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I hereby recommend that the thesis prepared under my supervision by Charles Virgil Adams

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An Introduction to The Divine Dialogues of Henry More

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Approved by:

Robert Shaper

Frank W. Chandler

An Introduction to The Divine Dialogues of Henry More

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Charles Virgil Adams

A.B.	Ohio Wesleyan University	1920
B.D.	Garrett Biblical Institute	1922
B.S. in Ed.	Ohio University	1929

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Chapter One

There is no present need for a new biography of Henry More, for with the exception of a few gaps, notably with respect to his relation to the far-reaching political events of his lifetime, adequate material is available. Of first importance is the somewhat idealized account published in 1710 by his friend Richard Ward.¹ Of even greater value is a certain amount of autobiographical material found chiefly in the preface to the Latin edition of More's works and in the Apologia appended to A Modest Enquiry into the Mystery of Iniquity. Of recent studies the most revealing is that presented in Miss Nicolson's Conway Letters.² From this work one gets a more human portraiture than from Ward's Life, but both are partial portraits at best. Ward's description is almost exclusively that of a spiritual hero; Miss Nicolson's, though somewhat broader than that, is almost equally restrictive because it presents him principally in his relation to Lady Anne Conway, the seventeenth century feminine paragon of physical long-suffering and intellectual perspicuity.

It is, therefore, with some hesitancy that biographical matters are introduced here. If, however, it is true, as More himself was accustomed to say, that "if any Man had written, his Works would shew to all intelligent Readers what he was,"³ it is equally true that a knowledge of what a man is, is helpful in understanding what he writes. More's

important writings have immediate relations to specific interests and activities; and since the Divine Dialogues is in a sense an epitomization of large shares of his thought and experience, certain selected materials dealing with his literary activity and spiritual development are here included without further apology, in the hope that the reader may be thereby enabled to approach the Divine Dialogues with an increased measure of sympathy and understanding.

It is difficult to escape the feeling that Henry More was definitely predisposed to philosophic thoughtfulness. Certainly there is nothing in his pre-school environment, except perhaps his exposure to the influence of Spenser's The Faerie Queene,⁴ that would tend to make of him anything other than a conforming Calvinist. His parents and the schoolmaster who guided his early learning were "great Calvinists (but withal, very pious and good ones)."⁵ Yet by his fourteenth year we find him definitely committed to an earnest repudiation of the fundamental Calvinistic doctrine of predestination.

An uncle, greatly impressed by the boy's studiousness, undertook to sponsor his advanced schooling and secured his admission to Eton. This same uncle was so exercised, upon learning that his protege had debated fiercely against the doctrine of predestination with an elder brother, that he rebuked the youth severely for presuming to question accepted tenets, and went so far as to threaten to use a rod on him

if he should persist in such frowardness.

The threat was without preventive efficacy, for More
6
records:

I had such a deep Aversion in my Temper to this Opinion, and so firm and unshaken a Perswasion of the Divine Justice and Goodness; that on a certain Day, in a Ground belonging to Eton College, where the Boys us'd to play, and exercise themselves, musing concerning these Things with my self, and recalling to my Mind this Doctrine of Calvin, I did thus seriously and deliberately conclude within my self, viz., "If I am one of those that are predestined unto Hell, where all Things are full of nothing but Cursing and Blasphemy, yet will I behave my self there patiently and submissively towards God; and if there be any one Thing more than another, that is acceptable to him, that will I set my self to do with a sincere Heart, and to the utmost of my Power:" Being certainly persuaded, that if I thus demeaned my self, he would hardly keep me long in that Place.

More himself felt keenly that certain vital assumptions, upon which his whole thought structure depended, were his by virtue of an immediacy of perception peculiar to him from childhood.

Even in my first Childhood, [he writes,] an inward Sense of the Divine Presence was so strong upon my Mind; that I did then believe, there could no Deed, Word, or Thought, be hidden from him; Nor was I by any that were older than my self to be otherwise persuaded. Which Thing since no distinct Reason, Philosophy, or Instruction taught it me at that Age; but only an internal Sensation urg'd it upon me; I think it very evident, that this was an innate Sense or Notion in me, contrary to some witless and sordid Philosophasters of our present Age. And if these cunning Sophisters shall here reply; that I drew this Sense of mine ex Traduce, or by way of Propagation, as being born of Parents exceedingly Pious and Religious, I demand, how it came to pass that I drew not Calvinism also along with it? For both my Father and Uncle, and so also my Mother, were all earnest Followers of Calvin. ... I was endued with these Principles, that is to say, a firm and unshaken Belief of the Existence of GOD, as also of his unspotted Righteousness and perfect Goodness, that he

is a God infinitely Good, as well as infinitely Great. 7

Be that as it may, there were manifestations of philosophic inquisitiveness at an age when the average adolescent is chiefly interested in very different matters; and when, after three years at Eton, the seventeen-year-old youth was admitted to Christ's College, Cambridge, the trait was greatly accentuated.

