosce*, and that if they had used that thread aright, they would have explored the intricate labyrinth. Farther on,[54] in speaking of humility, which he considers the chief cardinal virtue, he divides it into two parts—*Inspectio sui* and *Despectio sui*. *Ipse te nosce* applies to the *Inspectio*, which consists of a diligent search into one's nature, condition, and origin. This search reveals man as a mere spectator of the world, having no power in himself of creation or of movement, but wholly dependent upon God for his very existence and his ability to make use of natural laws to meet his ends.[55]

Knowing one's self in the sense of knowing one's soul is, of course, the dominant force of the phrase in religious literature, where the process of arriving at self-knowledge is well defined and largely stereotyped. The Reformation brought freedom

from many of the flagrant abuses of the church, but it had little effect upon its main doctrines. The Protestant could not procure his escape from hell by the purchase of indulgencies, but he must follow the plan of salvation outlined in the first century of the Christian era and persisting down the years. Catholic and Protestant, Lutheran and Calvinist, Puritan and Mystic—all taught that to know God man must know himself, and that he could know himself only as he realized that his soul had been made in the image of God, that he had fallen from grace, and that he must therefore humble his heart in sorrow for his manifold sins in order to be restored to favor with God. This done, his immortality was assured. If he failed to arrive at such self-knowledge in this life, he would have to see his soul in its misery at the Last Judgment. So general was it to speak of self-knowledge in this sense that knowing one's self came to be synonymous with our term "conversion," and treatises on self-knowledge came to embrace practically the wholy body of Christian doctrine in so far as it concerns the individual soul. To quote all of the passages which illustrate this teaching of the church would be tedious, although several of them are connected with γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, as, for instance, the following extract from Calvin's *Institution de la Religion Chrestienne:*[56]

> There is much reason in the old adage which so strongly recommends to man the knowledge of himself. . . . . The knowledge of ourselves consists first, in considering what was bestowed on us at our creation, and the favors we continually receive from the divine benignity, that we may know how great the excellence of our nature would have been, if it had retained its integrity. . . . . Secondly, we should contemplate our miserable condition since the fall of Adam, the sense of which tends . . . . to fill us with real humility. . . . . Hence . . . . we are inflamed with fresh ardor to seek after God, to recover in Him those excellencies of which we find ourselves utterly destitute.

The Introduction to the first book of Charron's *De La Sagesse*, which deals with man's physical and moral qualities, emphasizes the doctrine that to know God it is essential that man study to know himself:

> By the knowledge of self man mounts and arrives earlier and better at the knowledge of God[57] . . . . whereof there was engraven in characters of gold upon the front of the temple of Apollo . . . . this phrase "cognoy-toy" as a greeting and a notice from God to all, signifying to them that to have access to the divinity and to enter his temple, it is necessary to know themselves.

As regards the doctrine of immortality, the maxim is conspicuously connected with it in Davies' *Nosce Teipsum*, the second part of which bears the subtitle "Of the Soule of Man and the Immortalitie Thereof"—a work in which the philosophical basis for a belief in immortality is discussed at length in an admirable manner.[58] But the most succinctly satisfactory expositions of the theme of self-knowledge as it functions in this life and the next are to be found in Nicole's *De la Connaissance de Soi-Même*[59] and in Baxter's *The Mischiefs of Self-Ignorance and the Benefits of Self-Acquaintance*.[60] The maxim is alluded to in both treatises, and repeatedly in Nicole's, although it is not used in either work as a text for the entire discussion.

Mysticism, more or less of the medieval type, continued to flourish during these centuries, particularly in Spain, where some three hundred mystics lived and wrote,[61] of whom Santa Teresa, Fray Luis de Granada, and Fray Luis de Leon are probably the best known. Among its adherents in other countries, the names of Jacob Boehme[62] and Angelius Silesius[63] (Johann Scheffler) stand out conspicuously. Like their predecessors, they regarded self-knowledge as an indispensable preliminary to contemplation,[64] and they sometimes used figures to make their thought more vivid and real. Juan d'Avila writes in

one of his spiritual letters[65] that "there were two parts to the temple of Solomon and both were holy, but one was holier than the other and the less holy was the way thereto. The first is the knowledge of self . . . . the approach to the Holy of Holies, which is the knowledge of God." Self-knowledge appears under a figure also in the poem by Cosme Gomez de Texada entitled "El Todo,"[66] where it is the secret gate to the temple of philosophy, whose four columns are the four cardinal virtues. "The school of expert philosophers judged it a very difficult thing to enter," he says, "for they inscribed on high an aphorism (a mockery to the ignorant) *Conócete à ti mismo*."[67]

The influence of mystical conceptions can be traced in some of the other literature of the period. Torquato Tasso in his dialogue "Il Porzio, o Vero de le Virtu"[68] quotes *nosce te ipsum* and adds that some philosopher has said that we ought to leap from the knowledge of self to the knowledge of God, because our souls are, as it were, rays of that intelligent sun which he illumines with his own light. There is a suggestion of mystical doctrine, too—of the soul as a reflection of God—in Davies' *Nosce Teipsum*:[69]

> The best Soule with her reflecting thought
> Sees not herself without some light divine.

And, again, near the end of the poem, there is a hint of the hindrance to self-knowledge imposed by the flesh:

> And thou, my Soule, which turn'st thy curious eye
> To view the beames of thine own form divine;
> Know that thou canst know nothing perfectly,
> While thou art clouded with this flesh of mine.

That man is a microcosm, a little universe, which the soul, a spark of the Divine, rules as God rules the big universe, or

macrocosm, is one of the common conceptions which the Mystics borrowed from the Stoics. In the *Coloquio del Conocimiento de sì Mismo* of Dona Oliva Sabuco de Nántes Barrera the interlocutors reach a point at which the questioner is satisfied with the discussion of man's physical self as governed by his sensations, but feels that more is meant by *Nosce te ipsum*.

FIG. 12

The protagonist replies with the usual statement about man being a microcosm, by way of introduction to what he has to say about the soul, which forms its contacts with the outside world through the senses.[70] There is a striking picture illustrating the idea of man as a microcosm in an emblem by Florentius Schoonoven which has "Nosce te ipsum" for its title (Fig. 12), and a poem which counsels:

Do not, O man, the most valued part of the Universe, keep thine illustrious worth in a servile state. In thee the image of the Heavens and the world lies wholly revealed. Hence learn to know thy glory and thy dower.[71]

To the modern as to the ancient mind, the quest for self-knowledge is of high importance[72]—the beginning of virtue and wisdom.[73] That it is difficult of attainment is a commonplace of discussions of the subject, whether the statement be a mere echo of the ancient saying or an expression of the writer's profound personal conviction.[74] The quest became a lifelong process with Montaigne,[75] as with Socrates, while he, along with many another, realized that complete self-knowledge is impossible for man but is rather an attribute of God alone. "I who have no other profession," he writes, "have found a depth and a variety so infinite that my apprenticeship has no other fruit than to make me realize how much there remains for me to apprehend";[76] and again he says, "It is ⟨the prerogative⟩ of God alone to know himself."[77] That self-knowledge is the beginning of wisdom is implicit to a greater or less extent in the works of certain of the philosophers of the seventeenth century, notably in those of Descartes, although they do not express the conviction as definitely as the Stoics of old. And that self-knowledge is the beginning of social, as well as of individual virtue,[78] while not a new thought, is given a new emphasis. Sir Thomas Elyot in *The Governour*[79] speaks of the precepts "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," and "Love thy neighbor as thyself," and goes on to say:

Knowledge . . . . in a more brief sentence than hath yet been spoken declareth by what means the said precepts of reason and society may be well understood and thereby Justice finally executed. The words be these in Latin, *Nosce te ipsum*. . . . . By this counsel man is induced to understand the other two precepts, and also thereby is accomplished not only

the second part, but also the residue of Justice. . . . . In knowing the condition of his soul and body he knoweth himself, and consequently in the same thing he knoweth every other man.

Thomas Hobbes presents a similar conception of the relation of self-knowledge to the performance of civic duty in the Introduction to his *Leviathan:*

There is a saying much usurped of late, that wisdom is acquired not by reading of books but of men. . . . . But there is another saying not of late understood, by which they might learn truly to read one another, if they would take the pains; and that is, *Nosce te ipsum, Read thyself*, which was . . . . meant . . . . to teach us, that for the similitude of the thoughts and passions of one man to the thoughts and passions of another, whosoever looketh into himself and considereth what he doth, what he does think, opine, reason, hope, fear, &c., and upon what grounds, he shall thereby read and know what are the thoughts and passions of all other men upon the like occasions. . . . . He that is to govern a whole nation must read in himself not this or that particular man, but man-kind.[80]

Not only must the ruler know himself in order to know men[81] and so govern with justice, but the self-knowledge of the subject should include a sense of civic responsibility. So Samuel Pufendorf, the eminent jurist, in his book on *The Laws of Nature and of Nations*[82] discusses self-knowledge from a point of view consistent with his profession, and echoes the teaching of the Stoics of old when he interprets γνῶθι σεαυτὸν to mean that man should realize that he does not exist for himself but that he is a part of human society and should obey the laws of society.

The Renaissance period has little to add in answer to the persistent question, "How can a man know himself?" It will be remembered that Galen suggested that an impartial friend might help us by telling us our faults. This is one of the methods recommended by Nicole, who says[83] that we ought to have a faithful and understanding friend to tell us what is said of

us in the world, and suggests further that a confessor might serve the purpose, although he might not know our pet frailties.[84] Boccalini humorously suggests a device for securing other people's estimates of us in his *Advertisements from Parnassus;*[85] for among the wares offered for sale, at a very high price, are human eyes, which are designed to help men better than anything else to attain that most excellent virtue *Nosce te ipsum.* The figure of the mirror, which we found in Seneca and elsewhere,[86] appears frequently in later discussions of self-knowledge. It was the usual device for picturing self-knowledge in emblem literature, where we meet it first in Andrea Alciati's emblem entitled "Dicta Septem Sapientum"[87] (see Fig 4, p. 17). Most of the illustrative pictures represent his *noscere se* by a mirror alone, but in one edition the mirror is held by a woman's hand.[88] One of the highly esteemed *Quatrains* of Pibrac,[89] a pupil of Alciati, was probably influenced by his or some similar picture:

Fig. 13

> Qui a de soi parfaite cognoissance
> N'ignore rien de ce qu'il faut savoir;
> Mais le moyen assure de l'avoir,
> Est se mirer dedans la sapience.*

In one of the later emblems, by Achilles Bocchius,[90] Socrates is pictured handing a mirror to a youth (Fig. 13); in another, by Kreihing,[91] a woman is adorning herself before a looking-glass (Fig. 14), and the rather long poem, entitled "Nosce teipsum," is to the effect that we should look into our hearts, as a woman looks in a mirror, to see that we are clean

FIG. 14

and well adorned within.[92] In another emblem, by Engelgrave,[93] entitled "Ex Fragili te nosse potes," a sad-faced mother is looking into a mirror hung on the wall, while her dead child lies in its cradle beside her, its little face likewise reflected in a small mirror held near by (Fig. 15). Again we find the mirror among the symbols of wisdom or prudence. Henricus Oraeus

*The man who of himself hath perfect knowledge gained
Fails to know nothing which he needs to know,
But the surest means by which it is attained
Is in Wisdom's mirror his own heart to show.

has a picture of an altar on the top of which is a cock standing on an hourglass, while an arm extends on either side, one hand holding a mirror and the other a serpent[94] (Fig. 16). The cock, we are told, represents giving heed to time; the serpent is a symbol of wisdom because he is so regarded in the

Fig 15

story of the temptation of Eve; and the mirror typifies knowledge of self. Cesare Ripa adds other symbols to his picture of "Prudence"[95] (Fig. 17), for she has two faces—one turned toward the Past and the other toward the Future; she wears a helmet, indicating her skill in defense, wreathed with mulberry leaves, symbolic of deliberate good judgment; in her left hand is an *echeneis* twined on a spear, apropos of Pliny's story to the effect that this fish has the power to delay the progress of

ships;[96] at her feet reclines a stag with very long horns, the weight of which retards haste; in her left hand, of course, is the mirror of self-knowledge.[97]

The mirror is also a prominent feature of the highly symbolic frontispiece designed for the second edition of Charron's *Book of Wisdom*.[98] A statue of Wisdom stands crowned with laurel and olive, tokens of victory and peace; the space around her signifies liberty; four old women chained to the pedestal beneath her feet represent Passion and Opinion on the right, and Superstition and Learning on the left; the mirror which reflects her face, we are told, shows wisdom "employed in the knowledge and contemplation of herself." For Charron, wisdom is really synonymous with philosophy, and his book is concerned with a discussion of man's physical and moral nature. That self-knowledge is aided by philosophy is but a truism, of course, whatever the philosophic system. It is one of the chief ends of Descartes' method of "doubt," as he tells us in his *Recherche de la Vérité*. "From this universal doubt . . . . ," he says, I have decided to derive the knowledge of yourself and of all things which are in the world."[99]

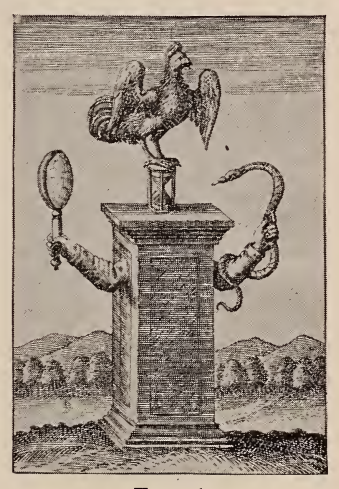


Fig. 16

Nicole thinks that if men only would, they might see their own faults by observing the faults of other people;[100] and other writers would have us see ourselves writ large in society as depicted in literature, in history, and in the state of the times in which we live. Montaigne says in his essay on "Books,"[101]

"If I study, I seek only the knowledge which treats of the knowledge of myself." Sir Thomas Culpeper, a minor author of the period, tells us in his *Essays or Moral Discourses*[102] that "in conversing with books we are but made more acquainted with ourselves by the assistance of others." Touching the use of the drama, Madame Molière asks impetuously in the *Impromptu of Versailles*,[103] "Why does he make wicked plays that all Paris goes to see, and paint people so well therein that everyone recognizes himself?" The use of history to teach men self-knowledge is discussed in Speroni's *Dialogo della Istoria*,[104] where he says:

> By such history not only the private citizen may see in the situation of others, as in a mirror of fine glass, the vanity of human things, on which he learns not to found his hopes; but a city can discern itself altogether from head to foot, before and behind . . . . applying the precept *nosce te ipsum.*

And again applying the maxim to corporate life, he says, farther on:

> Truly that saying *nosce te ipsum* has more of divine power as it is applied to the public—that is, to many people united in living a city life—as we find therein a more perfect humanity than in this man or that taken alone by himself, or with his few in the family.

This political self-knowledge is also the burden of Bacon's discussion of the apothegm in the following passage:[105]

> The oracle "Nosce teipsum" is not merely a rule of universal wisdom, but it has a special place in politics. For St. James advises men excellently "he who beholds his face in a mirror, nevertheless forgets suddenly what manner of man he was," so that there is need of looking at ourselves very frequently. And this holds even in politics. But the mirrors are different, of course. For the divine mirror in which we ought to behold ourselves is the Word of God; but the political mirror is none other than the state of affairs and of the times in which we live.[106]

Not only through books and through his direct observations of society may man come to a better understanding of

himself, but through his very experience of life. He learns to know the measure of his capacity by attempting to do things. "It is a Proverb that *magistratus virum conmonstrat*," says

Fig. 17

Hugh Latimer in one of his sermons before Edward VI;[107] "Office and authoritye sheweth what a man is. A man knoweth not hym selfe tyl he be tried." But the experience which reveals him to himself especially is adversity. This is no new thought, for the ancients recognized the value of affliction,[108]

and the Christian church came to regard it as an aid in bringing man to a humble realization of his sinful condition. We meet the theme again in a fable by Gabriel Faerno of Cremona, entitled "Mulus."[109] In this fable, which is borrowed from Aesop and illustrated by a picture of a prancing mule, we are told that a well-fed mule once had the proud thought that he was handsome and a very swift runner, sprung from a sire who wore a golden bridle; but presently when he was forced to run, he had to stop after a short space, and he remembered straightway that his father was an ass. Faerno's *explicatio* reads, "Favorable fortune make us ignorant of ourselves: adverse fortune reveals us to ourselves."[110] The story of the origin of John Davies' *Nosce Teipsum* is well known.[111] A quarrel with one of his fellows in the Middle Temple, in the course of which Davies gave the man a thorough beating, resulted in his expulsion from the Temple. He retired to Oxford, where he seems to have repented; and the outgrowth of the experience was the above mentioned poem. So it is out of his own heart that he writes:

> Yet if Affliction once her warres begin,
> . . . . . .
> The mind contracts herself and shrinketh in,
> And to herself she gladly doth retire.
> . . . . Affliction's lookes
> Teach us to know ourselves beyond all books.[112]

A rather more beautiful expression of the power of adversity to bring us to self-knowledge is found in the following little poem by Christian Wernicke:[113]

> Es Ist Uns Gut, Herr, Dass Du Uns Züchtigst
> Wie Mancher dünket sich in Glück ein Held zu sein
> Der in der Noth verzagt! Das Unglück ist's allein,
> Dass in das Innerste des falschen Herzens dringet
> Und den verführten Tropf zur Selbsterkenntniss bringet.

Ein Glas zeigt wenn es ist durchsichtig nur das Licht;
Doch wenn's verfinstert ist, so zeigt's dir dein Gesicht.*

In the religious writings of these centuries, as of those which had preceded, the beginning of self-knowledge is achieved by prolonged self-examination[114] and reflection; and it is aided by the study of the Bible,[115] by the preaching of the Word,[116] and by the illuminating power of the Spirit of God.[117] A further aid, which was also recommended by the medieval Mystics, is associating with and conversing with saints. In Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*,[118] when Hopeful asks Christian what it was that brought his sins to mind again, Christian replies, "Many things: as, if I did but meet a good man in the streets"; and Baxter says, "It will be a great help to the knowledge of yourselves, if you will converse with those that bear the image of their Creator."[119] Hugh Latimer, in his fifth sermon on the Lord's Prayer, tells the story of St. Anthony, who fasted in the wilderness so long that he thought no one could be as holy as himself. He asked God who "should be his fellow" in heaven, and God sent him to a poor cobbler in Alexandria who was living a very simple life, doing his duty humbly and faithfully. By associating with him, St. Anthony "came to know himself and laid aside all pride and presumption."

The necessity for retirement and calm in order to enable the soul to see itself is illustrated by La Fontaine in the last of his *Fables*, entitled "Le Juge Arbitre, l'Hospitalier et le Soli-

* It is Good for us, Lord, that Thou Dost Chastise us
How many a man, when all is fair, thinks he is made of hero stuff,
Who fainteth in the hour when trouble draweth nigh!
'Tis trouble alone that pierceth to the false heart's innermost reaches,
And bringeth the soul of the misguided wretch to self-knowledge.
A piece of transparent glass revealeth only the light;
But darken its surface beneath, and it showeth to thee thy face.

taire."[120] A judge and a minister to the sick and needy had each tried to serve humanity regardless of reward and had become discouraged because of the attitude of those whom they tried to help. So they took a walk together in the woods, by way of respite, and there they met a hermit to whom they told their troubles. When they asked his advice, he turned to a pool of water and replied:

> To know oneself is, here below,
> The first command of the Supreme.
> Have you obeyed, among the bustling throngs?
> Such knowledge to tranquillity belongs:
> Elsewhere to seek were fallacy extreme.
> Disturb the water—do you see your face?
> See we ourselves within a troubled breast?
> A murky cloud, in such a case,
> Though once it were a crystal vase!
> But, brothers, let it simply rest,
> And each shall see his features there impressed;
> For inward thought a desert home is best.[121]

This poem, like the other fables of La Fontaine, was early illustrated. In the picture (Fig. 18) the three men are seen bending over the pool, while the hermit stirs the water. It is but another phase of the mirror figure, really, and its lesson is obvious.

Yet reflection and self-examination can be carried too far, and some of the writers on self-knowledge in this period frankly warn their readers against too much poring over self. Speroni says, in his treatise on the two maxims, "It is bad to know one's self too much, just as every 'too much' is bad";[122] and farther on he says again, in effect, that excessive self-examination is acting contrary to *Ne quid nimis*. Nicole and Baxter likewise caution the reader against overdoing the matter. Nicole, in fact, dwells upon the point at some length, declaring that we ought not to desire to know more than God wishes, and that

God does not wish us to know ourselves more than is necessary to make us humble and able to govern ourselves. In his judg-

FIG. 18

ment, it were better to busy our minds about God's mercies, for we need the contemplation of God as well as the study of self to keep our souls in equilibrium.[123]

CHAPTER VII

MAXIM AND THEME IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LITERATURE

The century between the death of Milton in 1674 and the rise of Romanticism in the last quarter of the eighteenth century was for certain countries a period of formal classicism carried to the extreme. The literature is characterized by more frequent quotations from ancient authors, by numerous and painstaking translations, and by patent imitations of classical works. Scrupulous attention to style, receiving its chief impulse from the French Academy, led to conventionality and finish of form; while the enthronement of Reason, a natural concomitant of the increasing interest in philosophy, particularly "natural philosophy," did its part to check spontaneity and imagination. Classicism found its chief stronghold in France, with England a close second; but it had only a feeble hold upon Italy, and in Germany it was at once weak and short-lived. Yet the eighteenth-century literature of France, as well as of Italy and Germany, rarely contains any allusion to *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* or direct discussions of the theme of self-knowledge; and even in English literature, where we find more instances of both, they occupy a less important place than in the literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and mark no advance in thought. For this reason our interest often centers more upon the author and the occasion for his introduction of the maxim or the theme than upon what he says about it, and the material lends itself to an arrangement by authors rather than to a topical treatment.

The most important French work of the century on the theme of self-knowledge is the little book on *L'Art de Se Connoître Soy-Même* by that eminent divine, Jacques Abbadie. His only allusion to the maxim occurs in the first sentence, where he refers to Juvenal's famous verse. He thinks the ancients' understanding of the subject unsatisfactory and proposes to study man, not from the physical or metaphysical standpoint, but from the ethical, as "a creature capable of virtue and happiness, ... who finds himself in a state of corruption and misery."[1] His book thus becomes virtually a treatise on moral philosophy written from the religious point of view. It is in two parts—the first part dealing with the baseness and misery of man, his duties as related to the Decalogue, his motives, and his sense of immortality; the second, with "the source of our corruption," with the faults of self-love, with the characteristics of pleasure, with pride, and with human vanity and ambition.

Other direct references to self-knowledge in eighteenth-century French literature are few and brief. Jean Baptiste Rousseau, in one of his *Allégories*, characterizes philosophers as "those vain mortals nurtured on illusion, who with faith in their feeble systems, knowing all things without knowing themselves, seek the truth, which always eludes them."[2] Voltaire, the most representative figure of the century in France, never quotes the maxim; but he uses the phraseology of self-knowledge in one of his *Dialogues d'Éuhémère*.[3] Euhemerus is praising the new scientific knowledge; and Callicrates, who is concerned about a knowledge of the soul, asks, "But what good will it do to know that one planet is balanced above another, and that they can analyze rays of light, if *je ne me connais pas moi-même?*" The French scientific writer Buffon begins his *Histoire Naturelle de L'Homme*[4] by saying that while it is to

our interest to know ourselves, he doubts if we do not know everything else better; and presently he uses words which have become almost a platitude: "The first and most difficult thing which we have to do to arrive at the knowledge of ourselves is to recognize distinctly the nature of the two substances of which we are composed." He then discusses briefly the faculties of the soul and its relation to the body by way of introduction to his physiological study of man at the different stages of his life.

Among Italian writers, we find the maxim quoted in an *Inaugural Oration*[5] by the philosopher Vico, author of the *Scienza Nuova*. He thinks that the fame of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν would not be so great if, as is commonly thought, it had been devised for checking elation of spirit and crushing pride, but that it means, rather, to know one's soul. It means to know that the soul is divine, made in the image of God, and that it is in the body as God is in the universe; and it means further that the soul is immortal, for if the body dies, the soul will live, just as God would still exist, if the universe should be destroyed. Another Italian philosopher, Genovesi, says, in a paragraph of his *La Diceosina*, that the most important duty a man owes to himself is to know and measure himself, for without knowing his own particular qualities he cannot know his own best good, and that the maxim *Nosce teipsum* ought to be regarded as the foundation of all morality, since it is the basis of our relation to others and to God.[6] Then there is a discussion of the maxim by a less known Italian, Joseph Rinaldi, "Doctor of Sacred Theology and Director of Studies in the Seminary at Patavia." At the request of his friends, he published a little volume of addresses in 1746—addresses which evidently had been delivered to his students on different occasions. One of these bears the title "De Cognitione Sui"[7] and

consists of the application of *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν*, which he quotes several times, to the end and aim of education. He takes the maxim to mean "Know the soul," and declares that the practice of it would silence criticism of the student's career—that the study of dialectic, physics, and philosophy leads to self-knowledge, and that philosophers and preachers are of help in the attaining of it. In self-knowledge, he observes, lies the answer to the riddle of the Sphinx, who represents Letters. In another oration, entitled "De Vero Litterarum Fine,"[8] he speaks of the virtuous, wise, and modest type of man, who seems in all his studies to have nothing other in mind than *Nosce teipsum.*

The German philosopher, Christian Wolf, has a chapter in his *Ethica* entitled "De Notitia Sui."[9] The chapter begins with the statement that virtue consists in the pursuit of self-knowledge, and self-knowledge is taken to mean a knowledge of both our natural and our acquired characteristics and of what concerns our external state. It means, further, a knowledge of our powers in comparison with others, of our duty as God's creatures, of how we may serve him, and of how far we have advanced in goodness. Self-knowledge is difficult, but it is necessary for a happy life. It is aided by the study of psychology, of philosophy both natural and moral, of politics, and of other arts; and a knowledge of God is essential. Hamann, called "Magus aus dem Norden," that erratic philosopher with his conspicuous pietism and his hostility to abstraction, belongs in part to the next period; but his quotation of the maxim occurs in one of his early works, his *Sokratische Denkwürdigkeiten*,[10] where he says that Socrates was declared the wisest man, rather than Sophocles or Euripides, because he went farther in self-knowledge than they and knew that he knew nothing. And in his slightly earlier work, *Brocken*,[11] he says in

effect that Christ came into the world to teach us self-knowledge and self-love. All of our knowledge has self-knowledge for its object; and as long as it is impossible for man to know himself, so long it is impossible for him to love himself. Self-knowledge is impossible without soul-nurture, for the soul needs the higher Spirit as the body needs the air. It would facilitate self-knowledge, moreover, if we would look at our neighbor and see ourselves reflected in him as in a mirror.

The German poet Wieland quotes the maxim near the close of his *Musarion*, which is a satire on the Cynic and Pythagorean systems of philosophy. Fanias, the story goes, disappointed in his love for the nymph Musarion, adopts the Cynic philosophy and withdraws to the forest. There Musarion one day appears to him as he is lying half-asleep in his musings, and insists upon staying and talking with him, until darkness comes on and she does not wish to return to Athens alone. Reluctantly he takes her to his lodge, where they find his companions—a young Stoic, Cleanthes; and a Pythagorean, Theophron—actually coming to blows as a result of a dispute over some philosophical tenet. Under the influence of Musarion's presence they calm themselves and talk with her about their respective philosophical systems. At length the evening meal is prepared, which, through Musarion's magic, becomes a sumptuous feast, served by the nymphs Phyllis and Chloe. Cleanthes and Theophron drink immoderately, until Cleanthes loses consciousness and Theophron seeks Chloe's embrace. Fanias avoids excess, but becomes increasingly enamored of Musarion. In the end he seeks her in her chamber, and as a consequence abandons his Cynic life. As for the others, Cleanthes disappears and is never heard from more; but of Theophron, the poet writes:[12]

Er ward in einer einz'gen Nacht
Zum *γνῶθι σαυτὸν* in Chloe's Arm gebracht;
Er fand er sey night klug, und lernte Bohnen essen.*

So the poet shows that the would-be philosophers had really adopted the ascetic life only as a refuge from disappointment and dissatisfaction, for they were ready to abandon it when human delights were put within their reach enticingly: and the *γνῶθι σαυτὸν* came to mean for Theophron knowing his measure, rather than knowing his soul.

One of the earliest occurrences of the theme of self-knowledge in eighteenth-century English poetry is in Gay's fable of "The Man and the Flea."[13] Man claims that the world was made for him, the fable reads, but the flea on his nose replies:

Be humble, learn thyself to scan;
Know, pride was never made for Man.
'Tis vanity that swells thy mind.
What, Heav'n and Earth for thee design'd!
For thee! made only for our need,
That more important Fleas might feed.

The thought that man is not necessarily the final cause of Creation is as old as the Stoics, at least,[14] and it may be found in the writings of Descartes[15] and other philosophers.[16] It was a persistent theme with Lord Bolingbroke,[17] from whom Pope derived ideas for the *Essay on Man;* and it is best known to us, perhaps, in the first epistle of that poem[18]—a poem of which self-knowledge serves as the keynote. The opening verses of the second epistle, which is concerned with man in relation to himself, are the familiar

Know then thyself: presume not God to scan.
The proper study of mankind is man.

* In Chloe's arms he was brought in a single night to *γνῶθι σαυτὸν*; he found he was not wise, and learned to eat beans.

And the entire poem closes with the words:

> And all our knowledge is, ourselves to know.

The burden of the first epistle, on "The Nature and State of Man with Respect to the Universe," is that man should know the limits of his wisdom and think mortal thoughts:

> Of God above, or man below,
> What can we reason, but from what we know?[19]

Man's "knowledge" is "measur'd to his state and place."[20] Man in his pride questions God's justice, and

> Little less than Angel, would be more.[21]

But

> The bliss of man (could pride that blessing find)
> Is not to think or act beyond mankind.[22]

In the three remaining epistles, man's knowledge of himself means a knowledge of his soul. In the second, Pope declares the two reigning principles in human nature to be self-love, of which the passions are "modes," and reason, which controls them. He then discusses the passions, and the way in which virtue and vice are joined in our nature "to some mysterious use," and touches upon the social value of self-love. In the third epistle, which treats of man with respect to society, he exalts self-love, showing

> That true Self-love and Social are the same;[23]

and in the fourth epistle, he shows that virtue is the only source of happiness. This exaltation of self-love at its best might seem at first thought to be the antithesis of self-love as the foe to self-knowledge in ecclesiastical literature; but there is no contradiction, really, for the churchman uses self-love as a synonym for moral selfishness, whereas the philosopher treats it as a primitive instinct—the starting-point of all outgoing, and so unselfish, good will. Pope's conception, of course, is a natural outgrowth of the insistence of Shaftesbury[24] and others upon

the co-existence of the social and the egoistic impulses from the beginning, in opposition to Hobbes' doctrine that the egoistic principle alone is original.

The popularity and influence of Pope's *Essay on Man* gave rise to the echo of his famous lines on knowing one's self in the works of several of his admirers. In William Thompson's sonnet "On Mr. Pope's Works,"[25] written soon after his death, we read:

> To root excesses from the human breast
> Behold a beauteous pile of Ethics rise;
> . . . . . .
> Where Socrates and Horace jointly reign.
> Best of philosophers: of poets too
> The best! He teaches thee thyself to know.

Matthew Green says, near the close of "The Spleen":[26]

> Hold, Muse, nor melting pinions try,
> Nor near the blazing Glory fly,
> . . . . . .
> My soul, the vain attempt forego.
> Thyself, the fitter subject, know.

So John Gilbert Cooper in "The Tomb of Shakespear"[27] describes his visions at the tomb and tells how, in the prayer which he offers on waking, he petitions:

> Let not my reason impiously require
> What Heav'n has plac'd beyond its narrow span,
> . . . . . .
> Teach me what all believe, but few possess,
> That life's best science is ourselves to know.

And James Grainger writes, in his ode on "Solitude":[28]

> What boots through Space's furthest bourns to roam,
> If thou, O man, a stranger art at home?
> Then know thyself, the human mind survey,
> . . . . . .
> Hence Homer's crown; and, Shakespeare, hence thy bays.
> Hence he, the pride of Athens, and the shame,
> The best and wisest of mankind became.

Young's *Night Thoughts* advocates self-knowledge in three passages. In the first, the poet is speaking of the cross of Christ, and of how it may signify the essential divinity of man:

> "Man! know thyself!" All wisdom centres there;
> To none man seems ignoble but to man;
> Angels that grandeur men o'erlook, admire:
> How long shall human nature be their book,
> Degen'rate mortal, and unread by thee?
> The beam dim Reason sheds, shows wonders there;
> What high contents, illustrious faculties!
> But the grand comment which displays at full
> Our human height, scarce severed from Divine,
> By Heaven composed, was published on the cross.
> Who looks on that, and sees not in himself
> An awful stranger, a terrestrial God?
> A glorious partner with the Deity
> In that high attribute, immortal life?[29]

In the second passage, the poet pictures the grief and emptiness of existence without the hope of immortality, in which case self-knowledge could mean only misery:

> To *know myself* true wisdom? No, to shun
> That shocking science, Parent of despair!
> Avert thy mirror: if I see, I die.[30]

And in the third, he recommends a knowledge of our higher self as a step toward the higher self-love:

> The man is dead, who for the body lives,
> . . . . . .
> Thyself, first, know; then love: a self there is
> Of Virtue fond, that kindles at her charms.[31]

It is in his poem "Resignation," however, written when he was nearly eighty years of age, that Young alludes to the maxim.

He there represents knowledge as the child of resignation in adversity, and as the revealer of God in the soul:

> But whither points all this parade?
> It says that near you lies
> A book, perhaps yet unperus'd,
> Which you should greatly prize.
>
> Of self-perusal—science rare!—
> Few know the mighty gain;
> Learn'd prelates, self unread, may read
> Their Bibles o'er in vain.
>
> Self-knowledge, which from heaven itself
> (So Sages tell us) came,
> What is it but a daughter fair
> Of my maternal theme?
>
> Unletter'd and untravel'd men
> An oracle might find,
> Would they consult their own contents,
> The Delphos of the mind.
>
> Enter your bosom: there you'll meet
> A revelation new,
> A revelation personal,
> Which none can read but you.
>
> There will you clearly read reveal'd
> In your enlighten'd thought,
> By mercies manifold, through life,
> To fresh remembrance brought,
>
> A mighty Being! . . . . [32]

After Dr. Johnson had revised and enlarged his famous dictionary, he evidently felt lost with the great work off his hands; and he expressed his restlessness in a Latin poem entitled *Γνῶθι Σεαυτόν*.[33] When Scaliger had finished his lexicon, the poem reads, he cursed the work and consigned the writing of

lexicons to condemned criminals;[34] and Scaliger was right, because he could do bigger things, while lesser men are not entitled to show the same spirit. "Each man should know his own measure," Dr. Johnson says, and he knows that he cannot equal Scaliger. The lassitude and melancholy to which he was subject must be reckoned with. He is sleepless and restless; and he asks whether he shall spend his old age in sluggish ease, or gird himself for more arduous studies, or at length demand new dictionaries![35]

Passages from the works of three other English poets of the period call for mention. Richard Savage in *The Wanderer*, published earlier than any of the above-mentioned poems except Gay's, touches a phase of the theme which is to be given new emphasis in the following century in the verse:

> "Justly to know thyself, peruse mankind."[36]

Nathaniel Cotton and William Whitehead, who flourished later, introduce an allusion to the maxim into their various familiar remarks about self-knowledge. In the last of Cotton's *Visions in Verse*, entitled "Death," Reason cries:

> Retire, and commune with thy heart,
> Ask, whence thou cam'st, and what thou art.
> . . . . . .
> Study the science of your heart.
> This homely philosophy, you know,
> Was priz'd some thousand years ago.
> . . . . . .
> Not all the volumes on thy shelf
> Are worth that single volume, self.
> . . . . . .
> Proclaim the truth—say, what is man?
> His body from the dust began;
> . . . . . .
> But whence the soul? From Heav'n it came!
> . . . . . .

