

which Hegel develops and expresses it. And there are perhaps many at the present time who are prepared to accept the former, but who yet suspect, or even reject, the latter. And no doubt there is much in Hegel's *Logic* and *Philosophy of Spirit*, and still more in his *Philosophy of Nature*, which there is reason to regard with distrust. In clever hands that are not checked by a sufficient consciousness of the whole, the Hegelian dialectic may be made into the means of producing a seeming proof of anything. Nor is it always easy to determine how far Hegel himself was tempted by an impatient consciousness of the universality of his method to employ it in cases where the conditions of its successful application were wanting. Sometimes he seems to forget, what he himself teaches, that science must first have generalized experience and determined it by its finite categories, ere it is possible for philosophy to give its final interpretation. Yet, when we realize the nature of that interpretation, and of the transformation of science which philosophy by means of it proposes to effect, it becomes clear that the dialectic of Hegel is no extraneous addition to his idealism, but is part and parcel of the same movement of thought. For this dialectic rests on the idea that thought or self-consciousness finds in its own organic unity the ultimate key to all difficulties in regard to the objects of thought and their relations to each other and to the mind. Self-consciousness, as has been already shown, is implicitly the whole web of categories which it throws over the world, and by aid of which it makes the world intelligible. All these it contains in itself; and, as it proceeds to determine the meaning of things, it simply produces its store, and exhausts itself on the object. Now, if it be idealism, in the strict sense of the word, to make thought or self-consciousness the principle and ultimate explanation of all that exists, it is obvious that we cannot separate idealism from such a dialectic as this, which is nothing more than the mind's consciousness of its own movement or process of self-affirmation. If to find thought in things be more than an empty word, then the movement or process which thought is must explain at once the transition from thought to what in opposition to it we call "things," and must give us the means of reconciling that opposition. In other words, the same movement by which thought determines itself as self-conscious, i.e., as a unity realized through difference, must also be conceived as the explanation of the difference between pure thought and the world, and as the solution of that difference in the idea of absolute spirit.

Such idealism has a close relation to Christianity; it may be even said to be but Christianity theorized. It has often been asserted that Hegel's philosophy of religion is but an artificial accommodation to Christian doctrine of a philosophy which has no inherent relation to Christianity. If, however, we regard the actual development of that philosophy it would be truer to say that it was the study of Christian ideas which first produced it. What delivered Hegel from the mysticism in which the later philosophies of Fichte and Schelling tended to lose themselves, and led him, in his own language, to regard the absolute "not merely as substance but as subject,"—what made him recognize with Fichte that the absolute principle is spiritual, and yet enabled him with Schelling to see in nature, as the opposite of spirit, the very means of its realization,—was his thorough appreciation of the ethical and religious meaning of Christianity. In the great Christian aphorism that "he who loseth his life alone can save it" he found a key to the difficulties of ethics, a reconciliation of hedonism and asceticism. For what this saying implies is that a spiritual or self-conscious being is one who is in contradiction with himself when he makes his individual self his end. In opposing his own interest to that of

others, he is preventing their interests from becoming his; all things are his, and his only, who has died to himself. But if this be the truth of morality, it is something more, for "morality is the nature of things." We cannot separate the law of the life of man from the law of the world in which he lives. And, if it is the nature of things, as it is the nature of spirit, that he who loseth his life shall save it, the world must be referred to a spiritual principle, and the Christian doctrine of the nature of God is only the converse of the Christian law of ethics. To Hegel, starting from this point, a new light was thrown on the Fichtean treatment of the idea of self, and the Fichtean proof that the consciousness of self implies a relation to an object which is opposed to the self, and which yet from another point of view—since an object exists only for a subject—cannot be anything but an element of its own life. It was seen that this movement of thought is no mere fluctuation between contradictory positions, to be terminated finally by an *ipse dixit* of faith, but that the unity of the opposite elements is apprehensible by the intelligence, and that indeed it is its presence to the intelligence which makes the consciousness of opposition possible. It was in this sense that Hegel could say that that unity of opposites which had been called unintelligible by previous writers was just the very nature of the intelligence, and that only a view of the world guided by this idea could be properly intelligible, while every other view must contain in it an unsolved contradiction, an element that remains permanently impervious to thought.

The great objection to a metaphysic like this, at least an objection which weighs much in the minds of many, is that which springs from the contrast between the claim of absolute knowledge which it seems to involve and the actual limitations which our intelligence encounters in every direction. If the theory were true, it is felt we ought to be nearer the solution of the problems of our life, practical and speculative, than we are; the riddle of the painful earth ought to vex us less; we ought to find our way more easily through the entanglement of facts, and to be able to deal with practical difficulties in a less tentative manner. Yet there is really no antagonism between such a doctrine and a consciousness of the limitation of our faculties; nay rather, it is only on such a theory that a rational distrust of ourselves can be based. When Aristotle meets the warning that we should think finite and human things since we are finite and human with the answer that we ought rather, so far as in us lies, to rise to what is immortal and divine, he is not denying the limits of man's knowledge and power; on the contrary, he is rather pointing to the very principle which makes us conscious of those limits; for it is just because there is in man a principle of infinity that he knows his finitude, and, conversely, it is just in the consciousness of this finitude that he rises above it. A rational humility is possible only to one who has in himself the measure of his own weakness, and who, if he "trembles like a guilty thing surprised," is yet conscious that he is trembling before himself. This truth is often expressed by Kant with special relation to the moral consciousness, as where he contrasts the limitation of man, as a sensible being, occupying an infinitesimal space in the boundless world of sense, with his freedom from all limitation as a personal self, a member of the truly infinite world of intelligence. But it is not necessary to adopt Kant's abstract division of the sensible from the intelligible world to see that the consciousness of the greatness of the problem which has to be solved in human life and thought is deepened and widened by that very idea of philosophy which yet gives us the assurance that the problem is not insoluble, and even that, in principle, it is already solved.

