A COMPARATIVE LITERARY STUDY OF PLATO AND PAUL.

BY

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A THESIS.

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A COMPARATIVE LITERARY STUDY OF PLATO AND PAUL.

OUTLINE.

Introduction:-

I. Relative position of each in modern minds.

II. Contribution of preceding and conteraneous history to each.

Discussion:-

A. Plato.

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B Paul.

I. Factors which influenced the work of Paul.

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   d. Grecian philosophy.
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2. Temperament.
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3. Purpose of Paul's productions.
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II. The style of Paul's writings.

1. Structure.
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Summary:
I. Amount of written work left by each.
II. Intended use and actual use made of writings.
III. Effect of logic employed.
IV. Comparison of temperament.
V. Relation of each historically to one another and to the world.
A survey of the progressive steps of civilization, reveals a large number of men who stand out distinctly against the common mass of society because of remarkable executive ability. They flashed meteor-like before the consciousness of the world, and their effects remained long after they themselves had perished. Such men were Alexander the Great and Napoleon. But others who presented themselves humbly before their fellow-men, have more truly lived in the succeeding generations, because of the fact that they incorporated into their lives that which is more enduring than brilliant deeds and fame---living ideas and principles. History once was a mere record of events; it now is the recognition of the struggle going on between divergent ideas which men simply interpret by action.

Hence the retrospective process of investigation finds its most productive fields to be those in which the great world-ideas have been undergoing a rapid and striking transformation. At few times in the world's history has there been a period better designed to foster the development of forceful thought than the Golden Age of Pericles, and few men have ever given such consistent aid to this general movement as the philosopher Plato.
It is not enough to recognize him as a distinct character with ideas far in advance of any which had so far been submitted to the world's consideration. He represents the highest intellectual development of one of the greatest civilizations of the world—the Grecian, and more than that, he represents a progressive tendency which cannot be limited by nation, or race, or era.

Closely following this age was one in which was formed the nucleus of a great religious system destined to affect the world most significantly. The Christian Age gave rise to the development of a wide-spread and influential moral revolution in which was involved every phase of man's life. The most striking exponent of this system, excepting the originator himself, was Paul, the Apostle of the Gospel among the Gentiles. The influence of these two men has permeated every part of civilization.

In the ever-recurring processes of existence, Plato sought for the Reality of the Universe and in his search he laid the basis for all the sciences which in point of time, have followed his work, such as the material sciences, the social sciences, and psychology. The problems which came to man could not long resist the increasing persistence of his inquiry. As a consequence there can be found today in every philosophical consideration a warm appreciation of him as a forerunner of a spirit of sincere and earnest investigation. In a very different
way, Paul the Apostle has helped to mold the world into a new form. He did not stimulate scientific research or philosophical meditation, but taught positively the dogmas of his belief. He held out a hope of future life which Plato vainly attempted to establish. He gave a practicable exposition of a moral code which would act as a purifying agent in society, and which Plato could not wholly incorporate into a working system. Paul was not an originator, but a propagandist. These two men stand, each in his own particular domain, as having exerted a most wonderful force in the development of human thought and action.

It was as if by fate that both came to their tasks at the time that they did and under the circumstances that so fittingly occurred. Under less fortunate conditions the results would have been far different. Local and temporary disturbances are often produced by the so-called "man of the hour," but those changes which are general and permanent, do not depend upon the erratic movements in society of irresponsible persons. In the greatest of characters there is a happy mixture of individual energy and favorable environment. Plato was heir to the rich legacy of Grecian strength and culture. The refinement which came through the developing civilization of Greece, contributed largely to the quality and stability of the work performed by this philosopher. The blood of aristocracy, the impulse of education, the broadening
tendencies of travel and intercourse, all lent their assistance in producing this remarkable man. Yet so great was his humility that he did not foresee or even dare to conjecture the honor that was to be accredited him.

In an analogous manner, Paul the Apostle was enabled to establish a set of principles which ultimately influenced the world more positively than did those of Plato. The contribution of Jewish civilization was not of the same type as that of Greece, but it was none the less effective in its operation. There had been accumulating during the history of the Jews, an intense and positive religious feeling, based upon a hope for world-wide dominion; and all the energy of Israel found its focus in the life of Paul, who brought over into the broader field of Christianity a vast store of traditional wealth. To use his own words, "After the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee," "of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews. Howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ." Thus through his zeal, the selfishness of Jewish pride gave way to a cosmopolitan interest in society.

No search, however thorough and prolonged, would be likely to disclose two men more completely prepared to perform their allotted tasks, more fully alive to the requirements of their situation, or more faithful in the discharge of their duties. It is not within the limits of
human ability to give a fair appreciation of the work of Plato and of Paul, so varied and intricate are their qualities; and it shall be the purpose of this discussion to deal merely with a comparison of the style of their writings and the different factors which had their bearing upon the peculiar form of literature produced by each.

It should not be supposed that any writer himself makes final determination as to the style his writing shall take on. In the case of Plato and of Paul, Jewish history and Jewish hope molded the character of the literary productions of the one, while Grecian culture and aristocracy affected the other. The human language, and the Greek in particular, is capable of such varied expression that the mere study of it as a vehicle of thought, becomes a fascinating undertaking.

The thought which Plato wished to convey by his writings would naturally be best transmitted by the pure Attic Greek, and yet for the sake of clearness or of force, he was not above using on occasion a striking word or phrase of common origin. Thus the task at hand determined quite largely the method of presentation, rather than any whim or mood which might possess the author. To seek then the fundamental factors which influenced the style of writing must be the first step in acquiring an appreciation of the manner by which the author set forth his particular doctrines.

Not the least important factor in any one's work is
temperament. As Professor James so aptly put it, a philosopher's "temperamental vision is the potentest of all premises." It flavors his philosophy of life, his religion and conduct. It stamps him as a child of circumstance more than anything else does.

Plato in his earlier life, was characterized by a restlessness like that of which Landor wrote in one of his "Imaginary Conversations," —"Those who are quite satisfied sit still and do nothing; those who are not quite satisfied are the sole benefactors of the world." His discontent did not abate, but became more calm and more steadily and properly directed. The spirit of Socrates' inquiry, not the results, drove him on in the endless search for Reality whose intangible form was tauntingly held out before him. If it had not been for this insatiable desire for truth, Plato might well have been a mediocre poet or dramatist, and even if he had ranked with the greatest of strictly literary men, he would still have been below Plato, the philosopher.