This nobler self with rapture scan.
'Tis mind alone that makes the man.

. . . . . .

Revere thyself—thou'rt near ally'd
To angels on thy better side.[37]

And Whitehead says in "A Charge to the Poets":

It boots us much to know, observers say,
Of what materials Nature form'd our clay;

. . . . . .

O mark it well! does pride affect to reign
The solitary tyrant of the brain?
Or vanity exert her quick'ning flame,
Stuck round with ears that listen after fame?
O to these points let strict regard be given,
Nor 'know thyself' in vain descend from Heaven.[38]

In eighteenth-century English prose we find two sermons and two little books on the theme of self-knowledge, besides discussions in a few essays and brief allusions in the letters of Lord Chesterfield. The sermons are both by men who are more famous for their secular works—by Jonathan Swift, author of *Gulliver's Travels;* and by Laurence Sterne, author of *Tristram Shandy*. Swift's sermon is on "The Difficulty of Knowing Oneself," and he takes for his text the story of Hazael's visit to Elisha to ask if Ben-hadad, king of Syria, would recover from his illness.[39] Elisha sees in Hazael the coming murderer and successor of Ban-hadad; and he so pictures his future cruelty to the Israelites that Hazael exclaims, "What! Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" Swift says that this story illustrates well the deceitfulness of the human heart regarding the things of which it is capable, and the sermon goes on to discuss the reasons for our ignorance of self and the advantages of self-knowledge. The chief reason for our self-ignorance, he says, is a lack of reflection, calling for a diffi-

cult process of concentration for which we do not take the time, nor have we the courage, owing to our fear of what we may see revealed within. The advantages of self-knowledge he considers to be a modest opinion of one's self, patience under criticism, since we know we deserve it, and a greater charity with the faults of others, once we know our own. Sterne's sermon is entitled "Self-knowledge,"[40] and he takes for his text the passage in which Nathan makes David's sin known to him through the parable of the little ewe lamb—a tale which roused David's anger at the supposed offender.[41] This story, like the story of Hazael referred to above, is taken to illustrate the deceitfulness—the blindness—of the human heart, in that it is so often guilty of the very conduct which it condemns in others.[42] The knowledge of self is "one of the hardest and most painful lessons," Sterne reflects; and so it was that "some of the earliest instructors of mankind . . . . saw the necessity for laying such a stress upon this great precept of self-knowledge, which for its excellent wisdom and usefulness, many of them supposed to be a divine direction; that it came down from Heaven, and comprehended the whole circle both of the knowledge and the duty of man." As an aid to self-knowledge, Sterne recommends the setting apart of some small portion of the day for searching the heart.

One of the books to which we referred above is an unimportant little tract by one Samuel Walker, curate of Truro in Cornwall, entitled *A Familiar Introduction to the Knowledge of Ourselves*. The author's purpose, he tells us, is to help those who are willing to search into themselves by affording a "kind of key, whereby the various Iniquities that dwell in their Hearts may be opened to them."[43] Of far more importance is the book by John Mason, a non-conformist divine, who first attracted attention by publishing his *Plea for Christianity* in 1743. His

treatise on *Self-knowledge*, one of the longest and most complete works on the subject which the century produced, was held in high esteem, if we may judge from the fact that it went through six editions in the eighteen years succeeding its first appearance in 1745. Pope's "The proper study of mankind is man" is used with Juvenal's "E caelo descendit *γνῶθι σεαυτόν*" as a flyleaf inscription. In his Preface the author acknowledges his debt to Baxter's *The Mischiefs of Self-Ignorance*, but says that he has become convinced that "something more correct, nervous, and methodical" is wanting on the subject. He apologizes for his marginal quotations from "heathen" writers, because it looks like an ostentation of reading, although it was conversing with those authors that first turned his thought to the subject; and if the reader cares for them, he will find that they contain some of the finest sentiments in the book. The work is divided into three parts—on "The Nature and Importance of the Subject," on "The Excellency and Advantages of This Kind of Science," and on "How Self-Knowledge Is to Be Attained." The point of view with which the book is written is that of the churchman, and thus religious, though not mystical. We are exhorted to know what we are and what we shall be, our relation to God and Christ and our fellow-men, our talents and capacities, our faults and deficiencies, our thoughts and motives, our life's aim, and our fitness for death. Self-knowledge brings self-possession, humility, charity, moderation, improved judgment, the proper exercise of self-denial, consistency, and piety; and it is attained by self-examination, by learning the opinions of others, by converse with our superiors, by oblivion to the world, and especially by fervent and frequent prayer. The work is thus seen to cover virtually the same ground as earlier treatises on the subject, including Baxter's; and the style, while a little more logical and matter-of-fact, is really not more pleasing than his.

Among the essayists, we find the maxim discussed by the third Earl of Shaftesbury in his *Characteristics*, by Addison in *The Spectator*, and by Dr. Johnson in *The Rambler*; and it is discussed by the poet Young in his essay entitled *Conjectures on Original Composition*, besides being quoted in a satirical connection in his Dedication to *The Centaur Not Fabulous*. Shaftesbury says that the ancients conceived that we each possess a δαίμων, and it is our business to discover that the soul is of a dual nature and put the superior in authority. "This was among the Ancients," he continues, "that celebrated Delphic inscription, Recognize yourself; which was as much as to say, Divide yourself, or be two. For if the division were rightly made, all within would, of course, they thought, be rightly understood and prudently managed."[44] Shaftesbury says further that the philosophical writings referred to in Horace's *Ars Poetica* were either real dialogues or recitals of personated discourses, which exhibited morals and manners alive, teaching men to know others, and more important still, themselves; and that in the secondary characters particularly, men might see themselves as in a mirror—even their minutest features.[45] Addison, in *The Spectator* for June 7, 1712, declares his intention to show the reader "those methods by which he may arrive at a true and impartial knowledge of himself."[46] In addition to the means usually prescribed, which he designates as a study of the Scriptures and a comparison of our lives with Christ's, he proposes that we consider what our enemies think of us, and in how far we deserve the approbation we receive.

Dr. Johnson treats of self-knowledge in two numbers of *The Rambler*,[47] the second article, written two weeks later, being really a continuation of the first. There is no more famous precept than γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, he says, and it comprises "all the

speculation requisite to a moral agent." It means "the knowledge of our original, our end, our duties, and our relation to other beings," although the first author is not likely to have intended it in so complicated a sense. Yet all of Socrates' lectures were but commentaries upon the maxim. The lack of self-knowledge is responsible for every error in conduct, for unwise ventures, and for misdirected effort and pride. Then he concludes the first article with the following unusual application:

> There is one instance in which the ladies are particularly unwilling to observe the rule of Chilo. They are desirous to hide from themselves the advances of age, and endeavor too frequently to supply the sprightliness and bloom of youth by artificial beauty and forced vivacity . . . . and are scarcely awakened from their dream of perpetual youth but by the scorn of those whom they endeavor to rival.[48]

In the second article he discusses the difficulty of attaining self-knowledge, emphasizes the assistance of adversity, and recommends retirement for reflection that we may "consider things as if there were no other beings in the world but God and ourselves."

Young, in his *Conjectures on Original Composition*, is seeking a remedy for men who underestimate their literary gifts, and he writes:

> Since it is plain that men may be strangers to their own abilities, and by thinking meanly of them without just cause may possibly lose a name, perhaps a name immortal, I would find some means to prevent these evils . . . . I borrow two golden rules from Ethics, which are no less golden in composition than in life: 1. 'Know thyself'; 2. 'Reverence thyself'. . . . . Therefore dive deep into thy bosom; learn the depth, extent, bias, and full fort of thy mind; . . . . excite and cherish every spark of intellectual light and heat, however smothered under former negligence, or scattered through the dull, dark mass of common thoughts; and, collecting them into a body, let thy genius rise (if a genius thou hast) as the sun from chaos.[49]

In the Dedication to *The Centaur Not Fabulous*, addressed to the Lady ——— (probably the Countess of Yarmouth, the king's mistress),[50] Young explains that a centaur is a type of those who are given over to gross pleasures—those in whom "the brute runs away with the man." At length, continuing his vivid satire, he pictures an imaginary frontispiece for his work, designed to be duly suggestive to the scholars of her "modern Academy" (meaning, apparently, the centaurs of the court circles), just as "the statues of the renowned are set up in public, to kindle honest emulation, and in most ancient schools of wisdom were the busts or portraits of the wise." It is a unique frontispiece that he has in mind when he exclaims:

> What, Madam, if for your modern Academy Hogarth should draw a centaur . . . . with Harlequin's sabre by his side; in a party-coloured jacket of pictured cards; a band of music before, a scaramouch-demon behind him; a weathercock on his head, a rattle in his hand, the Decalogue under his feet, and for the benefit of your scholars, a label out of his mouth, inscribed as was the temple of Apollo, with Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, in letters of gold? (In me Know thyself). . . . .[51]

The scholars, he adds, would take the maxim in its true philosophical sense and "wonder how it came into the mouth of so ridiculous and, to them, so foreign a monster."

The allusions to the theme of self-knowledge in the *Letters of Lord Chesterfield to His Son* are brief. He says in one letter,[52] "The great and necessary knowledge of all is, to know yourself and others: this knowledge requires great attention and long experience; exert the former, and may you have the latter!" And in another letter[53] he writes:

> I know myself, (no common piece of knowledge, let me tell you). I know what I can, what I cannot, and consequently what I ought to do. And I ought not, and therefore will not, return to business when I am much less fit for it than I was when I quitted it.

While there is very little that is new in these eighteenth-century allusions to the maxim, either in its connotations or in the means suggested for attaining self-knowledge, it is interesting to observe the variety of ancient forces given it in this century, in view of the limited extent to which it is quoted, as well as the prominence of most of the men to whom it appealed. We find the maxim (or in some instances a phrase for self-knowledge) used in the sense of knowing our measure by Genovesi, Wieland, Gay, and Dr. Johnson; in the sense of knowing our ability, by Young and Lord Chesterfield; in the sense of knowing that we are mortal, by Pope; in the sense of knowing the limits of our wisdom, by Pope and Hamann; in the sense of knowing our faults, by Swift, Sterne, and Young; in the sense of knowing our dual nature, by Buffon, Cotton, and Shaftesbury; in the sense of knowing our Soul, by Wolf, Wieland, Voltaire, Vico, Rinaldi, and Young; and in a number of these senses, by Abbadie, Wolf, and Mason. The means suggested for gaining self-knowledge are: looking at our neighbor as into a mirror, or listening to his opinion of us, whether he be friend or foe; the study of philosophy and literature and the pursuit of education in general; adversity; retirement for reflection and other religious observances. The application of the maxim to women's recognition of their advancing years is an incidental new phase of knowing that we are mortal. Of more significance is the single suggestion that the best means to self-knowledge is a knowledge of mankind. The idea that *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* means to know man was a conception of the Stoics, but they did not say, "Come to know *yourself through* knowing men in general." This is, rather, an essentially modern thought, and one which becomes markedly insistent in the following period.

CHAPTER VIII

ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE PERIOD FROM 1775 TO 1875

The last quarter of the eighteenth century with its surging tide of democracy, as expressed in the American War of Independence, and, more significantly still, in the French Revolution, is generally regarded as the beginning of the modern era. It marked the introduction of an epoch which, while growing out of and recognizing its dependence upon the past, was destined to witness a rapidity of development along material, scientific, and political lines hitherto unparalleled, and to demand large and ever widening adjustments in the thought-life of mankind. The wellsprings of the movement are to be found in the philosophy, both metaphysical and social, of the years preceding, with their insistence upon freedom of thought—a philosophy which refused to sanction any authority save the mind and spirit of man, and the truth deduced from a reasoned understanding thereof. This new spirit of freedom and its consequent philosophy of life, which found its political protest in the French Revolution, gave rise to the Romantic movement in the literature of France and England, formed the inspiration of the best in the nineteenth-century literature of Italy and America, and was essentially the soul of the great golden age of German literature. The spirit of the new era is reflected in the character of the discussions of *γνῶθι σεαυτόν*; and while the old forces of the apothegm linger on until the present day (and perchance will always linger, because self-knowledge must ever include them), many of those forces become increasingly sec-

ondary or incidental in the presence of man's enlarged conception of himself and his place in the world. We look for the maxim in vain, however, in the writings of Rousseau and others who were widely influential in the French Revolutionary movement. It is rather in German philosophy in the period beginning with Kant that we begin to find it colored with the modern spirit.

It is but a truism to say that while the object of modern speculative philosophy may be to discover "the irreducible all-of-reality,"[1] man's conception of his existence and of his relation to the universe usually forms the basis of the investigation; and the ultimate aim of every "spiritualistic" philosophical system[2] is a knowledge of the reality of one's own self, of the Supreme Self, and of other selves, in whatever way the given system may relate them, and under whatever terminology. Self-knowledge, therefore, is a leading theme of modern metaphysics; and from that standpoint, the γνῶθι σεαυτὸν on Apollo's temple might be regarded as the watchword for modern as for ancient philosophy.[3] The self-knowledge of modern philosophy, however, is, as a rule, a purely reasoned self-knowledge, calling for abstract thought, to be sure, but shorn of any Neo-Platonistic or mystical tendency to abstract the self from the realm of sense until it apprehends or merges with the Supreme Self.[4] Moreover, the emphasis upon the reality of other selves, so generally characteristic of modern speculative philosophy, leads to an essentially new basis for self-knowledge from the ethical standpoint. Under the possible initial influence of Kant's doctrine of "duty," seemingly, to know one's self comes to mean a recognition of others not merely in judging of one's characteristics by what we know of other individuals, nor even in realizing that we were "born for civil society," as the Stoics put it,[5] although service to society is a natural consequence of the new conception. The ethical self-

knowledge of modern philosophy and literature is essentially a social self-knowledge. It emphasizes man's knowledge of himself as a unit of society, and postulates that the individual cannot know himself by self-examination alone or chiefly, but only through knowing his environment—through his relation to other selves in general. So it is that an era of extreme individualism becomes an era of quickened social consciousness;[6] and discussions of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν now, as heretofore, come to reflect the enlarged view of the "enlightened," as "the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns."

The maxim is rarely quoted in the French, English, and Italian philosophical works of the period under consideration; but it occurs in the writings of Kant, Schelling, Schopenhauer, Hegel, and a few less important German philosophers, such as Feuerbach and Baader. This fact, together with the strong influence of German philosophy upon nineteenth-century English literature, as well as upon the literature of Germany herself, suggests the use of the maxim in German philosophy as the logical starting-point in a consideration of its interpretations in the current and subsequent literary period. German philosophers quote the maxim with two main connotations—knowing one's self psychically: the mind's abstract, inward reasoned knowledge of itself; and knowing one's self ethically, with reference to the motives and ends of conduct.[7] Kant's discussion of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν is mainly ethical, but Schopenhauer applies the maxim to Kant's doctrine that the characteristics of known objects are phenomena of consciousness, in a succinct passage in his *Theoria colorum physiologica*.[8] He is explaining that our perception of color in objects is due to the behavior of the retina of the eye and not to the refraction of the rays of light, as Newton taught; and to illustrate the difference between the two conceptions, he says:

Copernicus in days gone by showed that the earth revolves, instead of being a sphere around which the heavenly bodies roll; and likewise supreme Kant, in place of absolute qualities of things ontologically comprehended, revealed the forms of cognition properly belonging to the mind and implanted in us. Γνῶθι σαυτὸν praecipit Apollo.

Moreover, Baader uses Γνῶθι Σεαυτόν for the subtitle of his *Preliminary Report on the Transformation of Metaphysics Introduced into Germany through Professor Kant*,[9] and in the course of the *Report* he writes:

Kant saw that Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν was necessary for us above all, and that should we have to stand in ignorance about all the circumstances that surround us, we could in no way find excuse for ignorance of the true nature of our understanding. He therefore searched further and found in this way that our speculative understanding is not, as it might appear from the inevitable and natural delusion, an unlimited and illimitable plain, but that it is rather to be likened to a sphere, whose circumference he sought to bound.[10]

Hegel's interpretation of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν is almost exclusively psychical, although universal in the psychic sense. He says in the Introduction to his *Philosophy of Mind:*

The significance of that "absolute" commandment *Know thyself*—whether we look at it in itself or under the historical circumstances of its first utterance—is not to promote mere self-knowledge in respect of the particular capacities, character, propensities, and foibles of the single self. The knowledge it commands means that of man's genuine reality—of what is essentially and ultimately true and real—of mind as the true and essential being.[11]

In the Introduction to his lectures on the *History of Philosophy* he applies the maxim to the activity of the subject self, declaring that the mind is actively living only as it is self-knowing:

It has been shown above in reference to the existence of mind that its Being is its Activity. . . . . The activity of mind is to know itself. I am, immediately, but this I am only as a living organism; as Mind I am only

in so far as I know myself. Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, Know thyself, the inscription over the temple of the oracle at Delphi, is the absolute command which is expressed by Mind in its essential character. But consciousness really implies that for myself I am object to myself. . . . .[12]

In his discussion of Socrates' life and teaching, Hegel shows how Socrates made man's inner consciousness the criterion of judgment regarding truth and duty, and that this inner spirit, or "daemon," of Socrates was in a sense a new god among the Athenians. The fact that the Pythia declared Socrates to be the wisest man is noteworthy in this connection, he thinks; and he adds:

> Socrates it was who carried out the command of the God of knowledge, "Know Thyself," and made it the motto of the Greeks, calling it the law of the mind, and not interpreting it as meaning a mere acquaintanceship with the particular nature of man. Thus Socrates is the hero who established in the place of the Delphic oracle, the principle that man must look within himself to know what is Truth. Now seeing that the Pythia herself pronounced that utterance, we find in it a complete revolution in the Greek mind, and the fact that in the place of the oracle, the personal self-consciousness of every thinking man has come into play.[13]

Hegel once more quotes the maxim as a command to know the mind, or inner spirit, in the Introduction to his *Philosophy of the Middle Ages*. He has been discussing the fundamental idea of Christianity from a philosophical standpoint—that the image of God, or the spiritual, is implicit in the natural man, and man attains to Truth, or becomes one with God—becomes explicit—through rising above the natural. This idea of Christianity has come forth and become the universal consciousness of the nations. That it has come forth as the world-religion is the content of history, and necessarily so, if we understand the philosophy of history. "To this end," he explains, "the conception of mind must be made fundamental, and it must now be shown that history is the process of mind itself, the

revelation of itself from its first superficial, enshrouded consciousness, and the attainment of this standpoint of its free self-consciousness, in order that the absolute command of Mind "Know thyself," may be fulfilled."[14]

The foregoing passages show clearly Hegel's psychical interpretation of the maxim. Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν is the absolute command of the Absolute "Geist" to know "*Geist*" as reality, as active being, whose very activity is knowing itself; and self-knowledge may thus be regarded as a "process," both in the individual and in history, Similarly, Schelling interprets the apothegm as the impulse to a psychic process in his discussion of whether absolute freedom can be known.[15] It cannot be known as absolute subject, he says, for it is beyond all knowledge, but its negative, not-freedom, may be known as object, and through the development out of knowledge of the object toward the self-knowledge of the subject there lies the possibility of the self-knowledge of the eternal freedom. It is a process in which the object is subject, and the subject object—the known the knowing, and the knowing the known. Eternal freedom has no knowledge of itself in the beginning, for it is passive, implicit; in the middle stages it knows itself as something other, not as eternal freedom; for only in the end can eternal freedom be conceived as knowing itself as such. In the process it is subject and object both; and subject and object cannot meet, any more than the two poles of a magnet can come together. Therefore the whole process is a *process toward* self-knowledge, he goes on to say, and adds: "The imperative, the impulse of the whole movement is the Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, 'Know thyself,' the exercise of which is generally regarded as Wisdom."

We have already referred to Baader's application of the maxim to the system of Kant, and he cites it elsewhere in his works. In his *Tagebuch* for June 3, 1786,[16] he quotes three or

four Latin passages which enjoin self-knowledge, beginning with *Nosce te ipsum*, which he connects with the *nec te quaesieris extra* of Persius,[17] and declares that herein lies the magic key which unlocks all abysses within and without, banishes ignorance and self-satisfaction, and entices us into the fairy temple of Truth and Inner Joy. "The only criterion of truth," he maintains, "is the innermost consciousness of that which we feel.[18] The seeds of all knowledge, all goodness and badness, lie in me. All outer experiences can only develop these; midwifery and all books can do nothing further." And in one of his lectures on *Religionsphilosophie*[19] he writes with his usual mystical phraseology that since man is an image of God, and God reflects himself in man, man by virtue of his origin and mission should look upward to God. Then he continues:

> The saying of the Delphic oracle becomes true for him ⟨man⟩, namely that the self-knowledge of man should carry him only to the knowledge of what is over him, rather than of what is around and under him, if indeed . . . . the self-knowledge of man is not of his finding or making, but the gift of God to him, which he has wrought out by working with it and making it a part of himself, like food, or breath, or the like.

This sentence shows that Baader is thinking of self-knowledge not only in the religious and mystical sense of man's realization of his relation to God and the method of approach to him, but also in the philosophical sense of a psychic process—a developing of something implicit in him.

To consider all of the passages in modern philosophy in which self-knowledge is discussed in this abstract metaphysical sense would involve the repetition of much that has been written, and would keep us needlessly long in the realm of metaphysics. It seems advisable, therefore, to limit this phase of our study to the passages cited above, in which the maxim either occurs or is unmistakably implied.[20] A further applica-

tion of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν in the sense of knowing one's mind may be found in Feuerbach's Introduction to *Das Wesen des Christenthums*,[21] but he uses it in the more general sense of knowing that we are endowed with a mind capable of scientific and abstract thought, in contrast with the material and animal creation. He says that the moon, the sun, the stars, cry out to man the Γνῶθι σεαυτόν; and the fact that he sees them, and sees them as he sees them, is a witness to his real essence. The animal is concerned only with the rays of light necessary for life; man, on the contrary, is more concerned with the unimportant ray of the farthest star. Man has pure, intellectual, disinterested joys and affections. Man only makes much of the steadfast look of theoretic knowledge.

The ethical interpretation given to the maxim by the German philosophers occurs chiefly in the works of Kant and Schopenhauer. One of the sections of Kant's *Metaphysics of Ethics* is entitled "The first commandment of all Duties owed by Man to himself," and it begins as follows:

> This is, Know Thyself, not after thy physical perfection, but after thy ethical, in reference to thy duty. Search, try thy heart, whether it be good or evil, whether the springs of thy conduct be pure or impure; and how much, either as originally belonging to thy substance or as acquired by thee, may be imputable to thy account, and may go to make up thy moral state.[22]

Kant then goes on to say that the self-knowledge springing from an examination of the depths of the heart is the beginning of all human wisdom. Wisdom consists in the accordance of the will with its end of existence; and it is therefore necessary that man remove the inner hindrance, the bad will nestled in himself, and endeavor to develop the originally implicit good will. The recognition of this fundamental goodness within him keeps a man from a low estimate of his intrinsic worth as a man, and

of the human race in general, and it affords him a standard of judgment. It is his duty to develop the implicit goodness within him—to attempt to perfect his moral nature; but, owing to the frailty of human nature, this duty becomes a never ending obligation, as far as this life is concerned.[23]

Schopenhauer says, in the chapter of the supplement to *The World as Will and Idea* entitled "Of the Primacy of the Will in Self-Consciousness," that we may be ruled by motives which we are ashamed to own, and may even fail to guess the true motive of our conduct, and he remarks in passing that we have in all this "a commentary on the Socratic γνῶθι σαυτὸν and its difficulty."[24] In his *Counsels and Maxims* he introduces the precept in a discussion of the value of a man's having a plan for his life-work—a miniature outline sketch, to which he should look from time to time for inspiration and for help in keeping in the straight path. In order to form such a plan, he says that a man "must have made some little beginning in γνῶθι σαυτὸν and therefore know what he really and chiefly wants above all else—what is actually essential to his happiness—and then what occupies the second and the third place after that; so also he must know what, on the whole, his calling is,[25] his rôle and his general relation to the world."[26] The difficulty of knowing ourselves as we really are, and the reasons for it, are discussed in the *Psychologische Bemerkungen*.[27] A man cannot secure a complete picture of himself in a mirror, he says, "a difficulty which stands in the way of γνῶθι σαυτὸν at its very first step"—because he can see himself from only one angle. The ethical situation is analogous, for it is not possible for him to separate himself from himself entirely and so see himself objectively.

There is nothing very new in these ethical interpretations given the maxim by Kant and Schopenhauer. Earlier writers,

as we have seen, have conceived of self-knowledge as including a man's knowledge of his duty and of his life-purpose, and of the part he is to play in the world; and they have recognized the difficulty of always realizing one's true motives and of securing an entirely objective view of one's self. Yet taken in their setting and as a part of the entire philosophy of Kant and Schopenhauer, the passages indicate a new emphasis upon knowing the fundamental springs of conduct; and out of Kant's doctrine of duty there seems to have grown a more far-reaching influence upon the meaning attached to knowledge of self than these particular passages, taken alone, might indicate.

Baader also gives the maxim an ethical interpretation in one of his letters,[28] but the ethical is so closely akin to the mystical in his conception that both ideas are present in the passage. He writes:

> He who knows the right does it; and vice versa, he who does, knows. We are always seeking after truth, but what is really Truth has come forth already in our activities. . . . . Wouldst thou know what really concerns thee, what the living truth is, search thoroughly thy conduct, how thou art acting every moment, or at least most of the time. Here first will the true light arise for thee. That "Lerne dich selbst kennen" have I set forth industriously in my last letter in a somewhat mystical discussion, for I cannot advance three steps without coming upon the deepest mystery in myself. Therefore you and I need no books, no uninterrupted speculations, but only a straight, sharp look directed into our inmost selves from time to time.

As we have said, the maxim plays a very negligible part in the French philosophical literature of the period. It occurs, however, on the title-page and in the introductory chapter of Le Baron Massias' *Traité de Philosophie Psycho-physiologique*, and there is a possible suggestion of it in Auguste Comte's *Catéchisme Positiviste*. Massias alludes to it in connection with his discussion of the definition of philosophy.[29] He defines "phi-

losophy" as: "The knowledge of man, of his faculties and his relations, having for its end the perfection of his Reason and of his Will." This definition, he says, is derived from that of the ancients as expressed in their term "philosophy," "the love of wisdom"; and, moreover, the definition is in accord with the the ancient conception in that no distinction is made between *sagesse* and "science," for "they have combined all knowledge and all wisdom in this maxim, written on the front of the temple of Delphi, Know Thyself." In Comte's *Catéchisme Positiviste*, Clothilde de Vaux and Comte, designated as "A Woman" and "A Priest," are discussing positivism; and the priest explains that positivism and theology meet at one point, for since the end of human life is the conservation and perfection of the Great Being whom we must know and love and serve, and since he functions only through men, it is necessary to know men in order to serve him aright. Thus positivism, he claims, crystallizes irrevocably the fundamental precept of the initial theocracy—*Connais-toi pour t'améliorer*, and the intellectual principle is linked with the social motive. Positivism is always essentially social, he says further, and makes moral science depend upon the observation of others—of society—much more than on the observation of one's self.[30]

A few of the Italian philosophers of the period allude to the maxim, but without extended discussion. Romagnosi says in the Introduction to his *Che Cosa E La Mente Sana?*[31] that Mother Nature surely recommended the *Nosce te ipsum*, but she did not promise to reveal her mystery fully, and the field of the knowledge of man is limited. In Galuppi's *Saggio Filosofico*[32] we read that we must distinguish between the intuitive and the reasoned knowledge of our own spirit: the first is only a simple perception of that which happens to exist in us; the second inquires into all the different functions of the soul, as

it does into those of other objects. It reflects upon, judges, and reasons about the faculties of one's own ego, and so analyzes one's spirit. It is with this knowledge gained by reflection that the celebrated maxim *Conosci te stesso* is concerned. Mamiani in his *Del Rinovamento della Filosofia Antica Italiana*[33] speaks of two previous, and, as he thinks, less successful attempts at a revival of philosophy—the Socratic, and the Alexandrian or Neo-Platonist—and he adds that Socrates toiled hard to remind men of the precept of common sense and stored away a precious seed of the reformed philosophy in that saying of his, γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, which, besides being a moral precept, includes a precept of method—the method of beginning the study of philosophy with critical psychology. And lastly, Ventura quotes the maxim in the Introduction to his *La Filosofia Cristiana*,[34] where he deplores the rationalism of modern philosophy. According to the Rationalists, he says, man is but a beast of the earth which has become a man by its own efforts. This animal-man (they claim) was dominated by the desire to know himself; the *Nosce te ipsum* of the ancient oracle became his constant preoccupation. By searching into the depths of his own nature, he recognized that he possessed the instinct of the supernatural and the mysterious; whereupon he came to invent god and his worship—religion and its mysteries. As a matter of fact, the evolutionists of the period seldom, if ever, cite the maxim; and Ventura is merely employing it as a convenient expression for self-examination in stating the Rationalistic theory—a theory of which he heartily disapproves. Yet the fact that it should even occur to him to use it in this connection is but another indication of the varied adaptability of the precept, and of its ever living familiarity in the thoughts of men.

CHAPTER IX

ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ IN GERMAN AND FRENCH LITERATURE FROM 1775 TO 1875

Outside of the realm of philosophy, *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* is cited by only a few of the authors of Germany's golden age; but it occurs repeatedly in the works of Goethe, and we find it in the prose treatises of Schiller and Klinger, and later in a story and in a short poem by Paul Heyse.[1] The keynote of Goethe's attitude toward the apothegm is suggested in that beautiful dedication—the *Zueignung*—to his poems. He pictures himself on a mountain-side in the early morning, wrapped in a mist illumined with radiance. On the cloud there appears to him a woman's form—the personification of Truth and giver of Poesy—whom he recognizes as the inspiration of his life, although he cannot call her name. Sinking to earth in adoration, he speaks of the bliss she imparts and of the isolation involved in his devotion to her. She, however, reproves his spirit of isolation, reminding him of his human weakness and of his neglect of his duty to his fellow-men while thinking himself their superior, and bids him "Erkenne dich, leb' mit der Welt in Frieden."* Thus Goethe's chief premise is that man cannot come to know himself by inward contemplation, but only through his outward contacts—through his relation to others and his part in the world's activities.[2] He says in his *Maximen und Reflexionen:*

If we take, then, the significant saying "Know thyself," we must not interpret it in an ascetic sense. It has no connection with the self-knowledge of our modern hypochondriacs, humorists, and self-tormentors, but

* Know thyself, live with the world in peace.

it means simply "Give a certain amount of consideration to yourself, take notice of yourself, so that you may become aware of how you have come to stand with your equals and the world." For this there is no need of psychological torments. Every level-headed man knows from experience what it should mean. It is good counsel, which in practice brings the greatest advantages to everyone.[3]

And in a previous passage of the same work he asks how man can learn to know himself, and replies in answer to his own question, "Through contemplation, never; but in truth through activities. Seek to do thy duty, and thou knowest likewise what is in thee."[4]

Goethe discusses the maxim again in his essay on *Natur und Wissenschaftslehre* and applies it to his own habits of life. He has been reading a favorable criticism of his work in Dr. Heinroth's *Anthropologie*, which praises him for his ability to look at things objectively, and he remarks that he has really sought to combine the objective with the subjective in his work. Then he goes on to say:

> As regards this, I have always professed from of old that that great and important-sounding phrase *erkenne dich selbst!* merits the suspicion that it was a device of secretly bound priests, who confused men with unattainable requirements and wanted to lead them away from the activities of the outer world to an inner false contemplation. Man knows himself only in so far as he knows the world, of which he becomes aware only in himself, and he becomes aware of himself only in it. Each new object, if looked at well, opens up in us a new way to see ⟨ourselves⟩.

By comparing our view of the world with our neighbor's, he continues, we arrive at self-knowledge more nearly than we can by ourselves. So in his own riper years he has paid great attention to seeing how far others know him, that with their help, as with so many mirrors, he may become better informed concerning himself and his own inner being. It is the sympathetic understanding and revelation of friends that he looks for, how-

ever, not the prejudiced estimate of his enemies.[5] In his essay on Shakespeare, also, Goethe recognizes the mingling of the objective and the subjective in the poet's task, but with a reversal of emphasis. "The highest attainment to which a man can come," he declares, "is the consciousness of his own speculations and thoughts—that knowing of himself which gives him the introduction to an intimate knowledge of other people's thought."[6] A great poet most nearly attains this consciousness, he would have us believe, and so is in a position to reveal the thoughts of others to themselves. Apropos of relating the maxim to himself, there is an interesting little discussion of it recorded in one of his "Conversations with Eckermann,"[7] which runs as follows:

It has at all times been said and repeated, that man should strive to know himself. This is a singular requisition, with which no one complies or indeed ever will comply. Man is by all his senses and efforts directed to externals—to the world around him, and he has to know this so far, and to make it so far serviceable, as he requires for his own ends. It is only when he feels joy or sorrow that he knows anything about himself, and only by joy or sorrow is he instructed what to seek and what to shun.[8] Altogether, man is a darkened being; he knows not whence he comes, nor whither he goes; he knows little of the world, and least of himself. I know not myself, and God forbid I should! But what I wish to say is this, that in my fortieth year, while living in Italy, I became wise enough to know thus much of myself, that I had no taste for plastic art. . . . .[9]

There is an obvious allusion to the maxim in two of Goethe's little "Sprichwörtlich,"[10] both of them somewhat enigmatical. The first reads:

Erkenne dich! was soll das heissen?
Es heisst: Sei nur! und sei auch nicht!
Es ist eben ein Spruch der lieben Weisen,
Der sich in der Kürze widerspricht.*

* Know thyself! What meaneth that? It means: only Be! and also not-Be! It is even a saying of the beloved Wise, which in its brevity contradicts itself.

Evidently the poet is here playing with the philosophical meanings attached to γνῶθι σεαυτόν. "Sei nur!" may refer to self-knowledge as a synonym for self-consciousness—the knowledge of one's existence, which is the basic premise of most philosophic systems. But full self-knowledge is declared impossible; knower and known are ever like the opposite poles of the magnet, and so full being cannot be attained: hence the apparent contradiction. In the other "Sprichwörtlich" he exclaims:

> Erkenne dich!—was hab' ich da für Lohn?
> Erkenne ich mich, so muss ich gleich davon.*

This couplet is probably to be taken in an ethical rather than in a metaphysical sense, with the idea that knowledge of one's self involves a sense of mission—the losing sight of self in the world's activities; although it may refer merely to the fact that the sight of ourselves as we are is so unpleasant that we try to escape from it.