(E. C.)

METAPONTUM, or METAPONTIUM (the first form is that generally found in Latin writers, but Thucydides, Strabo, and other Greek authors employ the latter form), was a city of Magna Græcia situated on the Gulf of Tarentum, near the mouth of the river Bradanus, and distant about 24 miles from Tarentum and 14 from Heraclea. It was founded by an Achæan colony about 700 B.C., though various traditions existed which assigned it an earlier origin. But according to the only historical account it was a joint foundation from Sybaris and Crotona, to which, as usual in similar cases, was joined a body of fresh settlers from the mother country, under the command of a leader named Leucippus. The object of its establishment was without doubt to strengthen the Achæan element in Magna Græcia, as opposed to the increasing power of the Tarentines, but at the same time to occupy a territory which was remarkable for its fertility. It was to this cause that Metapontum owed the great prosperity to which it attained at an early period, and appears to have continued to enjoy for several centuries, though it never assumed a prominent place in history. It was, however, one of the cities that played a conspicuous part in the political troubles arising from the introduction of the Pythagorean principles into the cities of Magna Græcia, and it was there that the philosopher himself ended his days. His tomb was still shown there in the time of Cicero.

At the time of the Athenian expedition to Sicily (415 B.C.) Metapontum appears to have been an opulent and powerful city, whose alliance was courted by the Athenians; but they contented themselves with a very trifling support. In 332 B.C., at the time of the expedition of Alexander, king of Epirus, into Italy, it was one of the first cities to espouse his cause, and enter into an alliance with him; and they appear to have in like manner lent an active support to Pyrrhus at a later period. Down to this time, therefore, Metapontum seems to have retained its position as one of the principal cities of Magna Græcia, and there is no evidence of its having suffered materially from the establishment of the Lucanians in its immediate neighbourhood. Nor have we any account of the precise period at which it passed under the dominion of Rome, or the conditions under which it became subject to the great republic. But it was the Second Punic War which gave the fatal blow to its prosperity. After the battle of Cannæ in 216 B.C. it was among the first cities in the south of Italy to declare in favour of Hannibal, and after the fall of Tarentum in 212 B.C. it not only received a Carthaginian garrison, but became for some years the headquarters of Hannibal. Hence, when the defeat of Hasdrubal at the Metaurus (207 B.C.) compelled him to abandon this part of Italy, and withdraw into the fastnesses of Bruttium, the whole mass of the inhabitants of Metapontum abandoned their city, and followed him in his retreat.

From this time Metapontum sunk into a poor and inconsiderable town; though it was still existing as such in the days of Cicero, it soon fell into complete decay, and Pausanias tells us that in his time nothing remained of it but a theatre and the circuit of the walls. All remains of these have since disappeared, but the site is still marked by the ruins of a temple, which occupy a slight elevation on the right bank of the river Bradanus, about 2 miles from its mouth. The surrounding plain, so celebrated in ancient times for its fertility, is now desolated by malaria, and almost uninhabited; and the remains of the city itself, between the site of the temple and the sea, are in great part buried in the alluvial deposits of the neighbouring rivers.

Some excavations were carried on upon the spot by the Duc de Luynes in 1828, and the results of his researches were published by him in a special work (*Métoponte*, fol., Paris, 1833).