The boldness of philosophical investigation is likely to prompt a corresponding egoism, but throughout all the writings of Plato, except the Epistles, if indeed these be genuine, the name of the author seldom appears and never as a participant in the discussion. So strong had been the influence of Socrates that all the chief arguments were given in his name.

Plato did not consciously conceive of an idealistic
formula by which the problems of the universe might be solved, and yet he did see the incongruities of the materialism with which his system was involved. As a consequence he launched out into the abstract, adopting the simple yet lofty phraseology of pure reason. With no little exactness of diction he expounded his "Idea" of Virtue, Beauty, etc., but with a tinge of realism common to all who are not yet far removed from this natural philosophy.

The basis of his idealistic position depended upon the theory of Knowledge which he adopted. All the virtues of the soul were the outgrowths of an intelligent appreciation of and a discrimination between the consequences of different courses of action. Quite naturally it followed that vice and sin were due to a failure of the mind to interpret or to foretell these accurately.

In later days other philosophers adopted the same line of reasoning; but with the rise of psychology as a science, reason as a source of intelligent action, gave way to impulse. The correctness of Plato as to this question does not alter the fact that his attitude toward it drove him into the realm of pure reason where the very words were chosen because of their special fitness in describing coldly and definitely the attitude of his mind. If Plato was beyond the comprehension of the multitude, he could not well have written otherwise.
Living thus in the rigid, formal region of intellect, Plato lost, (if indeed he ever possessed it), that fervent feeling of worship toward God which speaks of humility and trust. And yet despite this, in his daring attempts to fathom the mysteries of the eternal, he maintained strict fidelity to God. In the "Apology of Socrates," he credits his master with these words, which evidently are as much his own, "Gentlemen of Athens, I respect and love you, but I shall obey God rather than you." This statement is not weaker than the declaration of Peter before the high priest at Jerusalem, although it came from the lips of a so-called pagan.

Naturally dependent, in Plato's mind, upon the idea of the Absolute or God, was that of the Immortality of the Soul. The "Phaedo" especially is given over to a proof of this doctrine through the intricacies of logic, analogies, and any method which will serve the end.

Notwithstanding the formality of style which resulted, there is at times an interesting side-play into mythology and popular ideas. His imaginative tendencies had not been destroyed in the search for truth, and besides he was still hampered by the sacred beliefs of the past. It is for both these reasons that we find his mind reveling in the fantastic conceptions of primitive Greece concerning the world and the underworld, after his long dis-
cussion in the "Phaedo" about the immortality of the soul. Such a diversity of subjects necessitates an equal diversity of style.

The purpose of a literary production also has weight in the consideration of an author's method of writing. The complex arguments of Plato as he searches for the essence of Reality, could not be expected to resemble very closely a religious exhortation of Paul. Even similarity of religious and philosophic ideas could not overcome the difference of style, which always varies according to the task in hand as do the different tools used in a workshop.

Wright in his "Greek Literature," says, "There is no doubt that, if Plato had been asked what was the end of his teaching, he would have replied that it was the improvement of the moral nature of man." Since he maintained as did his master Socrates, that Virtue rested upon Knowledge, the moral nature of man could be bettered in no other way than by the enlightenment of the intellect. For the sake of morality itself, we find that he led his thought from one point to another in logical sequence, and with the same care and earnestness with which Paul urged his readers to add to each succeeding virtue the one that was next in order.

Plato evidently had as a secondary purpose the task of justifying the life and work of Socrates, who had been
obliged to pay such a heavy penalty for abiding by his convictions. Socrates was made the principal speaker in all discussions, whether religious or philosophic; and the most successful attempts toward high literary polish are given as if spoken by him, rather than by any other character of the dialogues. It is difficult to estimate at this time to what extent Socrates really did influence his pupil, but suffice it to say that no other man has ever been so completely transferred into the work of a disciple. Even Paul was not more humble in presenting Christ to the world than was Plato in presenting his master Socrates. Paul sometimes stopped long enough in his letter to express personal opinions on a side issue, and even to glory in his own achievements, though legitimately so, but Plato presented his own philosophy as that of Socrates, and left to us the distracting yet fascinating problem of disentangling his own teachings from those of the master. Such reticence is rare in one who is so bold in giving expression to doctrines that revolutionize religion and society.

Plato as has been observed, was progressive in thought rather than conservative, and a survey of his works with a view to structure will reveal the same tendency. The Grecian Classics are remarkable for the sustained feeling that is present in every tragedy, comedy,
lyric, or epic. To have relaxed for a moment even, the fatalistic trend, the jest and humor, the musical rhythm, or heroic measure, would have been the signal for a strenuous attack on the author. In modern literature the attempt is made to combine and heighten these varied methods by contrast, and it is in this particular that Plato most nearly approaches modern literary style. Though this was his tendency, he still was bound closely enough by tradition to his own day, to act as its leader. Mahaffy in his "Greek Classical Writers" says, "We see in Plato a child of his age, and yet its leader, the most Attic of Athenians, and yet its disaffected citizen, a profound skeptic, and yet a lofty preacher, an enemy of the poets, and yet a rhapsodist himself, a thinker that despaired of his own people, and yet aloft on the Pisgah of speculation, looking out with prophetic vision upon a far future of better laws, purer religion, and nobler life."

Such an attitude as his could not be well conveyed by tragedies or comedies, framed according to rigid laws. It was here that the dialogue as a form of literature, was adopted for this purpose. Plato may not have been its originator, but at least he became so proficient in its use as to discount any other author who employed it. Four distinct advantages were derived from its use: first, Socrates, in life, character, and works, was best pre-
sented; second, the dialogue most clearly exemplified Socrates' method of searching for truth, whether or not it was found; third, in instances where the truth was not found, the dialogue offered excellent opportunity for putting forward provisional views that they might be exploited and later adopted or rejected; fourth, the love for drama and poetry, which was so much in evidence in Plato's early life, was thus satisfied in the dialogue.