The thought which Goethe emphasizes in most of the foregoing prose discussions of the apothegm—that man can know himself only through his relations to others and the world—occurs in other passages in which the reference to the maxim is less patent. In the *Zahme Xenien*, for instance, he says that no man can know himself—that he divides himself from his ego and tests every day what he is, outwardly and clearly in the last analysis, and what he was, and can, and may be.[11] And in his *Tasso* he makes Antonio say:[12]

> Inwendig lernt kein Mensch sein Innerstes
> Erkennen: denn er misst nach eignem Mass
> Sich bald zu klein und leider oft zu gross.

* Know thyself! What have I there to reward me? Know I myself, I straightway must lose sight thereof.

Der Mensch erkennt sich nur im Mensch, nur
Das Leben lehrt jedem, was er sei.*

In his *Wilhelm Meister's Lehrjahre* Goethe says that when a man's education has reached a certain stage, it is to his advantage if he learn to lose himself in the greater mass—if he wills to live for others and forget himself in the performance of his duty; and he adds, "He then first learns to know himself, for it is by our conduct that we are really enabled to compare ourselves with others."[13] And in a little poem under the general title of "Aus dem Nachlass" there is a suggestion that a knowledge of self, with its necessary complement, a knowledge of others, may serve as a basis for universal understanding:[14]

Wer sich selbst und andre kennt
Wird auch hier erkennen:
Orient und Occident
Sind nicht mehr zu trennen.

Sinnig zwischen beiden Welten
Sich zu wiegen, lass' ich gelten;
Also zwischen Ost- und Westen
Sich bewegen, sei's zum Besten!†

*His inmost nature no man learns to know
By introspection: still he rates himself
Sometimes too low, but oft, alas! too high.
Self-knowledge comes from knowing other men:
'Tis life reveals to each his genuine worth."
—Translated by Anna Swanwick

†He who knows himself and others
Herein shall know what follows, too:
That Orient and Occident
Stand no more parted to our view.

In my musing, I admit,
Between both worlds I sway;
So between the East and West
Be it best for us to stray!

Schiller quotes the maxim but once, although he may have had it in mind in his elegiac couplet entitled "Der Schlüssel":[15]

Willst du dich selber erkennen, so sieh wie die Andern es treiben,
Willst du die Andern verstehn, blick' in dein eigenes Herz.*

His direct quotation occurs in his essay *Über den Zusammenhang der tierischen Natur des Menschen mit seiner geistigen*, where he says that in the development of the race, man's physical needs have driven him to exercise, and so develop, his mental powers. When the stage of meeting mere necessities was outgrown, luxury grew up, and in its train came the pestilence. Then man searched the earth for healing drugs, and overcoming his superstition, he used the knife to discover man's physical structure. The passage continues:

So must the least help us to reach the highest; so disease and death must press us on to γνῶθι σεαυτόν. The plague produced our Hippocrates, and our Sydenhams, as war gave birth to generals; and we have to thank the most devastating disease for an entire reformation of our medicinal methods.[16]

In this unusual passage Schiller is evidently applying the maxim in the sense of knowing the mind, the higher nature, which becomes possible as a result of evolutionary development. That he represents this mental development as coming through the effort to prevent, not alone the death of the individual, but the recurrence of widespread pestilence, is an interesting instance of the way in which the maxim is often linked with the enlarging social outlook of the age.

Klinger does not allude to the maxim in his plays, but there is a somewhat lengthy discussion of it in his *Betrachtungen und Gedanken über Verschiedene Gegenstände der Welt und Littera-*

The Key
*Wouldst thou know thy self, see how it affects others.
Wouldst thou understand others, look in thine own heart.

tur.[17] "The wise man has preached to men ever since there have been wise men and foolish, *Kenne dich selbst!*," he says, and then he goes on to say further that the reason why more people do not follow the call is because they could make no worse acquaintance than themselves; and perhaps it is as well for society that many men do not learn to know and exercise all their powers. It is important to know how and after what standard man has set up the moral measuring-rod with which he measures himself; and while the mystery of man's self cannot be gainsaid, he can discover something at times by laying the measure on others and judging himself thereby. Position, activity, a significant rôle in the shifting world-drama, important, dangerous alliances and entanglements, and great enterprises surely lead to correct self-knowledge. If we observe most people in these circumstances, however, we find that their self-knowledge is not deep-seated—that it is limited to merely an estimate of their skill and powers. Thus knowledge of self, as Klinger interprets it, ordinarily consists in knowing what one can do, and it is attained by playing one's part in the activities of the world. Like Speroni, he thinks that such self-knowledge, fully realized, might prove dangerous for society. Yet he implies all through the discussion the desirability of a deeper self-knowledge than we ordinarily have, for while it may be unpleasant in its revelations, it leads to a higher wisdom.

Heyse's story entitled *Erkenne dich selbst*[18] brings out the dangers involved in insisting that the youthful mind turn its thoughts inward overmuch. The scene of the story is laid in Florence, where a woman happens to meet one day at a coffee-house a young man whom she has known previously at a German university. After a little, they take a walk about the city and down by the banks of the Arno, where they seat themselves, and in their conversation he tells the story of his life. His

father, it seems, was a wealthy merchant—a self-made man. He was well read in the classics and versed in history; but inasmuch as he lived among uneducated people and had cultivated his higher interests in the face of opposition from his family, he grew to have a certain sense of self-sufficiency; and this spirit he wished to bequeath to his son. He was impatient of the authority of tradition, and he expressed his attitude to his son with the single saying, *Erkenne dich selbst.* He asked nothing of the boy but a continual, ruthless self-examination; and he was bitterly opposed to indifference, dreaming, vague talking in platitudes, and casual judgments. As soon as he observed that the boy thoughtlessly repeated something that he had heard or read, he showed him, with the dialectical sharpness which was characteristic of him, that the opposite was true; and then when he saw that he had made an impression, he let the subject drop. If the boy's mind was vexed with helplessness and he was dumb with doubts as they crowded in upon him, the father would break off and say, "Things don't matter. They are either true or false—true for one and false for another. It all comes back to you. So know yourself."[19] The result of this insistence upon self-examination, this repression, and this endeavor to make his son always see two sides of a question was that the boy lost spirit and became hesitant and distrustful of himself and his opinions. It is a sad thing, Heyse says, when a man sees both sides of a question at the beginning, instead of seeing the second only after he has become familiar with the first. In that way all of the essential reality is lost. It is as if one were looking through a glass cube, and imagining the glass defective. We finally come to look through ourselves as through glass and miss the hidden core of personality, whose seeds always produce new powers when the old are outworn. In examining ourselves we are like the man who possessed an

inexhaustible spring, and whose curiosity led him to search it with a torch; whereupon the nymph became angry because the man had pried into her secrets, and the spring was dry from that hour. Or it is as if one were to try to grasp and hold with clenched fingers the water which has been given into the hollow of his hand. To sum up the remainder of the story briefly, after his father's death Franz had come to Italy in a desire to get away from himself—to recover himself. He saw his old friend frequently after their first meeting; and one night at a festival he became attracted to two people, an artist and his supposed brother, who soon became his friends also. Franz was especially drawn to the so-called brother, who turns out to be the artist's sister in masquerade; and once the full truth is known, his irresolution and the other weak traits engendered by his peculiar rearing give way before the transforming power of love. We wish that Heyse had quoted the maxim at the end of the story also, but perhaps he expected us to infer from the tale itself that love is a better way of obeying the God's behest than constant self-examination. In the light of this story we may read disapproval in a little poem of Heyse's, which is likewise entitled "Erkenne Dich Selbst":[20]

> Wer's wagen darf sich selbst zu kennen,
> Den muss man hochbegnadet nennen;
> Die meisten wären bestraft genug,
> Würden sie je aus sich selber klug.*

The maxim occurs in two French works of the period—in Rodolphe Töpffer's *La Bibliothèque de mon Oncle* and in Alfred de Musset's *Histoire d'un Merle Blanc*. Töpffer's passage[21] shows that he shares in the disapproval of self-contemplation, so marked in the writings of Goethe and Heyse. He is speaking

* Who dares venture to know himself must be considered highly blest.
To most 'twould be sure punishment, were they clever enough to know.

of La Rochefoucauld's book of *Maxims*, and calls it a mirror in which a man may see himself revealed better than he would have thought possible. The duke, he says, has followed the maxim of Socrates which exhorts a man "to look into his mind. Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν . . . . signifies nothing else." "As for me," he continues, "I seriously doubt if there is much to be gained from this habitual contemplation. In many things it is better to be ignorant of one's self. Surely, some people would become worse, if they knew themselves better. Seeing their field bereft of good grain, they would seize upon the idea of pulling up the weeds."

De Musset's story *Histoire d'un Merle Blanc*[22] is an interesting piece of satire, directed against the would-be literary genius who has not yet found himself. A young blackbird learns that his father scorns him and that he is a source of grief to his mother, so he flies off with a carrier pigeon, who tells him that he is a carrier pigeon also. Out-distanced in the flight, he falls exhausted in a field, and is revived by a Russian magpie and a turtledove. The magpie tells him that he is a Russian magpie, and he turns to the turtledove to see if she agrees. As she hesitates, he bursts out with the exclamation, "O Socrates, what an admirable precept you have given us, but difficult to follow, in saying *Connais-toi toi-même!*" As soon as he tries to sing, the magpie leaves him. After various vicissitudes, he returns at length to Paris, to find his parents gone. One day he happens to hear someone call him a white blackbird; and convinced that he is unique, he writes a long poem about himself and his experiences, which brings him renown and an English blackbird for his bride. But after a time he discovers that his feathers are only painted! He resolves to give up trying to live, and is wafted to the forest of Morfontaine, where the nightingale is singing for the rose, who sleeps unheeding. De Musset brings the maxim into this story quite casually, we see, but it might be applied to the whole tale and help to point the satire.

CHAPTER X

MAXIM AND THEME IN ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE FROM 1775 TO 1875

While the English literature of the hundred years under consideration falls naturally into two divisions—that of the Romantic period, extending well on toward the middle of the nineteenth century, and the literature of the Victorian age—such a division becomes purely arbitrary as far as the interpretation of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν is concerned; and so does any separation of American from English literature. The maxim occurs in discussions of varying length in the works of a number of authors, both prominent and obscure, and with various connotations —some of them as old as the maxim itself, and others reflecting phases of the newer thought of the modern period. For instance, the discussions of a group of minor English authors —namely, William Richardson[1] in his *Philosophical Analysis of Shakespeare's Characters*, Charles Colton[2] in his *Lacon*, Charles Bucke[3] in his *Book of Human Character*, Sir William Hamilton[4] in his essay on *Oxford as It Might Be*, and Tupper in his poem on "Self-Acquaintance,"—might as well have been written in a previous century; and the same is true of the discussion in three unimportant American books—*Thoughts on Men, Manners, and Things* by Anthony Grumbler,[5] *The Probe* by L. Carroll Judson,[6] and *The Aristocrat*, a novel "by the author of *Zoe*."[7] On the other hand, the influence of German philosophy is evident in the metaphysical interpretation given to the precept by Coleridge and in the ethical forces attached to it by both Coleridge and Matthew Arnold; while Goethe's

insistence upon avoiding self-examination and learning to know ourselves through association with others is echoed in the writings of Carlyle and Ruskin. In addition to the above-mentioned works, the maxim serves as the title of poems by Emerson; by James Henry,[8] successful physician and classical scholar of Dublin; by Jones Very, that mystical American clergyman and poet, the first publication of whose poems[9] Emerson so helped to further; and by one or two other minor poets whose names are now scarcely known at all.[10] It is mentioned incidentally in Browning's *Ring and the Book*,[11] and in Lowell's *Bigelow Papers*;[12] and it is quoted in passages fresh in interest in Southey's *The Doctor*, in George Eliot's *Felix Holt*, in Lowell's *Cambridge Thirty Years Ago*, and in two less-known works —*The Artist's Book of Fables* by James Northcote, friend and pupil of Joshua Reynolds and a writer on art,[13] and an essay on *Literary Clubs* by William Matthews, a Boston lawyer, editor, and writer, for several years professor of English at the University of Chicago. Besides these passages which are directly connected with the apothegm, the phraseology of self-knowledge occurs with significant meaning not only in other works by some of the authors mentioned above, but in the poems of Cowper, Byron, Shelley, Tennyson, Richard Henry Dana, Whittier, J. G. Holland, and Edward Rowland Sill, in Kingsley's *Alton Locke*, and in certain of the stories of Hawthorne. Pictures illustrating the maxim serve as the frontispiece of an English translation of *Aphorisms on Man* by John Casper Lavater of Zuric,[14] and of an American translation of Baron d'Hollbach's *System of Nature*.[15] The former picture represents a woman wrapped in the clouds of heaven extending a large tablet with the words Γνῶθι Σεαυτόν inscribed thereon, to meet the upturned gaze of a seated youth. The latter picture, which we are told was drawn for the Free Inquirers' Family

Library, is entitled "Reason Enlightening the Nations." It represents a statue of Reason unrolling a scroll before the eyes of a multitude of people. Behind her stands an eagle holding in its beak the watchword "Free Discussion"; and the scroll bears the inscription "Truth is Eternal. Γνῶθι σεαυτόν."

The maxim is used with its earliest force of "Know your measure" in one of James Henry's poems entitled "Γνῶθι σεαυτόν":

> So thou hast been at Delphi, yet not learned
> Thou'rt not a baker, but a lump of dough
> Leavened with one part pleasure, three parts pain,
> Kneaded, roll'd out, and scored and pricked all over,
> Baked, sliced, chewed, swallowed, cast into the draught,
> Not doubting, all the while, but thou'rt a baker.
> Go back to Delphi, fool, and say I sent thee,
> Not to consult the oracle, but read
> The inscription on the shrine; go back to Delphi.[16]

It is in this sense of knowing one's self that Carlyle advises the industrial lords to compare themselves with the man of genius—the man who possesses more clearly than others the presence of God, which is dim and potential in all men—the man of high soul, who cares not for wealth, but for the eternal values. "Wouldst thou commune with such a one?" he asks. "Be his real peer, then; Does that lie in thee? Know thyself and thy real and thy apparent place, and know him and his real and apparent place, and act in some noble conformity with all that."[17] Modesty is "the measuring virtue" in Ruskin's *Queen of the Air;*[18] and she

> arrives at great results with her yard-measure—cutting her dress always according to the silk, so that, consulting her carefully of a morning, men get to know not only their income but their in-being—to know *themselves*, that is, in a gauger's manner, round, and up and down—surface and contents; what is in them and what may be got out of them; and, in fine, their entire canon of weight and capacity.[19]

Other familiar uses of the maxim occur, as we have said, in the Introduction to William Richardson's *Philosophical Analysis of Shakespeare's Characters*, where it is applied to "discovering the capacity and extent of our faculties," to a discovery of our habits and propensities, and to the study of human nature, "accustoming us to turn our thoughts inwards . . . . which facilitates self-examination and renders it habitual."[20] Charles Bucke, in the rambling little chapter of his *Book of Human Character* entitled "Nosce Teipsum," applies it to a knowledge of our faults and virtues, and says further in his closing paragraph:

> "Know Thyself!" This is indeed a comprehensive sentence. For it is not only to know our relative situation in society, our manners, our wants, our superfluities, our desires, and our capacities; the force of our passions, our probable and real opportunities; but our duties in their several parts; and what is, perhaps, still more difficult, our relative situation in the universe.[21]

The little essay on "Examination" in Carroll Judson's *Probe*,[22] with "Know Thyself" as its subtitle, repeats the old commonplaces about seeing the mote in our neighbor's eye, our failure to know our own powers and propensities, especially our propensity to evil, and our overestimate of our moral strength. And Anthony Grumbler's paragraph entitled "Know Thyself" pictures the man who is the embodiment of the faults and habits which he deprecates in others because he fails to reflect "on the numerous springs and motions of his own mind."[23]

The specific application of the maxim to a knowledge of the physical man occurs in Jones Very's poem entitled "Know Thyself"—a poem suggested, as he tells us, by hearing Dr. M——'s lectures on the human body:

> Who with dull mind can view man's wondrous frame,
> And not with deepest reverence and awe?
> For from the hand of God at first it came,

And from His breath did life and motion draw.
The bones, which show such marvellous strength and skill,
The blood, which circulates through every vein,
The ever-moving lungs the air doth fill,
The pulsing heart, the all-directing brain.
What higher knowledge than thyself to know?
Though countless objects gain our time and thought,
On our own frame we scarce a thought bestow,
The body thus so marvellously wrought;
The type of that which shall immortal be,
From pain, disease, and death forever free.[24]

The connotations of the maxim thus far indicated in this chapter are almost entirely such as we find commonly in Greek literature and in numerous subsequent discussions. Certain of these old forces, however, are sometimes given an extended meaning in nineteenth-century literature, and this is true also of the phrase "know thyself" apart from any allusion to the precept.[25] Byron uses the phrase in his *Cain* to indicate man's recognition of his littleness in comparison with the vastness of the universe. Lucifer has taken Cain off through space and shown him marvelous things; and when Cain wishes to know why he has done this, Lucifer asks:

Didst thou not require
Knowledge? And have I not, in what I show'd,
Taught thee to know thyself?[26]

Cain replies:

Alas! I seem
Nothing.

Whereupon Lucifer says:

And this should be the human sum
Of knowledge, to know mortal nature's nothingness;
Bequeath that science to thy children, and
'Twill spare thee many tortures.

Shelley pictures man's relative situation in the universe effectively in his "Adonais," where he uses the phrase "know thyself" in the sense of knowing one's mortal limitations, as contrasted with the untrammeled range of Keats' immortal spirit:

> Who mourns for Adonais? Oh come forth,
> Fond wretch! and know thyself and him aright.
> Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous earth;
> As from a centre, dart thy spirit's light
> Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might
> Satiate the void circumference: then shrink
> Even to a point within our day and night;
> And keep thy heart light lest it make thee sink
> When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to the brink.[27]

Ruskin uses the maxim in the sense of knowing our high worth and dignity, together with the connotation of knowing the limits of our wisdom, in his chapter on "Wisdom and Folly in Science" in *The Eagle's Nest.* He quotes a passage from Blake—

> Doth the eagle know what is in the pit?
> Or wilt thou go ask the mole?—

to illustrate the fact that each creature has its own appropriate kind of knowledge which it is compelled by instinct to learn, and that the "glory of the higher creatures is in ignorance of what is known to the lower." And he goes on to say:

> But man has the choice of stooping in science beneath himself, and striving in science beyond himself; and the "Know thyself" is for him, not a law to which he must in peace submit; but a precept which of all others is the most painful to understand and the most difficult to fulfil. Most painful to understand and humiliating; and this alike, whether it be held to refer to the knowledge beneath us, or above. For, singularly enough, men are always most conceited of the meanest science. . . . . It is just those who grope with the mole, and cling with the bat, who are vainest of their sight and of their wings.

In the following section Ruskin asks if "Know thyself" can mean sophia, conceived as the "noble wisdom," which has to do with surpassing and divine things; and if "by so much as we are forbidden to bury ourselves in the mole's earth-heap," we are "urged to raise ourselves towards the stars."[28] But sophia, he concludes at length, is in the last analysis unselfish: "the faculty which recognizes in all things their bearing upon life, in the entire sum of life that we know, both bestial and human," and which "concentrates its interest and its power on Humanity." And he argues further:

> It is as little the part of a wise man to reflect much on the nature of beings above him, as of beings beneath him. It is immodest to suppose that he can conceive of the one, and degrading to suppose that he should be busied with the other. To recognize his everlasting inferiority, and his everlasting greatness; to know himself and his place; to be content to submit to God without understanding Him; and to rule the lower creation with sympathy and kindness . . . . this . . . . is to be . . . . wise for himself.[29]

Ultimately, then, the maxim in this passage means for Ruskin to know man—humanity—man's own realm as distinguished from the animal world beneath him, too exclusive a knowledge of which tends to breed the conceit of wisdom on the one hand, and too low a sense of worth on the other—and as distinguished from the purely spiritual world, which speculative thought can never compass, because it is beyond the reach of man's knowledge. Moreover, since "Know thyself" is sophia's word to man, and sophia is unselfish as well as modest, the inevitable end of self-knowledge is ethical—knowledge for the service of mankind.

The application of the apothegm to a knowledge of the mind is used in an unusual sense in George Eliot's *Felix Holt*, for she connects it with the then popular science of phrenology. Felix tells the minister of his unsatisfactory experiences with a phrenologist at Glasgow, and the minister replies:

I have had my own head explored, with somewhat similar results. It is, I fear, but a vain show of fulfilling the heathen precept "Know thyself," and too often leads to a self-estimate which will subsist in the absence of that fruit by which alone the quality of the tree is made evident.[30]

It is Coleridge, as we have said, who uses the maxim in connection with speculative philosophy. In his *Biographia Literaria*[31] he reminds those who have a mistaken conception of metaphysics that "as long as there are men in the world to whom the γνῶθι σεαυτὸν is an instinct and a command from their own nature, so long will there be metaphysicians and metaphysical speculations"; and in one of his essays in *The Friend* he says:

> Under the tutorage of scientific analysis, haply first given to him ⟨man⟩ by express revelation,
>
> E caelo descendit Γνῶθι σεαυτόν,
>
> he separates the relations that are wholly creatures of his own abstracting and comparing intellect, and at once discovers . . . . that the reality, the objective truth, of the objects he has been adoring, derives its whole and sole evidence from an obscure sensation . . . . which compels him to contemplate as without and independent of himself what yet he could not contemplate at all, were it not for a modification of his own being.[32]

In his essay on *The Prometheus of Aeschylus*, Coleridge enters into a metaphysical explanation of the myth. He thinks that Aeschylus "adapted the secret doctrine of the mysteries" and that "the ground-work of the Aeschylean *mythus* is laid in the definition of idea and law as correlatives that mutually interpret each other," Zeus representing *νόμος*, and Prometheus, idea." Before applying this metaphysical doctrine to the interpretation of the myth, he discusses at some length what he conceives to be the Greek conception, showing how Greek philosophy, like the Phoenician, regards the creative impulse as implicit in the world which is created, and how the original "prothesis" became polarized—became thesis and antithesis,

law and idea, co-existent and co-essential, the *νόμος* being essentially idea in substance and having for its highest product the understanding, while idea in its development produces an "analogon" or image (not a real product, since it exists as idea only as it continues to be both subject and object), which is self-consciousness. At this point in the discussion Coleridge remarks:

> If the preceding disquisition . . . . should answer no other purpose, it will still have been neither purposeless, nor devoid of utility, should it only lead us to sympathize with the strivings of the human intellect, awakened to the infinite importance of the inward *γνῶθι σεαυτόν*.[33]

In these three passages Coleridge is seen to give the maxim a purely metaphysical import, but in an earlier passage in the *Biographia Literaria* he shows that he considers its force to be at once practical, or ethical, as well as speculative:

> The postulate of philosophy and at the same time the test of philosophic capacity is no other than the Heaven-descended Know Thyself . . . . and this at once practically and speculatively. For as philosophy is neither a science of the reason or understanding only, nor merely a science of morals, but the Science of Being altogether, its primary ground can be neither merely speculative nor merely practical, but both in one.[34]

The end of metaphysical, or speculative, self-knowledge with Coleridge, as with the Neo-Platonists and the Mystics, is the mergence of the soul with the eternal, for he states farther on, "We begin with the *I Know Myself* in order to end with the absolute *I am*. We proceed from the self in order to lose and find all self in God."[35]

Shelley, in "The Triumph of Life," includes the philosophers among the captives chained to Life's car, because they have not, like the sacred few, "touched the earth with living flame." They have not known their souls—have not solved the mystery

of life—and so they have become Life's captives, not her conquerors:

> The wise,
>
> The great, the unforgotten,—they who wore
> Mitres and helms and crowns, or wreaths of light,
> Signs of thought's empire over thought: their lore
>
> Taught them not this, to know themselves; their might
> Could not repress the mystery within,
> And, for the morn of truth they feigned, deep night
>
> Caught them ere evening.[36]

It is chiefly in the sense of knowing one's soul that Matthew Arnold cites the precept. In his *Literature and Dogma* he applies it to the teaching of Christianity, connecting it with μετανοία, which with Christ was not repentance of sins alone but "the setting up of an immense *new inward movement* for obtaining one's rule of life . . . . a change in the inner man. . . . . It was the introduction, in morals and religion, of the famous *know thyself* of the Greeks."[37] The maxim means "Know your soul" in the wider application of the term in his essay entitled "My Countrymen," published in his *Friendship's Garland*, and in a similar passage in *Culture and Anarchy*. In "My Countrymen" he writes:

> The old recipe, to think a little more and bustle a little less seems to me still the best recipe to follow. So I take comfort when I find *The Guardian* reproaching me with having no influence; for I know what influence means,—a party, practical proposals, action; and I say to myself, "Even suppose I could get some followers and assemble them . . . . in a committee-room in some inn; what on earth should I say to them? . . . . I could only propose the old Socratic commonplace *Know Thyself;* and how black they would all look at that!"[38]

The passage in *Culture and Anarchy* reads:

> I do not wish to see men of culture asking to be entrusted with power; indeed, I have freely said, that in my opinion the speech most proper, at

present, for a man of culture to make to a body of his fellow countrymen who get him into a committee room, is Socrates' *Know thyself!* and this is not a speech to be made by men wanting to be entrusted with power.[39]

The force of the maxim in these passages becomes clearer as we read the entire essays in which they occur. In "My Countrymen" Arnold contrasts the smug self-satisfaction of middle-class England with her wealth and industry and commercial power, divorced from any "love of the things of the mind" and "love of beautiful things," with foreign opinion of England's waning influence. From holding a leading place among the nations in the early part of the nineteenth century, when the times called for a great aristocratical power, backed by the wealth and industry of the middle class, she has sunk to third place, he contends, because she has continued to live for material ends and let the great stream of human progress pass her by. For the spirit of the new era, in which she has been outstripped by France and America, has for its task "the work of making human life, hampered by a past which it has outgrown, more natural and rational."[40] If England is to recover herself and keep abreast of the world's progress, it is the business of her politicians to bring a wider intelligence to bear upon the situation before them, and "to set their desires on introducing, with time, a little more soul and spirit into the too, too solid flesh of English Society."[41] In *Culture and Anarchy* he dwells at length upon the distinction between Hellenism and Hebraism, the one placing its initial emphasis upon thinking, and the other upon doing—upon moral earnestness, that is, upon conscience and self-conquest. Hebraism, he says in substance, and its more spiritual and attractive offshoot, Christianity, carried humanity forward to a better knowledge of itself at the time when humanity needed its stimulus—its strengthening moral fiber—of conscience and effort; but there

came a time when humanity was ready to receive Hellenism also, with its spontaneity of consciousness and its endeavor to see things as they are—its quickening power of thought and its desire to "make Reason and the will of God," as expressed in the universal order, prevail in human society. This rising tide of Hellenism, added to the moral force of Christianity, is carrying men toward a still better knowledge of themselves and the world; but in England the cross-current of Puritanism has retarded the progress of Hellenism; Englishmen are living too much for action and holding to fixed tenets of religion, instead of letting Hellenism have its way. So it is that the man of culture—the advocate of Hellenism—of "endeavoring to make Reason and the Will of God prevail," were he to find himself in a group of politicians, whose sole interest is in action and power, could only remind them of the motto of Hellenism, "Know thyself"—a motto which in practice includes all that culture stands for—in other words, a knowledge of the soul in both its spiritual and its ethical relations. Hence with Arnold the Delphic "Know thyself" becomes the message of the hour —a message of the inseparability of the higher knowledge and true service to men.

Lowell uses the maxim of knowing one's soul, but in the rather general and practical sense, in his *Cambridge Thirty Years Ago*. He is speaking of European travel and advising that the traveler go abroad after he has reached the age of thirty, when his mind has become mature and he can judge of what he sees in the light of his past study and experience. And he gives the following reason for this advice:

> A man should have travelled thoroughly round himself and the great *terra incognita* just outside and inside his own threshold, before he undertakes voyages of discovery to other worlds. Let him first thoroughly explore the strange country laid down on the map as ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ; let him look down into its craters, and find whether they be burnt-out or only

smouldering; let him know between the good and evil fruits of its passionate tropics; let him experience how healthful are its serene and high-lying table-lands; let him be many times driven back (till he wisely consent to be baffled) from its speculative inquisitive northwest passages that lead mostly to the dreary solitudes of a sunless world, before he thinks himself morally equipped for travels to more distant regions.[42]

Emerson's rather long poem entitled Γνῶθι Σεαυτόν is more mystical.[43] It gives expression to the thought that God's dwelling-place is within us, but we do not know him because of the clouds of sin that veil him from our consciousness:

> God dwells in thee:
> It is no metaphor nor parable,
> It is unknown to thousands and to thee;
> Yet there is God.
>
> He is in thy world
> But thy world knows him not.
> .....
> And thou art stranger to thy Guest,
> And know'st not what thou dost invest.
> The clouds that veil his life within
> Are thy thick-woven webs of sin,
> .....
> Shall I ask wealth or power of God, who gave
> An image of himself to be my soul?
> As well might swilling ocean ask a wave,
> Or the starred firmament a dying coal,—
> For that which is in me lives in the whole.[44]

And it is probably self-knowledge in the deeper, though not necessarily mystical, sense that Tennyson has in mind in the familiar lines of his *Oenone:*

> Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
> These three alone lead life to sovereign power.[45]

The old idea that no one has ever really obeyed the god's behest occurs in James Northcote's "Application" of the fable

of *The Magpie and the Owl*, and in Charles Colton's *Lacon*. Northcote says:

> The aphorism of "*nosce teipsum*" (know thyself) is soon spoken; but then it is a long while in accomplishing. Gracián was placed among the seven wise men for having been the author of this maxim; "but never," replies the sage, "was any one placed there for having performed it."[46]

And Colton remarks:

> Γνῶθι σεαυτόν, know thyself, is a precept which we are informed descended from Heaven. . . . . The same authority has not been bold enough to affirm that it had yet reached the earth; and from all that we can observe, we might be pardoned for suspecting that this celestial maxim was *still on its journey*.[47]

Coleridge has a poem, entitled "Self-Knowledge" in some editions, which unlike his prose discussions, expresses the futility of man's attempting to know himself. He quotes as a heading the "E caelo descendit γνῶθι σεαυτόν" of Juvenal—a favorite verse with him, evidently—and then he writes:

> Γνῶθι σεαυτόν! and is this the prime
> And heaven-sprung adage of the olden time!
> Say, canst thou make thyself?—Learn first that trade;—
> Haply thou mayst know what thyself had made.
> What hast thou, Man, that thou dar'st call thine own?
> What is there in thee, Man, that can be known?
> Dark fluxion, all unfixable by thought,
> A phantom dim of past and future wrought,
> Vain sister of the worm,—life, death, soul, clod—
> Ignore thyself, and strive to know thy God!

Carlyle is emphatic in his outspoken disapproval of the maxim, but this is because he interprets it subjectively—as an injunction to become introspective, contemplative—whereas his own gospel is a gospel of objective activity. Consequently he sets up an antithesis between knowing one's self and knowing what one can do, apparently oblivious of the fact that with the Greeks of old, and with many a man since, knowing

what one can do is an important phase of self-knowledge. He says in his *Count Cagliostro:*

> *Know thyself*, value thyself, is a moralist's commandment (which I only half approve of); but *Know others*, value others, is the hest of Nature herself. Or again, *Work while it is called today:* is not that also the irreversible law of being for mortal man?[48]

And in *Sartor Resartus*[49] he speaks of "the folly of that impossible precept Know Thyself; till it be translated into this partially possible one, *Know what thou canst work at.*" In *Past and Present*, too, he exclaims:

> "Know Thyself": long enough has that poor "self" of thine tormented thee; thou wilt never get to "know" it, I believe! Think it not thy business, this of knowing thyself; thou art an unknowable individual: know what thou canst work at; and work at it, like a Hercules! That will be thy better plan.[50]

Carlyle's rejection of the maxim is shared, if not echoed, by James Henry on occasion; for he, along with Menander of old,[51] counsels abandoning the attempt to know self and giving heed to others:

> Know thine own self, the Wise man said of old,
> And many a time the advice has been re-echoed:
> Know thine own self. But I say: if thou'rt wise,
> What need hast thou to know it? if a fool,
> What whit less fool art thou because thou know'st it?
> So study others, friend, and not thyself;
> Cleave to the wise fast, and eschew the fool,
> And leave't to others so to do by thee.[52]

And in another little poem, entitled "Γνῶθι Σεαυτόν," he even makes bold to say that *our* god forbids us to know ourselves, because we are happier in our ignorance:

> Know thyself, said Apollo. Our God says
> Know thyself not, touch not the tree of knowledge.
> Our God is right; the ignorant alone
> —Bear witness, playful, envied child,—is happy.[53]

Among the means to be employed in our endeavor to know ourselves, the customary advice to regard as our own the qualities, and particularly the faults, which we see in others is given the specific turn of observing family traits in Northcote's fable of *The Magpie and the Owl:*

A pert, conceited Magpie was boasting of his own excellencies to the Owl, saying how much he was superior to all the others of his family. When the sagacious Owl thus answered him: "I shall not attempt to argue with you on your superior excellence, when compared with the rest of your family; only I must observe that we are rarely the most unbiassed judges of our own merits; but the great secret towards acquiring a competent knowledge of one's self is best found by a critical and impartial view of our nearest of kin, and then return to make a strict examination into ourselves, to discover if there is not some slight tincture at least of a family similitude in respect to those propensities which we so often can distinctly descry and despise in those very nearly allied to us by nature."

James Henry in his little poem entitled "The Two Looking-Glasses"[54]—an echo doubtless, of Aesop's fable of the two sacks—indicates that we may come to know ourselves by knowing the hearts of our friends:

With two looking-glasses, the wise man of Greece said,
Most bountiful nature supplied us;
One to show us what passes in other men's hearts;
This glass is placed queerly—inside us.

In our own hearts what passes we see in the other,
Which is placed just as queerly—outside us;
And of all places where in the world do you think?
Why, deep in our friends' hearts—beside us.

The self-illumination which may come through conversation with a friend is suggested in Shelley's *Julian and Maddalo* —a poem which finds its setting in Shelley's visit to Byron in Venice in 1818. Julian, a pseudonym for Shelley's self, says, near the close of the poem, that he is loath to leave Venice and

Maddalo's (that is, Byron's) charming company; and he pictures the pleasure which he would have in remaining:

> I might sit
> In Maddalo's great palace, and his wit
> And subtle talk would cheer the winter night
> And make me know myself; and the firelight
> Would flash upon our faces. . . . .[55]

The value of intercourse with a group is emphasized by William Matthews in his essay advocating the formation of literary clubs in our Western cities.[56] He says that conversation with others is an essential means to full self-knowledge; for valuable as private reading and study may be, too much of the solitary life leads to prejudices, wrong conclusions, fixed ideas, and sometimes to insanity. "Intercourse is, after all, man's best teacher," he argues, and adds:

> "Know thyself" is an excellent maxim; but even self-knowledge cannot be perfected in closets and cloisters,—nor amid lake scenery, and on the sunny side of the mountains. Men who seldom mix with their fellows are almost sure to become one-sided.