METASTASIO (1698–1782). Pietro Trapassi, the Italian poet who is better known by his assumed name of Metastasio, was born in Rome, January 6, 1698. His father, Felice Trapassi, a native of Assisi, came to Rome and took service in what was termed the Corsican regiment of the papal forces. He subsequently married a Bolognese woman called Francesca Galasti, and established himself in business as a sort of grocer in the Via dei Cappellari. Two sons and two daughters were the fruit of this marriage. The eldest son, Leopoldo, must be mentioned, since he played a part of some importance in the poet's life. Pietro, while quite a child, showed an extraordinary talent for improvisation, and often held a crowd attentive in the streets while he recited impromptu verses on a given subject. It so happened that, while he was thus engaged one evening in the year 1709, two men of high distinction in Roman society passed by and stopped to listen to his declamation. These were Gian Vincenzo Gravina, famous for legal and literary erudition, famous no less for his dictatorship of the Arcadian Academy, and Lorenzini, a critic of some note. Gravina was at once attracted by the boy's poetical talent and by his charm of person; for little Pietro was gifted with agreeable manners and considerable beauty. The great man interested himself in the genius he had accidentally discovered, made Pietro his protégé, and in the course of a few weeks adopted him. Felice Trapassi was glad enough to give his son the chance of a good education and introduction into the world under auspices so favourable. Gravina, following a fashion for which we may find precedents so illustrious as that of Melanchthon, Hebenized the boy's name Trapassi into Metastasio; and this name remained with him for life. Gravina intended his adopted son to be a jurist like himself. He therefore made the boy learn Latin and begin the study of law. At the same time he cultivated his literary gifts, and displayed the youthful prodigy both at his own house and in the Roman coteries. Metastasio soon found himself competing with the most celebrated improvisatori of his time in Italy. Days spent in severe studies, evenings devoted to the task of improvising eighty stanzas at a single session, were fast ruining Pietro's health and overstraining his poetic faculty. At this juncture Gravina had to journey into Calabria on business. He took Metastasio with him, exhibited him in the literary circles of Naples, and then placed him under the care of his kinsman Gregorio Caroprese at a little place called Scalà. In country air and the quiet of the southern sea-shore Metastasio's health revived. It was decreed by the excellent Gravina that he should never improvise a line again. His great facility should be reserved for nobler efforts, when, having completed his education, he might enter into competition with poets who had bequeathed masterpieces to the world.

Metastasio responded with the docility of a pliant nature to his patron's wishes. At the age of twelve, while attending to classical and legal studies, he translated the *Iliad* into octave stanzas; and two years later he composed a tragedy in the manner of Seneca upon a subject chosen from Trissino's *Italia Liberata*—Gravina's favourite epic. It was called *Giustino*. Gravina had it printed in 1713; but the play is lifeless; and forty-two years afterwards we find Metastasio writing to his publisher, Calsabigi, that he would willingly suppress it. Caroprese died in 1714, leaving Gravina his heir; and in 1718 Gravina also died. Metastasio inherited from the good old man a property, consisting of house, plate, furniture, and money, which amounted to 15,000 scudi, or about £4000. At a meeting of the Arcadian Academy, amid the tears and plaudits of that learned audience, he recited an elegy on the patron who had been to him so true a foster-father, and then settled down, not it seems without real sorrow for his loss, to enjoy what was no inconsiderable



fortune at that period. Metastasio was now twenty. During the last four years he had worn the costume of abbé, having taken the minor orders without which it was then useless to expect advancement in Rome. His romantic history, personal beauty, charming manners, and distinguished talents made him fashionable. That before two years were out he had spent his money and increased his reputation for wit will surprise no one. He now very sensibly determined to quit a mode of life for which he was not born, and to apply himself seriously to the work of his profession. Accordingly he went to Naples, and entered the office of an eminent lawyer named Castagnola. It would appear that he articulated himself as clerk, for Castagnola, who was a stern master, averse to literary trifling, exercised severe control over his time and energies. While slaving at the law, Metastasio did not wholly neglect the Muses. In 1721 he composed an epithalamium, and probably also his first musical serenade, *Endimione*, on the occasion of the marriage of his patroness the Princess Pinelli di Sangro to the Marchese Belmonte Pignatelli. But the event which fixed his destiny was the following. In 1722 the birthday of the empress had to be celebrated with more than ordinary honours, and the viceroy applied to Metastasio to compose a serenata for the occasion. He accepted this invitation with mingled delight and trepidation; for Castagnola looked with no favour on his clerk's poetical distractions. It was arranged that his authorship should be kept a profound secret. Under these conditions Metastasio produced *Gli Orti Esperidi*. Set to music by Porpora, it won the most extraordinary applause. The great Roman prima donna, Marianna Bulgarelli, called La Romanina from her birthplace, who had played the part of Venus in this drama, was so enraptured with the beauties of the libretto that she spared no pains until she had discovered its author. Asked point-blank whether he had not written the words of the successful play, Metastasio was obliged to answer, Yes! La Romanina forthwith took possession of him, induced him to quit his lawyer's office, and promised to secure for him fame and independence, if he would devote his talents to the musical drama. It was thus that the opera, already partially developed by the Cæsarean poet, Apostolo Zeno, attained perfection. The right man had been found for maturing this form of art which the genius of the age demanded, but which was still but incomplete. In La Romanina's house Metastasio became acquainted with the greatest composers of the day,—with Porpora, from whom he took lessons in music; with Hasse, Pergolese, Scarlatti, Vinci, Leo, Durante, Marcello, all of whom were destined in the future to set his plays to melody. Here too he studied the art of singing, and learned to appreciate the style of such men as Farinelli. His singularly pliant genius discerned the conditions which the drama must obey in order to adapt itself to music in the stage it then had reached. Gifted himself with extraordinary facility in composition, and with a true poetic feeling, he found no difficulty in producing plays which, while beautiful in themselves, judged merely as works of literary art, became masterpieces as soon as their words were set to music, and rendered by the singers of the greatest school of vocal art the world has ever seen. Reading Metastasio in the study, it is impossible to do him justice. Our only chance of rendering him a portion of his due is to approach these lyrical scenes—so passionate in their emotion, so cunningly devised for musical effect—with the phrases of Pergolese or Paesello ringing in our ears, and to imagine how a Farinelli or a Caffariello voiced those stanzas which demand for their artistic realization the “linked sweetness long drawn out” of melodies as the Italian school developed them. In short, Metastasio is a poet whose poetry leapt to its real life in the environment

of music. The conventionality of all his plots, the absurdities of many of his situations, the violence he does to history in the persons of some leading characters, his “damnable iteration” of the theme of love in all its phases, are explained and justified by music. He can still be studied with pleasure and profit. But our only chance of understanding the cosmopolitan popularity he enjoyed is by remembering that at least one half of the effect he aimed at has been irrecoverably lost.