A mighty and almost immoderate Thirst after Knowledge possessed me throughout. Especially for that which was Natural; and above all others, that which was said to dive into the deepest Cause of Things, and Aristotle calls the first and highest Philosophy, or Wisdom. 8

The tutor into whose hands he had been entrusted, "Suspecting ... a certain Itch, or Hunt after Vain-glory," questioned the lad as to the reason for his furious application to his studies; he elicited the succinct reply, "That I may know." "For," More wrote subsequently, "even at that Time, the Knowledge of natural and divine Things, seem'd to me the highest Pleasure and Felicity imaginable." 9 The desire to know led More deep into "Aristotle, Cardan, Julius Scaliger, and many other philosophers of the greatest Note" 10 without any appreciable satisfaction.

The Truth is, though I met here and there with some things wittily and acutely and sometimes solidly spoken; yet the most seem'd to me to be either so false and uncertain, or else so obvious and trivial that I looked upon my self as having plainly lost my time in the Reading of such Authors. 11

The net result of almost four years' immersion in the classic philosophers was an attitude of decided scepticism

toward almost everything except his convictions as to "the Existence of God, and the Duties of Morality." Of these he at no time entertained any doubt. While his intellectual disquietude was at its peak, shortly before the completion of his undergraduate studies, More, accustomed to make some record of deep impressions, committed the burden of his mood of uncertainty to writing, in a Greek stanza which he titled Aporia or The Perplexity of the Soul.

Nor whence nor who I am, poor wretch, know I:
 Nor, O the blindness! whither I shall goe.
 But in the crook'd Claws of Greif I lye,
 And live (I think) thus tugged to and fro.
 Waking and dreames all one, O Father Jove,
 'Tis rare, we mortalls live i' th' clouds like thee,
 Lyes, Toyes, or some hid fate, us fix or move,
 All els being dark, what's life I onely see. 12

Some time after the composition of Aporia - he is not at all explicit about the interval - More found himself interrogating the validity of his earlier notion that man's greatest joy lies in the possession of knowledge, or, supposing it to be true, that "it was to be acquired by such an Eagerness and Intenttness in reading of Authors and contemplating of Things; or by the Purging of the Mind from all sorts of Vices whatsoever." ¹³ Several forces may have operated to bring about the changed point of view with respect to knowledge, but there is probably more than simple coincidence between the shift and the onset of a new and fruitful personal relationship.

In 1636 Benjamin Whichcote was appointed Sunday afternoon Lecturer at Trinity Church, Cambridge. He immediately

attracted a large and attentive following, of which More was doubtless one from the first; and the contact established at Trinity Church must have been accentuated and cemented in the Fellow's hall in Emmanuel College, for Whichcote's enthusiasm¹⁴ for Plato and Plotinus, an enthusiasm which pervaded his public discourse, became engrafted in the questing mind of young More. Whetted by the mystical suggestions of Whichcote's sermons, he undertook excursions into the writings of "Marcilius Ficinus, Plotinus himself, Mercurius Trismegistus; and the Mystical Divines."¹⁵ In the writings of these authors More was particularly attracted by ideas involving "Purification of the Soul, and ... the Purgative Course that is previous to the Illuminative," because they suggested that "the Person that expected to have his Mind illuminated of God, was to endeavour after the Highest Purity."¹⁶ These studies brought healing in their train. That More should have been interested in the mystical aspects of such writings is neither strange nor unexpected, for he had from childhood entertained some notions by virtue of a directness of conception not explicable in terms of usual ratiocination.