And again the necessity of associating with others, which Goethe emphasized so much, is expressed in Ruskin's *Ethics of the Dust*.[57] In answer to Mary's question, "How did the old Greek proverb 'Know thyself' come to be so highly esteemed?" the Old Lecturer replies:

> My dear, it is the proverb of proverbs;—Apollo's proverb, and the sun's; but do you think you can know yourself by looking *into* yourself? Never. You can know what you are only by looking *out* of yourself. Measure your own powers with those of others; compare your own interests with those of others; try to understand what you appear to them, as well as what they appear to you; and judge of yourselves, in all things, relatively and subordinately.

And in his *Queen of the Air*, in the passage where he speaks of coming to know ourselves by applying Modesty's yard-meas-

ure,[58] Ruskin says that "to all true Modesty the necessary business is not *in*look, but *out*look, and especially *up*look."

The assistance afforded by a mirror—actual, not figurative—is suggested in a unique passage in Southey's *Doctor*. He is talking about razors and shaving and Dr. Dove's attitude on the subject, and he tells us he has heard the Doctor say:

> What lectures does the looking-glass, at such times, read to those men who look in at such times only! The glass is no flatterer, the person in no disposition to flatter himself, the plight in which he presents himself, certainly no flattering one. It would be superfluous to have γνῶθι σεαυτὸν inscribed upon the frame of the mirror; he cannot fail to know himself, who contemplates his own face there long and steadily, every day. Nor can he as he waxes old need a death's head for a memento in his closet or his chamber: for day by day he traces the defeatures which the hand of Time is making,—that hand which never suspends its work.[59]

Apropos of the mirror as an instrument of self-knowledge, we may cite the rôle of the magic mirror in Hawthorne's *Feathertop*. It was the sight of himself in the mirror that showed the poor scarecrow that he was but a "wretched, ragged, empty thing"; and when he refuses to exist any longer, Mother Rigby cries:

> Poor Fellow! . . . . There are thousands upon thousands of coxcombs and charlatans in the world, made up of just such a jumble of worn-out, forgotten, and good-for-nothing trash as he was! Yet they live in fair repute, and never see themselves for what they are.[60]

The figure of the mirror is also used in Lowell's *Cambridge Thirty Years Ago* to point the fact that we ourselves are what we judge others to be. Lowell describes the carnival character of the old-time Harvard Commencement day, with "peep-shows" at a cent each among the features. If Commencement were what it used to be, he would be tempted to take a booth himself and try an experiment. The experiment, he tells us in

rhyme, would consist of setting up "a full-length psyche-glass" in a darkish room, and then issuing handbills advertising

GREAT NATURAL CURIOSITY!! THE BIGGEST LIVING FOOL!!

He would admit the public one by one and let each "look his fill," with the probable strange result that Smith would tell his wife it was a face like Brown's that he saw, while Brown would say that he saw "the counter-part of that conceited Smith."[61]

That men may see themselves mirrored in the drama is indicated by William Richardson's discussion of self-knowledge in the Introduction to his *Philosophical Analysis of Shakespeare's Characters*. The genuine poet, he affirms, "teaches us to know ourselves";[62] and through the plays of a great dramatist such as Shakespeare, men may come to know human nature "by an easier and more agreeable path than that of mere metaphysics."[63] So Shelley declares, in his *Defence of Poetry*,[64] that a drama of the highest order teaches self-knowledge and self-respect.

Adversity has long been given a prominent place among the experiences which help toward the attainment of self-knowledge. This service of adversity is indicated in Burns' "First Epistle to Davie":[65]

> And ev'n should Misfortunes come
> . . . . . .
> They gie the wit of Age to Youth;
> They let us ken oursel';
> . . . . . .
> There's wit there, ye'll get there,
> Ye'll find nae other where.

Kingsley writes in his *Alton Locke:*

> The poet, I suppose, must be a seer as long as he is a worker, and a seer only. He has no time to philosophize—to "think about thinking," as Goethe, I have somewhere read, says that he never could do. It is too

often only in sickness and prostration and sheer despair that the fierce voracity and swift digestion of his soul can cease, and give him time to know himself and God's dealings with him; and for that reason it is good for him, too, to have been afflicted.[66]

And Hawthorne remarks in *The House of Seven Gables*[67] that a hard, cold man like Judge Pyncheon "seldom or never looking inward . . . . can scarcely arrive at true self-knowledge except through the loss of property and reputation."

Self-examination and reflection are recommended by several of the authors of this period. Charles Bucke suggests the keeping of a diary "of our affections and feelings, as well as of our hopes and disappointments, our actions and reactions."[68] Coleridge says in the Preface to *Aids to Reflection:*

> There is one art of which every man should be master—the art of reflection. . . . . There is one knowledge which it is every man's interest and duty to acquire, namely, self-knowledge. Truly said the Pagan moralist,
>
> E caelo descendit γνῶθι σεαυτόν.
>
> But you are . . . . born in a Christian land; and Revelation has provided for you new subjects for reflection, and new treasures of knowledge, never to be unlocked by him who remains self-ignorant. Self-knowledge is the key to this casket: and by reflection alone can it be obtained. Reflect on your own thoughts, actions, circumstances and . . . . on the words you use, hear, or read. . . . .

Sir William Hamilton in his Educational essay on *Oxford as It Might Be*[69] recommends the study of philosophy, which he defines as "the theory of what we can know and think and do, in a word—the knowledge of ourselves," and says, "To know, we must understand our instrument of knowing. 'Know thyself' is, in fact, a heavenly precept, in Christianity as in heathenism. And this knowledge can be compassed only by reflection,—only from within." The value of self-examination is also emphasized in the passages quoted above from William Richardson, Anthony Grumbler, and Lowell.[70]

The idea that a man can know himself only by revelation from God, and only as he knows God, is expressed by Cowper in his poem entitled "Charity":

> Self-knowledge, truly learn'd, of course implies
> The rich possession of a nobler prize;
> For self to self, and God to man, reveal'd
> (Two themes to nature's eye for ever seal'd)
> Are taught by rays that fly with equal pace
> From the same centre of enlight'ning grace.[71]

This thought is also the chief purport of Tupper's lines in "Of Self-Acquaintance":[72]

> Well said the wisdom of earth, O mortal, know thyself;
> But better the wisdom of heaven, O man, learn thou thy God:
> .....
> . . . . Self-knowledge filleth with acceptance its niche in the temple of utility:
> But vainly wilt thou look for that knowledge, till the clue of all truth is in thy hand,
> For the labyrinth of man's heart windeth in complicate deceivings:
> Thou canst not sound its depths with the shallow plumb-line of reason,
> Till religion, the pilot of the soul, have lent thee her unfathomable coil.
> Therefore, for this grand knowledge, and knowledge is the parent of dominion,
> Learn God, thou shalt know thyself; yea, and shalt have mastery of all things.

Richard Henry Dana, likewise, writes in his "Thoughts on the Soul":[73]

> Know God, and, so, thyself.

And Whittier in "The Word" characterizes the "Voice of the Holy Spirit" as

> . . . . making known
> Man to himself. . . . .

While Carlyle only half approves of the maxim, and prefers to substitute for Apollo's "Know thyself," his own "Know

what thou canst work at," he yet insists that through man's work he comes to know something of his soul. We read in *Sartor Resartus*,[74] "A certain inarticulate self-consciousness dwells dimly in us, which only our works can render articulate and decisively discernible. Our works are the mirror wherein the spirit first sees its natural lineaments." And again in his *Count Cagliostro*,[75] "What is all working, what is all knowing, but a faint interpreting and a faint showing forth of that same Mystery of Life, which ever remains infinite,—heaven-written mystic Sanskrit? View it as we will, to him that lives, Life is a divine matter."

As Carlyle's method of attaining a certain degree of self-knowledge is implied in some of the thoughts which gather about his slogan of "work," so Matthew Arnold's watchword of the right education signifies his conception of the method to be pursued, if a man would come to a knowledge of himself in his sense of the term. And the right education, in Arnold's judgment, gives large, though not exclusive, place to a familiarity with the life and literature of Greece and Rome. He says in his report on *The Higher Schools and Universities in Germany*:[76]

> The aim and office of instruction . . . . is to enable a man to *know himself and the world*. . . . . To know himself a man must know the capabilities and performances of the human spirit; . . . . Whoever seeks help for knowing himself from knowing the capabilities and performances of the human spirit will nowhere find a more fruitful object of study than in the achievements of Greece in literature and the arts during the two centuries from the birth of Simonides to the death of Plato.

And again in one of his *Discourses in America*,[77] on "Literature and Science," he refers to a phrase of his "to the effect that in our culture, the aim being to *know ourselves and the world*, we have, as the means to this end, to *know the best which has been thought and said in the world*." And he explains that he

includes in this *best* "knowing the Greeks and Romans, and their life and genius, and what they were and did in the world; what we get from them, and what is its value."[78] Edward Rowland Sill seems to be influenced by this thought of Matthew Arnold's in his poem entitled "Man the Spirit," when in speaking of the clamor of the present as against the past in education, he asks:

> What is our training—what do colleges give
> To men, which makes that feared and sneered-at thing,
> A culture through the classics? Do we dare
> Reveal the Eleusinian mysteries
> Which leave such impress on these white boy-brows,
> That the world, recognizing kingship, says,
> "Here is a soul that knows itself, has touched
> The centre, and radiates the broadening beams
> Of influence straight to the point he means?"[79]

The self-revelation which comes in great moments through strong emotional experience is called "self-knowledge" in Emerson's essay on "*History*," where we read:

> A mind might ponder its thoughts for ages and not gain so much self-knowledge as the passion of love shall teach it in a day. Who knows himself before he has been thrilled with indignation at an outrage, or has heard an eloquent tongue, or has shared the throb of thousands in a national exultation or alarm? No man can antedate his experience, or guess what faculty or feeling a new object shall unlock. . . . .[80]

With Emerson's thought touching the self-knowledge to be gained through the experience of love, we may compare J. G. Holland's lines regarding marriage in the *Mistress of the Manse:*

> For maiden life, with all its fire,
> Is hid within a grated cell,
> Where every fancy and desire
> And graceless passion, guarded well,
> Sits dumb behind the woven wire.

Marriage is freedom: only when
The husband turns the prison-key
Knows she herself: nor even then
Knows she more wisely well than he
Who finds himself least wise of men.[81]

Emerson further suggests the possibility of utilizing our dreams in order to know ourselves better. He says in his lecture on "Demonology":

A skilful man reads his dreams for his self-knowledge; yet not the details, but the quality. What part does he play in them,—a cheerful, manly part, or a poor drivelling part? However monstrous and grotesque their appearance, they have a substantial truth.[82]

And there is a hint of the possibility of acquiring unconsciously a certain knowledge of self during our sleeping hours in Sill's "Commencement Poem," where he glories in the memory of life at Yale:

Hours of golden noon-day, when the blood up-leaping
Like a soft, swift lightning pulses through the veins;
Hours of shrouded midnight, when the soul unsleeping
Calm self-knowledge, wider trust, and patience gains.[83]

These last passages from Emerson and Sill anticipate the influence of the psychology of the subconscious upon the interpretation of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν in the literature of our own day. To look back again at the period under consideration, this study of the passages in which the maxim is discussed in the philosophy and literature of the century following the French Revolution points, as we have already indicated, to a rather subtle, and yet unmistakable, change of attitude toward the essential import of the command and the means of fulfilling it. More often than not among minor writers, to be sure, we find the maxim used with some one or more of its ancient implications, and the mystical concept of the Middle Ages is not wholly

lost; but it is obvious that with the greater minds, on the whole, the emphasis has shifted from the subjective and individual to a more objective and social point of view. The duty of self-examination and reflection is no longer made paramount. The man who would know himself adequately, according to the most representative thinkers of the age, must know his fellow-men and his relation to them, not alone to the end that he may understand himself better, but that he may duly play his part in the life of the whole. This new emphasis, as we well know, has its roots in the past; but it remained for the modern era to make it an appreciably dominant note in some of the more significant discussions of the maxim.

CHAPTER XI

MAXIM AND THEME IN PHILOSOPHY AND LITERATURE FROM 1875——

As we approach the twentieth century we begin to see the effect of the dominating scientific interest upon the interpretations of γνῶθι σεαυτόν. The application of scientific method to a study of the human mind has progressed rapidly, until some knowledge of the workings of the subconscious has become widespread. The doctrine of evolution has penetrated almost every field of learning and has led to a new apprehension of life and knowledge from the evolutionary point of view. Moreover, the mechanical development which has been knitting the world together more and more, has brought to the West an increasing understanding and appreciation of the thought-life of the Orient, both directly and through the works of Schopenhauer and others who were influenced by the first available translations of Eastern lore. The mystical East is at our doors, with the philosophy of the Upanishads and the highly spiritual life of a Ghandi and a Tagore. Pantheism, already familiar to the philosophical student,[1] thus makes a wider appeal, not only as a possible metaphysical deduction, but as a working philosophy of life; and it leads us back to the Western mystic's sense of oneness with his God, plus an added sense of oneness with his fellows, hitherto unexpressed in like degree. We may expect to find these three influences, then—the psychology of the unconscious or subconscious, the evolutionary development of the race both physically and historically, and the pantheistic conception of the universe—entering into discussions of the maxim

in the philosophy and literature of the past fifty years; and we find them all, although the passages in which the evolutionary development is the prevailing thought are relatively few and will be cited last.

Certain of the old-time connotations of the apothegm still persist, however, and call for early mention. The original forces of "Know your measure" and "Know your capabilities" have, as a rule, but incidental place in recent literature. The chief use of the maxim in the sense of "Know your high worth" occurs in a section of Dubray's *Introductory Philosophy*[2] in which he is discussing "Personal Dignity" as one of the "Duties Referring Chiefly to the Mind." He says that due self-respect and self-esteem will proceed from self-knowledge, and then he quotes the passage from Cicero's Epistle to his brother Quintus (iii. 6): "Do not think that γνῶθι σεαυτὸν was spoken merely to lessen our arrogance, but that we might know our good points also."[3] Self-knowledge, he adds, "makes a man aware of what is respectworthy in himself, chiefly his moral nature, and prevents him from lowering or allowing anybody to lower his human personality." And Arthur Benson expresses the same idea in his essay on *Egotism*:[4]

> In one sense we must be egotistic, if self-knowledge is egotism. We must try to take the measure of our faculties, and we must try to use them. But while we must wisely humiliate ourselves before the majesty of God . . . . we must at the same time believe that we have our place and our work. . . . .

The maxim is used in the sense of knowing one's characteristics, especially one's faults, in a recent discussion of Bertrand Russell's criticism of Bergson's philosophy. Russell remarks, with reference to Bergson's doctrine of intuition:

> The best instance of it, according to him, is our acquaintance with ourselves; yet self-knowledge is proverbially rare and difficult. Most men,

for example, have in their nature meannesses, vanities, and envies of which they are quite unconscious, though even their best friends can perceive them without any difficulty.[5]

And George Rostrevor in the Appendix to his *Bergson and Future Philosophy* replies to this criticism as follows:

The difficulty of self-knowledge is a truism; γνῶθι σεαυτὸν is a hard precept, as men have tragically proved, generation after generation. Is Bergson really such a fool . . . . as to say that at least we can all know ourselves? Certainly not. Russell flagrantly misinterprets him when he substitutes for the knowledge of "*our own self in its flowing through time —our self which endures*" the terms "acquaintance with ourselves" and "self-knowledge." Bergson does not affirm that this primary intuition gives us knowledge of our own characters. Obviously knowledge of our moral qualities . . . . implies dissection, analysis, the work of the intellect; if we attempt to know ourselves in the sense of knowing our faults, the failure—supposing we do fail—is the failure of the intellect.[6]

Nietzsche applies the maxim to a knowledge of the motives which govern conduct in *Beyond Good and Evil*,[7] where he says that in the prehistoric period actions were valued by their consequences, for the command "Erkenne dich selbst" was then still unknown, but in the last ten thousand years on certain portions of the earth the value of an action has been determined not by its consequences but by its origin—a moral period with whose coming the first attempt at self-knowledge was made.

The application of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν to a knowledge of the body occurs in Coventry Patmore's *The Rod, the Root, and the Flower* and in the works of Nietzsche. Coventry Patmore writes:

A strange age of "Science" in which no one pays the least attention to the one thing worth knowing—himself! No supernatural light is needed to see that "we are fearfully and wonderfully made," and to enable us to say with David, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. I cannot attain unto it." We cannot, indeed, attain to the fulness of it . . . . but it is no reason . . . . for diligently gathering sticks and stones only be-

cause the gold and rubies on the ground are more than we can carry away. It was not always so. *Scire teipsum* was the maxim of all ancient philosophy and the stupidest little Greek knew more of man, and therefore of God . . . . than Bacon and all our "men of Science" as such since him, put together. We have had but one psychologist and human physiologist . . . for at least a thousand years, namely Swedenborg . . . . and he, Mr. Huxley may perhaps think it sufficient to answer, was mad![8]

So Nietzsche says in *The Will to Power:*

Man did not know himself physiologically throughout the ages his history covers; he does not even know himself now. The knowledge, for instance, that man has a nervous system . . . . is still the privilege of the most educated people. But man is not satisfied, in this respect, to say he does not know.[9]

And in his essay on *Truth and Falsity* he exclaims:

What indeed *does* a man know about himself? Oh! that he could but once see himself complete, placed as it were in an illuminated glass case! Does not nature keep secret from him most things, even about his body, e.g. . . . . the quick flow of the blood currents. . . . . Nature threw away the key; and woe to the fateful curiosity which might be able for a moment to look out and down through a crevice in the chamber of consciousness, and discover that man, indifferent to his own ignorance, is resting on the pitiless, the greedy, the insatiable, the murderous, and, as it were, hanging in dreams on the back of a tiger.[10]

In the sentence just quoted Nietzsche apparently shrinks from the sight of what a glimpse into the subconscious may reveal. John Burroughs applies the maxim to a knowledge of the subconscious, but in happier vein, in his essay entitled *An Egotistical Chapter.*[11] He is speaking of his literary method, and of how some of the things which he writes seem to come to him from beyond his ken, and he adds:

It is a wise injunction "Know thyself," but how hard to fulfil! This unconscious region in one, this unconscious setting of the currents of his life in certain directions,—how hard to know that! The influence of his family, his race, his times, his environment, are all deeper than the plummet of his self-knowledge can reach.

Burroughs is evidently thinking of the "unconscious region" as the realm in which racial and environmental influences hold sway. With Maeterlinck, on the other hand, the realm of the unconscious is the realm of the spiritual, of which man may become increasingly aware as he seeks to know it. It is in this sense that he says in his *Wisdom and Destiny* that perhaps the only ideal left to us "is to gain full self-knowledge"[12]—to know the "inner force" whose springs lie deeper than consciousness,[13] and which cannot be apprehended by reason alone.[14] We read:[15]

> This knowledge of self is only too often regarded as implying no more than a knowledge of our defects and our qualities, whereas it does indeed extend infinitely further, to mysteries vastly more helpful. To know oneself in repose suffices not, nor does it suffice to know oneself in the past or the present. Those within whom lies the force that I speak of know themselves in the future too.[16] Consciousness of self with the greatest of men implies consciousness up to a point of their star or their destiny. . . . .[17]

And again he writes:

> He who knows himself is wise: yet have we no sooner acquired real consciousness of our being than we learn that true wisdom is a thing that lies far deeper than consciousness. The chief gain of increased consciousness is that it unveils an ever-loftier unconsciousness, on whose height do the sources lie of the purest wisdom.[18]

Self-knowledge is made to include a knowledge of the subconscious in both the scientific and the spiritual sense in the following statement by Horatio Dresser, lecturer and prolific writer on practical philosophy, with leanings toward "New Thought," in his *Education and the Philosophical Ideal:*

> The larger knowledge of self includes the results of psychic research, the therapeutic value of thought, the power of hope, and a practical idealistic philosophy. It gives great prominence to the study and development of the subconscious mind as a potent factor in spiritual education.[19]

The apothegm is applied to speculative philosophy in *The New Philosophy of Henri Bergson* by Edouard LeRoy, in George Trumbell Ladd's *What Can I Know?* and in Bernardino Varisco's metaphysical work entitled *Know Thyself*. In *The New Philosophy of Henri Bergson* we read:

> "Know thyself": the old maxim has remained the motto of philosophy since Socrates, the motto at least which marks its initial moment, when, inclining towards the depth of the subject, it commences its true work of penetration, whilst science continues to extend on the surface. Each philosophy in turn has commented upon and applied this old motto. . . . . Speaking only of the last century we may say that, under the influence of Kant, criticism had till now been principally engaged in unraveling the contribution of the subject in the act of consciousness, in establishing our perception of things through certain representative forms borrowed from our constitution. Such was even yesterday the authenticated way of regarding the problem.[20]

Ladd's application of the maxim to speculative philosophy occurs in the chapter of *What Can I Know?* entitled "On the Worth and Way of Self-Knowledge." In speaking of the Delphic oracle "Know thyself," he says that while "the technical and elaborate metaphysics of the inquiry into the nature of the human Self is . . . . reached only by a speculative climb up an arduous and steep path,"[21] yet we may "feel the utmost courage in pressing our way a little distance"—we may arrive at a knowledge of the unity of the self[22] by "self-consciousness, memory, and sound reasoning." Varisco links his work with the maxim, not only in the title of his book, but in two interpretative statements in the opening chapter. "By the precept which forms the title of the present book," he writes, "Socrates laid it down that philosophy ought to be a theory of knowledge";[23] and again farther on, "Metaphysics is constructed by penetrating into the cognition which we have of ourselves; it has self-consciousness as its presupposition, though

not a self-consciousness incapable of development . . . . 'Know thyself: this is the starting-point, and must be the goal.'"[24] Varisco summarizes the main points in his discussion at the close of the work. To further summarize his summary, he states that every subject is a unity of its own phenomenal world—a secondary unity, one among many, existing only as it belongs to a system connected with the supreme unity of the universe —a "unity which, while it connects the subjects, is constitutive of each." The reality of the universe consists in its being known. For every subject as the center of its own phenomenal world the facts of the phenomenal world are external and internal, and both external and internal facts are either conscious or subconscious. This phenomenal world has as its center many other subjects analogous to one's self. Every subject and every fact is a determination of being. The unsolved problem is whether the determinations by which the phenomenal world is constituted are essential to being or not. If they are, "we are in the sphere of pantheism"; if not, "being has other determinations which constitute it a person," and "we are within the sphere of theism." Varisco himself is a theist, he tells us in the Appendix;[25] but he does not consider his personal opinion on the subject as yet fully demonstrated by argument. To return to Le Roy's statement quoted above, he says further that Bergson, more than anyone else, has given the maxim a new and profound meaning and reverses the former way of regarding the problem. He then quotes a passage from Bergson's *Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*, in which he asks whether the most apparent states of the ego itself, which we think we grasp directly, are not most of the time perceived through certain forms borrowed from the outer world which in this way gives us back what we have lent it, and he proceeds

to discuss Bergson's teaching. We may remark in passing that Bergson himself nowhere cites the maxim.

The first definite connection of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν with the pantheistic philosophy of the East occurs in the opening paragraph of an essay by Richard Wagner entitled *Erkenne dich selbst.*[26] He reminds us that great Kant taught us to investigate the possibility of man's knowing at all before wishing to know the world, and Schopenhauer proved the reality of the world-in-itself on the basis of the fundamental will in us. Then he adds:

> *Erkenne dich selbst* and thou hast known the world!—so the Pythia; Look around thee—all this art thou—so the Brahmin. How entirely these lessons of ancestral wisdom had been lost to us, we can see from this—that they had to be rediscovered a thousand years afterward through Schopenhauer following in the shining wake of Kant.

The "This art thou" (or "That art thou")[27] is the keynote of ancient Indian philosophy, which became known to Europeans for the first time through the publication of a Latin translation of the Upanishads by Anquetil Duperron in 1801–2.[28] This Latin translation was read by Schopenhauer and it influenced his philosophy, as we learn from his own words;[29] while translations into German and English by later scholars have made a considerable portion of the entire body of Vedic literature available for a larger circle of readers.[30] Although Wagner is here bringing the two maxims together in such a way that the one serves as the complement of the other,[31] the "That art thou," with a "know" implied, is actually identical in force with the mystical connotation of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν—a fact which becomes clear only as we study the phrase in its setting, along with the conception of self-knowledge in the Vedas. "That art thou" occurs frequently in the Chāndogya Upanishad, where the pantheistic conception of the universe is illustrated by several parallels

from nature. The bees, for instance, "prepare honey by collecting the essence from different trees and reducing the essence to a unity," and there is then no separate essence of this tree or that; likewise rivers flowing into the ocean are one with the ocean—the ocean itself; and so "That which is the finest essence—this whole world has that as its soul. That is Reality. That is Ātman (Soul). That art Thou, 'Śvetaketu.' "[32]

The method of realizing this essence—this soul of the universe, with which the individual soul is identical—is brought out by a story a little farther on.[33] There once came to Prajāpati, the supreme lord of all beings, one from among the gods, named Indra, and one from among the devils, named Virocana, and for thirty-two years they "lived the chaste life of a student of sacred knowledge." Then Prajāpati said to them, "Desiring what have you been living?" And they replied:

> The Self (Ātman) which is free from evil, ageless, deathless, sorrowless, hungerless, thirstless, whose desire is the Real . . . . He should be searched out, Him one should desire to understand. He obtains all worlds and all desires who has found out and who understands that self. —Such do people declare to be your words, Sir. We have been living desiring Him!

Prajāpati tells them that the person they see in a mirror or in water is the Self—is Brahma. So they look in a pan of water and see themselves—with their hair, their clothes, and their adornments; and they go away with tranquil hearts. Virocana goes back to the devils and tells them that he who makes himself happy here on earth gains both this world and the next, and we hear of him no more. But Indra sees that the bodily features perish with the body, and he returns dissatisfied to Prajāpati. After another thirty-two years have passed, Prajāpati says to him, "He who moves about happy in a dream—he is the Self. . . . . That is the immortal, the fearless. That is

Brahma." And with tranquil heart Indra goes forth again. But before he reaches the gods, he sees that while the dream self may be free from bodily defects, it can experience the unpleasant; and he returns dissatisfied. Another thirty-two years pass, and Prajāpati says to him, "Now, when one is sound asleep, composed, serene, and knows no dream—that is the Self. . . . . That is Brahma." Once more Indra starts to go back to the gods, and again he returns, saying, "Assuredly, indeed, this one does not exactly know himself (Ātmānan) with the thought 'I am he,' nor indeed the things here. He becomes one who has gone to destruction. I see nothing enjoyable in this." Indra lived with Prajāpati five years longer, and Prajāpati then disclosed the ultimate truth—that the body is merely the support of the deathless, bodiless self; and that while the incorporated self feels pleasure and pain, the real self is beyond sensation. The parts of the body are but the instruments of the Ātman; the mind is his divine eye, which sees, desires, and experiences enjoyment. "He obtains all worlds and all desire who has found out and who understands that self." This last explanation of Prajāpati is not wholly satisfactory to the reader as it stands, but in other passages of the Upanishads, as, for example, in the earlier passage from the Chāndogya quoted above, the ultimate bliss lies in the absorption of the individual in the real—a state in which self-consciousness is lost. Only ignorance, then, and persistence in the thought of a separate self, as Robert Ernest Hume says,[34] keeps one from becoming Brahma.[35]

It follows that he who would attain to an actual realization of the "That art thou," of the identity of his soul with the world-soul, must be emancipated from individual existence; and while in a sense perfect emancipation may be realized only in death, an effective approach thereto may be gained by free-

ing the soul from desire and from pleasure and pain. Through the practice of the effacement of the bodily self, known as yoga, the aspirant may arrive at the state described in the Bhagavad-Gîtâ[36] as:

> The state in which his mind finds rest
> By Yogic practices restrained,
> In which by self beholding Self
> He rests content in Self alone.[37]

For, as we read farther on in the Bhagavad-Gîtâ:

> The Yogin who has stilled the mind,
> And all his passions has suppressed,
> Who has no sins, and Brahm become,
> Finds verily the Bliss Supreme.[38]

The means for arriving at this state of indifference to the bodily affections are various. The Maitrâyana-Brâhmana Upanishad opens with the story[39] of a king who put his son on his throne and retired to the forest as a penance; and there he stood in the forest with uplifted arms, looking at the sun, for a thousand days. Then a saint "who knew the Self" came near, burning with splendour, and the king said to him, "O Saint, I know not the Self, Thou knowest the essence (of the self). . . . . Teach it to us." The saint replies that what he asks is difficult to obtain and advises him to choose other pleasures, but the king refuses. Whereupon the saint, well pleased, calls him the banner of his race "quickly obtaining a knowledge of Self." Then the saint goes on to explain the nature of the real or higher self as distinguished from the elemental self. Farther on in the same Upanishad the remedy for the elemental self is said to be acquirement of a knowledge of the Veda, performance of one's duty (which means obeying the rules of the order to which one belongs), ascetic penance, and meditation. He who exercises knowledge, penance, and meditation, we read, is

freed from the senses and attains bliss imperishable—union with the Supreme Self.[40] So in Edwin Arnold's *Secret of Death*, which gives the content of the first three Vallîs of the Katha Upanishad in the form of a dialogue between a Brahman priest and an Englishman, we read:

> Whoso hath laid aside desire and fear,
> His senses mastered, and his spirit still,
> Sees in the quiet light of verity
> Eternal, safe, majestical—HIS SOUL!
> . . . . . .
> . . . . Only by soul itself
> Is soul perceived—when the soul wills it so!
> There shines no light save its own light to show
> Itself unto itself!
> None compasseth
> Its joy who is not wholly ceased from sin,
> Who dwellest not self-controlled, self-centred—calm,
> Lord of himself! It is not gotten else![41]

It is by these means which lead the soul to realize its union with Brahma that it becomes free at last—free to do what it will and free from Karma—from reincarnation—the lot of all who do not so attain; for again we read in Arnold's *Secret of Death:*

> If a soul depart
> Instructed—knowing itself—and knowing truth;—
> And how that Brahma and the Self are One—
> Then hath it freedom over all the worlds:[42]

And in the Bhavagad-Gîtâ also:[43]

> Whoso thus knows himself, and knows his soul
> Purusha,[44] working through the qualities
> With Nature's modes, the light hath come for him!
> Whatever flesh he bears, never again
> Shall he take on its load. Some few there be
> By meditation find the Soul in Self

Self-schooled; and some by long philosophy
And holy life reach thither; some by works:
Some, never so attaining, hear of light
From other lips, and seize and cleave to it
Worshipping; yea! and those—to teaching true—
Overpass Death![45]

From this very sketchy digression on one phase of Indian philosophy we can see that the famous "That art thou," with the "know" implied, is similar in force to γνῶθι σεαυτὸν in its metaphysical and mystical use, and that the Indian mystic's methods for attaining such self-knowledge are likewise similar to those employed by Western mystics in past centuries. Rabindranath Tagore, whose philosophy of life, it has been observed, is "nothing but the ancient wisdom of India restated to meet the needs of modern times,"[46] employs the phrase "Know thyself" with its old-time force in *The Home and the World*,[47] where he also uses it, with less approval, in the sense of knowing what one can do—what success one can achieve as the world counts success. Sandip, who craves worldly power even at the expense of crushing his nobler inclinations, reflects:

The chief controversy between Nikhil and myself arises from this: that though I say "know thyself," and Nikhil says "know thyself," his interpretation makes this "knowing" tantamount to "not-knowing."

"Winning your kind of success," Nikhil once objected, "is success gained at the cost of the soul: but the soul is greater than success. . . . ."

"You only lose your soul if you seek it in your success."

"Where, then, is this wonderful soul?"

"Where it knows itself in the infinite and transcends its success."

And in an address entitled "Thou Shalt Obey," in which Tagore tries to rouse his countrymen to shake off the sloth of their subjection to authority in politics and to social and religious tradition, he declares:

The wakeful, ageless God of India calls today on our soul,—the soul that is measureless, the soul that is undefeated, the soul that is destined to immortality, and yet the soul which lies today in the dust, humbled by external authority, in the fetters of blind observances. With blow upon blow, pang upon pang, does He call upon it "*Ātmānam Viddhi:* know thyself!"[48]

The influence of pantheistic philosophy upon the thought of our times in the West has led to a frequent restatement of the relation between man's knowledge of himself, his neighbor, and his God in terms of the essential oneness of them all.[49] The self in this case is always the true self—the divine in man—as distinguished from the multiple other selves which constitute collectively his elemental or lower self. This essential union of man with his neighbor and his God and the far-reaching consequences of such a realization are expressed in *The Spirit of the New Philosophy* by John Herman Randall.[50] He holds that while each self is in a certain sense "a unique appearance in a finite centre of the underlying Reality," in their deeper essence all individual selves are one;[51] that both science and philosophy today are prepared to prove "that men in their true selves are nothing more or less than dynamic differentiations of Being in a unitary cosmic organism under phenomenally individualized and personalized forms";[52] and that only as one comes to actually experience the true self within does he see the essential self in other people.[53] So the quest for God becomes man's search for his true self[54] and "true self-knowledge alone leads to true knowledge of others."[55] "Know thyself!" he urges toward the close of the book, "and the surface self vanishes. . . . . The deeper Self emerges and all unselfishness is attained. . . . . 'Love your neighbor as yourself' . . . . because your neighbor *is* yourself."[56] With this last statement we may compare Witter Bynner's poem entitled "How Can I

Know You All?" in which he asks of the passing throngs with all their sorrows, joys, and needs:

> How shall I know you whom I need to know,
> Discovering your splendid lonely souls
> And mating them with mine?—
> Out from among you comes a voice in answer:
> "How can you know
> Him whom you will not know?
> We are yourself."[57]

And Reginald Robbins has the same idea in some of his rather involved philosophical poems. In his "Matthew Arnold" and in his "Paul" he attempts to give a present-day pantheistic interpretation to the maxim, in distinction from what he conceives to be its individualistic meaning for the Greeks of old. His Matthew Arnold says:[58]

> Let me weigh now well
> The modern meaning. Let me learn my soul.
>
> It is the old, old word: this, "Know Thyself;"
> Stale as their Greek confusion of that self
> With "me" or "thee." And I have feign'd some Greek,
> Impersonated some atomic mould
> Of private purpose; whilst my social worldhood
> Was yet not of me; . . . .
> . . . . . .
> My self, my person now must be the world
> Of modern implication, a self-world,

His Paul appears soliloquizing in Athens just before he makes his famous address on Mars Hill:[59]

> What was their utmost wisdom? "Know thyself!"
> And what the outcome of much earnest search
> Unguided of the Christ? Just this at last:
> The self is atom, item each alone,
> Indifferently to the wider world
> Of other selves sustaining each its fate—
> . . . . . .