Metastasio resided with La Romanina and her husband in Rome. The generous woman, moved by an affection half maternal half romantic, and by a true artist's admiration, for so rare a talent, adopted him more passionately even than Gravina had done. She took the whole Trapassi family—father, mother, brother, sisters—into her own house. She fostered the poet's genius and pampered his caprices. Under her influence he wrote in rapid succession the *Didone Abbandonata*, *Catone in Utica*, *Ezio*, *Alessandro nell'Indie*, *Semiramide Riconosciuta*, *Siroe*, and *Artaserse*. These dramas were set to music by the chief composers of the day, and performed in the chief towns of Italy. Every month added to Metastasio's renown. But meanwhile La Romanina was growing older; she had ceased to sing in public; and the poet felt himself more and more dependent in an irksome sense upon her kindness. He gained 300 scudi (about £60) for each opera; this pay, though good, was precarious, and he longed for some fixed engagement. Abandoning himself gradually to despondent whims and fancies, it became clear that some change in his condition was desirable. And the opportunity for a great change soon presented itself. In September 1729 he received the offer of the post of court poet to the theatre at Vienna, with a stipend of 3000 florins. This he at once accepted. La Romanina unselfishly sped him on his way to glory. She took the charge of his family in Rome, and he set off for Austria.

In the early summer of 1730 Metastasio settled at Vienna in the house of a Spanish Neapolitan, Niccolò Martinez, where he resided until his death. This date marks a new period in his artistic activity. Between the years 1730 and 1740 his finest dramas, *Adriano*, *Demetrio*, *Issipile*, *Demofonte*, *Olimpiade*, *Clemenza di Tito*, *Achille in Sciro*, *Temistocle*, and *Attilio Regolo*, were produced for the imperial theatre. Some of them had to be composed for special occasions, with almost incredible rapidity—the *Achille* in eighteen days, the *Ipermestra* in nine. Poet, composer, musical copyist, and singer did their work together in frantic haste. The impress of the peculiar circumstances under which they were created is still left upon them, not only in negligence of style, but also in an undefinable quality which marks them out as products of collaboration. But what must always surprise us is that they should be as good as they are. Metastasio understood the technique of his peculiar art in its minutest details. The experience gained at Naples and Rome, quickened by the excitement of his new career at Vienna, enabled him almost instinctively, and as it were by inspiration, to hit the exact mark aimed at in the opera.

At Vienna Metastasio met with no marked social success. His plebeian birth excluded him from aristocratic circles. But, to make up in some measure for this comparative failure, he enjoyed the intimacy of a great lady, the Countess Althann, sister-in-law of his old patroness the Princess Belmonte Pignatelli. She had lost her husband and had some while occupied the post of chief favourite to the emperor. Metastasio's liaison with her became so close that it was even believed they had been privately married. From his letters to his friend La Romanina, and to the great singer Farinelli, who reigned supreme at the court of Madrid, we learn the little details of the poet's life in

its wearisome monotony, and come to comprehend his character, at once generous and timid, selfish and amiable, prudent almost to excess of caution, and personally cold in contradiction with the fervour of his sentimental muse. The even tenor of this dull existence was broken in the year 1734 by the one dark and tragic incident of his biography. It appears that La Romanina had at last got tired of his absence. Little satisfied with his friendly but somewhat reticent communications, impatient to see him once again, inquisitive perhaps about the terms on which he lived with his new mistress, she resolved to journey to Vienna. Could not Metastasio get her an engagement at the court theatre? The poet at this juncture revealed his own essential feebleness of character. To La Romanina he bowed almost everything as a man and as an artist. But he was ashamed of her and tired of her. He vowed she should not come to Vienna, and wrote dissuading her from the projected visit. The tone of his letters alarmed and irritated her. It is probable that she set out from Rome, but died suddenly upon the road. Nothing can be said for certain about her end, or about the part which Metastasio may have played in hastening the catastrophe. All we know is that she left him her fortune after her husband's life interest in it had expired, and that Metastasio, overwhelmed with grief and remorse, immediately renounced the legacy. This disinterested act plunged the Bulgarelli-Metastasio household at Rome into confusion. La Romanina's widower married again. Leopoldo Trapassi, and his father and sister, were thrown upon their own resources. The poet in Vienna had to bear their angry expostulations upon his ill-timed generosity, and to augment the allowances he made them.