No other form of literature was so capable of having worked into it, the opinions of different moods. It was possible to present an argument in a seemingly simple method, but which was in reality, subtle and involved. Humor, satire, poetry, and tragedy, to the extent that the author possessed them, were all incorporated with delightful variety.

It may not be apparent to a casual reader of a translation or to a student who is compelled to toil blindly with the original, that there is any system to be found in these dialogues, but a careful observer is able to note a most orderly series of arguments, interspersed with diverging ideas and sometimes with playful touches which enlived the interest. The prologue introduces the characters, with a proper setting of time and place, and from this there is easy transition to the opening discourses on some philosophical subject, which might indeed be called Act I. There is one central theme and 'Mahaffy.
a plot which leads gradually to a climax where, (if perchance the evidence has been sufficient), the conclusion is finally drawn. Supplementing this is a short epilogue in which the didactic element gives way and the characters are properly dismissed.

If the so-called Epistles of Plato do not bear the marks of genuineness, as most scholars maintain, we have then but one piece of his literature which is not in dialogue form.--"The Apology of Socrates." Evidently the purpose of the author was to reproduce as accurately as possible the exact words of Socrates as he stood before the Athenian court, not in defence of his life, but in its justification. A responding thrill to the nobility of his character cannot fail to come to every appreciative reader, for a position of confident assurance, so lofty and strong that nothing of selfishness could reach it was maintained by this teacher and questioner to the very last. The account may be colored by Plato's personal love for his master, yet whether or not we have now an expanded shorthand account of the "Apology" or a reproduction from memory, the universal conception is that had we been present at its delivery in Athens, our emotions would have been simply stronger and not different from those we now experience. There is no involving of moral precepts in justification of any course which might result in the confusion of any disciple, but all
stands out with attractive simplicity.

As to the unity of Plato's thought, a subject which Shorey has worked out in detail, it may be said that the dialogues do not disclose any great variety of inharmonious ideas or transition from early to more mature positions. If his philosophy had been wholly the result of an individual struggle, there would likely have been a consistent growth, but instead Socrates, during the last ten years of his life and while Plato was only in his twenties, laid the foundation for the main conclusions which waited for one less influenced by direct personal contact than Plato to develop them. Nevertheless some critics have made havoc with the dialogues by arranging them under stress of the supposition that Plato grasped one by one the points of his system, as if they must correspond to certain presupposed requirements. Such a mechanical disposition destroys the life which they breathe, and adds little if anything to the student's appreciation.

The distinctive marks of Plato's writings are not to be found in the structure alone. In fact the most striking features are to be found in what is properly called style. Any one might write philosophy in dialogue form, or reproduce forensic arguments, but only Plato could write with the vigor and life which characterizes his works.

Besides the form of the dialogue, which is essentially that of the drama, there is an element in the style which is even more dramatic than the form. It is true that the subject matter would prevent the staging of the dialogues,
yet there is enough of action to give the impression that all is natural. For instance Phaedo in relating to Echecrates the incidents of Socrates' last days, mentions the dismissal of Xanthippe with true dramatic skill, and following that, the homely incident in which Socrates is seen to rise from his couch and rub his aching joints, remarking at the singular fact that pleasure is related by nature to its apparent opposite, pain. Upon this simple incident hinges the whole argument of the dialogue. It would seem to require no little skill to evolve the doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul from such a commonplace happening, but Plato finds here an opportunity to show his aptitude.

A more vividly realistic touch is found in the main part of the dialogue. As if to relieve the monotony of the long recital of abstractions, or to show the skillful method of Socrates in bringing his wearied and discouraged companions back to the argument, Plato makes Phaedo say:

"He might be compared to a general rallying his defeated and broken army, urging them to accompany him and return to the field of argument.----- He stroked my head, and pressed the hair upon my neck-----he had a way of playing with my hair; and then he said, 'Tomorrow, Phaedo, I suppose that these fair locks of yours will be severed.-----To-day and not tomorrow, if this argument dies and we cannot bring it to life again, you and I will both shave our

\[\\text{xxxvIII, 89, B.}\\]
looks; and if I were you, and the argument got away from me, and I could not hold my ground against Simmias and Cebes, I would myself take an oath, like the Argives, not to wear hair any more until I had renewed the conflict and defeated them.' This pleasing little sidelight into their companionship, reveals as much of Plato as of Socrates.

Prose is not ordinarily tempered by such varied strains as are found in the Dialogues. It is possible that this characteristic was the result of an effort to parody the style of the popular writings of the day. If such was the case, he was so skillful that the superficiality was made secure from the ordinary investigator. But he was not able to maintain this continually, for at times the style is more than an imitation, ---it is the outgrowth of genuine and sincere feeling. In some of the lighter arguments he may have assumed with playful mood the stilted diction of the current writers, but in those passages which deal with the defence made by Socrates for his voluntary course, no commonplace poet or tragedy writer was allowed to offer a pattern. The "Apology" above all other Platonic productions is essentially free from all outside influences. It preserves most faithfully the bold simplicity and ruggedness of the speaker. The "Crito" is of the same nature, for in this dialogue is submitted the justification of Socrates' action.

The poetical element is most generally considered as

'Dialogues of Plato. Vol II, Jowett.'
being a result of imitation, yet in all probability this also is largely original. Plato once made some youthful attempts at writing verse, but when he came under the influence of Socratic philosophy, the poems were destroyed and forgotten. The early training in dreams, however, could not be put aside as easily as the manuscripts, and hence his admirers have been enabled to find charming passages of easy-flowing language throughout the philosophic discourses. The wide-spread influence of his thought was not wholly due to the exactness of his reasoning, but in large measure, to that persuasive quality which leads one on, though he may not see the path clearly. One may read Plato with an interest equal to that with which he may read Browning. The subject matter may be difficult, but it is encased in an exterior that is pleasing to the most exacting taste.