However much he revelled in certain ideas derived from the aforementioned authors, not one of them ministered so much to More's perplexed mind as the Theologia Germanica, a mystical treatise, of uncertain authorship from the fourteenth century, republished by Martin Luther. The chief

burden of this volume is that utter denial of self-will is the one exacting prerequisite to union with the Will of God. "Which sense," More writes, "that truly Golden Book did not then first implant in my soul, but struck and rous'd it, as it were, out of Sleep in me. ... But after that the Sense and Consciousness of the great and plainly Divine Duty was thus awaken'd in me; Good God! what Strugglings and Conflicts follow'd presently between this Divine Principle and the Animal Nature." ¹⁷ The triumph of the little book was quite definite; for though sharp conflict ensued, it came to pass "that insatiable Desire and Thirst of mine after the Knowledge of things was wholly almost extinguish'd in me; as being sollicitous now, about nothing so much as a more full Union with this Divine and Celestiall Principle, the inward flowing Wellspring of Life Eternal: With the most fervent Prayers breathing often unto God, that He would be pleased thoroughly to set me free from the dark Chains, and this so sordid Captivity of my own Will." ¹⁸

The inner revolution, with its attendant dedication of life and energy, brought about a stabilization of mind and a serenity of spirit which remained with him through the years.

In the flush of new certainty he wrote another Greek stanza, in which he tried to express the complete opposition of his new attitude toward that of three or four years earlier.

This stanza he called Euporia, or The Extrication of the Soul.

Beam of aeternall light from Heaven I came,
 And, O the pleasure! unto Heaven I goe.
 Now Love enfolds me in its tow'ring flame.
 I truly live, my thoughts with joy oreflow,
 Farewell to Night, and dreams. The Eternall Sun
 Doth us surround of uncreated Light.
 Fayth, Wisdom, Joy, free strength our race to run
 Are Life; but all things els are Death and Night. 19

Writing of the years of More's inner conflict, Ward says, "He reduc'd himself to almost Skin and Bone"; but when the struggle was over, his physical powers were completely responsive to the demands of his will.

There seems to be little doubt that More was able, at least in the earlier years of his mystic devotion, to lose himself wholly in contemplation of and communion with Divinity.

This short time of Holy Discipline and Conflict, [writes Ward] let him in it seems, to wonderful communications; and opened, as it were, the Gates of Paradise to him. This then was the Blissful and Glorious Issue of the Doctor's so sincere and Heroical Enterprise, in the freeing of his Soul from Sin and Self; it was excellent Wisdom; and that sudden, in a manner, and unexpected; a clear Aetherial sort of Temperament of Body and of Mind; a gladsome and even Enthusiastick Sense of Joy, in the Nature, Work and Providence of God; with a most stable Truth and Rectitude of Nature as to Himself. 20

He was convinced "that God reserves his choicest secrets for the purest Minds; and that it is Uncleaness of Spirit, not distance of Place, that dissevers us from the Deity." 21
 Something of the character of those moments of absorption in the Divine Nature, and of More's exaltation of spirit, may be gleaned from The Second Lash of Alazonomastix, an article aimed at what More regarded as the false enthusiasm of Thos.

Vaughn. There, writing of the true mystical experience, he says:-

How lovely, how Magnificent a State is the Soul of Man in, when the Life of God inactuating her, shoots her along with himself through Heaven and Earth; makes her Unite with, and after a Sort feel her self animate the whole World. This is to become Deiform, to be thus suspended, (not by Imagination, but by Union of Life; ... joining Centers with God) all by a sensible Touch to be held up from the clotty dark Personality of this Compacted Body. Here is Love, here is Freedom, here is Justice and Equity in the Super-essential Causes of them. He that is here looks upon All things as One; and on himself, if he can then mind himself, as a part of the Whole.

Nor am I out of my Wits, [he continues in the same article] as some may fondly interpret me in this Divine Freedom. Nor am I Enthusiastical. For God doth not ride me as a Horse, and guide me I know not whither my self; but converseth with me as a Friend; and speaks to me in such a Dialect as I understand fully, and can make others understand, that have not made Shipwrack of the faculties that God hath given them, by Superstition or Sensuality. ... The Dispensation I live in, is more Happiness above all Measure, than if thou couldst call down the moon so near thee, by thy Magick Charms, that thou mayst kiss her, as she is said to have kiss'd Endymion; or couldst stop the course of the Sun; or which is all one, with one Stamp of thy Foot stay the Motion of the Earth. ...