As time advanced the life which Metastasio led at Vienna, together with the climate, told upon his health and spirits. From about the year 1745 onward he writes complainingly of a mysterious nervous illness, which plunged him into the abyss of melancholy, interfered with his creative energy, and constantly distressed him with the apprehension of a general breakdown. He wrote but little now, though the cantatas which belong to this period, and the canzonet *Ecco quel fiero istante*, which he sent to his friend Farinelli, rank among the most popular of his productions. It was clear, as his latest and most genial biographer, Vernon Lee, has phrased it, that “what ailed him was mental and moral ennui.” In 1755 the Countess Althann died, and Metastasio was more than ever reduced to the society which gathered round him in the bourgeois house of the Martinez. He sank rapidly into the habits of old age; and, though his life was prolonged till the year 1782, very little can be said about it. On the 12th of April he died, bequeathing his whole fortune of some 130,000 florins to the five children of his friend Martinez. He had survived all his Italian relatives.

During the long period of forty years in which Metastasio may be almost said to have overlived his originality and creative powers his fame went on increasing. In his library he counted as many as forty editions of his own works. They had been translated into French, English, German, Spanish, even into Modern Greek. They had been set to music over and over again by every composer of distinction, each opera receiving this honour in turn from several of the most illustrious men of Europe. They had been sung by the best virtuosi in every capital, from Madrid to St. Petersburg, from London to Constantinople. The critics of all nations vied in raising Metastasio's credit to the skies. There was not a literary academy of note which had not conferred on him the honour of membership. Strangers of distinction passing through Vienna made a point of paying their respects to the old poet at his lodgings in the Kohlmarkt Gasse. Letters of congratulation, adulation, sympathy, respect, condolence, poured in upon him. And yet, during the whole of this long period, he was gradually outliving the artistic conditions upon which that fame was really founded. It has been already pointed out that Metastasio cannot rank as a poet in the unqualified sense of that word, but as a poet collaborating with the musical composer and performer. His poetry, further-

more, was intended for a certain style of music—for the music of omnipotent vocalists, of thaumaturgical soprani. With the changes effected in the musical drama by Gluck and Mozart, with the development of orchestration and the rapid growth of the German manner, a new type of libretto came into request. Metastasio's plays fell into undeserved neglect, together with the music to which he had linked them. Farinelli, whom he styled “twin-brother,” was the true exponent of his poetry; and, with the abolition of the class of singers to which Farinelli belonged, Metastasio's music suffered eclipse. It was indeed a just symbolic instinct which made the poet dub this unique soprano his twin-brother.

The musical drama for which Metastasio composed, and in working for which his genius found its proper sphere, has so wholly passed away that it is now difficult to assign his true place to the poet in Italian literary history. Compared with Shakespeare, or even with Racine, he hardly merits the title of a dramatist. His inspiration was essentially emotional and lyrical. Instead of creating characters, he created situations for the display of very varied feelings, for all the feelings in fact to which melody allies itself. But in doing this he showed a capable playwright's faculty. His personages act and react upon each other. Their characters, though not in harmony with history or fact, are clearly traced and cleverly sustained. Each of the dramatic personæ is an emotion incarnate and consistent, admirably fitted for musical effect and contrast. The clash and combat of passions are vividly presented, with the smallest possible expenditure of rhetoric, in the dialogues intended for recitative. The climax of emotion is cadenced in appropriate stanzas, with simple but effective imagery, at the close of each important scene. The chief dramatic situations are expressed by lyrics for two or three voices, embodying the several contending passions of the agents brought into conflict by the circumstances of the plot. The total result is not pure literature, but literature supremely fit for musical effect. Language in Metastasio's hands is exquisitely pure and limpid. Of the Italian poets, he professed a special admiration for Tasso and for Marini. But he avoided the conceits of the latter, and was no master over the refined richness of the former's diction. His own style reveals the improvisatore's facility. Of the Latin poets he studied Ovid with the greatest pleasure, and from this predilection some of his own literary qualities may be derived. The pedantic rules of Aristotelian poetics never touched an artist who felt his real vocation to be the interpretation of music. For historical propriety, for the psychology of character, for unity of plot, for probability of incident, he had a supreme disregard. It was indeed his merit to have discarded all these considerations. His poetry was the twin-sister of Italian melody, and he was right in trusting entirely to music and action on the stage to render his conceptions vital. What, therefore, he gained during his own lifetime, while the musical system to which he subordinated his genius was yet living, he has since lost when, as now, he must be studied by readers who have only a faint and dim conception of that perished art. For sweetness of versification, for limpidity of diction, for delicacy of sentiment, for romantic situations exquisitely rendered in the simplest style, and for a certain delicate beauty of imagery sometimes soaring to ideal sublimity, he deserves to be appreciated so long as the Italian language lasts.

There are numerous editions of Metastasio's works. That by Calsabigi, Paris, 1755, 9 vols. 8vo, published under his own superintendence, was the poet's favourite. Another of Turin, 1757, and a third of Paris, 1780, deserve mention. The posthumous works were printed at Vienna, 1796. The collected editions of Genoa, 1802, and Padua, 1811, will probably be found most useful by the general student. Metastasio's life was written by Aluigi, Assisi, 1783; by Charles Burney, London, 1796; and by far the most vivid sketch of his biography will be found in Vernon Lee's *Studies of the 18th Century in Italy*, London, 1880, a work which throws a flood of light upon the development of Italian dramatic music, and upon the place occupied by Metastasio in the artistic movement of the last century. (J. A. S.)