The finished argument for the immortality of the soul might have concluded the "Phaedo," but Plato preferred to state his opinion as to the future life and the future world. With a vision not much different from that of Saint John, he pictures,—not the new Jerusalem, but "the subtler world," of which "even the shore is not to be compared to the fairer sights of this world." Faithfully he recites the journeyings of the immortal soul according to sacred traditions, as it seeks its final resting place. Here is where we see his fine poetical skill at work, as he puts
forward the longings of his own soul, provisional though it may be, yet as he himself says, "καλὸν γὰρ τὸ ἀθλὸν, καλὶνίκας μεγαλὴν." —"Fair is the prize and the hope great."

The poet oftentimes outruns the philosopher, and it may well be said that Plato the poet, in that he saw visions of truth is far beyond Plato the philosopher. The organized consciousness of man has only a very limited scope, while the so-called subconscious nature reaches out and brings him in contact with the outlying fragments of reality. This is no doubt the secret of Plato's hold on world thought, for we feel that he appreciated much more than he systematized.

Plato's work is not characterized by impassioned flights or the studied rhetoric of popular sophistry, designed to carry a point by the blinding of reason, but rather by a willing dependence upon the humbler arguments of universal experience. He approaches the discussion of any subject in a calm and self-confident, yet not over-confident spirit, and even as he sweep son with exultation, we have no fear that he will sacrifice strength for beauty. He adheres strictly to his purpose of defining the proposition at hand in such statements that no one can mistake his meaning. It might be expected that the conversation put in the mouths of the characters would be labored and cumbersome when carried on in such a manner, but this is rarely the
In his most sublime passages even, the same calm spirit predominates, whether it be in defence of the laws and of obedience to them, or in hopeful anticipation of future freedom for the soul, whose immortality he firmly believes has been established. The composure which he displayed makes one wonder what might have been done, had all restraint been cast aside.

However when we consider the logical trend of Plato's mind, there is no surprise at the even tone which pervades his works. He endeavored to show each particular point with utmost precision, and the impetuous method of Paul, with its broken constructions and its digressions, would hardly have been consistent with his purpose. Analogy and deductive logic were the chief methods of argument used, and for that age were quite effective. The body was compared to a musical instrument, and the soul was its harmony, but this argument was quickly disposed of on the ground that it was not in agreement with the former statement acceded to—that of the preëxistence of ideas. With respect to Plato's use of logic, Jowett makes this comment: "Living in an age when logic was beginning to mold human thought, Plato naturally cast his belief in immortality into a logical form. And when we consider how much the doctrine of ideas was also one of words, it is not surprising that he should have fallen into verbal fallacies: early logic is always mistaking the truth of the form for the truth of the matter. It is easy to see that the alternation of opposites
is not the same as the generation of them out of each other; and that the generation of them out of each other, which is the first argument in the "Phaedo," is at variance with the mutual exclusion of each other, whether in themselves or in us, which is the last."

The use of logic is to Plato's credit, despite the weakness which is apparent to the modern philosopher. But let no enthusiastic admirer assert that there are no faults to be found, for there is at times a lack of definiteness which is disappointing. Reflection upon the habit of Plato in putting a tentative conclusion forward lessens this. At another time he seems to cover up his inability to clinch the argument, by a highly imaginative picture of the future state of the soul with its intense joys or sorrows. The narrative becomes as vague as does the Apocalypse of Saint John, and serves no purpose save that of diverting the reader's mind until the scene can be closed and every answer be forestalled.

Possibly the weakest point in Plato's method, can be found in the conversations of the dialogues. The characters are supposed to have equal opportunity in presenting their beliefs in their own individual way, but so eager is Plato at certain stages of the development, that all the conversation is entrusted to one character, generally Socrates, while the others are allowed time only for the monotonous rejoinders. "Yes, certainly." "It seems so." and "By all means." These parrot-like responses are,
from the standpoint of the English critic, the most tiresome and objectionable features in the dialogues, but fortunately thoughtful translators are able to cull them all out, but no one can ever insert the answers which Plato might have made his characters speak.

This brief analysis of Plato's position as an author, has found him one of the cleverest of the world's writers, human indeed, and with the common faults of humanity, but inspired with the spirit of truth as certainly as any. Our attention is now turned to the other writer whose contribution is even more significant to the world in general. The difference in environment, method, and result, will become apparent as the investigation is carried on. Paul the Apostle was from earliest childhood familiar with the Greek tongue which in the first century A. D. was the prevailing language of civilization. It is not at all probable that he was familiar with Grecian Classics as was Plato, but he used the Greek language simply as a medium of everyday intercourse. He made no claim of being proficient in rhetoric, for he was proud of the fact that he had a message far more satisfying than that which literature afforded.

If the few biographical and autobiographical records of the New Testament are accepted, it becomes evident that Paul's chief concern was wrapped up in the hope of Israel. His birth, home training, and education, were strictly Jewish.
When transferred to Christianity, he lost no essential part of his previous life, but added instead a hitherto unknown zeal.

The influence of the Septuagint is quite marked, for not only did he quote freely from it, but many evidences can be noted of its indirect effects. It has been argued that Paul was familiar with the popular poets of Greece also, yet the three quotations found in his writings do not warrant such a conclusion. In the famous speech at Athens a line is quoted from "certain even of your own poets," "τοῦτο ράμοι ταῖς ἐννοίαις ἐστευεν." These exact words are found in a poem of Aratus, a Cilician poet, and resemble a line from Cleanthes, who once lived at Athens. In the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians occurs an iambic trimeter found also in the "Thais" of the Athenian Meander,

--- "φθιόμονι φήμι, Χριστιανοί, κακά!"

Also he quotes in Titus, "Μηρίτες ἐν θείοτερι, κακά τοίο, παστέρες αργαί," from a Cretan soothsayer, Epimenides. These three references offer no conclusive evidence that Paul was well acquainted with current literature. The likelihood is that he had picked up these lines which were used as proverbs by everyone and used them for his own special purpose.