Ah . . . . take the Christ as type of each
Successful in the knowledge of Himself
And only therefore centrally of God
And, as God, Savior to the race of men!
. . . . . .
. . . . I or thou
Saved but by proof that each is yet his world
And therefore universal and the God.
It is an instance, then, of "Know thyself"
The God thou art. . . . .[60]

In Wagner's essay entitled *Erkenne dich selbst*, from the opening paragraph of which we quoted above, he applies the maxim repeatedly to a knowledge of national characteristics. "Whoever finds the command *erkenne dich selbst* applied to the situations of the world?" he asks; and he goes on to say that in the then current anti-Jewish agitation,[61] men were not showing any inclination to search deeply into themselves—to criticize thoroughly the will and spirit of the nature and civilization that is called German. Were the maxim applied in a comparison of the Jewish and Christian religions, it would be hard to prove the superiority of the revelation through Christ, in view of the mockery to his teachings which Christian civilization affords. Likewise, the application of the maxim to economic conditions would reveal the fact that the Jews are experts where the Germans are bunglers. The root of the trouble really lies in the weakened pride of race in Germany following the Thirty Years' War, which gave the Jews their chance. The people of Germany are no longer pure-bred. Racial pride has given place to vanity and greed; whereas the Jewish race affords a remarkable instance of race persistence. As compared with the Jew, then, the German stands at a disadvantage in these particulars. And yet there is an encouraging factor in the situation in the reawakening of a certain German instinct

through this agitation — something higher than racial instinct —nobler and higher than any instinct, really—a spirit of pure *Menschlichkeit*.[62] Fatherland and mother-tongue are common bonds, and a study of the origins of that language takes one back into the remote past and gives him a quickened sense of the dignity of German manhood, as he realizes that he belongs to one of the primal branches and recalls the greatness of his forefathers. With such a perspective, these foreigners can be estimated aright on the basis of the spirit of the essential dignity of man in their work. But this spirit of pure *Menschlichkeit* finds no voice in the jargon and clash of present-day political parties; none of those parties would think of testing itself by the maxim. Yet only as "Know thyself" is applied to the inner reaches of existence may a solution of the problem be hoped for.

It is a national self-knowledge,[63] then, that Wagner calls for—a challenge to the German people to take their own measure religiously, economically, and politically, and to find the true essence of their possible national spirit. It is this national self-knowledge, too, that Wagner's friend, Nietzsche, advocates in his essay on *The Use and Abuse of History*. The essay consists of a protest against the educational system of Germany, with its second-hand learning—its attempt to produce culture by an artificial mastery of the facts regarding past civilizations, instead of leaving the youthful spirit free to develop a native culture from within, out of life as he learns to live it in the present. In answer to the query "How can such a native culture be attained?" Nietzsche replies,[64] "The Delphic God cries his oracle to you at the beginning of your wanderings, *Erkenne dich selbst*"; and he goes on to show that there was a century in Greek history when the Greeks found themselves in danger of being submerged by what was past and

foreign—Semitic, Babylonian, Lydian, Egyptian—but by taking the advice of Delphi, they turned their thoughts back to themselves and their actual needs, letting all merely apparent necessities go. In this way they recovered the possession of themselves, increased their treasures of inherited culture, and became models for the culture of the future.

That perfect self-knowledge is impossible of attainment is expressed by Nietzsche in his *Schopenhauer as Educator*, and by Oscar Wilde in his *De Profundis*. Nietzsche is speaking of the man who wants to *be himself*—to be individual and independent of others in his thoughts and desires—and he asks, "But how can we 'find ourselves' again, and how can man 'know himself'? He is a thing obscure and veiled: if the hare have seven skins, man can cast from him seventy times seven, and yet will not be able to say 'Here art thou in very truth; this is outer shell no more.' "[65] And Oscar Wilde says in his *De Profundis*[66] that while mechanical people who desire to be something separate from themselves know where they are going and go there, people whose desire is solely for self-realization never know where they are going. And he adds:

> They can't know. In one sense of the word it is of course necessary, as the Greek oracle said, to *know oneself:* that is the first achievement of knowledge. But to recognize that the soul of man is unknowable, is the ultimate achievement of wisdom. The final mystery is oneself.[67]

The various methods suggested for arriving at a certain degree of self-knowledge include some which are long since familiar and others which are essentially new to this period. The assistance which other people may lend takes various forms. A unique method of learning to know what others think of us is suggested in a short essay on "Self-Knowledge" by William Stebbing[68]—a method which reminds us somewhat of the one described in Boccalini's *Advertisements from Parnassus*.[69] Anyone who is really eager to know the sort of creature he is

can find out by managing "to overhear the talk of his family, servants, friends, and townsmen"; and it is suggested that this common "tittle-tattle" be organized in some way and sold in sealed envelopes through a public bureau, so that a man may have a composite portrait of himself as he looks to others. The old idea that man may know himself better by associating with those who are of superior character is again implied in Percy Mackaye's *Jeanne D'Arc*, where Catherine says of the Maid:

> I know not what she did,
> But what she *is* shone through her as a lamp
> Into my wretched heart, and made me weep
> To know myself.[70]

Associating with people in general—living and working among them—is recommended as a means to self-knowledge by Dr. Henry Maudsley in his *Life in Mind and Conduct*.[71] It is in connection with his discussion of the maxim that he writes:

> He ⟨man⟩ should know other selves in order to know himself, and know them as he can only adequately know them, by work among them, for he will see reflected in them what he cannot see in himself by introspection. Social life is, as it were, life—reflection of self in others and of others in self; in which interaction lies, perhaps, the very origin and principle of conscious life, conscious and self-conscious. As the mental constitution of a present self contains quintessentially many selves which have been (many millions, perhaps, if we count five hundred years back), this capacity of knowing others and himself . . . . will depend on the quality and quantity of these quintessences and their reciprocal action.[72]

The mirror figure continues to be used fancifully in connection with the theme of self-knowledge, for we have a suggestive poem entitled "The Mirror" by Lawrence Binyon, and the all-pervading mirror of truth in Percy Mackaye's *Scarecrow*. Binyon pictures the speaker in the poem taking up a mirror which has been long abandoned in a deserted room, and musing upon the image it reflected in days gone by and upon what a

marvel it would be if the mirror should open up the heart of man:

No man hath seen his soul
Save for a glimpse in the night
Brief as an ember of coal
Blown for an instant bright.
To see his own soul as it is
Eternity must enter him.

. . . . . .

Mirror, couldst thou show the spirit this,
Then within this narrow room
Were the judgment and the Doom.
For by so much as its own self it knew
Searched by that burning vision through and through
To the innermost of where it crouched and hid
Amid the husks of the mean deeds it did,

. . . . . .

To the uttermost of what its eager passion
Caught of the glory springing to re-fashion
Hope and the world, and great with pity saw
Life darkly wrestling with the angel, Law—
By such a measure, molten in that fire
Should the soul mete itself on God's desire,
Suffer at last all wisdom, and endure
The beam and vision of a thought all-pure,

. . . . . .

O were not this to taste Heaven's dawn, or dwell,
Because of knowledge, in the pains of Hell?[73]

In Percy Mackaye's *Scarecrow*, Rachel, the niece of Justice Merton who had once wronged the witch Goody Rickby, becomes interested in magic and buys of Goody Rickby a mirror which has the power of revealing people as they actually are. Rachel and her lover Richard make trial of it, and the mirror shows them to be just as they have always seemed to each other. But presently Lord Ravensbane is introduced. He is a

scarecrow underneath, kept alive by his pipe, and sent by mother Rickby to win Rachel, by way of revenge upon her uncle. He claims to be an English lord, sent by someone whom the Judge has known abroad. Rachel becomes interested in him, and he grows to love her sincerely. At an afternoon reception given in his honor Rachel is to wear a tassel of silk if she accepts his suit. She does not wear it at first, but finally allows him to pin it on her. As he is in the act of doing so, Richard draws the curtain which has been veiling the magic mirror, and Ravensbane is revealed as the scarecrow which he is underneath his outward show! Later, night finds Ravensbane prostrate before the mirror, addressing his image in a long speech, in the course of which he exclaims:

> Hark then, Spirit of Life! . . . . I have cried, "This world, the heavens, time itself, are mine to conquer," and I have thrust forth mine arm to wear Thy shield forever—and lo! for my shield Thou reachest me a mirror—and whisperest: "Know thyself! Thou art—a scarecrow; a tinkling clod, a rigmarole of dust, a lump of ordure, contemptible, superfluous, inane!" . . . . Thou hast vouchsafed to me, Spirit,—hahaha—to know myself. Mine, mine is the consummation of man—even self-contempt![74]

Then presently he looks out into the night, and, fancying that he sees Rachel high up among the twinkling leaves, he declares that Rachel's love has given him a soul—that he *is* a *man*. And the image in the glass makes answer:

> And prithee, what's a man? Man's but a mirror,
> Wherein the imps and angels play charades,
> Make faces, mope, and pull each other's hair—
> Till crack! the sly urchin Death shivers the glass,
> And the bare coffin boards show underneath.[75]

When Dickon later tries to make people believe that the mirror was bewitched and that what they have seen was not Ravensbane but an image conjured up by witchcraft, Ravensbane

tells the truth regarding his origin, throws away his pipe, and dies; but before he finally expires, he sees himself in the glass once more—and this time it is a man's image that he sees. The points of similarity between this play and Hawthorne's *Feathertop* are obvious, although as Percy Mackaye explains in his Preface, his purpose and his treatment of the plot are essentially different. But whether the author is merely satirizing "coxcombry and charlatanism," as did Hawthorne, or showing the "tragedy of the ludicrous," as does Mackaye, the rôle of the magic mirror is to make its victim known to others, and especially to himself, as he actually is; and the play is thus pertinent to our subject.

Bernard Shaw, like Lucian of old,[76] applies the mirror figure to the drama in saying that when people grow up to the point where they realize that they do not see themselves in a mirror of glass as they look to others, they "begin to demand that the Stage shall be a mirror of such accuracy and intensity of illumination that they shall be able to get glimpses of their real selves in it."[77] Besides the drama, other types of literature continue to be regarded as a help toward a better self-knowledge. Hamilton Wright Mabie says of books in general, "Whoever knows them in a real sense knows life, humanity, art, and himself."[78]

That sorrow and suffering are an aid to self-knowledge is indicated by a passage in George Moore's novel *Sister Teresa*.[79] Evelyn tells the Prioress about her father's last hours, and of how he exclaimed just before he died, "The wall has been taken away." She interprets that to mean that in the last moment of our lives everything becomes clear to us—that "then we learn what we are. We do not know ourselves until then." At length the Prioress replies, "It is through such experiences ⟨as yours⟩ that we discover our real selves, and the way that God

intends us to walk in. It is only through great grief that we come to know ourselves."

As regards the value of self-reflection, some authors are hostile to the idea, and others recommend it with approval. Nietzsche's attitude is mostly one of hostility. We read in his essay on *Schopenhauer as Educator*, "This digging into one's self, this straight, violent descent into the pit of one's being, is a troublesome and dangerous business to start. A man may easily take such hurt, that no physician can heal him."[80] So in one of his lectures on *The Future of Our Educational Institutions*[81] he says that if a student be given academic freedom without great leaders, his self-analysis is disappointing[82] and he falls from the heights of his eagerly desired self-knowledge into an ironical skepticism. In the "Criticism of Philosophy" in his *Will to Power* he writes:

> We regard it as almost a sign of degeneration when an instrument endeavors to "know itself:" we are instruments of knowledge and we would fain possess all the precision and ingenuousness of an instrument—consequently we may not analyze or "know" ourselves.[83]

And the whole burden of his poem *Between Birds of Prey* is a protest against the hermit, contemplative life of Zarathustra. He calls him "Self-hangman" in two stanzas, and in another he characterizes him as

> A sick man now
> Sick of serpent's poison,
> A captive now
> Who hast drawn the hardest lot:
> In thine own shaft
> Bowed as thou workest,
> In thine own cavern
> Digging at thyself,
> Helpless quite,
> Stiff,
> A cold corse

Overwhelmed with a hundred burdens,
Overburdened by thyself,
A knower!
A self-knower!
The wise Zarathustra![84]

Again in his *Ecce Homo*[85] he says in effect that if one's life task is a great one, nothing could be more dangerous than for a man to come face to face with himself beside it. The fact that one becomes what he is presupposes that he has not the remotest idea of what he is. The mistakes which he makes unconsciously and the earnestness wasted on duties outside his real life work all have their value. *Nosce te ipsum* would be the sure road to ruin, but forgetting one's self, belittling and narrowing one's self are an aid in developing the powers which he must not recognize. And in his *Human All-Too-Human* he declares:

> Active, successful natures act, not according to the maxim "Know thyself," but as if always confronted with the command "Will a self, so you will become a self." . . . . Inactive contemplative natures, on the other hand, reflect on how they have chosen their self "once for all" at their entry into life.[86]

Dr. Maudsley also heartily disapproves of introspection, for he says in his chapter on "Character," "The Delphic . . . . 'Know thyself.' But how? No man will do that by looking into himself, even if he live in a closet and occupy his life in a continual self-examination; . . . . To know self by prying into self will not carry any one very far in self-knowledge."[87]

But despite the extreme practicality of our day, and the ban put upon introspection by many, including certain psychologists, there are those who still insist upon the value of a certain amount of self-reflection. They are found not alone in the pulpits of our churches and in the mystical Orient. "Entering the Silence" is a cardinal practice of the "New Thought"

movement, for instance; and in the scholastic world we find such men as Professor Warner Fite of Princeton and the late Professor Ladd of Yale among the advocates of the "inward look." Horatio Dresser writes in his *Voices of Freedom:*

> If the New Thought be a sovereign remedy for all ills, even evil itself, it must strike deep into the life. It is, in a word, the remedy of understanding. "Know thyself," for self-knowledge reveals that quality or tendency in us, in mind, doctrine, or temperament, which is still undeveloped, still hostile to the spirit, still trouble-bearing and selfish.[88]

Professor Fite quotes a sentence from Plato's *Apology*—"The unexamined life is not fit for human living"—as a title-page motto for his book on *Moral Philosophy*, and defines morality as "the self-conscious living of life." He explains:

> To be moral is to be thoughtful, to be conscious; which to me means to be self-conscious; to live one's life, if possible, in the clear consciousness of living. . . . . For this conception of morality I might, perhaps, offer reputable authority by quoting those two famous sayings of Socrates, "Virtue is knowledge" and "Know thyself," and I might then call myself a disciple of Socrates. . . . . The examined life—in other words, the critical life. Given the examined life, I say that nothing else is needed.[89]

And Ladd says in his chapter on "The Worth and Way of Self-knowledge" that in order to gain the self-knowledge of supreme worth, we must discover our "better Self."[90] The general features of this better self are "somewhat plainly marked by the experience of the race as that experience is embodied in the principles of art, of morals, and of religion"; but each individual has his own peculiar best self, which he can by an act of will make dominant, just as he can any one of his conflicting personalities. To find this best self, self-reflection within limits is essential. Introspection has been too much disparaged. Ladd is aware that the inward look has its dangers, but he maintains that it is the "absolutely indispensable organ of all attempts at

accurate and complete self-knowledge,"[91] and that "the American public . . . . most sorely needs more seriously and steadily to look inward."[92] To find the best self, he says further, we must bring the self that we are into comparison with the ideal—with what God thinks of us—and we may therefore "expand the exhortation of the ancient oracle: Know thy present real Self by comparison with the ideal of thy yet better and truer Self, as seen from the divine point of view."[93] To know "the divine point of view" is to know God; and this oft-stated truth that man can fully know himself only by knowing God is also expressed in David Ritchie's comment upon the maxim in his *Philosophical Studies*. "Is it not the metaphysician's universal that alone explains the real individual and the Self?" he asks: ". . . . Γνῶθι σεαυτόν: but he who knows himself must know God. To attempt to know self (individual) without God (universal) is to find—the devil."[94]

The power of love to reveal us to ourselves which was indicated by a few passages in the last chapter becomes still more insistent in the literature of the present period. This thought has found expression in the novel of every age, of course, and to a considerable extent in the drama; and it is doubtless largely a matter of chance that the first play to bear the title "Know Thyself" should make its appearance in the twentieth century. The play *Connais-Toi*, by Paul Hervieu, is a play of rapid movement, in which two young men fall in love with two married women respectively, both of whom are surprised at the tremendous effect which this new love has upon them, and whose husbands are brought to realize that their love for their wives is great enough to make them forgive. The strongest character in the play is Sibéran, an army general, who has uncompromising views of morality and discipline, and who is wont to be rather harsh in his methods of "training" people.

His immediate family consists of a young, second wife, Clarisse, and a grown son by his first wife, named Jean. Sibéran's cousin Doncières and his wife Anna are living with him at the time the play opens. The remaining character is Pavail, a young officer and a protégé of Sibéran's first wife. Jean is in love with Anna, and she meets him at Pavail's home on a day when Jean is supposed to be out of town. Sibéran and Doncières surprise Anna there, and think Pavail the guilty man; whereupon Sibéran dismisses Pavail and advises Doncières in no uncertain terms to get a divorce. Pavail, fully expecting that he must depart, ventures to make known the real truth to Clarisse, and at the same time discloses his hitherto secret love for her. She admits that she cares for him to a certain extent, supposing this to be their last farewell. Then Jean confesses to his father, and Pavail is retained. He approaches Clarisse and asks that she go away with him. She demands that he shall refrain from seeing her for several weeks until she can decide what to do, but yields to his request for just one kiss before they part. As she grants his request, Sibéran appears! Clarisse offers to leave Sibéran, but he finally breaks down and begs her to stay. Then in accordance with the wish of Anna and Jean, he advises Doncières to retain his wife also. At the play's close, Sibéran remarks concerning Doncières: "Yesterday I should have thought him grotesque and abject." Clarisse asks if he were a better man yesterday, and he replies: "I didn't know myself as well." And Clarisse queries (*with humility*): "Who knows himself?"[95]

It is observable that in Percy Mackaye's *Scarecrow* the power of love is the compelling power which makes the bundle of rubbish into a real man at last; and in Heyse's story, told in a previous chapter, while not so stated, it is love which brings Franz to himself. We are reminded in this connection

of a pertinent little sonnet by James Vila Blake, in which the lover says of his awakening:

> Thou art my heart's voyage of discovery
> And regions new; for till I was thy lover
> I knew not of myself; beneath the cover
> Of unproved life I lay full piteously.
> Then freed, self-known, I burst captivity,
> . . . . . .
> Thence I into myself with heart intense,
> Half fear, more joy, all marvel, did explore
> The realms of me, for love's most leal behoof.[96]

And it is Maeterlinck who says of love in the broader sense, "When you love . . . . the knowledge of self that you will have found, deep down in your love—this it is that will help to fashion your life."[97]

It was for want of the right leadership at a crucial period, we remember, that Nietzsche pictures the young student turning away from his miserable self in despair and becoming an ironical skeptic. In the passage in his *Schopenhauer as Educator* from which we quoted above he answers his question "How can a man know himself?" by pointing out the work of the true teacher, who leads youth to a higher self-realization:

> This is the most effective way: to let the youthful soul look back on life with the question "What hast thou up to now truly loved, what has drawn thy soul upward, mastered it and blessed it too? Set up these things that thou hast honored before thee, and, maybe, they will show thee, in their being and their order, a law which is the fundamental law of thine own self . . . . thy true being lies not deeply hidden in thee, but an infinite height above thee, or at least what thou dost commonly take to be thyself. The true educators and moulders reveal to thee the real groundwork and import of thy being.[98]

That self-knowledge is the end of education is also implied in a brief passage in Nietzsche's *Dawn of Day*: "*Erkenne dich selbst* is the whole of science. Only when man shall have ac-

quired a knowledge of all things will he be able to know himself. For things are but the boundaries of men."[99]

Nietzsche and Dr. Maudsley commend the study of science as an aid to self-knowledge. "Hoch die Physik!" cries Nietzsche in *The Joyful Wisdom*,[100] "for teaching men to observe"; and he asks how many of the few who know how to observe, observe themselves. *Erkenne dich selbst*, he adds, "in the mouth of a God and spoken to man, is almost a mockery." Our lack of self-observation, he thinks, is shown in our superficial moral judgments, for we decide that an action is right because it seems right to us, without undertaking an intelligent scrutiny of the basis of our judgment. So in his *Beyond Good and Evil*[101] he would apparently except the subjectivity of the scientific man, as of a Socrates, from an otherwise objective interpretation of the maxim. "What meaneth that God who crieth *Erkenne dich selbst?*" he asks: "Did it mean, perhaps, 'cease to be concerned about thyself! Become objective!' And Socrates? And the Scientific man?" In these passages from Nietzsche it is an indirect benefit of scientific study which he emphasizes—namely, the acquiring of the scientific attitude of mind—which should lead to a more intelligent study of self. With Dr. Maudsley, on the other hand, it is the facts of science which are emphasized as essential. He says in his discussion of the apothegm:

> He ⟨man⟩ must know himself in nature—know something of the constitution of the physical world and of the physical constitution of his own being, else his self-knowledge will leave a large part of self unknown. . . . . A more modest and hopeful way of discerning the main lines of character will be by observation and reflection on his doings in Nature—what they have been, and by what natural laws they became what they were.[102]

The influence of the evolutionary point of view implied in the sentence just quoted appears in Nietzsche's *Human, All-*

Too-Human and in William Knight's *Varia*. Nietzsche postulates that we need to know the history of the race if we would attain self-knowledge. "Immediate self-observation is not enough, by a long way, to enable us to learn to know ourselves," he asserts; "We need history, for the past continues to flow through us in a hundred channels. We ourselves are, after all, nothing but our own sensations at every moment of this continued flow."[103] We need travel to understand history, he says further; but we can travel without going far, for the last three centuries survive near at hand, and the different strata may be seen sometimes even in given families and individuals. Practice in the art of travel reveals the ever growing, ever changing *ego*, and so *Selbst-Erkenntniss* becomes *All-Erkenntniss* as regards the entire past. William Knight, in the following passage from his *Varia*, lays stress upon the importance of a knowledge of the development of human thought and belief:

> The old Socratic maxim "know thyself" lies at the very root of all human progress, personal, social, or political. We must know ourselves before we can know anything else adequately. And in this connection all wide historical study, study which deals with the rise, decline, and fall of opinion, and the resurrection of belief the wide world over, is one of the most important. . . . . I take the Socratic motto "know thyself," as the basis of everything else worth knowing. . . . . I maintain that unless we do know ourselves, getting initiation into the true lines of thought, and the ultimate springs of human action, we are incompetent to form a just opinion on any contemporary problem.[104]

With the last sentence of the above, finally, we may well compare a brief but significant statement by Kojiro Sugimori, professor of philosophy in the University of Waseda, Tokyo, in the Introduction to his book entitled *Principles of the Moral Empire:* "Nationalism no less than internationalism is and ought to be more intelligently founded on the sole basis of

personalism. *Know thyself* is once again what we have to realize"[105]—a statement which links our maxim indirectly with the growing interest in world relationships, so characteristic of the present day.

These passages quoted from the literature and philosophy of the past fifty years indicate that man's interest in *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* remains still fresh and unabated until the present hour. Now, as always, some of the old-time connotations occur, but they are less evident than formerly. It is the newer lines of thought, rather, which occupy the foreground in connection with recent citations of the maxim; for man's self-knowledge today has come to involve a knowledge of the subconscious realm, a knowledge of the development of the race of which he is a part from both the evolutionary and the historical standpoint, and a conception of the spiritual unity of mankind.

This study of *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν* as a whole may serve to indicate the way in which men's thoughts have widened concerning its possible applications during the centuries since it first appeared on Apollo's temple. Taken in early times to mean simply "Know your measure," we have observed how it developed various specific meanings, such as "Know what you can and cannot do," "Know your special bent," "Know your place," "Know the limits of your wisdom," and "Know your human and mortal limitations." Then in the hands of the philosophers of old it came to mean "Know your soul," now in the narrower sense of "Know your disposition, your faults," and again in the sense of "Know your soul in its relation to the body," and especially "in relation to the higher Spiritual Essence." With the Neo-Platonists in particular the

maxim was given a metaphysical interpretation which made it synonymous with self-consciousness. With the Fathers of the Christian church it came to mean "Know your soul" in the sense of knowing that while we are made in the image of God, we are sinners in need of repentance, and that if duly repentant, the soul may become immortal. We have seen how during the Middle Ages (and later in some sections) the Mystics made self-knowledge a cardinal duty, for reflection on our sinful nature was regarded as the first step in the graded career of the Mystic toward the mergence of his soul with the Divine, through which alone perfect self-knowledge could be attained. With the Renaissance came a revival of the interpretations given the maxim in the Classical period, illustrated frequently by picture and fable; and these older forces remained dominant until the beginning of the modern epoch, dating roughly from the French Revolution. Then, while the old individual and subjective connotations persisted, there came a new note into many of the discussions of the apothegm. It was not only taken by certain German philosophers, especially Hegel, as the watchword of speculative philosophy, but it came to be colored increasingly by the modern objective and social point of view, with a consequent marked reaction against introspection and subjective self-analysis. And, finally, in the present period, it is man's self in relation to his fellows and in relation to the development of the race which constitute the chief essentials in his self-knowledge—an objective, scientific knowledge, on the one hand; and a philosophical conception of the oneness of humanity as an expression of the all-pervading self, on the other.

The question "How can a man know himself?" has been variously answered down the ages. Many of the means suggested are more or less superficial, of course, because the writer is thinking of the maxim in some of its lighter forces. If he takes it in the sense of knowing one's faults, for instance, he

tells us that we may learn what they are from a friend, or a neighbor, or a relative, as the case may be, whether directly by word of mouth, or by some special device for eliciting the secret. But if he means self in the larger sense of all that goes to make the man—his inheritance, near and remote, his environment, his temperament, his associations—obviously the means recommended must be wider and deeper. Such means, while variously expressed, may be broadly classed as education in the fullest sense, literary, historical, scientific; the experiences of life, such as work, and love, and sorrow, and contact with our fellows generally; and the inner illumination of the Universal Spirit, to the realization of which, foes to introspection notwithstanding, a certain degree of reflection is essential.

It would be interesting to try to predict what the remainder of the twentieth century will contribute to the thought gathering around this apothegm. Surely the international note, struck first by Goethe in this connection and sounded again in the passages last quoted above, will become more insistently linked with it; and it will doubtless take on many another connotation, hitherto unconceived, as mankind continues to grow in self-knowledge.

On the left of the archway under the beautiful tower of the Harkness Memorial Building at Yale University there is inserted in the wall a little piece of sculpture in low relief. The design is that of a seated figure with the traditional features of Socrates, resting his arm on a tablet which bears the inscription γνῶθι σεαυτόν (see Frontispiece). Thus the twentieth-century temple of learning takes up in its turn the message of Apollo's temple of over twenty-five hundred years ago, and bears it aloft to the youth of today—the youth whom the God of the ages is ever challenging to a deeper and wider knowledge of the meaning of its self-hood.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

CHAPTER I

For a fuller discussion of various points touched upon in this Introduction, see my " 'Know Thyself' in Greek and Latin Literature" (dissertation, University of Chicago, 1917), pp. 1–11.

1. Plutarch says in *De E apud Delphos*, c. 3, that five sages—Chilon, Thales, Solon, Bias, and Pittacus—met at Delphi and consecrated the E, signifying that they were only five in number, as a protest against Cleobulus and Periander usurping the name of "Sage," and that the old wooden E was known as the "E of the Sages." This statement taken in conjunction with Plato's *Protagoras* 343 A-B may imply that the sages met at Delphi twice—once to dedicate the maxims, and again to protest that there were five of them, not seven. Rabelais has this passage in mind, perhaps, when he says that EI, "also divinely written and transmitted from the Heavens," appeared some time after γνῶθι σεαυτὸν (*Pantagruel* iv. 49). The fact that the wooden E was called "the E of the Sages," however, indicates for its presence on the temple a possible antiquity equal to that of the inscribed maxims.

2. *N.H.* vii. 32.

3. Clem. Alex. *Strom.* v, viii. 45.

4. Aristotle *Eth. Eudem.* i. 1.

5. "Die delphischen Sprüche," *Abhandlungen*, I, 225 ff.

6. "Weiteres über die Bedeutung des E zu Delphi und die übrigen γράμματα Δελφικά," *Philologus*, LX, 81 ff.

7. *Sat. Menipp.* xxix. 16. 130 (ed. Riese).

8. Goettling's hexameter thus reads: εἰ. θεῷ ἦρα. ⟨κόμιζε⟩ παραὶ τὸ νόμισμα χάραξον.

9. iii. 22.

10. vi. 31.

11. Roscher's hexameter reads: εἰ. θεῷ ἦρα. νόμοις πείθεν. φείδεν τε χρόνοιο.

12. x. 24. 1.

13. ix. 10.

14. *Sat.* i. 6. 6.

15. *Somn. Scip.* i. 9. 2.

16. 229 E. Cf. Sir Thomas Browne, *Miscellanies*, Tract XI, entitled "Of Apollo's Answers": "Though EI were inscribed over the gate of Delphos, yet was there no uniformity in his deliveries" (ed. Sayle [Edinburgh, 1907], III, 399).

17. *De def. orac.*, c. 31.
18. Bk. III, c. xi. *Sämmt. Werke* (Leipzig, 1839), XXIV, 213.
19. "Die Sprüche der delphischen Säule," *Philologus*, XXIV, 195 ff.
20. "Die Bedeutung des E zu Delphi und die übrigen γράμματα Δελφικά," *Philologus*, LIX, 21 ff.
21. "Das E zu Delphi," *Hermes*, XXXVI, 411 ff.
22. P. 23 (Berlin, 1925).
23. II, 176, n. 2 (Cambridge University Press, 1925).
24. x. 24. 4.
25. Cook, *op. cit.*, p. 178.
26. XXIX (1925), 239–46.
27. 343 A-B.
28. x. 24. 1.
29. Stob. *Flor.* iii. 79.
30. See Hitzig's *Pausanias*, III, Pt. II, 749.
31. ix. 10.
32. *N.H.* vii. 32.
33. *De Legibus* i. 22.
34. *Sat.* xi. 27.
35. Stob. *Flor.* xxi. 26.
36. *E apud Delphos*, c. 2.
37. *De Pyth. or.*, c. 29.

CHAPTER II

For a fuller discussion of the material in this chapter, see my article on "Ἐγγύα πάρα δ' ἄτη in Literature," *Classical Philology*, XXII (1927), 121 ff.

1. Clem. Alex. *Strom.* i. 14. 61.
2. *Diodorus Siculus* ix. 9.
3. *Charmides* 165 A.
4. Quoted in schol. on Plat. *Charm.* 165 A.
5. Clem. Alex. *loc. cit.*
6. C. 3.
7. *Strom.* ii. 15. 70.
8. Vss. 69–71.
9. Vss. 171 ff.
10. *Op. cit.*, ix. 9—x. 2.
11. vi. 57.
12. ix. 11. 8 (71).
13. *Philologus*, LX, 100.
14. Pp. 107 ff.
15. No. 452 (ed. Allen, II, 318).

16. No. 187. The poem is as follows:

"Haec habeas, septem sapientum effingere dicta
Atque ea picturis qui celebrare velis.
Optimus in rebus modus est, Cleobulus ut inquit:
Hoc trutinae examen, sive libella docet.
Noscere se Chilon Spartanus quemque iubebat:
Hoc speculum in manibus, vitraq: sumpta dabunt.
Quod Periander ait, fraena adde, Corinthius, irae;
Pulegium admotum naribus efficiet.
Pittacus at ne quid, dixit, nimis: haec eadem aiunt,
Contracto qui gith ore liquefaciunt.
Respexisse Solon finem jubet: ultimus agris
Terminus haud magno cesserit ipse Jovi.
Heu quam vera Bias, est copia magna malorum:
Musimoni insideat effice Sardus eques.
Ne praes esto, Thales dixit: sic illita visco
In laqueos sociam parra, meropsq: trahit."

Andrea Alciati (1492–1552) was professor of law in several prominent universities, including Avignon, Bourges, Pavia, and Bologna. His epitaph reads: "He completed the whole circle of learning, and was the first to restore the study of the laws to its ancient dignity." His first edition of *Emblemata* was brought out in 1522. He formed them on classical models, and his influence on the emblem-writers of Europe was very great.

17. Introduction to *History of Greek Philosophy* (translated by E. S. Haldane [London, 1892–96], I, 161).

18. *Greek Philosophy* ii D (translated by Haldane, II, 334).

19. *Grundlage der Moral* ii. 9 (translated by A. B. Bullock [London, 1915], p. 110). For the theme without reference to the maxim, see Sir Walter Raleigh, *Instructions to His Son* (*Works* [London, 1751], II, 351–52):

"Suffer not thyself to be wounded for other men's faults and scourged for other men's offences; which is, the surety for another; for thereby millions of men have been beggared and destroyed. . . . . If any friend desire thee to be his surety, give him a part of what thou hast to spare; if he press thee further, he is not thy friend at all. . . . . If thou be bound for a stranger, thou art a fool: if for a merchant, thou putteth thy estate to learn to swim: if for a churchman, he hath no inheritance: if for a lawyer, he will find an evasion by a syllable or word, to abuse thee. If for a poor man, thou must pay it thyself: if for a rich man, it need not: therefore from suretyship, as from a manslayer, or enchanter, bless thyself. . . . ."

CHAPTER III

For a more detailed study of the first few pages of this chapter, see my article "Μηδὲν Ἄγαν in Greek and Latin Literature," *Classical Philology*, XXI (1926), 132 ff.

1. See Henry Osborn Taylor, *Ancient Ideals* (New York: Putnam's, 1896), I, 202–3: "This relationship of proportion carries as a consequence a universal principle of Greek life and thought, one stated in many forms. . . . . Homer does not state it broadly . . . . but the course of the epics points to it. . . . . After Homer, the idea found general expression in the phrase *μηδὲν ἄγαν*—nothing too much; then in the word *σωφροσύνη*,—wise temperance. Hesiod bids men preserve moderation; the half is better than the whole. Theognis applies the principle to feelings—do not be stirred too much by good or evil; it is the part of man to bear all. . . . . Thoughts like these pervaded all Greek life as principles of action which Greeks should follow. They showed themselves in love of harmony, proportion, beauty, in desires for the best that life offered; yet nothing too much, nothing too costly, nothing entailing too great ill; but a weighing of all things."
2. *W. & D.*, vss. 40 and 694, respectively.
3. *Anth. Lyrica*, Poet. Eleg. XXIX, frag. 2 (ed. Bergk).
4. Vss. 219, 335, 401, 657.
5. No. 216 (ed. Christ).
6. Vs. 1062.
7. Vss. 72, 327.
8. Vss. 34–35, 238, 244.
9. Vs. 824.
10. Frag. 154 (ed. Nauck).
11. Vs. 711.
12. Vs. 1695.
13. Vs. 265.
14. See *supra*, p. 8.
15. 165 A.
16. 228 E.
17. 45 D.
18. 247 E.
19. ii. 12. 14–13. 1.
20. *ἧττόν τε ἄγαν ἅπαντα ἢ δεῖ.*
21. *Op. cit.* ii. 21. 13–14.
22. ix. 9. 3.
23. C. 28.
24. Cf. the sepulchral inscription which begins with the words: *Μηδὲν ἄγαν φρονέων. θνητὰ δὲ πανθ' ὁρῶν ἦλθον . . . .* (Kaibel, *Ep. Graec. ex Lapid. conlecta* v. 615).

25. C. 19 and c. 21.

26. *Pal. Anth.* vii. 683 (ed. Stadtmueller). Pindar (*Isth.* 6. 44) first makes the Bellerophon story symbolic of too great ambition. The story is told in Francis Thynne's *Emblemes and Epigrames*, No. 53, under the title "Not to Climbe Overhighe" (published by author, A.D. 1600; ed. by Furnivall for Early English Text Society, London, 1876).

27. *Pal. Anth.* v. 298.