METCALFE, CHARLES THEOPHILUS METCALFE, BARON (1785–1846), a distinguished administrator, was born at Calcutta on January 30, 1785; he was the second son of Thomas Theophilus Metcalfe, then a major in the Bengal army, who afterwards became a director of the East India Company, and was created a baronet in 1802. Having been educated at Eton, where he read extensively, he in 1800 sailed for India as a writer in the service of the Company. After studying Oriental languages with success at Lord Wellesley's college of Fort William, he, at the age of sixteen, received an appointment as assistant to Lord Cowley, then resident at the court of Sindhia; in 1802 he became assistant in the office of the chief secretary; in 1803 he was transferred to that of the governor-general, and in 1806 to that of the commander-in-chief. On August 15, 1806, he became first assistant to the resident at Delhi, and in 1808 he was selected by Lord Minto for the difficult post of envoy to the court of Ranjit Singh at Lahore; here,



on April 25, 1809, he successfully concluded the important treaty securing the independence of the Sikh states between the Sutlej and the Jumna. Four years afterwards he was made principal resident at Delhi, and in 1819 he received the appointments of secretary in the secret and political department, and of private secretary to the governor-general (Lord Hastings). From 1820 to 1823 Sir Charles (who succeeded his brother in the baronetcy in 1822) was resident at the court of the nizam, but in the latter year he was compelled by the state of his health to retire from active service; in 1825, however, he was so far restored as to undertake the residency of the Delhi territories. Two years afterwards he obtained a seat in the supreme council, and in February 1835, after he had for some time been governor of Agra, he, as senior member of council, provisionally succeeded Lord William Bentinck in the governor-generalship. During his brief tenure of office (it lasted only till March 28, 1836) he originated or carried out several important measures, including that for the liberation of the press, which, while almost universally popular, complicated his relation with the directors at home to such an extent that he withdrew from the service of the Company in 1838. In the following year he was appointed by the Melbourne administration to the governorship of Jamaica, where the difficulties created by the recent passing of the Negro Emancipation Act had called for a high degree of tact and ability. Sir Charles Metcalfe's success in this delicate position was very marked (see vol. xiii. p. 551), but unfortunately his health compelled his resignation and return to England in 1842. Six months afterwards he was appointed by the Peel ministry to the governor-generalship of Canada, and his success in carrying out the policy of the home Government was rewarded with a peerage shortly after his return in 1845. He died at Malshanger, near Basingstoke, September 5, 1846. See J. W. Kaye's *Life and Correspondence of Charles Lord Metcalfe*, London, 1854.

METELLUS, the name of the most important family of the Roman plebeian gens Cæcilia. They rose to distinction during the Second Punic War, and Nævius satirized them.

QUINTUS CÆCILIUS METELLUS MACEDONICUS, prætor 148 B.C. in Macedonia, defeated Andrisicus in two battles, and forced him to surrender. He then superintended the conversion of Macedonia into a Roman province. He tried unsuccessfully to mediate between the Achæan league and Sparta, but, when the Achæans advanced, he defeated them easily near Scarpheia; Mummius soon after superseded him, and returning to Italy he triumphed in 146. Consul in 143, he reduced northern Spain to obedience. In 131 censor with Q. Pompeius (the first two plebeian censors), he proposed that all citizens should be compelled to marry. He was a moderate reformer, and was considered the model of a fortunate man; before his death in 115 three of his sons had been consuls, one censor, and the fourth was a candidate for the consulship.

QUINTUS CÆCILIUS METELLUS NUMIDICUS, whose reputation for integrity was such that when he was accused of extortion the jury refused to examine his accounts, was selected to command against Jugurtha in 109 B.C. He subjected the army to rigid discipline, and aimed solely at seizing Jugurtha himself; he defeated the king by the river Muthul, and next year, after a difficult march through the desert, took his stronghold Thala. Marius, however, accused Metellus of protracting the war, and received the consulship for 107. Metellus returned to Rome and triumphed. Saturninus, whom as censor he tried to remove from the senate, passed in 100 an agrarian law, inserting a provision that all senators should swear to it within five days. All complied but Metellus, who retired to Asia. After Saturninus was killed, he returned, but died shortly after under suspicion of poison.

QUINTUS CÆCILIUS METELLUS PIUS, so called from his efforts to restore his father Numidicus, commanded in the Social War, defeating Q. Pompeius (88 B.C.). Sulla on departing gave him proconsular command over South Italy. When Marius returned, the soldiers, who had no confidence in Octavius, wished Metellus to command, but he refused. Metellus retired to Africa and afterwards to Liguria, resuming his former command on Sulla's return. In 86 he gained a decisive victory over Norbanus at Faventia. In Sulla's proscriptions he pleaded in favour of moderation. Consul in 80 with Sulla, he went to Spain next year against Sertorius, who pressed him hard till the arrival of Pompeius in 76. Next year Metellus defeated Sertorius's lieutenant Hirtuleius at Italica and Segovia, and joining Pompeius rescued him from the consequences of a check at Sucro. From this time Sertorius grew weaker till his murder in 72. Metellus had previously set a price on his head. In 71 he returned to Rome and triumphed. He was an upright man, of moderate ability.