Without doubt the Hebrew style guided him more than did that of the Greek; also the mystical attitude of the East in religious and philosophical problems is present in a more pronounced proportion than is the rational spirit of the
West. This is nowhere more clearly shown than in the identification which he makes of the sinful man with Adam, and of the one seeking salvation with Christ. The foundation of this conception is the relation of cause and effect, but like all mystics, Paul sometimes overlooked the method by which he attained his belief, and emphasized it as a state wholly present to and appreciated by the spirit of man. Instead of sin being made possible to all men through Adam's transgression, or being caused by it, the whole sinned with Adam. In a similar manner, "one died for all, therefore all died, 2 "ye died and your life is hid with Christ in God." 3 Such a method of thought was quite effective in dealing with the people with whom he came in contact in his travels. The intense fire within him burned too fiercely to admit of wasting time on minor points or in repetition. Plato would have lost his calmness, if he had attempted to grasp conclusions minus their approaches, and Paul would have lost his positive convictions, if he in turn had striven for detailed analysis except in the personal problems with which he chiefly dealt.

Although the general philosophical and religious temperament manifested in the Pauline Epistles belongs to the Eastern mysticism, there are in some of his conceptions traces of Grecian thought. In the first place, Paul went beyond the Jewish and the Christian idea of God as the

1Rom. V, VI. 2 II Cor. V:14. 3 Col. III:3.
Heavenly Father, the Shepherd, and other relationships suggested by tribal and pastoral life, and seemed to observe just such discriminations as the Greek philosophers were wont to make. If Paul had been strictly Jewish in his theology, it is doubtful if he would have spoken of Christ existing in the \( \mu \rho \phi \, \), "form" of God. He also uses the closely related word \( \sigma \chi \mu \alpha \), "fashion", possibly with a careful distinction, considered as existing between \( \mu \rho \phi \, \) as referring to the essential nature, and \( \sigma \chi \mu \alpha \) to the external appearance. Also \( \theta \epsilon \delta \gamma \), "deity", differs from \( \theta \epsilon \iota \gamma \), "divinity", as essence differs from quality or attribute, according to Thayer and others. The "oneness" of God taught by Paul, may be the result of Jewish mysticism and not of Grecian philosophy. In considering again Paul's speech on Mars' Hill, noticeable marks of Western thought are found in the words, "for in Him, we live, and move, and have our being." Nor is the idea there expressed distantly removed from modern definitions of the imminence of God.

Paul speaks also of the "outward man and inward man" in true Platonic manner. The body is a burdensome "garment" or an "earthly tabernacle" in which the soul must for a time reside, but when freed it will go to live in the "tabernacle which is from Heaven." Let these foregoing ideas be compared with Plato's description as given in the "Phaedo," of the release of the soul: "that soul, I say, herself invisible, departs to the invisible world---to the divine and

Phil. II:6. \(^2\)Col. II:9. \(^3\)Rom. I:20. \(^7\)II Cor. IV:16.
immortal and rational; thither arriving, she is secure of bliss, and is released from the error and folly of men, their fears and wild passions and all other human ills, and forever dwells, as they say of the initiated, in company with the gods." In both Paul and Plato we find a dualism not only in man’s nature but also in the whole universe.

There is a legalistic style in the Pauline Epistles which has been attributed both to familiarity with Jewish law on the one hand, and with Roman law on the other. From both sources this element may well have come, for Paul was proud of his civil relationship to the Roman Government, and he was equally proud of his Jewish ancestry. That he was ever in any way closely associated with the Roman Seneca, has never been firmly established. Both were influenced by the culture of Tarsus, and both wrote of life as a warfare. So it is possible that Paul was in sympathy with many of the ideas which were prevalent at Rome.

Pushing out from between all these determining factors is the person of Paul himself, sometimes minimizing, sometimes enhancing their value and influence. He was not as uniform in temperament as Plato seems to have been, and hence he is more difficult to describe. As occasions demanded, he could be stern and forbidding and rebuke the open sin or hypocrisy as no other could. Immorality in his eyes, was in subordination to the will of Christ rather

'The Dialogues of Plato, Jowett.
than a lack of human knowledge, and so he dealt with it unsparingly. The fact that he was writing directly to persons whom he knew and not to imaginary friends, brought out the touches of life which are so prominent in his letters. If his correspondents were weak, he shared with them his strength; if they were living in ignorance, he imparted knowledge to them; and if they were sinful, he instructed them in righteousness. All that he did was the outgrowth of a burning love for mankind.

It may justly be said of him that the personal element entered quite freely into his writings, but it cannot be said that it was Paul's desire that it should. The presentation of the Gospel of Christ was so distasteful to the self-satisfied world, that abuse of all kinds was brought down upon Paul, but as in the case of Plato, he did not defend himself, except for the sake of truths more precious than his own life. He established his own claims to apostleship that he might turn more men from unrighteousness to righteousness, and he asserted that he supported himself, that he might not be accused of being a parasite, drawing his life from the church. His boldness is more than pardonable, it is highly commendable, for without it his letters would be characterless.

However important the early training, philosophy, religion, and temperament may be, the purpose of Paul is the final criterion by which his written work is to be judged.
What was his purpose, and did he fulfill it? As was stated above, the Dialogues of Plato were written in the search for knowledge, for the author was a philosopher, -- a lover and seeker of truth. Paul, however, had a somewhat different aim. He had received his wisdom "by revelation," and he "was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." There was no time now to seek for further verification of the Gospel, -- it must be put into practice. And so we see that the purpose of Paul was preeminently to teach knowledge. The value--the truth of the instruction, was to be demonstrated by its practicability.

The edification of fellow-Christians was the sole end for which the letters were written, and consequently all other motives were ignored. It made but little difference if constructions were loose, as long as redemption from the evil of the world was offered to men. Critics who contend that Paul was continually seeking self-aggrandizement, should bear in mind that the occasions of his boasting were provoked by most ruthless attacks on the Gospel. And if he had turned his boundless energy to his own advantage, he could have offered us productions far outranking from the literary judge's standpoint, that which he did write. This general survey of the purpose of Paul is sufficient to give an appreciation of his work. A detailed study of the letters separately would reveal a special purpose in each one, which he fulfilled with phenomenal success.
In turning now to the definite characteristics of Paul's style, it is with a clearer understanding because of this preliminary study. We are charmed by the positiveness of his convictions, astounded by his daring, and chastened by his love. So varied are the moods displayed that the authenticity of different letters has often been called in question.