28. *Ibid.*, ix. 110. Alpheius of Mitylene probably flourished in the time of Augustus.

29. Vss. 35–38.

30. Vs. 61.

31. *Sat. Menipp.* v (6) (ed. Riese).

32. v. 12 (36).

33. iii. 22.

34. xv. 2 (94). 43.

35. ix. 6.

36. Ep. lx. 7, and cviii. 21.

37. Ep. cxxx. 11.

38. *De Consideratione* i. 8 (*Pat. Lat.*, CLXII, 738).

39. Ep. xcix (*Pat. Lat.*, CCII, 549). Peter Cellensis was abbot of the monastery of Moutier-la-celle about A.D. 1150, and later of St. Remigius.

40. Ep. cii. 554.

41. John of Salisbury (Joannes Saresberiensis, *ca.* 1120–80) was a pupil of Peter Abelard at Paris, and later a clerk in the service of Peter Cellensis. He sent the *Polycraticus* to Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury and aide to Henry II, when he was attending the king at the siege of Toulouse in 1159. The king sent him to the pope to obtain permission to enter Spain. He later entered the household of Theobald and remained with his successor, Thomas à Becket. After Becket's death, he became bishop of Chartres. His writings are superior to those of any other churchman of his day.

42. *Polycraticus*, Bk. I, c. iv, sec. 398*a*. An alternative title of the work is *De Nugis Curialium et Vestigiis Philosophorum*. The contemporary poets of Middle High German had much to say of *Masse*.

43. *De Remediis Utriusque Fortunae*, Bk. I, Dial. 43.

44. *De Tranq. An.* ix.

45. *Op. cit.* xv. 69 ff.

46. No. 126 (ed. Allen [Oxford, 1906], I, 296–97). Lord Mountjoy, an enthusiastic student himself, was a long-continued friend and for many years a patron of Erasmus. He directed the studies of Prince Henry, and became Master of the Mint.

47. *Colloquia* (ed. London, 1717), p. 398.

48. Parts VII and XIV, in collection by Thomas Crenius (Lugduni Batavorum, 1699), pp. 113, 125.

49. Part XI, *ibid.*, p. 118.

50. *Symbolorum et Emblematum*, Bk. II, No. 16. The Latin reads:

"Ne nimium imprudens impone lacertis,
Et fortem sternunt pondera iniqua virum."

51. The picture of the overloaded camel appears also in De Boot, *Symbola Principum* (Amsterdam, 1686), p. 47; and in Houbraken's *Zinnebeelden*, (Amsterdam, 1767), No. 20, p. 83, under the motto "Niet meer nog minder."

52. Emblem No. 186. See *supra* p. 216, n. 16.

53. No. 5 (ed. Rotterdam, 1627), pp. 26, 30. Jacob Cats (b. 1577) was an eminent Dutch lawyer, statesman, and poet. He held high offices of state. He ranks among the first Dutch lyric poets of his day. His emblem books comprise many hundred subjects. The grandmother of Joshua Reynolds brought Cats's book to England, and her grandson was influenced by the designs for Cats's work, made by Adrian van de Venne.

54. *Emblemata Politica*, No. 5 (ed. Amsterdam, 1651), p. 52. M. Zuerius Boxhornus (d. 1653) edited several Latin works and wrote *The Majesty of Kings; Dicta Catonis;* etc.

55. No. 41. This work is dedicated to Baltasar, son of Philip IV, who died before he could profit by it. It met with great success—was translated into all the languages of Europe, and is still valued in Spain. Fajardo was long in the diplomatic service of the crown.

56. *Select Emblems* (Amsterdam, 1704), p. 11 and Plate VI. Cf. Schoonoven, *Emblems* (Amsterdam, 1648), No. 12, p. 37.

57. Plate XVIII, and p. 35. The couplet reads:

"Cui tempestivus sit Phoebus, prospera crescit
Arbor; at immodicis aestibus usta perit."

58. No. 10 and Plate X.

59. Antwerp, 1612, pp. 18–19. Gomberville reproduces this picture under the title "La Vertu fuit les Excez" in his *La Doctrine des Moeurs* (Paris, 1685), No. 9. p. 34.

60. *Theatro Moral De la Vida Humana* (Amberes 1733).

61. Among the quotations given by van Veen is one from Ovid *Tristia* i. 1:

"Dum petit infirmis nimium sublimia pennis,
Icarus, Icarus nomina fecit aquis."

62. Sambucus, *Emblemata* (Antwerp, 1564), p. 32. Sambucus (1531–83) was a physician and poet in Hungary. He wrote on historical subjects also, and was a student of philosophy and literature.

63. Ruscelli, *Le Imprese Illustri* (Venetia, 1572), Bk. I, c. viii, p. 13.

64. Part I, crisis 5. Baltasar Gracián (1601–58), one of the three greatest

Spanish prose-writers of the seventeenth century, published Book III of this, his greatest work—this virtual *Pilgrim's Progress*—twenty-one years before Bunyan's book appeared. He was punished for publishing the third part contrary to orders by being deprived of his position as rector and teacher of Scripture in the Jesuit College at Tarragona, and by being bidden to fast on bread and water.

65. Part I, crisis 13.

66. Bk. IX, fable No. 11.

67. Thomas Hobbes' *The Whole Art of Rhetoric*, c. xiv, and Gomez Texada's *Leon Prodigioso* (Seville, 1732), II, Pt. II, 113, are not included in the list because the passages are translations from Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. The literature of the Renaissance includes many poems with titles such as "On the Meane and Sure Estate"; but these must be excluded from our study, as well as prose discussions of the mean which do not refer to *μηδὲν ἄγαν*. Conspicuous among such prose discussions is the chapter on "Moderation" in Thomas Elyot's *Governour*, Bk. III, c. xxi, which contains allusions to several characters in classical literature who refrained from excess.

68. Luigi Chrysostomus Ferrucci (1797–1877), poet and Dante scholar, was head librarian at the Mediceo-Laurentian Library at Florence.

69. Guiseppe de Spuches (1819–84), a much beloved Sicilian classical scholar and poet, was a man of rank ("Principe de Galati e duca de Caccamo") and president of the Royal Academy of Sciences, Letters, and Arts at Panormi.

70. Blandes' *Proverbs from Erasmus* (London, 1814) contains some interesting comments on *Ne quid nimis*. The maxim appears on the flyleaf of Edward N. Gardiner's *Greek Athletic Sports and Festivals*, and in such works as Scott's *Unity of Homer* (p. 215). A. D. Godley in his lecture on *Classical Studies in England* (Vanuxem Lectures for 1913), p. 86, quotes it in criticism of current methods of classical study. He says there is too much reading of books about books, and too much reading for examinations on the part of the undergraduate. Matthew Arnold has much to say of the mean life and the life of excess in *Culture and Anarchy*, especially in c. ii. The little poem by Preston Gurney entitled "Moderation" expresses the spirit of the maxim to an unusual degree, although it does not cite it—

"To strike so hard as to
  Break the whip
Hurts the whipper.
. . . . . .
  Enough's enough;
What's over spills,—
Loss to the spiller.

"To overpay an
Honest debt,
Wastes the siller."

71. Written August 7, 1749 (ed. New York, 1853; No. 189).

72. C. viii (Riverside ed. [Boston, 1894], IV, 181 f).

73. Arnold Geulincx, *Opera Philosophica*, tract. IV, sec. 8 (Hagae Comitum., apud Martinum Nijkoff, 1893, III, 119).

74. Last poem in his Sämmtliche Gedichte, *Prosaische und Poetische Werke* (Berlin, 1867–68), V, 251 f.

75. *Werke* (Leipzig, 1877), II, 616. William Caldwell in his *Schopenhauer's System in Its Philosophical Significance* (Edinburgh and London, 1896), pp. 333–34, says: "Schopenhauer has little sense of the midway region in morals, the plain broad highway of life on which ordinary ethical actions are exhibited. . . . . It was mainly the 'excess' and the 'defect' in life that Schopenhauer saw. . . . . He had no real inward feeling for the ethical value of the Greek idea of the 'limit' in things, or of their maxim μηδὲν ἄγαν, or of Aristotle's idea of virtue as a 'mean' between two extremes."

76. *Op. cit.*, c. xxvii (*Bib. Autores Españoles* [Madrid, 1873], LXV, 345). Certain of the poems of Herrick seem to glance at this use of the maxim; e.g., his "Love Me Little, Love Me Long," and his couplet entitled "Moderation."

77. *Opere*, Vol. III (Panormi, 1877), *Carmina Graeca*, Bk. I, No. 34.

78. *Andrea del Sarto*, vs. 97.

79. *Morgenröthe*, sec. 559 (translated by Kennedy, ed. Levy [Edinburgh and London, 1911], IX, 388).

80. Sec. 940, "Die Lehre μηδὲν ἄγαν wendet sich an Menschen mit überströmender Kraft—nicht an die Mittelmässigen."

81. I, 48 (ed. Boston, 1859). The first edition was published in 1621, and the sixth posthumously in 1651 from MSS containing his latest corrections.

82. *Fabularum Libri Tres*, Bk. II, No. 41 (ed. Forocornelii, 1867).

83. *American Men of Letters* (Riverside ed., Boston, 1885), c. xiii, p. 297. Emerson is ever the foe of excess. Note especially his essay *The Superlative*.

84. See sec. II, Nos. 69, 71, 72; sec. VI, Nos. 378, 379, 381 (ed. Brunschvigg; Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1923).

85. Sec. I, No. 35 (translated by Trotter in "Temple Classics" [London, 1904]).

86. Ed. Chalmers (Boston, 1855), VI, 211 ff.

87. Another eighteenth-century citation of the maxim occurs in the following epigram by a little-known author, Carolus Desiderius Royer. It was published in 1701 and addressed to the "Very Reverend Master LEONARD NIMIS S. S. of Theology and Doctor of Laws in the Parish of Voltburamen," etc.:

> "Pastor es insignis, Contro- & Versista peritus:
> Doctus Chronologus, Theologusque gravis.
> Florini Flores, (potius sed dixero Spinas:

Illi Romanam sic pupugere Fidem)
Hi Flores veluti nascentia Tubera nocte,
Doctrinae ad Solem jam cecidere tuae.
Praelia amas Praeli, sacra est tua Penna Bipennis.
Nec dicam hic: *Ne quid*, Mi LEONARDE, *Nimis*."
—*Epigrammata*, Bk. IV, No. 215

88. *History of Philosophy* (translated by Haldane, I, 161).

89. See *supra*, p. 20.

90. See *supra*, p. 23.

91. *Opere* (Venezia, 1740), II, 514 ff.

92. Geulincx in his *Ethica*, Tract. IV, sec. 8, says that the oracle did not say "ne quid *minus*" because the temptation of the devil is greater on the side of excess; for as soon as anyone decides to devote himself to a certain virtue, he has already turned his back on its defect, and the danger is that he will not stop but will go beyond the mean, since the devil is there telling him to go on as he has begun. Cf. Owen Feltham, *Resolves* (London, 1840), No. 45, p. 103: "When the subject of our hatred is sin, it cannot be too deep: when the object of our love is God, it cannot be too high. Moderation may become a fault. To be but warm, when God commands us to be hot, is sinful. We belie virtue into the constant dulness of mediocrity. I shall never condemn the nature of those men that are sometimes violent, but those that know not when it is fit to be so."

93. A footnote says of him, "E quel Luigi Cornaro, che tanto onor fece alla sobrietà co' suoi scritti e colla sua vita tirata innanzi di là dell' anno novantesimo quinto. De lui abbiamo una lettera alla Speroni che gli rispose per esercizio ragionando contra la sobrietà, a poi altra volta e da buon senno in favore."

94. See Cicero *Acad. Quaest.* ii, 1.2. According to the story, when someone offered to teach Themistocles, who had a remarkable memory, the art of remembering, Themistocles replied that he should prefer learning to forget.

95. *Opere*, II, 521.

96. *In difesa dei Sofisti*, *Op.*, V, 430.

97. Cf. Oscar Wilde, *A Woman of Importance*, Act III: *Lady Hunstanton:* "... I don't believe in women thinking too much. Women should think in moderation, as they should do all things in moderation"; *Lord Ill.:* "Moderation is a fatal thing, Lady Hunstanton. Nothing succeeds like excess."

98. Bk. I, c. vi. He includes the *nosce tempus* of Pittacus also in what he has to say.

99. *Poems of Personality* (2d ser.; Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1909), pp. 54 ff.

100. *Shelburne Essays* (2d ser.; New York and London: Putnam's, 1906), pp. 188 ff.

CHAPTER IV

For a more detailed study of the contents of this chapter, see " 'Know Thyself' in Greek and Latin Literature," pp. 12 ff.

1. Frag. 116, Diels.
2. Vss. 309–10.
3. *Pythian* ii. 34. See scholiast.
4. *Op. cit.* ii. 4. 40–41.
5. vii. 2. 20–25.
6. 48 C ff.
7. *Nic. Eth.* iv. 9. 1123*b*–1125*a*.
8. Dio Chrys. *Or.* iv. 150 R ff.
9. *Or.* lxvii. 361 R.
10. Plutarch interprets the maxim as "Know your measure" in two passages in which he relates it to situations in Homer's *Iliad*—*Sept. Sap. con.*, c. 21; and *Quo. ad. poet. aud. deb.*, c. 14. In Stobaeus' *Florilegium* (sixth century after Christ) the collection of quotations under title of Περὶ Τοῦ Γνῶθι Σεαυτόν (c. 21) is followed by one on the corresponding vice, entitled "Of Pride."
11. Vss. 124–25.
12. ii. 28.
13. *Op. cit.* xi. 23 ff.
14. C. ii. Cf. Rudolph Eucken, *The Problem of Human Life* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), p. 56. He defines self-knowledge in the early Greek sense as "a correct estimate of one's own capacities," and says that we must know precisely how much we are capable of achieving if we would attain to the "just mean" and avoid undertaking too much or too little.
15. *Op. cit.* ii. 21. 13.
16. Epictetus iii. 22.
17. C. 3.
18. A prominent rhetorician of the Augustan age, who wrote on various subjects connected with Greek oratory. Plutarch evidently thinks that his ability is not equal to his task in this instance.
19. Julian *Letter to Themistius* 253 C ff.
20. iii. 7. 9.
21. *Ep. ad Quint.* iii. 6. 7.
22. *De tranq. an.*, c. 12–13.
23. *Op. cit.* ii. 493 ff.
24. Another special application of knowing what one can do is knowing the possible achievements of the will in the moral realm, and Epictetus so interprets the maxim in a passage in which he counsels the practice of indifference to loss and pain until we become invincible like the Olympic victor (i. 18. 17–23). It is possible to overestimate one's strength of will, however; and St. Augustine says

that one who does so fails because of ignorance of himself, as Peter did of old (*In John.* lxvi. 1).

25. 164 D ff.

26. *Op. cit.*, sec. 69.

27. *Ep.* 41. 420 B.

28. Stob. *Flor.* 21. 27.

29. vii. 14. 137.

30. *In Alc. I.* (ed. Creuzer), II, 214.

31. *De Dogmata Plat.* ii. 16.

32. Vss. 401–3.

33. 229 B ff.

34. 49 A.

35. *Apol.* 23 B.

36. *Ibid.* 23 A-B.

37. iii. 9. 6–7.

38. Vss. 841–42.

39. Sec. 230.

40. Paul Elmer More in his *Delphi in Greek Literature* ("Shelburne Essays," 2d. ser.; New York and London: Putnam's, 1906), p. 201, speaks of γνῶθι σεαυτὸν as synonymous with phrases like "Think as a mortal," and takes this to be the first meaning of the maxim. "Know thyself," he says, "at first meant simply, Know thy place in this world as a man among men, and as a mortal subject to the immortal gods."

41. Tertullian *Apol.* 33.

42. Frag. 538 (ed. Koch, III, 161).

43. vi, 11. 1–3.

44. C. 28–29.

45. This mosaic floor, found west of the Appian Way at Rome, is now in the Thermae Museum. See Helbig's *Guide* (English translation), II, 222, No. 1044.

46. No. 2.

47. No. 14.

48. *De Propriorum Animi Cuiusque Affectuum Dignotione et Curatione* (ed. Kuhn), V, c. ii, 3 f.

49. *De disc. adul. et am.*, c. 1.

50. Phaedrus iv. 9. Cf. Babrius, No. 66.

51. ii. 15. 1213*a*. 14 ff.

52. *De inimic. utilitat.*, c. 5.

53. *De Vita Beata* vii. 27. 4–6.

54. Vss. 23 ff.

55. *Op. cit.* 133 B-C.

56. *De Fuga et Inventione* 45 ff.; *De Somn.* i. 46, 55.
57. Stob. *Flor.* 21. 28.
58. *Or.* vi. 183 B-C, 190 B.
59. *The Nature of Man* i. 16.
60. *Ad. Colot.*, c. 21.
61. i. 52. Cf. Lucretius iii. 440–555.
62. *Ad Marcellam* 32.
63. Stob. *Flor.* i. 88.
64. 130 C.
65. Stob. *Flor.* 21. 27.
66. iii. 18.
67. ii. 8. 10–13; iii. 1.
68. *Ep.* xx. 4. 3.
69. vi. 185 D ff.
70. *De Fin.* iii. 73; v. 44; *Tusc. Dis.* v. 70.
71. *De Legibus* i. 58–62.
72. *En.* iv. 3. 1.
73. *En.* vi. 7. 41.
74. 132 C.
75. *En.* v. 3, esp. sec. 4.
76. P. 318.
77. I, 5 (ed. Creuzer).
78. A phrase used in a solemn initiation Eleusis.
79. Porphyry tells us that this purification consists in recognizing that the self is the soul, which is bound together with an alien substance (Stob. *Flor.* i. 88).
80. II, 7–8 (ed. Creuzer).
81. *Or.* vii. 225 D.
82. i. 9. 2–3.
83. Frag. 55 (ed. Nauck).
84. In some instances the knowledge of self is shown to involve a better understanding of other people.
85. See *supra*, p. 224, n. 51.
86. See *supra*, p. 224, n. 48.
87. *Nat. Quaest.* i. 17. 4.
88. *In Alc. I.* (ed. Creuzer), II, 9.
89. *Op. cit.*, sec. 81.
90. x. 4. 10–12.
91. *De Sac.* (*Sp. Leg.* i), 262–65.
92. *Op. cit.* iii. 73.
93. *Strom.* i. 60.
94. *Octavius* 17.

95. *Op. cit.* x. 5. 7.
96. *Strom.* ii. 15. 70–71.
97. Exod. 10:28; 34:12; Deut. 4:9.
98. Song of Songs 1:8; Origen *In Cant. Cant.* ii. 56.
99. *Hexaemeron* vi. 1.
100. Προσέχε Σεαυτῷ, sec. 7.
101. *Op. cit.* vi. 42.
102. *De Isaac et Anima* i. 4. 16.
103. *In Cant. Cant.* ii. 58.
104. See Augustine *Confessions* xiii. 11. 12; Dionysius the Areopagite *De Div. Nom.* vii. 2. 470; Prudentius *Apotheosis*, vss. 963–69.
105. Dion. Areop. *De Eccles. Hierarch.* ii. 3. 4.
106. Athanasius, frag. *In Cant. Cant.* (*Pat. Graec.*, XXVII, 1348); Gregory of Pisida *Hex.* 602 ff.
107. *De Civ. Dei* viii. 10. 2. See also *Sermo* xlvii. 23.
108. *Strom.* v. 4. 23.
109. *Refutation of all Heresies* x. 34.
110. *In Ps.* cxviii. 2. 13.
111. *Strom.* iv, 6, 27.
112. *In Ps.* cxviii. 2. 14.
113. *Op. cit.*, sec. 3.
114. *Apologeticum*, c. 48.

CHAPTER V

1. See Alan d'Isle, *Elucidatio in Cant. Cant.* (*Pat. Lat.*, CCX, 59); St. Bernard of Clairevaux, *De Purificatione Beatae Mariae*, Serm. V, sec. 11 (*Pat. Lat.*, CLXXXV, 84); Walter Hilton, *Scale of Perfection* (Westminster: Art and Book Co., 1908), Bk. I, Pt. III, c. ix.

2. For instance, Gregory the Great, *In Sept. Psalm. Poenit.*, Expositio IV, vs. 2 (*Pat. Lat.*, LXXIX, 583): "Semetipsum autem David cognoscebat, cum multitudinem miserationum quaerebat. . . ."

3. For mysticism in classical and earlier church literature, see *Studies in Mystical Religion* by Rufus M. Jones (London, 1919), c. iv–vi. *Mysticism* by Evelyn Underhill (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1912), contains an Appendix giving a brief account of leading mystics, and it also contains a bibliography of their works.

4. For this classification, see Dean Inge, *Christian Mysticism* (London, 1899), pp. 9–10. The illuminative process is usually subdivided into a varying number of steps. Sometimes the purgative stage is also subdivided, and then again it is treated as a whole as an obvious preliminary to the later stages. For instance, Walter Hilton in the *Scale of Perfection* merely subdivides the illuminative stage into two parts, while Richard of St. Victor divides it into six steps in

his *Benjamin Major*. St. Augustine divided the whole process of the ascent to God into seven steps (*De Quantitate Animae*, c. xxxiii. [*Pat. Lat.*, XXXII, 1075 ff.). St. Angela de Folgino makes eighteen steps in all, in *Visions*, Pt. I, sentence 1.

5. See Walter Hilton, *op. cit.*, Bk. II, Pt. II, c. xi: "A soul that would know spiritual things needs first to have the knowledge of itself. . . . . If then thou wilt find it, withdraw thy thoughts from all bodily things . . . . also from all thy five senses . . . . and think on the nature of a reasonable soul spiritually."

6. This idea of a state of negation is, as Dean Inge points out, oriental rather than Greek in its origin (*op. cit.*, p. 111).

7. See Inge, *op. cit.*, pp. 7, 155–57. Cf. Maeterlinck, *Ruysbroeck and the Mystics* (translated by Stoddart; London, 1894), pp. 15 ff. Ruysbroeck in *The Kingdom of the Lovers of God* (translated by Hyde; New York, 1919), p. 83, says: "We must fly in the air of the Rational faculty, that is, that each one may examine, look into and search himself in all his actions in accordance with the discernment of reason. . . . . Finally, like the eagle, we must soar beyond the air of the Rational faculty as far as the fire of the divine charity. . . . ."

8. *Supra*, pp. 66–67.

9. Translated by Bertram Keightley (New York and London: Putnam's, 1911), Intro., pp. 4–5.

10. Published in 1578. Steiner's quotation reads in part: "A saying . . . . which . . . . may well and appropriately be applied by us to the natural and supernatural knowing of the whole man; . . . . that he shall . . . . know his own nature, inner and outer, in spirit and in Nature; whence he cometh and whereof he is made, to what end he is ordained."

11. *Op. cit.*, pp. 7–8.

12. That he means the door into the chamber of perfect communion is indicated by *Serm. in Cant.* xxiii, which is entitled *De tribus modis contemplationibus circa Deum sub figura trium cellarum:* "Iam cubiculum veniamus. Quid et istud? Et id me praesumo scire quid sit? Minime mihi tantae rei arrogo experientiam nec glorior in praerogativa, quae soli servatur beatae sponsae, cautus iuxta illud Graecorum, scire me ipsum. . . . ."

13. C. xxxvi (*Pat. Lat.*, CLXXXIV, 544–45). St. Bernard also discusses self-knowledge in his *De Consideratione*, Bk. II, c. iv ff. (*Pat. Lat.*, CLXXXII, 746 ff.).

14. *Benjamin Minor*, Pt. I, c. lxvii ff. (*Pat. Lat.*, CXCVI, 48).

15. *Ibid.*, c. lxxi.

16. *Ibid.*, c. lxxiv.

17. *Ibid.*, c. lxxv.

18. *Ibid.*, c. lxxviii.

19. Canto XXXI.

20. See Pepwell, *The Cell of Self-Knowledge* (rev.; with an Introduction by Edmund C. Gardner; New York and London, 1910), Intro., p. xiii.

21. Page 169 (New York and London, 1913). Richard appears in the *Paradiso*, canto X.

22. See *St. Catherine of Siena* by E. C. Gardner (New York and London, 1907), p. 10.

23. *Letters of St. Catherine of Siena* by Vida Scudder (New York and London, 1906), p. 47.

24. *Dialogo* (*Libro della divina dottrina, volgarmente detto Dialogo della divina provvidenza*), c. lxv. Cf. c. lxxii and c. clxvi.

25. *Dialogo*, c. lxxiv.

26. *Ibid.*, c. cli. William Flete, an Augustinian friar of Lecceto, tells of her speaking of self-knowledge as the foundation-stone of her life. See Gardner, *St. Catherine of Siena*, p. 17.

27. *Instructions*, c. lvii.

28. Bk. I, Pt. III, c. i.

29. Pepwell, *op. cit.*, Treatise VI, p. 98.

30. See St. Bernard of Clairevaux, *De Duodecim Gradibus*, Pt. II, c. x, sec. 28 (*Pat. Lat.*, CLXXXII, 957); Peter Abelard, *Ethica seu Liber Dictus Scito Te Ipsum* (*Pat. Lat.*, CLXXVIII, 634 ff.); *et passim.*

31. See Thomas à Kempis, *Imitatio Christi*, Bk. I, c. ii: "Qui bene se ipsum cognoscit, sibi ipsi vilescit. . . . . Haec est altissima et utilissima lectio, sui ipsius vera cognitio et despicio." Also St. Bernard of Clairevaux, *Serm. in Cant.* xxxvi, 5 (*Pat. Lat.*, CLXXXIII, 969–70): "Volo proinde animam primo omnium scire se ipsam . . . . talis scientia non inflat, sed humiliat. . . . . Nam quomodo non vere humiliabitur in hac vera cognitione sui, cum se perceperit oneratam peccatis . . . ."; Heinrich Suso, *Discours Spirituels I*, "De la Vérité de notre Néant et de L'Humilité du Coeur," with subtitle "Combiens est précieuse connaissance de nous-mêmes" (translated into French by M. E. Cartier [Paris, 1852]); Johann Tauler, *Institutions*, c. vi.

32. See St. Bernard, *De Interiore Domo*, c. xxxvi (*Pat. Lat.*, CLXXXIV, 544): "Nulla scientia melior est illa qua cognoscit homo se ipsum . . . . agnoscere se debet homo ad quae bona sit naturaliter promptior vel at quae mala proclivior . . . . quibus vitiis valeat facilius corrumpi, quibus culpis subjaceat vel quibus meritis emineat."

33. Hugo of St. Victor, *Eruditionis Didascalicae*, Bk. I, c. ii (*Pat. Lat.*, CLXXVI, 741): "Immortalis quippe animus sapientia illustratus respicit principium suum, et quam sit indecorum agnoscit ut extra se quidquam quaerat: cui quod ipse est satis esse poterat. Scriptum legetur in tripode Apollinis *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν*, id est 'Nosce teipsum,' quia nimirum homo si non originis suae immemor esset, omne quod mutabilitati obnoxium est, quam sit nihil agnosceret"; Michel Psellus, *In Cant. Cant.* i. 7 (*Pat. Graec.*, CXXII, 551): "*γνῶθι σεαυτὸν τὶς πέφυκας*

τὸ πρὶν οὐδ' ὅλως οὖσα, καὶ πῶς εἰκὼν τετίμησαι τυγχάνειν τοῦ Δεσπότου. Cf. *De Omnifaria Doctrina*, sec. 31, *ibid.*, p. 70; Gregory the Great *Super Cant. Cant.* i. 7 (*Pat. Lat.*, LXXIX, 490); Walafridus Strabus *Cant. Cant.* i. 7 (*Pat. Lat.*, CXIII, 1132); Walter Hilton, *op. cit.*, Bk. I, Pt. III, c. i.

34. See, for example, Walter Hilton (?), *The Cloud of Unknowing*, c. xiii.

35. *Letters of St. Catherine of Siena* by Vida Scudder, p. 302.

36. St. Catherine of Siena, *Dialogo*, c. cxliii, clx.

37. Peter Blois, *De XII Utilitatibus Tribulationis* (*Pat. Lat.*, CCVII, 997); Richard Rolle, *The Fire of Love*, c. xxvii; Heinrich Suso, *Book of Eternal Wisdom*, Pt. I, c. xiii.

38. See Alan d'Isle, *Summa de Arte Praedicatoria*, c. iii (*Pat. Lat.*, CCX, 118 [57]): ". . . . in libro scientiae legis 'Nosce te ipsum'. . . . . O homo, vide te in triplici speculo. . . . . In speculo Scripturae legis statum tuum, in speculo Creaturae videbis te miserum, in speculo tuae naturae considerabis te reum. . . . ."

39. See Angela de Folgino, *Instructions*, c. lvii.

40. *Dialogo*, c. x. Cf. Walter Hilton, *The Scale of Perfection*, Bk. II, Pt. II, c. xi, p. 228: "The soul is but a mirror in which thou shouldst see God spiritually."

41. *Benjamin Minor*, Pt. I, c. lxxii (*Pat. Lat.*, CXCVI, 51): "Tergat ergo speculum suum, mundet spiritum suum, quisquis sitit videre Deum suum." John Tauler, in his sermon for the third Sunday in Advent, tells us to look at the lives of the saints and behold ourselves in that mirror (Tauler, *Life and Sermons* [translated by Winkworth; London, 1857], p. 194).

42. *Dialogo*, c. x.

43. *Predigten*, No. 56, in *Deutsche Mystiker des Vierzehnten Jahrhunderts* (ed. Pfeiffer; Leipzig, 1857), II, 180–81. The foregoing translation is found in Rudolf Steiner's *Mystics of the Renaissance*, pp. 74–75. For a further discussion of Eckhart's treatment of the theme of self-knowledge, see Lasson, *Meister Eckhart* (Berlin, 1868), p. 81.

44. One hundred and fifty-one of these tales were collected and printed in A.D. 1472. Another edition, the *Vulgate*, followed within two or three years, including 181 stories. The best critical edition is by Oesterley.

45. *Op. cit.*, No. 30.

46. Juvenal x. 39 ff.

47. Propertius iv. 1. 32.

48. Suetonius *Caesar* 50.

49. Tertullian *Apol.* 33.

50. No mention is made of this tale in the article on *Classical Elements in the Gesta Romanorum* by Ella Bourne in "Vassar Mediaeval Studies" (Yale University Press, 1923). Tale No. 139 is also somewhat relevant to our discussion, although it contains no allusion to the maxim.

51. See *supra*, p. 57. Keller's edition (Stuttgart und Tübingen, 1842) reads: ". . . . dicebat: gnoto seauton, id est, *nosce te ipsum*."

52. Bk. VII (ed. Morley; London, 1889), p. 369.

53. C. xcvii, vss. 18373 ff. (translated by Ellis; London, 1900). The French version (ed. Meon [Paris, 1814], III, 159) reads:

"Car Fraus-Voloirs est si poissans,
S'il est de soi bien cognoissans,
Qu'il se puet tous jors garentir,
S'il puet dedens son cuer sentir
Que Pechiés vueille estre ses mestres,
Comment qu'il aut des cors celestres."
—Vss. 17774 ff.

54. *Ibid.*, c. xcviii, vss. 18595 ff.

55. *Op. cit.*, vss. 139 ff.

56. *Ibid.*, vss. 211 ff.

57. *C.T.*, Group I, sec. 29 (*The Works of Chaucer* [ed. Skeat; Oxford, 1894]).

58. *C.T.*, Group D, vss. 1201–2.

59. Translated by John Payne (London, 1881).

60. Vss. 31–32. Cf. vss. 107 ff. For the mirror figure, see also John Lydgate's *Poem against Self-Love* with its refrain: "Look in thy merour and deeme noon othir wihte."

61. No. 3, vss. 25–27.

62. No. 66, entitled *Aller Länder Kunde*, vss. 120 ff.

63. *The Ship of Fools* (translated by Alexander Barclay; ed. Jamieson [Edinburgh and London, 1874], II, 27).

CHAPTER VI

1. Bk. I, c. vi. (ed. Sayle [London, 1904], I, 159).

2. *El Discreto*, "El Buen Entendedor" (in *Tratados* [ed. Reyes; Madrid, 1918]), p. 102.

3. *Sermons* (Philadelphia, 1845), I, 258. No. 16, "Against Long Extemporary Prayers."

4. *The Mischiefs of Self-Ignorance and the Benefits of Self-Acquaintance* (printed by R. White for F. Tyton, London, 1662), p. 55.

5. For instance see Rabelais, *Pantagruel*, Bk. IV, c. xlix: "En Delphes davant la face du temple d'Apollo, fut trouvée ceste sentence divinement escrite: Γνῶθι Σεαυτόν."

6. *Religio Medici*, Pt. I, sec. 13.

7. *The Complete Poems of Sir John Davies* (ed. Grosart; London, 1876), I, 19. For a discussion of this poem and its sources, see Sneath, *Philosophy in Poetry* (New York, 1903); and Mabel Dodge Holmes, *The Poet as Philosopher* (University of Pennsylvania dissertation, Philadelphia, 1921). Grosart's Introduction has been superseded by more recent works.

8. *De la Connaissance de Soi-Même*, Pt. I, c. vii (in *Oeuvres Philosophiques et Morales* [ed. Jourdain; Paris, 1845]).

9. *Adagio*, under *Modestia, Modusque*. Erasmus cites γνῶθι σεαυτὸν twice among other maxims in his letter to William Blount, Lord Mountjoy, No. 126, (ed. Allen, I 291). Robert Burton also includes it in a list of maxims in *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Pt. II, sec. 3, memb. 7. It is said that when Erasmus' guardians wished him to enter a monastery at the age of seventeen, he replied: "I neither know what the world is, what a monastery is, nor what I am myself. I think it, therefore, advisable to continue a few years more in the schools, that I may become better acquainted with myself" (Charles Bucke, *The Book of Human Character* [London, 1837], I, 1).

10. *De Augmentis*, Bk. VIII, c. ii, sec. 34 (in ed. Montagu [London, 1827], IX, 47).

11. P. 3.

12. Cf. Baltasar Gracián, *Oráculo Manual*, maxim LXXXIX (*Tratados* [ed. Reyes], p. 215): "Comprehension de sí. En el ingenio, en dictámenes, en afectos . . . . conoce las fuerzas de su cordura y sutileza para el emprender; tantee irascible para el empeñarse. . . . ."

13. Bk. III, c. iii.

14. *Essais de Montaigne* (Paris: Libraire Hachette & Co., 1872), Bk. II, c. vi, p. 234.

15. Ed. Grosart, I, 116.

16. The second stanza of the poem reads:

> "Thouhe the pecok have wengys brihte and sheene,
> Grauntyd be nature to his gret avayl,
> With gold and azour and emeroudis grene,
> And Argus eyen portrayed in his tayl;
> Berthe up his fethrys displayed like a sayl,
> Toward his feet whan he cast down his sighte,
> T'abate his pryde ther is no bet counsaylle:—
> Look in thy merour and deeme noon othir wihte."
> —*Early English Poetry* (ed. Percy Society; London, 1840), II, 156

17. *Emblemata Moralia* (Rotterdam, 1625), No. 1.

18. *Les Oeuvres de Voiture* (ed. Roux; Paris, 1856), Lettre I, p. 82.