QUINTUS CÆCILIUS METELLUS PIUS SCIPIO, son of Scipio Nasica, was adopted by the preceding. He was accused of bribery in 60 B.C., and defended by Cicero. In August 52 Pompeius procured him the consulship. Scipio in return supported Pompeius, now his son-in-law. On war being resolved on, Scipio was sent to Syria. His extortions were excessive, and he was about to plunder the temple of Artemis at Ephesus when he was recalled by Pompeius. He commanded the centre at Pharsalus, and afterwards went to Africa, where by Cato's influence he received the command. In 46 he was defeated at Thapsus; in his flight to Spain he was stopped by a corsair, and stabbed himself. His connexion with two great families gave him importance; but he was selfish and licentious, and his violence drove many from his party.

QUINTUS CÆCILIUS METELLUS CELER, prætor 63 B.C., was sent to cut off Catiline's retreat northward. Consul in 61, his personal influence prevented the holding of the Comptitia, which the senate had forbidden and the tribunes permitted. He opposed the agrarian law of the tribune L. Flavius, and stood firm even though imprisoned; the law had to be given up. He also tried, though fruitlessly, to obstruct Cæsar's agrarian law in 59. He died that year under suspicion of poison given by his wife Clodia.

METEMPSYCHOSIS, the transmigration of the soul, as an immortal essence, into successive bodily forms, either human or animal. This doctrine, famous in antiquity, and one of the characteristic doctrines of Pythagoras, appears to have originated in Egypt. This indeed is affirmed by Herodotus (ii. 123):—"The Egyptians are, moreover, the first who propounded the theory that the human soul is immortal, and that when the body of any one perishes it enters into some other creature that may be born ready to receive it, and that, when it has gone the round of all created forms on land, in water, and in air, then it once more enters a human body born for it, and this cycle of existence for the soul takes place in three thousand years."

Plato, in a well-known passage of the *Phædrus*, adapts, as was his wont, the Pythagorean doctrine to his myth or allegory about the soul of the philosopher. That soul, he says, though it may have suffered a fall in its attempt to contemplate celestial things, still is not condemned, in its first entrance into another form, to any bestial existence, but, according to its attainments, *i.e.*, to the progress which it has made in its aspiration for celestial verities, it passes, in nine distinct grades, into the body of some one destined to become a philosopher, a poet, a king, a general, a seer, &c.; or, if very inferior, it will animate a sophist or an autocrat (*τύραννος*). Plato extends the cycle of existence to ten thousand years, which is subdivided into periods of a thousand years, after the lapse of which the souls undergo

judgments, and are admitted to everlasting happiness or condemned to punishment.<sup>1</sup> It is after the period of a thousand years, he adds, that the human soul comes into a beast, and from a beast again into a man, if the soul originally was human.

Pythagoras, who was said to have travelled in Egypt,<sup>2</sup> brought this fantastic doctrine into Magna Græcia, and made it a prominent part of his teaching. He declared that he had himself been Euphorbus, the son of Panthus, in the time of the Trojan War, and had successively inhabited other human bodies, the actions of all which he remembered.<sup>3</sup> Closely connected with his theory of metempsychosis was his strict precept to abstain from animal food, even from eggs, from some kinds of fish, and (for some unknown, probably symbolical, reason) from beans.<sup>4</sup> There can be no doubt that the Egyptian custom of preserving the mummies of cats, crocodiles, and some other creatures had its origin in the notion that they had been inhabited by souls which might some day claim these bodies for their own. We cannot suppose that Plato or the later Greeks really believed in the transmigration of souls, though there are many allusions to it, generally of a somewhat playful character. Thus Menander, in the play called *The Inspired Woman* (*Ἐσφορομένη*), supposes some god to say to an old man, Crato, "When you die, you will have a second existence; choose what creature you would like to be, dog, sheep, goat, horse, or man." To which he replies, "Make me anything rather than a man, for he is the only creature that prospers by injustice."

Absurd and fantastic as such a doctrine as metempsychosis appears at first sight to be, it was in reality a logical deduction from primitive ideas about the nature of the soul. It is necessary to explain these ideas (which have important bearings on other questions) in order to show that metempsychosis was almost a necessary corollary to the belief that the soul was the vital or animating principle,—that the one distinction between organic and inorganic was the existence in the former of a *ψυχή*.