As aids in this great work of impressing the truth of the Gospel upon the world, Paul wrote his letters to persons, churches or groups of churches, with which he had been associated in his travels, and all dealt with matters that were primarily local. The letters to Titus, Timothy, and Philemon, are the private letters, though Philemon alone can be called so strictly. The letters may be grouped according to similarity, as I and II Thessalonians; Galatians, I and II Corinthians, Romans; Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon; and the Pastoral Epistles. Romans and Ephesians mark the extremes of style as it is found in Paul. Romans whose language and arguments are full of an aggressive spirit is the stronger of the two. The Ephesian letter however, moves slowly, the sentences do not seem so clear, and the thought is more involved and less concise. The causes of this difference are difficult to determine, probably it is because Romans was written during a period of controversy over doctrinal matters, while Ephesians is made to deal more with abstract truths. The writer

'Messages of the Bible, Stevens.'
had been worn by his labors and was languishing in prison while composing the latter epistle. All the vigor of doctrinal discussion had been driven from his heart, and instead of engaging in the spirited thrusting and parrying of earlier combats, he was content to push forward slowly, protected by an accumulating mass of argument. Of the structural peculiarities, a close examination reveals a marked tendency toward anacoluthon. While this is hardly admissible in the English language, the Greek permits its frequent employment, especially in passages of highly wrought emotion. "Broken constructions," says Prof. W. Stairs, "do not justify the statements that the New Testament writers are 'bungling writers.'" Plato sometimes changed his sentence structure without warning, but not as frequently as Paul.

One of the most involved constructions is in Romans V:12-19, "Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned:--for until the law sin was in the world,--". In the phrase, ζῷος ἐν τῷ ἁμαρτίᾳ καὶ ζῷος ἐν τῷ ἁμαρτίᾳ, the idea of the origin of sin is suggested and Paul finds it more to his purpose or liking, to continue with "sin" as the subject and not the verb, and hence the change.

This single reference is sufficient to illustrate the peculiar tendency of Paul's mind when under stress of a
line of thought which appealed to him so forcibly, that even his readers are carried over the intervening gap by the same clarifying intuition. There are many other instances where the break is so slight that a literal rendering into English is readily understood, but in the foregoing passage and others like it, words must be inserted or the punctuation changed before it is clear to the reader.

Quite significant of a keen appreciation of striking methods of presentation, is the use made of paranomasia. Paul employed this device in the first chapter of the Roman letter in two instances, — "For the unseen things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made." An apparent contradiction such as this, would serve to impress the careful distinction that was intended. Thus, the one fact that God's wisdom and power may be invisible to the indifferent observer, gives way upon careful consideration of "the things that are made," to the other fact that they have become clearly visible. Again he says, "And even as they did not approve to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to an unapproved mind. The meaning is not obscure, but it is very difficult to transfer into English the delicate personal touches which relieve Paul's letters of the stiff lines of conventionality. A thorough study of language, occasion, and author, alone will suffice in such cases.
The most interesting letter as a source from which the characteristics of the man Paul may be ascertained, is the one written to Philemon, who sometime before had been converted by the preaching of the Apostle at Colossae. A slave Onesimus, took some advantage of his master, Philemon, went to Rome, where he too was converted. "The slave of Philemon became the freedman of Christ" and returned to his master at the request of Paul. The strict privacy of the letter granted an occasion for unusual freedom of expression. Stevens suggests the following rendering which makes clear the play upon the name Onesimus, which means profitable,---"Now I entreat you for my spiritual child Onesimus, who, I know, has belied his name and has proved unprofitable, but who will be what his name imports, and will henceforth be really profitable both to thee and to me," and again where is used the rare verb ὑγιής from which Onesimus is derived,---"Let me be profited by thee in the Lord; I have sent back your Onesimus, no longer merely a slave but a Christian brother; now prove yourself to be my Onesimus, my Profitable by receiving him as such."

There is also a touch of humor when Paul suggests in a playful mood that in case Philemon has lost anything through the escape of Onesimus, he might charge it to Paul's account, since having received salvation through the Apostle's preaching he owed everything to him anyway.

Not only did Paul yield to the temptation to play upon Lightfoot.
a word, but often he was led aside by some suggested thought, and only after some little time spent in digression would he return, if indeed at all. To illustrate, he opens the Roman Letter with the salutation of "Paul--called to be an apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God." The word "gospel" suggests an explanation of its source (verse 2), its reference to the Son concerning whom an account is given (verses 3 and 4), and from whom the apostleship had been received which was for all the world (verses 5 and 6); then follows the conclusion of his greeting. In the eighth verse appears what seems to be the first reason for thankfulness to God. Paul is carried away by emotion, however, and never returns to his former intention of enumerating each item.

One of Paul's favorite methods of argument was by means of parallel illustrations which were familiar to his readers. What value he placed upon them himself we cannot know, but their effectiveness with those who were in need of instruction, is without question. When the Judaizers attempted to quote Scripture to refute his claims, he was able to turn their own sacred texts against them. Perhaps the most distressing contention that Paul had to meet was that men could only receive the salvation of Christ through first becoming Jews. It was not difficult, as we view the discussion today, for Paul to show that the same charges which the Jews brought against the Gentiles, might
be brought against the Jews themselves, and that the laws of moral conscience contained as much salvation as the laws of Moses.

The allegorical method, while somewhat akin to parallelism, was used very sparingly. Paul seemed to mistrust the value of its evidence, though possibly it may not have been as acceptable to the minds of those whom he desired to convince. The well-known allegory in Galatians IV, of the handmaid and the free woman, is preceded by arguments sufficient in themselves, and even prefaced by the statement that "these things contain an allegory," as if to warn the Galatians that the following paragraph was meant as an illustration rather than as positive proof. The arguments (of the allegory), as Luther says, are but the painting of the house, after it has been built.

It may appear that Paul sacrificed exactness and conclusiveness by a careless manner of writing; however, we feel, when we have finished any one of his letters and have considered his aim, that he has effectively gained his purpose. Method may have been surrendered, gaps may have been left in the argument, cumbersome and involved sentences may have been employed, but at the end the logical sequence is evident, every point seems clear, and the conclusion is driven home with a positiveness peculiar to Paul alone.