He that is come hither, God hath taken him to be His own Familiar Friend: And though He speaks to others aloof off, in Outward Religions and Parables; yet He leads this Man by the Hand, teaching him intelligible Documents upon all the Objects of His Providence; speaks to him plainly in his own Language; sweetly insinuates Himself, and possesseth all his Faculties, Understanding, Reason and Memory. This is the Darling of God; and a Prince among Men; far above the Dispensation of either Miracle or Prophet. 22

From a man who could write seriously in such a vein we might justifiably expect almost any sort of aberration. Perhaps the nearest approach to such in More is his confession to some friends, that "his Breast and Body, especially when

very young, would of themselves send forth flowry and Aromatick Odours from them; and such as he daily almost was sensible of, when he came to put off his Clothes and go to Bed. And even afterwards when he was Older, about the end of Winter or beginning of Spring, he did frequently perceive certain sweet and herbaceous smells about him; when yet there were no such external Objects near, from which they could proceed."²³

To this curious notion may be added his susceptibility to visions and premonitions. More was usually reticent about the subject of these phenomena, not so much because he mistrusted either the visions or himself, but rather because England was then overplentifully populated with fanatical sectaries who gloried in claims of God-possession in one form or another; and these fanatics More looked upon as enemies of both religion and morality. Ward tells us that upon being asked concerning the vision of Theomanes and the dream of Bathynous, in the fifth and third dialogues respectively, More replied, that the dream of Bathynous was "but a Fiction ... but that it deserv'd to be a true Dream. But for the former, (Theomanes his vision) that it was a real thing; and surpriz'd him, without the least Desire or Expectation of his; in the very Manner and Circumstances that are related by him."²⁴

Ward, realizing that his recording the testimony respecting the vision of Theomanes was one more evidence of peculiar-

ity in his beloved friend, attempts to soften the picture by a sober reminder that "though the Spirit of Prophecy be in one Sense ceased; yet God hath not hereby precluded His own Power, nor yet that of His Ministring Spirits, from Visiting and Assisting of his Servants, as He pleaseth. And there are some Pious Persons, to whom, it must not be denied, that very unusual things, of one sort or another, have sometimes happen'd: And doubtless, upon the whole, there will be found great Reason to believe that this we are speaking of was of this Nature." ²⁵ Then, evidently relishing the flavor of his friend's peculiar gifts, he recounts how as he was once going to the house of an acquaintance, More experienced a sudden "Check, or Motion" which forbade him to go in; and how shortly after he overcame the "Motion" and entered the house it was "all on Fire, and very soon burnt." ²⁶

Most authors pass over rapidly, or ignore entirely, this particular phase of More's intellectual and spiritual evolution, and there is no doubt that such manifestations as have been here noted do establish a prejudice in the minds of many; yet it is undeniably true that in the flood of mystical and symbolic verse which followed close upon his enlightenment we find the expression of every important idea developed at large in his subsequent prose works of philosophic import. Pre-existency of souls, the infinitude of God and the world, the immortality of the soul, right Reason as the high and trustworthy function of the devout soul, the surpassing

excellence of the virtues of patience and obedience, eternal goodness as the measure of Providence--all these find their utterance during those first years of mystical abnegation.

How long that immersion in mystic streams continued with relative unabatement is unknown. Of the years from 1639, when he became Master of Arts and received his Christ's College Fellowship appointment, until 1650, when his first prose appeared and the More-Conway correspondence began, almost no record remains besides the group of philosophical poems and the More-Descartes letters. These letters may be regarded as among the first strokes of a mind swinging somewhat away from a predominant interest in personal spiritual excursions toward a conscious desire to inform other pious minds of the usefulness, if not the validity, of what were for him important philosophical ideas. During the seventeen or eighteen years after 1650 we find More engaged chiefly in two wordy tasks: the attempt to set forth a rational justification of Christian philosophical concepts designed to reconcile reason and faith, and the defense of the Established Church against Romanism and sectarian fanaticism. In the course of those years of positive intellectual activity he tried various forms of personal discipline, such as fasting and abstention from small beers and light wines, though he abandoned both these forms as being unsuited to his temperament. He, also, vowed several times to retire from the business of much writing, professing, each time a new