19. Vss. 145 ff.

20. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, VII, 510 ff., where Milton follows Ovid's account of the creation of man (*Met.* i. 76 ff.) and describes him further as

> "Self-knowing, and from thence
> Magnanimous to correspond with Heaven,
> But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
> Descends. . . . ."

21. Sperone Speroni, *Opere* (Venezia, 1740), II, 516–19. Cf. Speroni's letter

to Sig. Giacomo Critonio Scozese a Mantova (No. 414, *Op.*, V, 319): "Porrà poi fine al ragionamento l'adulatore con quella nobil parola, *nosce teipsum:* alla quale perciocchè uom crede comunemente che sia precetto dato da Deo all' umanità, non par ragione, che voi nè altri di nostra specie abbia ragione di contradira."

22. *Discorso Sopra le Sentenze Ne quid nimis e Nosce te ipsum,* in *Op.*, II, 514.

23. This is probably what Antonio de Guevara has in mind in his *Marcus Aurelius, or Dial of Princes,* Bk. I, c. xxxv, when he adds to Thales' reputed statement that the most difficult thing is to know one's self, "porque no auria contienda en el mundo si el hombre se conociesse a sì mismo."

24. Bk. III, c. iii.

25. B. ed. Wright (Cambridge University Press, 1904), p. 111. He says further, "This thing should be both simile to the commonwealthe and most profitable for everyone . . . . and specially to turn our attention again to shooting, where wise archers have always theyr instrumentes fit for theyr strength."

26. *Essais,* Bk. I, c. iii.

27. *De Augmentis,* Bk. VIII, sec. 34 (ed. Montagu, p. 48). Cf. Michel de L'Hospital, *Ep. ad Vidum Fabrum* (*Carmina* [Amsterdam, 1732], Bk. IV, p. 208 ff.), poem with title "De Amore & Ignoratione Sui," closing verses:

"Quid possis aut non possis, cui fecerit aptum
Te natura minusve rei, cui longior usus:
Sic pelles externa regesque domestica victor,
Nec fallent alii, nec tu te denique falles."

28. Bk. II (ed. Paris, 1535), p. 43.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

30. "Hominem te esse cogita" forms the title of an emblem by Johannes de Boria (*Emblemata moralia* [Berolini, 1697], No. 100), illustrated with a picture of a skull. The verse reads:

"Quamquam victor ovas, mortalem te esse memento:
Destrue, vince orbem; denique talis eris."

The prose commentary refers to the story told of Philip of Macedon, who, after the battle of Chaeronea, insisted that a slave shout to him early each morning that he was human (Aelian, *Var. Hist.*, VIII, 15).

31. Pt. I, c. vii.

32. Ed. Grosart, I, 22.

33. *Pensées,* sec. II, No. 139.

34. Pt. I, c. i–ii.

35. Pt. I, c. vii. Cf. Michel de L'Hospital, *Ep. ad Vidum Fabrum,* Bk. IV, p. 207, and the poem of Mazzeo di Ricco of Messina, translated by Dante Gabriel Rosetti, entitled *Self-Seeing.*

36. *Carmina Lyrica* (ed. Muller), Bk. I, No. 9.

37. Christian Wernicke's *Epigramme* (ed. Pechel; Berlin, 1909), Bk. VIII, No. 64, p. 441.

38. *Sinngedichte*, No. 234 (in *Deutsche Dichter des 17. Jahrh.* [Leipzig, 1870], III, 73). Cf. poem by Andreas Tscherning entitled "Lerne dich selbst kennen." He says that we see others' faults with the eye of a lynx but are like moles when it comes to our own.

39. *Sinngedichte*, No. 474, p. 137. See *supra*, p. 60. Cf. also Michel de L'Hospital, *Ep. ad Vidum Fabrum*, Bk. IV, p. 213.

40. Bk. III, c. xxv.

41. See introduction to this chapter in *Oeuvres de Rabelais* (ed. Variorum, Paris, 1823), IV, 486–87.

42. There is a suggestion of the Neo-Platonist use of self-knowledge as synonymous with self-consciousness in Montaigne's *Essais*, Bk. II, c. xii, p. 353: "Or il est vraysemblable que si l'ame sçavoit quelque chose, elle se sçauroit premierement elle meme; et si elle sçavoit quelque chose hors d'elle, ce seroit son corps et son estuy, avant toute aultre chose."

43. *The Governour*, Bk. III, c. iii. Cf. Thomas Traherne, *Centuries of Meditation* (ed. Dobell; London, 1908), Cent. I, No. 19, p. 13: "You never know yourself till you know more than your body. The image of God was not seated in the features of your face, but in the lineaments of your soul."

44. *Epigrammatum*, "To Henry, Prince of Wales," Bk. I, No. 79 (ed. London, 1633, p. 141). John Owen has another epigram entitled "Nosce te ipsum":

> "Qualia sit, talem se nemo intelligit: atqui
> Se meminit puerum vir, iuvenemque senex."
>
> —"To Maria Neville," Bk. III, No. 154, p. 72

45. Ed. Grosart, I, 24.

46. P. 4.

47. A discussion of the union of soul and body, containing criticisms of Leibniz' theory, seems to have formed a considerable portion of a treatise entitled *Connaissance de Soy-même*, discussed by Leibniz, *Philosophische Abhandlungen, 1684–1703*, c. viii (ed. Gerhardt [Berlin, 1887], IV, 572, 590 ff.). Leibniz held that there is no real interaction between the monads of the body and the monads of the soul, but only an apparent one.

48. Bk. IV, c. i (ed. Montagu, VIII, 204).

49. C. i and lxii. See also, c. lv–lvi (*Bib. Autores Españoles*, LXV, 332 ff.).

50. *Religio Medici*, Pt. I, sec. 13.

51. "Second Anniversary," vss. 261 ff. (ed. Chambers [New York and London, 1926], II, 136). Contrast with this, Manzoli, *Zodiacus Vitae*, Bk. VII, pp. 535 ff.:

> "Quid melius quam se cognoscere? Corpora quid sint
> Norunt vel pueri: pulvis de pulvere: verum
> Difficile est naturam animi cognoscere ad unguem."

52. This title occurs in an edition by Philaretus (Amsterdam, 1709). The maxim is omitted from the title of the edition by Land (Hagae, 1893).

53. Ed. Land, III, 7.

54. Tract I, c. ii, sec. 2.

55. Note emblem by Engelgrave entitled "Tu quis es"? (*Lux Evangelicum* [Antwerp, 1648], No. 4), with quotation from Hor. *Sat.* i. 8. 1, *olim truncus eram*, illustrated by a picture of a man chiseling a statue. Four essays on self-knowledge follow, with γνῶθι σεαυτὸν quoted in the introduction to the set.

56. Bk. II, c. i, sec. 1 (translated by John Allen [Pres. Board of Pub. Philadelphia, 18—], I, 221 f.). For Luther's teaching on the subject of self-knowledge, see *Ein Sermon von der Betrachtung des heiligen Leid-Christi, am Charfreytage*, Pt. II, sec. 8 (*Sämmt. Schriften* [ed. Walch; Halle, 1740–53], XI, 790); *Ein anderer Sermon am Ersten Sonntage nach Ostern*, secs. 13, 17–18 (*ibid.*, pp. 1009–13); Drittes Hauptstück, *vom Vater Unser* 1, "Erste Bitte," sec. 60 (X, 1941).

57. Cf. Pascal, *Pensées*, sec. VII, No. 430: "Ne sachent de nous-mêmes qui nous sommes, nous ne pouvons l'apprendre que de Dieu." Cf. also Johannes de Boria, *Emblemata moralia*, No. 60), entitled "Ne te quaesiveris extra," and illustrated by a picture of a snail. The verses read:

"Proximus ipse tibi, ne te quaesiveris extra,
Te nosce, ut possis discere nosse Deum."

58. Speroni argues that our certainty of immortality comes by revelation of God, and that we cannot *know* it in the ordinary sense of the word ("Discorso sopra le Sentenze, etc.," *Op.*, II, 519 f.) Locke's "Second Reply to the Bishop of Worcester" is interesting in this connection. It seems that the bishop has taken exception to Locke's "way of Certainty" by ideas, because he said that by it he could not demonstrate that the soul is immortal, and that would mean failure in some of the first foundations of real self-knowledge. Locke asks in reply if the bishop's "way by reason" is not a strange way of certainty, if it also "fails us in some of the first foundations of the real knowledge of ourselves" (*The Works of John Locke* [London, 1823], IV, 459).

59. Note especially his assertion that ignorance of self inevitably entails beholding one's miserable self for all eternity (Pt. I, c. viii). With this, compare Sir Thomas Browne, *Christian Morals*, Pt. I, sec. 22: "Although our transgressions shall be tryed at the last bar, the process need not be long; for the Judge of all knoweth all, and every man will nakedly know himself."

60. There is a good summary of the whole matter on page 5. For the use of the phrase "knowing one's self" for conversion, see poem by Fray Luis de Leon entitled "Del Conocimiento de sì Mismo" (*Bib. Aut. Esp. Escritores del Siglo XVI*, II, 15–16), in which he tells of falling away from God after his early baptism, and of how he came to see his sin and turn again to God, who heard his prayer of penitence. See also Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress*, Pt. I (ed. Offor [London, 1862],

III, 160) where Hopeful and Christian are talking of fear, and of how convictions which tend to put them in fear are good, although the ignorant stifle those fears; and Hopeful says: "I know something of this myself; for before I knew myself, it was so with me."

61. See Martin Hume, *Spanish Influence on English Literature* (London, 1905), p. 217.

62. For the importance which he attaches to self-knowledge, see Preface to *Die drei Principien göttlichen Wesens.*

63. Some of his short poems show his mystical doctrines succinctly—for example:

GOTT SCHAUET MAN AN SICH

"Wie ist mein Gott gestalt't ? Geh' schau' dich selber an.
Wer sich in Gott beschauet, schaut Gott wahrhaftig an."
—*Sämtliche Werke* (ed. Ellinger [Berlin, 1924]), Bk. II, No. 157

GOTT IST IN MIR UND ICH IN IHM

"Gott ist in mir das Feu'r, und ich in ihm der Schein:
Sind wir einander nicht ganz inniglich gemein?"
—*Ibid.*, Bk. I, No. 11

DER SEELE, IST GOTTES BILD

"Das Bildniss Gottes ist der Seelen eingeprägt;
Wohl dem der solche Münz' in reiner Leinwand trägt."
—*Ibid.*, Bk. III, No. 76

64. See St. Teresa, *Castillo Interior o Las Moradas*, Bk. I, c. ii; Fray Luis de Granada, *Memorial de la Vida Cristiana*, Bk. VI, c. vii, which has the title "Del Conocimiento de sí Mismo" (*Aut. Esp.*, VIII, 371 ff.); also *ibid.*, Bk. VII, c. vi, p. 391 ff.; and *Adiciones al Memorial de la Vida Cristiana* (*Aut. Esp.*, I, 450 ff.). E. Allison Peers, in *Spanish Mysticism* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1925), p. 42, says: "The Spanish Mystic's primary care is to know himself, and this to him is an inseparable part of his great ideal—to know and to be one with God."

65. *Epistolario Espiritual*, Bk. IV, Ep. I (*Bib. Aut. Esp.*, XIII, 429).

66. The poem occurs in Part II of his *Leon Prodigioso*, an allegorical romance. Part II attempts to depict human life from the Creation to the Judgment (ed. Seville [1732], II, 167).

67. Jacob Boehme says in the Preface to *Die drei Principien göttlichen Wesens* that if we do not learn to know ourselves, we are as heifers looking at a new door to their stalls.

68. Torquato Tasso, *I Dialoghi* (Firenze, 1859), III, 484.

69. Ed. Grosart, I, 26.

70. C. lxii.

71. Florentius Schoonoven, *Emblemata* (Goudae, 1648), No. I, p. 1.

72. See Montaigne, *Essais*, Bk. III, c. xiii: "L' advertissement à chacun 'De se cognoistre' doibt estre d'un important effet, puisque ce Dieu de science et de lumière le feit planter au front de son temple comme comprenant tout ce qu'il avoit à nous conseiller." Also see Friedrich von Logau's poem entitled "Die höchste Weissheit":

"Gott und sich im Grunde kennen
Ist die höchste Witz zu nennen;
Vielen is viel Witz gegeben,
Diese selten noch daneben."
—Bk. II, sec. 1, No. 79 (ed. Eitner [Tübingen, 1872])

And Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici*, Pt. I, sec. 13: "His ⟨God's⟩ greatest knowledge is in comprehending that he made not, that is, himself. And this is also the greatest knowledge in man."

73. See Juan Luis Vives, *Ad Sapientiam*, DC.: "Hic est cursus absolutae sapientiae cuius primus gradus est *nosse se*."

74. See Vida, *De Dignitate Reipublicae*, Bk. II (London, 1732), Vol. II, Pt. IV, p. 198; Montaigne, *Essais*, Bk. III, c. ix: "Nous allons en avant à vau l'eau mais de rebrousser vers nous nostre course c'est un movement pemble: la mer se brouille et s'empesche ainsi, quand elle est repulsee à soy . . . . c'estoit un commandment paradoxe, que nous faisoit anciennement ce Dieu à Delphos . . . ." ; cf. *ibid.*, Bk. II, c. i, 10.

75. The essays of Montaigne might fittingly be entitled "Studies in Self-Knowledge." A. R. Waller in his Introduction to the essays ("Everyman's Library" ed., p. ix) says that we have "the spectacle of one, who, in the search after self-knowledge, freely placed himself upon the operating table, and caring as little for the exposure of his own weakness as for the revelation of those things upon which he prided himself, submitted himself to a vivisection which enables us to know him more intimately than we know any other writer."

76. Bk. III, c. xiii, pp. 302–3.

77. Bk. II, c. xii, p. 311.

78. See Ronsard, "Discours, Institution pour L'Adolescence du Roi":

"Le vray commencement pour en vertus accroistre
C'est (disoit Apollon) soy-mesme se cognoistre."
—*Oeuvres* (ed. Marty-Laveaux [Paris, 1891]), V, 349

Also Speroni, *Trattatelli di Vario Argomento*, "Della Vertu" (*Op.*, V, 394): "Questo modo d'imparar vertù non è cosa nova, ma è bene antica; ed è in comun proverbio esser cosa dataci da Dio . . . . *nosce te ipsum*."

79. Bk. III, c. iii.

80. Edward Hyde in his *Survey of Hobbes' Leviathan* (Oxford, 1676), pp. 11–15, says that Hobbes lays a wrong foundation for his book by assuming that we can know others by knowing ourselves. "*Nosce te ipsum*," he says, "in the

sense of Solon who prescribed it, was a sober truth, but was never intended as an expedient to discover the similitude of the thoughts of other men by what he found in himself, but as the best means to suppress and destroy that pride and self-conceit which might tempt him to undervalue other men, and to plant that modesty and humility in himself, as would preserve him from such presumption" (p. 15).

81. An interesting treatment of the knowledge of man as a corollary to knowledge of self occurs in one of Andrea Alciati's emblems, entitled "Submovendam Ignorantiam" (No. 188). It is illustrated with a picture of a sphinx which has a woman's face, wings, and lion's feet, and the concluding verses of the poem are as follows:

> "At quibus est notum quid Delphica littera possit,
> Praecipitis monstri guttera dira secant.
> Namq: vir ipse bipesq: tripesq: & quadrupes idem est
> Primaq: Prudentis laura, nosse virum."

Some such picture as this must have been in the mind of Albertinus when he said in his *Lucifer's Königreich und Seelen gejaidt oder Narrenhatz* (*Deutsch. Nat. Lit.* [Berlin and Stuttgart, 1884], XXVI, 26–29), that men of old represented ignorance of self by a sphinx, which they pictured as a beautiful woman because ignorance of self dazzles a man and makes him fall precipitously just as a beautiful woman does. It has feathers like the wings of Icarus, which let him fall into the sea, and it has the feet of a lion to indicate that ignorance of self is accompanied by the pride which "goes before a fall." Albertinus wrote an essay on *Nosce te ipsum*, which has not been available for this study.

82. Bk. II, c. iv, sec. 5. Cf. *De Officio Hominis et Civis*, Bk. I, c. v, sec. 4.

83. Pt. II, c. x.

84. Cf. William Browne, *Britannia's Pastorals*, Bk. II, Song 3, vss. 439–40.

> "You search'd yourselves if all within were faire,
> And did not learn of others what you were."

85. *Ragguali Di Parnaso*, Cent. I, Rag. I.

86. *Supra*, p. 68.

87. *Supra*, p. 216, n. 16.

88. In the 1614 edition.

89. No. 10.

90. *Quaestiones Symbolicae* (Bononiae, 1574), Bk. II, No. 59.

91. *Emblemata Ethica-Politica* (Antwerp, 1661), No. 109.

92. Cf. Arnold Houbraken, *Zinnebeelden* (Amsterdam, 1767), No. 6, p. 21. This is entitled "Look into Yourself from Within" and is accompanied by a poem by Mme. Gezinne Birt, in which the reader is admonished to turn away from this mirror to the mirror of the heavenly word, if he wishes to see his real self revealed.

93. *Lux Evangelica* (Antwerp, 1648), No. 51, p. 455.

94. *Viridarium Hieroglyphico-morale* (Frankfurt, 1619), No. 30.

95. *Iconologia* (Venezia, 1669), Bk. II, pp. 508–9.

96. *N.H.* ix. 41 (25); xxxii. 1.

97. Cf. also mirror on wall in Albert Flamen's *Devises et Emblems D'Amour* (Paris, 1672), No. 13, p. 50; and Basilisk looking in a mirror in Claas Bruin's *Zinnebeelden* (Amsterdam, 1722), p. 20. The world is pictured as a distorting mirror which makes a man look larger than his natural size in one of Francis Quarles' emblems (*Emblems*, Bk. II, No. 6). In a widely changed "modernized" version by an unknown author (London, 1766) the emblem is entitled "The Recompence of Vanity," and the poem seems to show the influence of Lydgate's *Steele Glas*, with its distinction between true and false mirrors. It begins with the words:

"The world's a mirror which deceives
And falsely objects represents";

and the "Moral" closes with the verse,

"The useful'st knowledge is thyself to know."

98. Charron was revising the book (first published in 1601) at the time of his death (1603). This second edition was brought out the following year. The frontispiece is described by Stanhope in connection with his English translation (London, 1729).

99. Descartes, *Oeuvres* (Paris: Adam and Tannery, 1908), X, 515.

100. Pt. I, c. iv.

101. *Essais*, Bk. II, c. x, p. 252.

102. P. 105 (London, 1671). He also wrote a number of tracts on usury.

103. Sc. iii, near middle.

104. *Op.*, II, 346 f.

105. *De Augmentis*, Bk. VIII, c. ii, sec. 34 (ed. Montagu, IX, 47).

106. Cf. Sir Philip Sidney, *Apologie for Poetrie* (ed. Schuckburgh [Cambridge University Press, 1891]), p. 13: "*Architektonike* which stands (as I thinke) in the knowledge of a man's selfe, in the ethicke and politik consideration, with the end of well dooing and not of knowing onely."

107. *Seven Sermons before Edward VI* (London, 1869), Sermon V, p. 138. Latimer was a Catholic clergyman converted to Protestantism, and a very popular preacher, influential in the Reformation. He died at the stake in 1555. Most of his extant sermons were published after his death.

108. For instance, Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, vss. 170 ff.

109. Faerno was a minor poet of the sixteenth century. He wrote one hundred fables, most of them borrowed from Aesop and other ancient poets. This story is told by Aesop in Plutarch's *Banquet of the Seven Wise Men*, c. 4.

110. Cf. Baxter, *Mischiefs of Self-Ignorance*, p. 77: "Men are befooled by

prosperity and unacquainted with themselves till danger or calamity call them to the bar." See, also, *ibid.*, p. 447.

111. *The Complete Poems of Sir John Davies* (ed. Grosart), Memorial-Introduction, pp. xx ff.; Sneath, *Philosophy in Poetry*, pp. 23 ff.; Holmes, *The Poet as Philosopher*, pp. 8 ff. While Davies' personal experience undoubtedly influenced him in the writing of the poem, his biographers may sometimes overdraw the picture of his remorse and soul-struggle. That the poem won immediate favor is indicated by the story that when Davies was presented to King James, the king asked if he were *Nosce Teipsum*, and on the assurance that he was, the king embraced him and made him first sollicitor and later attorney-general in Ireland (Sneath, *op. cit.*, p. 29).

112. *Op. cit.* (ed. Grosart), p. 22.

113. *Bib. Deut. Dichter des 17. Jahrh.* (Leipzig, 1838), XIV, 220.

114. See Fray Luis de Granada, *Memorial de la Vida Cristiana*, Bk. VI, c. vii (*Obras*, Vol. II, *Bib. Aut. Esp.*, p. 450.); Charron, *De la Sagesse*, Intro.; Nicole, *De la Connaissance de Soi-Même*, Pt. II, c. v; Baxter, *Mischiefs of Self-Ignorance*, p. 2.

115. See *supra*, p. 237, n. 92; Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress*, Pt. I (ed. Offor, III, 153); South, *Posthumous Sermons*, No. 14, on "The Hope of the Hypocrite Delusive."

116. See Vida, *De Dignitate Reipublicae*, Bk. II (ed. 1732, Vol. II, Pt. IV, p. 153). He speaks of how men are benefitted by coming together and hearing the truths of religion, and says: "Denique admoniti sunt quod factu est difficillimum, ut se ipse quisque nosceret: cuius praecepti tanta est excellentia ut antiqui. . . . . Delphici dei oraculo ascripserint."

117. See Francisco Ortiz, *Epistolas Familiares* iii (*Bib. Aut. Esp.*, Vol. XIII, Pt. I, pp. 263 ff.). This epistle treats, as the chapter title tells us, of "Cuánto aprovecha el conocimiento de sî mismo para alcanzar el de Dios." See, also, Calvin, *Institution de la Religion Chrestiene*, Bk. I, c. i; Davies, *Nosce Teipsum*, Pt. II, quoted *supra*, p. 102; Pascal, Pensées, sec. vii, No. 548: "Nous ne nous connaissons nous-mêmes que par Jesus Christ"; and Nicole, *De la Connaissance de Soi Même*, Pt. II, c. iii: "Il n'y a que Dieu qui nous puisse donner une connaissance de nous-mêmes. . . . ."

118. Vol. III, Pt. I, p. 153 (ed. Offor).

119. *Mischiefs of Self-Ignorance*, p. 46.

120. Bk. XII, No. 27.

121. Translated by Elizur Wright (Boston, 1841).

122. *Op.*, II, 516.

123. *De la Connaissance de Soi-Même*, Pt. II, c. xiii–xiv.

CHAPTER VII

1. *Op. cit.* (La Haye, 1711), p. 12.

2. Bk. II, *Allégorie* V. *Oeuvres* (ed. Seguy [Paris, 1745], II, 239).

3. Eighth dialogue, "Oeuvres Complètes de Voltaire" (ed. Condorcet [Paris, 1880], XXX, 507). Voltaire, of course, does not think that mind or soul as first principles can be known. See *Dictionnaire Philosophique*, "Oeuvres" (Paris, 1826), XXIV, c. i, pp. 221, 239, 264–65, and elsewhere.

4. Ed. Sonnini (Paris, 1799–1808), XVIII–XXI.

5. *Or.* i. Scrittori D'Italia (G. B. Vico, *Opere* [Bari, 1914], I, 7).

6. *Della Diceosina o Sia Della Filosofia Del Giusto e Dell' Onesto*, Bk. I, c. vii, sec. 2.

7. *Or.* xiii.

8. *Or.* xii.

9. Pt. IV, c. i.

10. Pt. II (*Schriften*, ed. Roth [Berlin, 1821], II, 30 f.).

11. Sec. 1 (*Schriften*, I, 131 ff.).

12. Bk. III, vss. 363–65.

13. First series, No. 49. This fable is variously illustrated pictorially.

14. See Seneca *De Beneficiis* iv. 23.

15. See *Prin. Phil.*, Pt. III, sec. 2.

16. For example, Leibniz, *Theodicée*, Pt. I, sec. 194.

17. See for example, *Fragments or Minutes of Essays*, No. 42.

18. For a discussion of the sources of Pope's philosophy, see Leslie Stephen, *Alexander Pope* (ed. Morley; New York and London, 1901), esp. pp. 163 ff.; and *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1876), II, 349 ff.; also Mabel Dodge Holmes, *The Poet as Philosopher* (Philadelphia, 1921).

19. Epistle I, vss. 17–18.

20. *Ibid.*, vs. 71.

21. *Ibid.*, vs. 174.

22. *Ibid.*, vss. 189–90.

23. Epistle IV, vs. 396.

24. See *On the Freedom of Wit and Humor*, Pt. III, sec. 3; *Concerning Virtue and Merit*, Bk. II, Pt. I, sec. 1; *The Moralists*, Pt. I, sec. 3.

25. In Chalmers' *English Poets* (London, 1810), XV, 29.

26. *Ibid.*, XV, 169, col. 1 (near close of poem).

27. *Ibid.*, XV, 228.

28. *Ibid.*, XIV, 477.

29. Night VII, vss. 869 ff.

30. Night VI, vss. 677–79.

31. Night VIII, vss. 869 ff.

32. *Op. cit.*, Pt. II (*Complete Works* [ed. Doran; London, 1854], II, 111 f.).

33. *Works* (ed. Murphy; London, 1820), I, 307 ff. (translation on pp. 59 ff.). Also see editor's essay on his life and genius, pp. 61–62.

34. See Scaliger's epigram in *Poemata Omnia* (Berolini, 1864), p. 38, No. 39, entitled "In Lexicorum compilatores, inscriptum Lexico Arabico a se collecto, in Batavis":

"Si quem dura manet sententia iudicis olim,
Damnatum aerumnis suppliciis caput:
Hunc neque fabrili lassent ergastula massa,
Nec rigidas vexent fossa metalla manus.
Lexica contexat, nam caetera quid moror ? omnes
Poenarum facies hic labor unus habet."

35. As a matter of fact, he did start to write a commercial dictionary but soon abandoned the project.

36. Canto V, vs. 765.

37. Chalmers' *English Poets*, XVIII, 45 f.

38. *Ibid.*, XVII, 232, col. 1.

39. II Kings 8:7–15.

40. *Sermons of Mr. Yorick*, No. 4.

41. II Sam. 12:1–4.

42. Cf. Vauvenargues, *Réflexions et Maximes*, No. 106: "Nous découvrons en nous-mêmes ce que les autres cachent, et nous reconnoissons dans les autres ce que nous nous cachons nous-mêmes."

43. *Op. cit.* (London, 1761), p. 4.

44. *Op. cit.*, Treatise III, Pt. I, sec. 2. (ed. Robertson [London, 1900], I, 113).

45. *Ibid.*, sec. 3, pp. 127–28. Farther on (Pt. III, sec. 1) Shaftesbury says more than once that it is the province of philosophy to teach us ourselves. In the *Philosophical Regimen*, put together from his notebooks and published by Benjamin Rand in 1900, there is a chapter entitled "The Natural Self" which bears the subtitle Γνῶθι σεαυτόν. It is written in the style of Epictetus and contains many translations and paraphrases from the *Discourses*. The "natural self" is the soul, considered apart from the body—the self we need not fear to love—a part of the universal mind, governed by it, and governing with it.

46. *Op. cit.*, No. 399 ("Chalmers' British Essayists" [Boston, 1856], X, 71).

47. No. 24, June 9, 1750; and No. 28, June 23. There are some unimportant remarks on self-knowledge in No. 155 also.

48. Cf. epigram by John Owen, *supra*, p. 233, n. 44.

49. *Op. cit.*, II, 564.

50. See H. C. Shelley, *The Life and Letters of Edward Young* (London, 1914), p. 234.

51. *Op. cit.*, II, 420.

52. No. 244 (ed. New York, 1853), written February 28, 1751.

53. No. 309, written February 26, 1754. Cf. Charles Churchill, *Gotham*, Bk. III, pp. 54 ff. The young king of Gotham asks in his soliloquy:

"Have I explored my heart?
. . . . . .
Have I found out there
What I am fit to do, and what to bear?
. . . . . .
Have I familiar with my nature grown?
And am I fairly to myself made known?"

CHAPTER VIII

1. *The Persistent Problems of Philosophy*, by Mary W. Calkins (New York: Macmillan Co., 1919), Introduction, p. 9.

2. This statement excepts the materialistic system of Hobbes and the phenomenalism of Hume. For Hobbes's use of the maxim in his political works, see *supra*, pp. 91 and 105.

3. See Carriere, *Die Idee des Schönen*, Pt. I, c. i (*Gesammt. Werke* [Leipzig, 1886], I, 19): "Und alles Erkennen ist zuerst und zuletzt Selbsterkennen." Cf. Paul Elmer More, *Delphi in Greek Literature*, in *Shelburne Essays*, 2d Ser., p. 208: "In its ⟨the maxim's⟩ last form *Cogito, ergo sum* it may be called the parent of modern philosophy."

4. Schelling's system is an obvious exception to this, and so are the writings of the somewhat mystical Baader.

5. See *supra*, p. 64.

6. See Kuno Francke, *Social Forces in German Literature* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1896), c. viii, Pt. II, p. 318: "The German classic thinkers and poets . . . . while saying the last word and embodying the highest ideal of individualism, ushered in at the same time the strongest intellectual movement of the nineteenth century, by anticipating, at least in theory, the new collective ideal."

7. There is a single instance of the use of the maxim in the sense of knowing the phenomena of mind in the title of a series of ten volumes on psychological subjects, edited chiefly by Carl Phillip Moritz, and published in 1783. The title reads *Γνῶθι Σεαυτόν oder Magazin zur Erfahrungseelenkunde.* The ten volumes, some of them consisting in part of revisions of earlier numbers, contain articles by various writers on normal psychological behavior, on cases of abnormal psychology, etc.

8. Sec. 8.

9. *Sämtliche Werke* (Leipzig, 1850), XI, 405 ff.

10. *Op. cit.*, Sec. 10, p. 417.

11. *Op. cit.* (translated by William Wallace [Oxford, 1894]), p. 3.

12. *Op. cit.* (translated by E. S. Haldane [London, 1892]), I, 32.

13. *Ibid.*, I, 435.

14. *Op. cit.* (translated by Haldane), III, 7. Cf. *Neuere Philosophie*, Pt. III, E: "Bis hierher ist nun der Weltgeist gekommen . . . . die letzte Philosophie, die Totalität der Formen ist. Diese concrete Idee ist das Resultat der Bemühungen des Geistes durch fast zweitausend fünfhundert Jahre seiner ernsthaftesten Arbeit, sich selbst objectiv zu werden, sich zu kennen: Tantae molis erat se ipsam cognoscere mentem."

15. *Über die Natur der Philosophie als Wissenschaft*, in *Sämt. Werke* (Stuttgart und Augsburg, 1861), Abt. I, Band 9, p. 226.

16. *Sämt. Werke*, XI, 43.

17. *Sat.* i. 7.

18. In a footnote on this passage the editor (von Schaden) says that Baader is here giving the first principles of philosophy, and he continues: "Denn nur das γνῶθι σεαυτὸν in einem unendlich umfangreicheren Sinn, als es Socrates that, genommen—führt in das Centrale der Gott- und Welterkenntniss ein, da der Mensch, der Geist das alleinige Ziel der Teleologie ist:—der Teleologie, deren weder Naturwissenschaft, noch Theologie, noch Philosophie jemals entrathen können."

19. *Sämt. Werke*, VIII, 201–2.

20. As a matter of fact, the line of reasoning followed in the passages cited is largely typical. See Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, Ergänzungen zum Buch II, Kap. 20 (*Sämt. Werke* [ed. Frauenstadt; Leipzig, 1877] III, 293–94): "Aber sofern das Gehirn erkennt, wird es selbst nicht erkannt; sondern ist das Erkennende, das Subjekt aller Erkenntniss. . . . . Denn der ganze Process ist das Selbsterkenntniss des Willens. . . . ." Also Ergänz. zum Buch IV, Kap. 50, pp. 739–40: Bei mir hingegen kommt der Wille durch seine Objectivation . . . . zur Selbsterkenntniss, wodurch seine Aufhebung, Wendung, Erlösung, möglich wird." Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, Pt. VIII, sec. 2 (ed. Lasson [Leipzig, 1921], p. 514): "Die Wahrheit . . . . für den wissenden Geist in der Form des Wissens seiner selbst." Fries, *Handbuch der Psychischen Anthropologie*, Vol. I, c. iii, sec. 20. The section is entitled "Selbsterkenntniss und Bewusstsein."

21. *Sämt. Werke* (Leipzig, 1849), VII, 29. The idea that man differs from the animal creation and the world of natural phenomena generally by reason of his intellectual faculties was connected with the phraseology of self-knowledge in an effusive lyric poem of the seventeenth century by Antonio Enriquez Gomez, entitled "Al Conocimiento de sì Mismo."

22. *Op. cit.*, Bk. II, Pt. I, c. iii, sec. 14 (translated by J. W. Semple [ed. Calderwood; Edinburgh, 1871], p. 257).

23. *Ibid.*, Pt. II, secs. 21–22. Cf. Schleiermacher, *Ethik-Die Weisheit*, No. 17 (*Werke* [ed. Braun; Leipzig, 1913], II, 385): "In jeder nur die Fortschreitung

befördernd vermöge des Speculativen, weil die Selbsterkenntniss jedes Ganzen nur ein Werdendes, also die Synthesis immer aufgegeben ist."

24. *Op. cit.*, Bk. II, c. xix, sec. 3 (*Werke* [Leipzig, 1877], III, 235).

25. Cf. Hartmann, *Philosophie des Unbewussten* (Berlin, 1873), B, c. xi, sec. 16. p. 353: "Die Wahl des Berufes eine grosse Selbstkenntniss."

26. *Paränesen und Maximen*, B 14 (*Werke*, V, 440).

27. *Parerga und Paralipomena*, Vol. II, "Vereinzelte," c. xxvi, sec. 343 (*Werke*, VI, 629).

28. Written December 10, 1786 (*Werke*, XI, 101).

29. *Op. cit.* (Paris, 1830), c. i, p. 6.

30. *Op. cit.*, Pt. II, ent. 6 (ed. Paris. 1874, p. 164). Émile Boutroux says in his chapter on "Auguste Comte and the Religion of Humanity" (*Science and Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*, Pt. I, c. i, sec. 3), that Comte's conception of humanity as the Great Being does not satisfy—that humanity is ever changing, but there is a regulating principle dwelling at once within and above man which he calls God—a principle revealed by self-knowledge. "In humanity itself," he says, "are found the germs of a religion in which the object goes beyond humanity. In order that man should rest content with man, it would be necessary for him to unlearn the γνῶθι σεαυτὸν of ancient wisdom. He cannot go to the foundations of self without being made to recognize the strongest compulsion to enlarge the reality, the perfection and the value of humanity" (Translated by Nield [London, 1909], p. 79).

31. *Opere* (Milan, 1841), I, Pt. I, 471.