There cannot well be a passive acceptance of an intellectual premise, there must be a moral and spiritual awakening in the
Any feeling on our part that the main points have not been carried, arises in all likelihood from our failure to appreciate the close relationship which existed between Paul and the churches or persons whom he was addressing. There was a perfect understanding of many less important matters of local interest, which if clear now would answer our perplexing questions. We cannot read between the lines as would be necessary to get the whole message. It was wholly useless for him to provide for contingencies which might arise later, for he was writing for that particular time, with no thought that his correspondence would be handed down indefinitely.

The author's complete absorption in the immediate conditions explains his indifference to the outer form. He wrote to the Corinthians that when he came unto them, he came not with excellency of speech or wisdom, for he had determined not to know anything among them save Jesus Christ and him crucified. Later he wrote to these same Corinthians, saying, "But though I be rude in speech, yet I am not in wisdom." It was only when Paul overlooked the restraints of language, and grappled boldly with profound problems that he became most interesting, just as Plato became truly sublime when he forgot to mimic his contemporaries and wrote as an enthusiastic philosopher.

These peculiarities of structure which have been touched upon, show the results that temperament and environment have
roduced, but there is yet to be noticed the subtler character-
istics of literary style which are not confined by
ules of grammar. They permeate every phrase and sentence,
giving life and soul to the production, leavening the whole
th the leaven of increasing force. It is by these intan-
ible qualities that we feel and appreciate but cannot de-
ine. They seem to be the outreaches of those things which
en be systematized according to human reason, but pass far
beyond the limits of discursive thought, and submit the
nal judgment as to the fulfillment of the author's mission.

There is nothing more prominent in Paul's style than
the oratorical element, which corresponds to the tendency
toward poetry found in Plato. It is not the studied elo-
quence of the Sophists, but the natural manner of a sincere
man endeavoring to impress the truth upon his friends. The
only strange thing is that oratory should be so prominent
in correspondence, but it must not be forgotten that Paul
was first of all an orator, and that only a most insigni-
ficant part of his works survived, and that, not because it
was more valuable or more characteristic of the man, but be-
cause it was cast in more enduring form. This quality is
common to all the letters, but is much more noticeable in
some than in others. The different occasions and the vary-
ing mood of the author determined the force of appeal to
which he resorted.

A comparison between the speeches of Paul which are re-
orded in the Acts of the Apostles and his letters, shows
that he was truly an orator at all times. It should be
borne in mind, however, that Luke's account may be tinged
with a style that is not genuinely Pauline, and also that
the letters themselves may have been slightly influenced
by the different amanuenses employed. Hence a comparison
cannot be absolute.

In general it may be observed that both speeches and
letters which have a tendency toward eloquence, are likely
to be somewhat impetuous and broken in style, varying in
degree according to the personality of the speaker or
writer and the nature of the subject in hand. It has never
been claimed for Paul that he wrote with any great degree
of literary skill. The rugged strength of the messenger
and the urgency of the message are the most attractive
features that can be found in the epistles. Undivided
attention to a definite purpose of such vital significance
as was involved, is a satisfactory explanation and justi-
fication for even a noticeable degree of roughness. But
Paul's attitude toward his work was more than that of
simple interest, he was intensely wrought up over the possi-
ble results of his teaching respecting the Gospel. At
times he was enthusiastic, at others discouraged; sometimes
kind and eager to comfort, or severe and satirical as the
exigencies of the case might demand. No single letter is
marked by uniform mental quality, but often several emotions
were inwrought into as small a compass as one chapter.

in the case of the Corinthians, Paul hardly knew, as it
seems, whether or not to upbraid the church for the factions which had arisen there, or to pity those who had such temptations placed before them. That men should gather in separate bodies under the names of Apollos, Cephas, Paul, and Christ, was one of the most flagrant violations of the teachings and spirit of Jesus. The most passionate appeal that Paul could bring to bear, was needed under such conditions.

The second letter to the Corinthians is even more impetuous, and because of this "tempest, torrent, and whirlwind of passion," a number of passages which baffle solution, occur, interspersed among some of the most clear thoughts of the whole New Testament. The persons who were causing the trouble understood quite clearly the import of every sentence and felt the sting of his just rebuke. The outer form which is to us so jagged and rough, cut keenly and surely into their heart of selfishness. All reserve on the part of Paul, was cast aside and he dealt the deserved blows of censure. It was Paul the rightful apostle of his Master, who spoke so boldly and vehemently, yet in a spirit tempered by the satisfaction that only a few were in need of such admonition.

The presence of the personal element may seem to have destroyed the effectiveness of the argument, as emotion is generally opposed to logical clearness. The carefully wrought out logic of Plato however, is not to be compared from the standpoint of effectiveness, with the Apostle's
appeals. Furthermore a detailed analysis of any one of the argumentative letters reveals a surprising unity and consistency of thought. Not only are the most substantial proofs submitted, but also the arguments of the opponents are turned back against them. Of decided advantage is the concreteness of every piece of evidence. Even the abstract terms which he frequently used, words of his own invention, were made concrete in their application to life.

The importance of the outcome of the moral program which Paul preached, led him into a dogmatic attitude toward his associates, not an overbearing dogmatism but one of clearest conviction. His humility on the other hand, was almost without equal, for he considered himself as the greatest of sinners, since he had persecuted the church, which later he came to know as the most potent factor for the betterment of society. And although no wrongdoing could be wholly excused, he knew too well the temptation of the flesh, to condemn unreservedly an erring disciple. It was only when he considered the ethical aspects of the teachings of Christ that he was accustomed to forget himself and his failings and adopt the bold manner of a reformer.

Few tasks are more difficult than that of summarizing the weaknesses of such a writer as Paul, giving at the same time an appreciation of his work. And yet in all fairness to the plan of investigation, no unguarded statement of excellency should be awarded to any candidate for favor.
To modern readers the Pauline Epistles contain many passages whose obscurity cannot be attributed to errors of the text. The difficulty arises from a lack of knowledge as to the particulars involved. Its only effect is that present day students are perplexed by the problem of determining the intended application, and consequently are led aside in a fruitless search from the more vital lessons which surround the disputed point. A hasty and careless scansion of the letters may result in a lack of interest, dependent however, not upon the author's inability, but because the reader has not yet placed himself as much as possible, in the position of the one who was the actual receiver of the letter. Sometimes there is a slight feeling of disappointment because the argument employed has this very characteristic,—that it is the argument which was based upon the authorities of that time and place. The greater the appreciation of every local reference, the fewer are the faults of Paul, concerning most of which it might be said that they are not faults of Paul, but of our understanding.