work appeared, that he continued to write only because he was assured that he was discharging a public service. There were, plainly, intervals of wavering between his sense of social obligation--really, one suspects, a half-blind excuse for a speculative interest in philosophic matters--and longings for a return of the mystic delights of earlier days. "His Pains in all this were the more Considerable, as well as highly Charitable," Ward declares, in referring to More's writing for the "Common Good," "because they kept him so much from the far more Pleasing, and, as to himself, Beatifying Introversions of his own Mind: Insomuch that writing to a Friend, he there tells him: That when he was Free from his present Incumbent Business, his Purpose was to recoil into that Dispensation he was in before he wrote or published anything in the World: In which (saith he) I very sparingly so much as read any Books; but sought a more near Union with a certain Life and Sense, which I infinitely prefer before the Driness of mere Reason, or the Wantonness of the trimmest Imagination: But there also are useful Instruments for some, to draw them to Good. Thus," Ward adds, "he wrote to one that affected, as he conceiv'd, overmuch this dry Reason and Fancy, without so due a Sense of that other Principle as he should also have had." ²⁷ The oft-promised cessation of "scribbling" never materialized; for, although his philosophical interests died an almost visible death in the Divine Dialogues, other interests challenged his restless mind.

A kindly intended legacy paved the way for a Latin edition of his works, and the consequent editorial labor imposed a considerable drain for five years; the impending Romanization of his beloved Church impelled him to frequent and vigorous attempts to read into the Papacy most of the Anti-Christ prophecies of the Scriptures; and a recurrent interest in Cabbalism and Spiritism stirred within him. That he remained, until death, the essential mystic is manifest in his steady refusal to consider any offers of dignity and preferment which would take him away from his quiet retreat. A clear reference to an obviously ecstatic experience a few days before his death heightens the conviction.

According to his own testimony, More's first considerable literary efforts were not designed for publication. When in 1639 or 1640 he gave whole-hearted intellectual assent to mystical contemplation and effort toward union between the human soul and God as the highest and noblest religious duty, he undertook to formulate a poetical statement of the philosophical conceptions of God and of the universe which constituted the basis of his new life, and to record an allegorical account of his spiritual journey toward Divine Union. That formulation and record he achieved in Psychozoia or The Life of the Soul, a poem of three cantos written in Spenserian stanzas.

The first part of the poem projects the universe under two aspects. The first is in terms of the Plotinian triad

composed of the Primary One and his necessary complements, Intellectual Being and Soul. In the One is all power; in Intellectual Being resides the perfect ideas of all things; in Soul exists all potentiality of creation. This creating and sustaining Triad, lying at the center of All in hypostatic union, is linked to its circumference of created things and creatures through the power of sense-perception, by which it is omniscient, and through the power of imagination, by which it is omniscient. Specifically, the powers of sense-perception and imagination reside in Soul, but, inasmuch as the three hypostases coexist in one Being, omniscientcy and omniscientcy are shared by each. In this representation the sensible universe of things and creatures is a result of the necessary activity of Soul, and it exists in, and is the sensible part of Soul.

The second projection of the universe differs from the first, chiefly, in that it is designed to "exhibit to our apprehensions the Universe, as one simple uniform being from Ahad [the One, or the Triad regarded as One] to Hyle [the potentially existent nothingness beyond the outer reaches of created forms], no particular straitned being, as yet being made; no earth or any other Orb as yet kned together. All Homogeneall, simple, single, pure, pervious, unknotted, uncoacted, nothing existing but those eight universal orders."

In this representation of the structure of the universe, which is a development of More's cabbalistic interests, the

universe is figured as a cube or sphere consisting of eight concentric cubes or spheres. The spheres, or cubes, from periphery to center are (1) the misty suggestion of creative possibility, the vague stirrings of the Urge to become; (2) Chaos, the Nebular-mass, as yet undifferentiated; (3) vegetative Nature; (4) Sentient being; (5) Imaginative being; (6) the World Soul; (7) the Eternal Mind; and (8) the One. This division indicates the differential qualities of these arbitrary universal elements, but it fails to indicate the immediate and whole presence of the Divine Principle in every part thereof. In order to embody that, More likens the universe to a space illuminated by a central sun, a space in which there is no diminution of light as one moves toward the periphery. Thus is the sun, emblem of the Divine Principle, as wholly and completely sun at the farthest reaches of its radiancy as at its core.