32. C. i, sec. 20 (ed. Milan, 1846, I, 41).

33. Pt. I, c. ii, sec. 1 (ed. Milan, 1836, p. 11).

34. Sec. 2, in *Opere* (Naples, 1862), IX, 6.

CHAPTER IX

1. Klopstock wrote an ode entitled "Kennet Euch Selbst" (*Werke* [ed. Hamel; Stuttgart and Berlin, 1884], III, 181). The contents of the poem, however, indicate that the title is colloquial, and means "Come to your senses." It is an ode of rejoicing over the first success of the French Revolution, in which the poet expresses astonishment at Germany's silence, and asks if it be due to apathy, or if it is as the calm before a summer storm. There is also a brief epigram by Hebbel entitled "Selbsterkenntniss," which reads:

> "Ob du dich selber erkennst? Du tust es sicher, sobald du
> Mehr Gebrechen an dir als an den Andern entdeckst."
>
> —*Werke* (ed. Von Scholz [Stuttgart, 1923], IV 187

2. Goethe may owe this line of thought to Fichte, consistent though it is with his own naturally objective point of view. See Fichte, *Ueber das Wesen des Gelehrten*, Vorlesung III, where he advises the student not to study himself to see if he has genius, but rather to forget himself in the pursuit of knowledge.

3. *Op. cit.*, sec. 3 (*Sämtliche Werke* [Stuttgart und Berlin, 1902], IV, 236–37).

4. Sec. 2, p. 224.

5. Sec. 13 (*Sämt. Werke*, XXXIX, 48 ff.)

6. *Schriften zur Literatur, Shakespeare und kein Ende*, sec. 1 (*Werke*, XXXVII, 37).

7. *Gespräche mit Goethe* von J. P. Eckermann, Friday, April 10, 1829.

8. Goethe says in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Pt. III, Bk. XIII (*Werke*, XXIV, 159), that our faults and virtues grow together; but while the virtues come forth into the light as we practice them consciously, our faults have only secret ramifications. Consequently we have to be surprised by our faults to see them, and they constantly bring us trouble and pain. Then he adds: "Hier liegt der schwerste Punkt der Selbsterkenntniss, der sie beinah unmöglich macht."

9. Translated by Oxenford (London, 1892), p. 402. Goethe studied drawing in his youth and again tried to gain some facility in it while in Rome in 1786.

10. *Sämt. Werke*, IV, 29.

11. *Zahme Xenien*, Bk. VII, vss. 19–24 (*Sämt. Werke*, IV, 100–101).

12. Act. II, sc. iii, vss. 1237 ff. (XII, 138). In contrast with this, however, see *Faust*, Pt. I, vss. 1194 ff.:

> "Ach, wenn in unsrer engen Zelle
> Die Lampe freundlich wieder brennt,
> Dann wird's in unsern Busen helle
> Im Herzen das sich selber kennt."

13. Bk. VII, c. ix (XVIII, 255–56). The knowledge of one's self as revealed by the observation of men in general is not always very flattering, as is indicated by the following epigram, entitled "Die Gesuchte Waare":

> "Welch ein heftig Gedränge nach diesem Laden! wie emsig
> Wägt man, empfängt man das Geld, reicht man die Waare dahin!
> Schnupftaback wird hier verkauft. Das heisst sich selber erkennen!
> Rieswurz holt sich das Volk, ohne Beordnung und Arzt."
>
> —GOETHE, *Werke* (Weimar, 1887), I, 311, No. 18

14. *Sämt. Werke* (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1902——), V, 132.

15. *Werke* (Leipzig und Wien, 1895), I, 158. The poem is one of the "Xenien" published jointly with Goethe in 1797.

16. Sec. 11 (*Sämt. Werke* [Stuttgart and Berlin, 1905], XI, 58).

17. Secs. 688–90 (*Werke* [Leipzig, 1832], XII, 239).

18. *Sämt. Novellen* (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1905), IV, 130 ff. This story was first published in 1856.

19. *Op. cit.*, p. 138.

20. *Gesammelte Werke* (Berlin, 1893), I, 445.

21. Pt. I, *Nouvelles Genevoises* (Paris, 1853), p. 6.

22. *Oeuvres Complètes* (Paris, 1876), VIII, 67.

CHAPTER X

1. William Richardson (1743–1814) was for many years professor of humanities in the University of Glasgow. He is the author of poems and plays, as well as of many critical works.

2. Charles Colton (1780?–1832), an eccentric Englishman of varied career—none too honorable during the last years of his life—was at one time curate of Tiverton, Prior's Quarter, and later, for about six years, vicar of Kew and Petersham in Surrey. He wrote several unimportant works. His *Lacon* (obviously from "laconic") has for an alternative title, "Many Things in Few Words Addressed to Those Who Think." It was reprinted several times.

3. Charles Bucke (1781–1846) was a dramatic and miscellaneous English writer. His works include *A Classical Grammar of the English Language, Amusements in Retirement, Philosophy of Nature,* etc.

4. Sir William Hamilton (1788–1856), learned Aristotelian scholar, and likewise versed in medicine and law. He was at length called to the chair of logic and metaphysics in the University of Edinburgh. His essay on *Oxford as It Might Be* is found in the Appendix to his *Discussions*—a collection of classroom lectures.

5. Pseudonym for David Hoffman, professor of law in the University of Maryland, 1817–1836. His *Thoughts on Men, Manners, and Things* was first published in 1837. He published a few other works, chiefly legal.

6. A Philadelphia lawyer, who published also a biography of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. *The Probe, or One Hundred and Two Essays on the Nature of Men and Things* (cop. 1846) has on the title-page Pope's verse

"The proper study of mankind is man."

7. The "Author of Zoe" was Lloyd Wharton Bickley (d. 1858). In *The Aristocrat* (Philadelphia: Key and Biddle, 1833), Vol. II, c. i, opening sentence, he says: "The precept 'Know Thyself' has been recognized as pithy and emphatic for a long succession of ages, and is still received and taught in all its pristine authority." Then he quotes Pope's famous line, and proceeds to discuss various motives for studying men.

8. James Henry was absorbingly interested in Virgil, and after giving up his medical practice, he collected manuscripts and rare editions of Virgil's works, and published valuable commentaries upon the *Aeneid.*

9. The poem entitled "Know Thyself" does not appear in the earlier editions.

10. One of these poems is by Francis Reynolds, pseudonym for Francis Reginald Statham, and is published in *Glaphyra and Other Poems* (London, 1870). It reads:

ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΤΤΟΝ

"To know thyself—how hard the task—
How sad to bend o'er Memory's scroll,
And from its records turn to ask,
What moved thee to this crime, O soul?

"Yet know thyself, and own the good
As much as thou dost hate the ill,
For only thus is understood
Which faults were weakness, which were will.

"Then shalt thou look with clearer eyes
Upon the mystery of sin,
And think, when doubts again arise,
'I erred without, but not within.' "

Another author, Thomas Nelson Haskell, has a poem entitled "Gnothi Seauton" which reads in part:

"Self-knowledge surely known
Doth a pure dignity impart,
And must its Maker own!

III

"Then let me 'Know myself,' I say,
That I may know my God;
His will in me I will obey
And trace where he hath trod;
For in his image was I made,
A trinity indeed, ..."

—*Domestic Poems* (Denver), cop. 1889, Vol. II, p. 167

11. Bk. X, 1697–98 (Cambridge ed., p. 568):

"Some word of weighty counsel for man's sake,
Some 'Know thyself' or 'Take the Golden Mean.' "

12. No. III (Cambridge ed., p. 239). The passage is plainly colloquial. It reads: "If I know myself,—and surely a man can hardly be supposed to have overpassed the limit of fourscore years without attaining to some proficiency in that most useful branch of learning (*e caelo descendit*, says the pagan poet),—I have no great smack of that weakness which would press upon the public attention any matter pertaining to my private affairs."

13. He was especially successful as a portrait and historical painter. His "One Hundred Fables, Original and Selected" were all given original apologues and illustrated with designs of his own making.

14. Translated by Henry Fuseli (Boston: Thomas and Andrews, 1790).

The last aphorism, No. 633, reads: "If you mean to know yourself, interline such of these aphorisms as affected you agreeably in reading and set a mark to such as left a sense of uneasiness with you; and then show your copy to whom you please."

15. Translated by H. D. Robinson (New York: George and A. J. Matsell, 1835).

16. *Menippea* (Dresden, 1866), p. 24.

17. *Past and Present*, Bk. IV, c. vii, in *The Works of Thomas Carlyle* (Centenary ed. [London, 1897–1901]), X, 292.

18. C. iii, sec. 135, reprinted from *The Cestus of Aglaia*, c. ii, sec. 22.

19. Cf. Tupper, "Self-Acquaintance:"

"Acquaint thee with thyself, O man! so shalt thou be humble."

And his "Humility":

"Where the meekness of self-knowledge veileth the front of self-respect,
There look for the man whom none can know but they will honor."

There is danger, however, of being vain of one's very self-knowledge, he says in his "Pride"—"proud of thy discoveries of pride."

20. *Op. cit.* (London, 1784), pp. 3 ff.

21. *The Book of Human Character* (London, 1837), Vol. I, c. xx, pp. 38 ff.

22. Published by the author (3d ed.), p. 65 (Philadelphia, cop. 1826).

23. Pt. I, c. vii, sec. 103, pp. 170–71 (Baltimore: Coale & Co., 1837).

24. *Poems and Essays* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1886), p. 523. The precept is taken to refer to the body, as well as to our moral situations, in a book entitled *Rural Philosophy or Reflections on Knowledge, Virtue, and Happiness*, by Ely Bates (London, 1803), Pt. I, sec. 2.

25. The word "self-knowledge," and some form of the phrase for knowing one's self, occurs rather frequently in nineteenth-century English poetry with a semi-colloquial force, closely akin to certain of the early connotations of the maxim. As a rule, "I know myself" in the colloquial sense means "I am aware of what I am doing, or can do; I am fully in possession of my faculties"—a force often given to it in the drama in all periods, although the negative colloquial phrase "I don't know myself" is more frequent. But in this period the phrase sometimes approaches more closely to the serious early force of the maxim, meaning "to be aware of one's power; to have a sense of personal dignity, of one's worth as a man"; and again, though less frequently, "to know one's limitations." As an instance of the first, Wordsworth in the *Prelude*, Bk. XI, vss. 236 ff., is speaking of the aspirations aroused by the French Revolution, and he says:

"How glorious! in self-knowledge and self-rule,
To look through all the frailties of the world,
And, with a resolute mastery shaking off

Infirmities of nature, time, and place,
Build social upon personal Liberty."

And Burns, in his "Tree of Liberty," says that the fruit of that tree

". . . . raises man aboon the brute,
It mak's him ken himsel', man."

So also Tennyson's *Princess*, Pt. III, vss. 210–11:

". . . . we move, my friend,
At no man's beck, but know ourself and thee,"

and Pt. V, vss. 408–9:

". . . . 'till she
Whose name is yoked with children's, know herself;
And knowledge in her own land make her free."

Cf. Shelley, *Revolt of Islam*, canto VIII, stanza 22; Browning, *Paracelsus*, Pt. I, p. 14 (Cambridge ed.); Clough, *Boetie of Tober-na-Vuolich*, Pt. VIII, vss. 10 ff.; and Emerson's "Uriel."

For the somewhat colloquial use of the phrase in the sense of knowing one's limitations, see Browning's "Bishop Blougram's Apology" (Cambridge ed., p. 353), where the bishop says in reply to the suggestion that he aim high—try to be a Shakspeare:

"Spare my self-knowledge—there's no fooling me!"

Cf. *Colombe's Birthday*, Act III (Cambridge ed. p. 241). Also Matthew Arnold's *Empedocles on Aetna:*

". . . . for those who know
Themselves, who wisely take
Their way through life, and bow
To what they cannot break. . . . ."

There is a suggestion of both ideas in Landor's *Pericles and Aspasia*, Ep. 79, where Anaxagoras says that if Pericles were a truly great man, he would know himself. Aspasia presently asks: "You think him then ambitious?" And Anaxagoras replies, "Ambitious! . . . . He might have been a philosopher, and he is content to be a ruler."

26. Act II, sc. ii (Student Cambridge ed. [1905], p. 645).

27. *Op. cit.*, stanza XLVII. For the self-revealing effect of an exhibition of Nature's power, cf. Goethe's *Faust*, Pt. I, vss. 3228 ff.

28. *Op. cit.*, Lecture II, secs. 21–22.

29. Ibid., sec. 30.

30. C. v (New York: Harper & Bros., 1871), p. 79.

31. C. xii, *The Complete Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (ed. Shedd, [New York: Harper & Bros., 1884——]), III, 353.

32. Sec. II, Essay XI, in *Complete Works*, II, 460.

33. *Complete Works*, IV, 358. Farther on, Coleridge says that Nature or

Zeus as the *νόμος ἐν νομιζομένοις* knows herself only, can only come to a knowledge of herself in man; and even in man, only as man is supernatural, above nature, noetic. But this knowledge man refuses to communicate: that is, the human understanding alone is at once self-conscious and conscious of nature (pp. 364–65).

34. *Op. cit.*, c. xii, p. 335.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 348.

36. Vss. 209–15 (ed. Locock [London: Methuen & Co., 1911], II, 130–31).

37. C. vii, sec. 3, in *The Works of Matthew Arnold* (London: Macmillan Co., 1903), VII, 197. Note also c. iii, sec. 2, pp. 89–90: "To find his own soul, his true and permanent self, became set up in man's view as his chief concern"; and farther on in the same section: "Self-examination, self-renouncement, and mildness were . . . . the three great means by which Jesus Christ renewed righteousness and religion."

38. *Works*, VI, 388. The essay first appeared in 1866.

39. *Op. cit.*, Introduction, in *Works*, VI, 2.

40. *Works*, VI, 367.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 389.

42. *The Works of James Russell Lowell* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin & Co., cop. 1864, etc.), I, 44.

43. Written July 6, 1831. Published in his *Journals for 1824–1832* (Boston and New York, 1909–14), II, 395.

44. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 303: "By and by, in consequence of his efforts at self-knowledge, his mind will revolve so far that increasing twilight will give place to the Sun, and God will appear as he is to his soul."

45. Vss. 142–43. For the thought that self-knowledge is essential to self-discipline, see Sir Arthur Helps' essay on "Self-Discipline" in his *Companions of My Solitude* (London, 1879), p. 222.

46. *The Artist's Book of Fables* (London, 1845), Fable 41.

47. P. 314 (New York, 1855). Cf. Judson, *The Probe*, p. 65.

48. First Flight, in *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays*, Vol. III (*Works*, XXVIII, 251).

49. Bk. II, c. vii (*Works*, I, 132).

50. *Op. cit.*, Bk. III, c. xi (*Works*, X, 196).

51. Stob *Flor.* 21. 5. Cf. Bucke, *Book of Human Character*, Vol. I, c. xx, where he says that most people respect the advice of the Menander fragment: "Away with that famed maxim *Know Thyself!*"

52. *Poemata* (Dresden, 1866), p. 153. The poem has no title. Cf. with this the inconsequential poem by Ebenezer Smith, Ayr, on "Self-Knowledge."

53. *Menippea*, p. 53.

54. *Poemata*, p. 117.

55. Vss. 558 ff. (ed. Locock, I, 232). William Matthews in *The Great Conversers* (*The Great Conversers and Other Essays* [Chicago, 1879]), pp. 32–33, says that we might apply these words to the conversation of Charles Lamb. Shelley's use of a friend to teach self-knowledge is obviously more subtle than that of ancient writers. Cf. *supra*, p. 68.

56. Essay on "Literary Clubs," *ibid.*, p. 48.

57. Lecture V, sec. 58.

58. See *supra*, p. 158.

59. *Op. cit.*, c. cliii (London, 1838, V, 207).

60. In *Mosses from an Old Manse*, Vol. I, in *Works* (Boston, 1884), III, 276.

61. *Op. cit.*, in *Works*, I, 81.

62. P. 1. William Thom, in the Preface to his *Rhymes and Recollections of a Hand-Loom Weaver*, says that he wants to reveal to one portion of the community a glimpse of what goes on in the other, and he adds: "'Man, Know Thyself' should be written on the right hand; on the left, 'Men, know each other.' It is a subject worthy of a wise head and a pithy pen."

63. P. 29. Cf. Coleridge, *Lectures on Shakespeare and Milton*, Lecture IX, sec. 2: "In the plays of Shakespeare every man sees himself, without knowing that he does so: as in some of the phenomena of nature, in the mist of the mountain, the traveller beholds his own figure, but the glory round the head distinguishes it from a mere vulgar copy" (ed. Ashe [London, 1883], p. 125).

64. *Prose Works* (ed. Forman [London, 1880]), III, 116.

65. Stanza VII.

66. C. vii.

67. C. xv (*Works*, IV, 248). See Wordsworth, "Character of the Happy Warrior," vss. 23–24, for temptation as an aid to self-knowledge:

> "More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
> As tempted more; . . . ."

68. See *supra*, p. 248, n. 21.

69. *Discussions on Philosophy, Literature and University Reform* (Edinburgh and London, 1852); Appendix III C, p. 696.

70. In the book entitled *Rural Philosophy*, by Ely Bates (see *supra*, p. 248, n. 24), Pt. I, sec. 2, the retirement of country life is advocated as an aid to reflection and repentance. The author also advises mingling with one's fellows, however, that the society of others may show us our strength and our weakness, for he regards both retirement and social life as essential to self-knowledge.

71. *Op. cit.*, vss. 359–64.

72. *Complete Poetical Works* (Boston, 1850), pp. 96–97. Tupper says also that we must know self to know God, in his poem entitled "Of Thinking" (p. 72):

> "The root of all wholesome thought is knowledge of thyself,
> For thus only canst thou learn the character of God toward thee."

73. *Poems and Prose Writings of Richard Henry Dana* (New York, 1850), I, 91.

74. Bk. II, c. vii.

75. First Flight, *Works*, XXVIII, 251.

76. C. viii (ed. London, 1874), pp. 169 ff.

77. P. 82 (New York, 1902).

78. P. 88. He insists again in this discourse that he is not advocating a purely classical education, but that he includes a knowledge of science in "the best which has been thought and said in the world." Arnold considered both the humanities and science essential; and moreover, he wished to see the study of the classics pursued with a view to gaining more of the spirit of the literature, rather than placing an overemphasis upon the details of language structure.

79. *The Poetical Works of Edward Rowland Sill* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1906), p. 56.

80. *Essays*, 1st ser., in *Works* (Centenary ed. [Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., cop. 1865, etc.]), II, 37–38.

81. "Loves Philosophies," sec. I, *in Complete Poetical Writings* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1885), p. 378.

82. *Lectures and Biographical Sketches*, in *Works*, X, 9.

83. *Op. cit.*, Pt. III, sec. 3, p. 19.

CHAPTER XI

1. There are suggestions of pantheism in the Neo-Platonists, of course, and there is more of it in Spinoza.

2. Charles A. Dubray (professor of philosophy at the Marist College, Washington, D.C.), *op. cit.* (New York, London, etc.: Longmans, Green & Co., 1912), p. 332.

3. See *supra*, p. 54.

4. *From a College Window* (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1907), c. viii, pp. 164–65.

5. *Mysticism and Logic* (New York, London, etc.: Longmans, Green & Co., 1918), pp. 15–16.

6. *Op. cit.* (London: Macmillan Co. Ltd., 1921), pp. 149–50.

7. C. ii, sec. 32.

8. *Op. cit.* (London, 1895), c. ii, sec. 36. Coventry Patmore (1832–1896), minor poet and critic, was assistant librarian at the British Museum for nearly twenty years.

9. *Op. cit.*, Bk. II, sec. 229 (translated by Ludovici in *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche* [ed. Levy, Edinburgh and London, 1909], XIV 187). Nietzsche says in *Morgenröthe*, Bk. II, sec. 119, that man does not know his instincts—"Wie weit einer Selbstkenntniss auch treiben mag, Nichts kann doch

unvollständiger sein, als das Bild der gesammten Triebe, die sein Wesen constituiren."

10. *Op. cit.*, sec. 1 (translated by Mügge [ed. Levy], II, 175–76).

11. *Indoor Studies*, c. ix (*Works of John Burroughs* [Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., cop. 1889, etc.], VIII, 279).

12. Sec. 33 (translated by Alfred Sutro [New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1901]).

13. Sec. 7 (translated by Sutro).

14. Secs. 26 ff.

15. Sec. 8 (translated by Sutro).

16. Cf. Paul Carus, *The Ethical Problem* (Chicago: Open Court Pub. Co., 1910), p. 308: "Self-knowledge will teach him ⟨man⟩ that he is a part of a greater whole; . . . . he must learn that his particular life is only a phase in the fuller life of the soul which came to him out of the past, animating him now and sweeping him onward into the dim future."

17. He says that man comes to accept all the events of life in the light of this "inner force," making them contribute to his spiritual growth.

18. Sec. 25.

19. *Op. cit.* (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1900), pp. 27–28.

20. *Op. cit.* (translated by Vincent Benson [London and New York, 1914]), pp. 61 f.

21. *Op. cit.* (New York, London, etc.: Longmans, Green & Co., 1914), c. viii, pp. 160 ff. For Ladd's metaphysical discussion of a knowledge of the self, see his *Philosophy of Knowledge*, c. vii, entitled "Knowledge of Things and Self" (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1897). There is relevant material also in his chapter on "Coming to One's Self" in *The Secret of Personality* (Longmans, 1918), c. iv.

22. Cf. George Fox-Pitt, *Free-Will and Destiny* (London: Constable and Co. Ltd., 1920), p. 31: "The process of 'knowing one's self' is a gathering together as a synthesis into the focus of awareness, of personality co-ordinated as a relevant whole."

23. *Know Thyself* (translated by Salvadori [London: Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1915]), p. 5. On page 20 he says that "Socrates would not have been obliged to formulate his precept, if it were an easy thing to know ourselves."

24. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 318.

26. *Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtung* (Leipzig, 1883), X, 338 ff.

27. *Tat tvam asi.*

28. The Upanishads were first translated from Sanskrit into Persian and published in 1657. A copy came into the hands of M. Duperron, the discoverer of the Zend-Avesta, in 1775, and he translated them from the Persian into Latin.

29. Preface to the first edition of *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (written 1818); *Parerga und Paralipomena*, Vol. II, c. xvi, sec. 185.

30. Max Müller translated twelve of the Upanishads into English, and published them in Vols. I and XV of the "Sacred Books of the East" series in 1879 and 1884, respectively. Among other German scholars, the work of Paul Deussen stands out conspicuously. See his *System des Vedanta* (Leipzig, 1883); *Sechzig Upanishads des Veda* (1897); *Philosophie des Upanishads* (1907). Also English translation of Deussen's *Outline of the Vedanta, according to Shankara*, by Wood and Runkle (New York: Grafton Press, 1906). Among notable recent works of the kind is *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads* by Robert Ernest Hume (London: Oxford University Press, 1921); and Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1922).

31. Cf. Paul Elmer More, *Delphi in Greek Literature*, p. 215: "Know thyself, the Delphian oracle proclaimed, learn thy individual nature and so bring it into harmony with life about thee. 'Tat tvam asi,' 'that art thou,' is the watchword on the Ganges: thy soul is itself that God; know this and thy illusive individuality comes to an end, and the world vanishes from about thee."

32. Prapathaka VI, Khanda 8 ff. (translated by Hume, pp. 246–47). "Ātman" is identical with "Brahma" here.

33. Prap. VIII, Kh. 7 ff. (translated by Hume, pp. 268 ff.).

34. *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, Introduction, pp. 50 ff.

35. In the *Book of the Golden Precepts* the "Great Law" says that "to reach the knowledge of that Self thou hast to give up self to non-Self, Being to non-Being, and then thou canst repose between the wings of the Great Bird" (translated by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Voice of Silence* [New York: Alliance Pub. Co., cop. 1889), p. 5.

36. The poem forms an integral part of the Mahābhārata.

37. *The Song Divine* (translated by C. C. Caleb [London, 1911]), Sixth Discourse, stanza 20.

38. Stanza 27.

39. *The Sacred Books of the East* (ed. Müller [Oxford, 1900], XV, 287 ff.).

40. Pp. 300–301. See adaptation of this in *Message of the East*, VI (1917), 127 ff. *Tapas*, which Müller renders "ascetic penance," is there translated "self-discipline." For a more detailed consideration of the means to be employed, see Deussen, *Outline of the Vedanta*, c. vi.

41. Second Vallî (ed. Boston, 1885), p. 36.

42. Third Vallî, pp. 35–36.

43. Bk. XIII (translated by Edwin Arnold in *The Song Celestial* [London, 1886], p. 128).

44. See *ibid.*, Bk. VIII, vs. 16, p. 68: "I am Purusha who begets."

45. Cf. Praśna Upanishad, Pras. I, sec. 10 (translated by Hume, p. 379):

"They who seek the Soul (Ātman) by austerity, chastity, faith and knowledge, they by the Northern course win the sun. . . . . That is the immortal, the fearless. . . . . From that they do not return."

46. S. Radhakrishnan, *The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore* (London: Macmillan Co. Ltd., 1918), p. 3.

47. Translated by Surendranath Tagore (New York: Macmillan Co., 1919), pp. 99–100.

48. *Modern Review*, XXII, 339.

49. For man's oneness with Nature, see Jackson Boyd, *The Unveiling* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1915), Act I, p. 6:

> "Were we to . . . .
> . . . . look within ourselves,
> Then should we see what Nature is! The All
> Would be revealed!"

50. Associate minister of Community Church in New York, and the author of several books.

51. C. vii (London: William Rider & Son, Ltd., cop. 1919), pp. 157–58.

52. *Ibid.*, p. 159. That the soul is part of, and one with, the universal self is emphasized in Walter Winston Kenilworth's *Psychic Control through Self-Knowledge* (New York: R. F. Fenno & Co., [1910]). He says in the opening chapter, which begins with a reference to the Delphic maxim, that a conception of what we mean by "self" is of prime importance. Man is part and parcel of the universal process. His nature is made of the same soul, the same intellect, the same physical and vital forces which animate all. All matter, all force, and all life are one, and the difference in manifestation is merely one of degree. Future humanity is latent in the animal soul; in the human soul resides potential divinity. Again he says (c. iii) that the source of all is the Eternal Essence, and, realized in consciousness, this truth is no other than the knowledge of self. And near the close of the book, he says that the command "know thyself" has made its powerful voice heard across the ages like a thunderbolt; but to know one's self is to realize the Eternal Essence and the perfect reality confined in the soul.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 181.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 162.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 304.

57. *Grenstone Poems* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., cop. 1917), p. 299.

58. *Poems of Personality* (Cambridge, Mass.: Riverside Press, 1908), p. 155.

59. "Paul," *ibid.* (2d. ser., 1909), pp. 95–98.

60. Cf. his "Athanasius," *ibid.*, p. 112:

> ". . . . Thy manhood were
> The God-head through and through, and so self-known!"

Also "Purgatory and Judgment," sec. 6 (*Love Poems* [2d ser., Cambridge, 1912], p. 58):

". . . . Were my self-searching soul
Blasphemous with acknowledgment of God
. . . . as its self self-known?"

See, too, his poem on "Descartes" in *Poems of Personality* (2d ser.), p. 185; and the poem on "Erigena" in *Poems of Personality* (3d ser., 1917), p. 103.

61. This essay was first published in the *Bayreuther Blätter*, February–March, 1881.

62. What Wagner really thinks is that the antipathy for the Jew is something other than mere race prejudice—that the Jew is a nomad and a usurer, persistent in racial type and religious tradition, but incapable of developing a culture such as the German people are capable of. Cf. his *Das Judenthum in der Musik*.

63. For *Selbsterkenntniss* applied nationally, see also his *Beethoven* (*Gesammt. Schriften* [Leipzig, 1873], IX, 148). He is saying that Germany needs the spirit of music to refine the national character, whose chief virtue is the depth and inwardness of its conception of life; but it is hard for Germany to understand the real German spirit, and he adds: "Wie schwer nun aber die richtige Selbsterkenntniss namentlich für eine ganze Nation ist, erfahren wir jetzt zu unserem wahren Schrecken an unserem bisher so mächtigen Nachbarvolke der Franzosen ⟨in the war of 1870⟩; und wir mögen daraus eine ernste Veranlassung zur eigenen Selbsterforschung nehmen. . . . ." There is a brief discussion of knowledge of self in the metaphysical sense in the fragment of his "Metaphysik, Kunst und Religion," *Nachgelassene Schriften* (Leipzig, 1895), pp. 167–68; and also an indication of the influence of philosophy upon the religious conception of self-knowledge in "Jesus von Nazareth," *ibid.*, p. 78.

64. *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen*, Pt. II, sec. 10 (translated by Collins [ed. Levy], V, 98–99).

65. *Op. cit.*, sec. 1 (translated by Collins [ed. Levy], V, 107). See also *Zarathustra*, Pt. III, c. lv, sec. 2.

66. *Works* (ed. Ross), XI, 129–30.

67. In *The Soul of Man under Socialism*, II, 288, Wilde contrasts the "Know thyself" of the ancient world with the "Be thyself" of Christ, as he terms it.

68. *Truths or Truisms* (London: Henry Frowde; New York: Oxford University Press, 1911), Pt. III, pp. 69 ff. William Stebbing (1832–1926) was evening lecturer in history at King's College, examiner for Indian civil service, and leader-writer for *The London Times* for many years. He is the author of many books, including *Sir Walter Raleigh: a Biography; Five Centuries of English Verse;* etc.

69. See *supra*, p. 106.

70. Act IV, sc. i (*Poems and Plays* [New York: Macmillan Co., 1916], II, 136). Cf. Charles Rann Kennedy, *The Servant in the House* (New York and London: Harper Bros., 1908), Act V, p. 144, where Robert tells of the change in him which Manson has wrought: "'e taught me my own mind; 'e brought me back to my own job."

71. C. ix, pp. 294–95 (London: Macmillan Co. Ltd., 1902). Dr. Henry Maudsley (1835–1918) was professor of medical jurisprudence in the University of London for several years. He published a number of books on medical and allied themes.

72. Nietzsche says in "Worin man sich Kennet," in *Morgenröthe*, Bk. IV, sec. 212, that man, like the beast of the field, knows himself only by comparison with his fellows, and so knows only his offensive and defensive powers. He says further, in *Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, Bk. V, sec. 354, that man's very consciousness of himself arose out of the necessity for communication—for making his needs known to others of his kind; and so, however much he may try to understand himself as an individual, the most that he can know is what is not individual in him but the qualities which he shares in common with other men.

73. "The Mirror," Pt. I (in *Selected Poems* [New York: Macmillan Co., 1922], p. 133).

74. *Op. cit.*, Act IV, first part (*Poems and Plays*, II, 154–55).

75. *Ibid.*, p. 157.

76. See *supra*, p. 68–69.

77. Preface to *Over-ruled*, pp. 73–74.

78. *Books and Culture* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1897), p. 84. Cf. Ian Colvin, *Aesop in Politics* (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1914), Introduction, p. 6. He says of teaching by animal fable;

> "And in the vain and fickle crow
> The mob its silly self would know,
> Coaxed by the vulpine arts that please
> To ope its beak and drop its cheese."

79. C. xxi, pp. 202–4 (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1901). For the self-knowledge taught by disappointment in love, see Reginald Robbins, *Parnassus* (*Love Poems* [2d. ser.], p. 83):

> ". . . . Shall soul
> Not burst anew into some wiser song
> Sweeter for more self-knowledge by this pain?"

80. Translated by Collins (ed. Levy), V, Pt. II, 107.

81. Lecture V (translated by Kennedy [ed. Levy], III, 133).

82. Cf. *Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, Bk. I, sec. 15, where he compares the frame of mind engendered by a closer self-knowledge to the disenchantment experienced in climbing a mountain which has looked beautiful in the distance. In

another passage he says that the savant is what he is because of self-knowledge; he despises himself and so tries to lose himself in serving those who are to come after him (*Wir Philologen*, c. v, sec. 6). Again he says that the idealist finds it prudent to avoid knowing himself (*Der Wille zur Macht*, Bk. II, sec. 344)—a process which is not difficult, for it is easier to forget or deny one's ugliness than to see one's self for what he is. One can see himself only as he surprises himself, torch in hand (*Menschliches, Allzumenschliches*, Pt. II, sec. 316).

83. Translated by Ludovici (ed. Levy), Vol. XIV, p. 344, sec. 426.

84. Ed. Levy, XVII, 180. Zoroaster's saying "He who knows himself, knows all things in himself" is frequently quoted in the modern period. See Emerson, *Ethnical Scriptures*, "Uncollected Writings" (New York: Lamb Pub. Co., cop. 1912), p. 130; Longfellow, *The Divine Tragedy*, "Christus," Pt. I, Passover II, sec. 11; Philip James Bailey, *Festus* (Boston, 1853), p. 570.

85. "Why I Am So Clever," *op. cit.* (ed. Levy), Vol. XVII, p. 49, sec. 9.

86. *Op. cit.*, Pt. II, sec. 366 (translated by Helen Zimmern [ed Levy], VII, 168).

87. *Life in Mind and Conduct*, c. ix, pp. 294–295.

88. *Op. cit.* (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1900), c. ii, p. 45. See also Dresser's *The Power of Silence* (Boston: Geo. H. Ellis, 1895), especially pp. 146–47.

89. *Op. cit.* (New York: The Dial Press, Lincoln MacVeaugh, cop. 1925), c. i, sec. 1, p. 3.

90. *What Can I Know?* p. 172. In this connection see Dubray, *Introductory Philosophy*, p. 337.

91. *Ibid.*, p. 178.

92. *Ibid.*, p. 180.

93. *Ibid.*, p. 185.

94. *Op. cit.* (ed. by Robert Latta, London: Macmillan Co. Ltd., 1905), p. 251. David Ritchie was professor of logic and metaphysics in the University of St. Andrew.

95. Translated by Barry Cerf and published in *Chief Contemporary Dramatists* (ed. by Thos. Dickinson [1st ser.; Boston, New York, etc.: Houghton, Mifflin Co., cop. 1915]), pp. 521 ff.

96. *Sonnets by James Vila Blake* (private ed., Chicago, 1898), No. 91. James Vila Blake (1842–1925), minor poet and prose author, was a Unitarian and Congregational minister, his last pastorate being at Evanston, Illinois. Cf. poem entitled "Self-Utterance" by Henry Bryan Binns in *The Free Spirit* (London and New York, 1914), p. 66: "I had not known my spirit but for you."

97. *Wisdom and Destiny*, sec. 9 (translated by Sutro).

98. *Schopenhauer as Educator*, sec. 1 (translated by Collins [ed. Levy], V, 107).

99. *Op. cit.*, sec. 48 (translated by Kennedy [ed. Levy], IX, 53).

100. Bk. IV, sec. 335 (ed. Levy, X, 259).

101. Chap. iv, sec. 80. Heracleitus too was a man of whom Nietzsche approved. He could say of himself, " 'Mich selbst suchte und erforschte ich' . . . . mit einem Worte, durch das man das Erforschen eines Orakels bezeichnet: als ob er der wahre Erfüller und Vollender der delphischen Satzung, 'Erkenne dich selbst' sei, und niemand sonst" (*Die Philosophie im tragischen Zeitalter der Griechen*, sec. 8).

102. *Life in Mind and Conduct*, c. ix, p. 294.

103. *Human, All-Too-Human*, Pt. II, sec. 223 (translated by Cohn [ed. Levy], VII, 117).

104. *Varia, Studies on Problems of Philosophy and Ethics*, by William Knight (professor of philosophy in the University of St. Andrews [d. 1916]) (London, 1901), c. x, p. 165.

105. *Op. cit.* (London: University of London Press, 1917), pp. 18–19.

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