The difference between a dead body and a living body—or rather, one principal difference—was that the living animal breathed; and it was observed that, as soon as the breath left the body, not only did warmth and motion cease, but the body began to decay. Life, therefore, was breath, an opinion tacitly expressed by the Greek and Roman vocabulary, *animus, anima* (*ἀνεμος, ψυχή, πνεῦμα, spiritus*). But breath is air, and air is eternal and imperishable in its very nature. Therefore the "soul," or portion of air which gave animation to the body, did not perish at the dissolution of the body, but it was returned to the element of which it was composed, and out of which it came. It followed that, from the countless millions of "souls" emancipated from bodies in all time, and still flitting about invisibly in space, the air must literally swarm with souls,—a doctrine taught by Pythagoras.<sup>5</sup> Hence, any creature, human or bestial, that first drew the breath of life, might, so to say, swallow a soul, *i.e.*, take in with the act of respiration the very same particles of air which had animated some former body. For, although the soul was air, and returned to its kindred element, it was supposed to retain a peculiar character in intelligence

(*φρόνησις*), remembrance of the past, and knowledge and experience gained in some former existence. Any creature which first breathed might or might not inhale this or that soul, just as a net thrown into the water may catch this or that fish, or no fish at all. But if no "soul" was inhaled the creature was believed for that reason to die; and the different degrees of intelligence observed in different men and animals led to the notion that there must have been a difference in the souls that first animated them. Even the belief that the soul, especially near the time of dissolution from the body, could foretell future events was based on the notion of intelligence and consciousness resulting from experiences of the past.<sup>7</sup>

As all the science of modern times cannot say precisely what life is, nor how it first came upon this earth, it is not wonderful that so obvious, though wholly erroneous, an explanation should have presented itself to primitive man when first he began to inquire into the causes of things. The extension of life, by the same term *ψυχή*, to plants and apparently non-breathing things, which, however, had birth, growth, and death, was a development of a philosophic age, and we are not surprised to find Aristotle recognizing one form of life as *vegetable, φυτόν*.<sup>8</sup> The irrational confusion of "soul" with sentient bodily functions, the attribution to spirits (*εἶδωλα*) of motion, speech, or other muscular and material action, though still common, while metempsychosis is derided or forgotten, is in reality, perhaps, a less excusable superstition.

The Romans inherited the doctrine of metempsychosis from Ennius, the poet of Calabria, who must have been familiar with the Greek teachings which had descended to his times from the cities of Magna Græcia. In his *Annals*, or Roman history in verse, Ennius told how he had seen Homer in a dream, who had assured him that the same soul which had animated both the poets had once belonged to a peacock, a story that might seem to indicate Indian traditions. The *Pavo Pythagoreus* and the *Somnium Pythagorea* are referred to by Persius and Horace, as well as by Lucretius.<sup>9</sup>

Theories suggesting element-worship naturally led to the notion that air and ether (upper air) were divine.<sup>10</sup> Hence every soul, as being but a portion of it, was in itself divine, and therefore immortal. We thus see that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, whether attained by a sound or a vicious course of reasoning, was an inevitable conclusion for early thinkers. Pantheism taught that all the universe was pervaded by a divine mind, and Virgil cites the opinion of some, that the intelligence of bees was due to a portion of this universal mind residing in them, a view closely allied to the doctrine of metempsychosis.<sup>11</sup> A divine thing might be polluted, but not destroyed; hence the notion of purifying souls by airing them or burning away a material defilement is enlarged upon by Virgil in the sixth book of the *Aeneid* (724 sq.). (F. A. P.)

METEOR, METEORITE. The term meteor, in accordance with its etymology (*μετέωρος*), meant originally something high in the air. It has been applied to a large variety of phenomena, most of them of brief duration, which have place in the atmosphere. Disturbances in the air are aerial meteors, *viz.*, winds, tornadoes, whirlwinds, typhoons, hurricanes, &c. The vapour of water in the atmosphere creates by its forms and precipitations the aqueous meteors, *viz.*, clouds, fogs, mists, snow, rain, hail,

<sup>1</sup> P. 249 A. Comp. Rev. xx. 2, 13; Virg., *Æn.* vi. 745, "Donec longa dies, perfecto temporis orbe, concretam exemit labem," &c.

<sup>2</sup> Diogen. Laert., viii. 1, 3; Lucian, *Gallus*, § 18 sq., where the doctrine of metempsychosis and the stories about the pre-existence of Pythagoras are wittily satirized.

<sup>3</sup> Lucian, *Gallus*, §§ 4, 5; Diodor. Sic., x. §§ 9, 10; Hor., *Od.* i. 28, 10, "habentque Tartara Panthoiden iterum Oreo demissum."

<sup>4</sup> *Gallus*, 19, 33. For fanciful reasons for the prohibition of beans, see Lucian, *Vitarum Auctio*, § 5. <sup>5</sup> Frag. 222, Meineke.

<sup>6</sup> Diogen. Laert., viii. 1, § 32, *εἶνα πάντα τὸν ἀέρα ψυχῶν ἐμπλεῶν.*

<sup>7</sup> Diodor. Sic., xviii., § 1. <sup>8</sup> *Ethics*, lib. i. 13.

<sup>9</sup> Pers., *Sat.* vi. 9; Hor., *Epist.* ii. 1, 52; Lucret., i. 124.

<sup>10</sup> *Ἐ δὲ δῖος ἀὴρ*, Prometheus exclaims, *Æsch.*, *Prom.*, 88.

<sup>11</sup> *Georg.* iv. 219.

His quidam signis, atque hæc exempla secuti,  
Esse apibus partem divinæ mentis et haustus  
Ætherios dixere; deum namque ire per omnes  
Ætrasque tractusque maris cælumque profundum