There must be some reason for the survival of these letters, for the world is too heartless to preserve any contribution to literature merely for the sake of having a source from which may be drawn illustrations of possible faults. Such a course would be negative; the ideal alone is the positive guide.

In the lesser works of art, the inharmonious combi-
nations of the dilettante are the only noticeable characteristics, while in the masterpieces, the personality of the artist smooths over and minimizes the once conspicuous faults of incompetency. If Paul had followed the directions of chance or of inclination, he would never have passed beyond the stage of a novice, and his efforts would have succumbed to the persistent demands for a justifying purpose. As it was, his own aggressive personality, spurred on by the promptings of love and duty, transcended the weakness of grammar and rhetoric. When the charges of broken constructions, of cumbrous flow of thought, and of spirited movement that leaps from point to point, have arrayed themselves against the claim for Paul's excellence, they fall in the impotence of their opposition. If, as is generally done in this modern age, the test of utility be applied to the Apostle's letters, these spectres of the grammarians and purists, no longer frighten or dishearten the reader who now loves to jostle with them under the leadership of his hero.

From the foregoing discussion of Plato and of Paul separately, some conclusions may be drawn indicative of the relative merits of each as authors and as men of progress. The works of each are ample and characteristic, but the life history is more obscure. Paul, in all likelihood, wrote more than now remains as credited to his name, while the reverse is true of Plato. Instead of seeking for more literature which may be ascribed to him the critics are endeavoring to
eliminate all the spurious writings which for some reason have crept into the so-called Platonic canon. Both Paul and Plato wrote of masters who did not write, each was enriched by the treasures of his own nation's past, both sought the moral enlightenment of man, one through the intellect, the other through the heart and both have become immortal in the mind of the world.

While indeed the purpose of both authors was much the same, the use made of their writings differs widely. Plato is not extensively cited as a guide in matters of morality or of religion, or even as a guide in philosophy; he is studied historically for the literary and philosophic culture which may be obtained. Almost the opposite is true of Paul. He too is studied historically, but not as a model for literary aspirants to pattern after. Public speakers may well study the method which he adopted on different occasions in approaching his subject, but any imitation beyond that will be fatal.

In outward appearance the works of Plato are more pleasing than Paul's, because of their symmetrical development. The diction is carefully studied, the sentences are well proportioned, and the argument is for the most part completely supported at every point. Paul's letters while not strictly uniform and apparently disregardful of exactness in form, are in fact, quite as logical as Plato's. The main point often needs no long drawn-out proof, for the Corinthians, the Romans, or others, may have acknowledged already the contention. Plato considered logical form of
first importance, and to that end he subordinated all else.

The difference in temperament may be summed up in the statement that Paul was cosmopolitan and democratic, while Plato was aristocratic; and all other temperamental peculiarities may be seen to depend in large measure upon these two characteristics. The one would have the government of the State in the hands of a few great intellects, with power delegated to them to superintend the life of every citizen from his birth until his death, while the other submitted all to an enlightened conscience. Paul was more like his teacher, and Plato's also, in his direct appeal for individuality. He dealt with everyday life and everyday people, with no feeling, hidden or expressed, of any personal superiority of his own.

Viewed historically, Paul brought into a more perfect and serviceable form, the half-systematized formulas of Plato, vitalizing them with an active and aggressive spirit such as the Greek had never known before. The fact that one was a philosopher and the other a religionist, might seem to be an objection to their being granted such a close relationship as this, but of all fields of human interest, these two that are here concerned, are most closely interwoven.

Plato may have had little acquaintance with the Jewish religion from which Paul drew his inspiration, and Paul in turn may never have met a true Platonic thinker. Through all the time intervening between their day and ours, the philosophy and religion of men have been tempered by the
propositions then submitted. Not only did Aristotle and
the Neo-Platonists look back to their predecessor for
their foundation and inspiration, but also the later devotees
of philosophy, unknown to themselves oftentimes, were act-
uated by the same impulse and followed the same beaten
paths of earlier investigation, daring only on few occas-
ions to trespass beyond the marked limits of the past. The
Idealism of Royce unquestionably has its inception in the
dissatisfaction of Plato in the materialistic tenets of
Grecian thought. To unite these systems separated so widely
by time, may appear to come from a scanty appreciation of
the development that is going on in human affairs constant-
ly. In a strictly finite sense, the change that takes
place in one soul is great, but when the progress of the
race as a whole is surveyed, the slowness of the movement
of thought is forcibly impressed upon us.

Since Plato's day, philosophers and near-philosophers
building upon the earlier foundation, have entered a claim
for recognition and their efforts have met with varying
success. The civilized world honors several thinkers, as
being of clearer discernment than Plato; but no one has ever
been able to rise above the position of Paul, who built upon
a foundation, other than which "no man can lay." He stood
between two divergent mental types; yet his thought, clothed
as it was in Grecian form and the spirit of purely Semitic
religion, was able to pass eastward and westward with equal
ease; and the peculiar modern nature of this new linguistic
combination, has not only gone to the East and to the West, but in point of time, has reached to the present, and bids fair to gather momentum as each century passes by. But Paul's world has another, a third dimension. Like the Master whom he imitated, he was lowly in spirit to the extent that he associated with the humble, the poor, and the despised of men. When occasion demanded, however, he displayed a courage that brought him face to face with governors and kings, and today in the spirit of his work, he meets more stern and haughty royalty, with the same calm assurance. Thus in space, in time, and in life, Paul the Apostle compasses the whole world.

It is with a feeling of reluctance that the study of two men whose works have had such a significant bearing upon our lives, shall for the present be given up,--two men, with whom to associate through the medium of their writings is a privilege denied to no one, and a privilege which no one should refuse to accept.

The End.