These two representations of the organization of the universe are here stated, even at the risk of disproportion, because the fundamental idea underlying both (that all life emanates from, is participated in by, participates in, derives significance from, and, with the single exception of man to whom freedom of will has been given, may be drawn back into the Divine One) is implicit in every significant utterance of More's tongue and pen. Pre-existency and immortality of the soul, infinity of time and space, the possibility of the human soul uniting with the Divine Soul, the necessary

supremacy of Spirit: they are all here in these two mystical imaginative representations.

The remainder of Psychozoia is an allegorical account of the progress of a soul through the various levels of body-soul and soul-body domination to the state of complete union with God. Two items from the allegory are significant as revealing More's deepest thought and experience: first, that though the Hill of Philosophy is a beautiful and noble place, the soul cannot rest there because its three worthiest inhabitants, Plato, Pythagoras, and Zeno, are more concerned with what is ~~merely~~³¹ harmful rather than with what is absolutely evil; second, that Obedience, the product of Self-denial and Patience, is the Soul's sure guide to its highest estate.

Psychathanasia, or The Immortality of the Soul, the longest of the songs of the soul, argues its thesis by asserting: (1) that, since the higher functions of the soul, reason, memory, and common percipiency are independent of body powers, the soul is immaterial; (2) that it is irrational to believe that the soul which strives after knowledge of and union with God should ever perish; (3) that the soul's groping after God is evidence of its origin in Him and of its consequent indestructibility; and (4) that the goodness of God is the guarantee of the soul's immortality. The poem has added interest in that it declares the finitude of time and space, a notion which More revised a few years later in his poem The Infinitie of Worlds.

Antipsychopannichia, or a Confutation of the Sleep of the Soul after Death, seeks to establish its position by asserting: (1) that Intellection and Will, the highest activities of the soul, are independent of the body and are, therefore, not affected by sleep, which is a purely physical phenomenon; and (2) that the soul must experience no interruption of ideas, because it is derived from God and receives ideas innately from Him. The poem disposes of the problem of the bad soul by assigning it a place of habitation in "Infernal Night," the lowest realm of being.

Antimonopsychia, or Confutation of the Unity of Souls, a sort of appendix to Psychathanasia, is a refutation of Averroes' doctrine that what are taken for individual souls are but parts of the one Soul of the universe. To this notion More opposes the propositions that God has given to man-soul individuality and will, and that by the exercise of the second gift the man-soul may move toward union with God.

Psychozoia, which was written when More was in his twenty-fifth year (1640), was apparently looked upon by its author as a kind of verse diary; for Ward tells us that More considered burning it, lest it should fall into the hands of strangers. However, "at the instigation of some Learned and Pious Friends, to whom he had in private accidentally shew'd them," More agreed to publish the verses, and they appeared in 1642 as the first part of A Platonick Song of the Soul, of which

the other three poems briefly digested herein are, respectively, second, third, and fourth parts.

Between 1642 and 1647, when the entire group of philosophical poems was published, More wrote two additional poems worthy of mention here. The first was The Preexistency of the Soul, which he offered as not necessarily true but as consonant with Scripture; the second was The Infinitie of Worlds, in which, revising a sentiment expressed in Psychathanasia, the author discursively argues that material forms are eternal phases of God's effluxive power, and that the temporary nature of physical life and material forms is satisfactorily accounted for by such a series of cycles as ³²Origen proposes. The poem closes with a visionary proposal that the world shall be consumed in fire, only to rise Phoenix-like from its own ashes for another interval of life and ³³form. In addition to the poems specifically named, the volume of Philosophicall Poems contains several shorter philosophical and devotional poems, a number of hymns, a few occasional verses, and a set of explanatory notes to the longer poems. With the exception of the hymns and a half dozen or so short passages incorporated into some of his prose works, More wrote no verse after 1646, the year in which the Infinitie of Worlds was first published.

Sometime in 1642 More probably spent an interval at Ingolsby, a Lincolnshire living in the bestowal of his father. There he quickly learned that his "somewhat inward" voice did

not suit him for public speaking, and he returned to his Fellowship at Christ's, retaining, however, the advowson of Ingolsby parish, which he left to Christ College at his death.

From 1642 until 1652, the year of the publication of his first major prose work, his energies were apparently consumed in the routine of tutoring. Aside from the Infinite of Worlds and the Descartes letters his pen was idle. Sometime during that interval, however, he came to the resolution that, since he could not serve the cause of the Church by the actual work of preaching, he would dedicate his mind and pen to her service if and when the occasion should arise.

The occasion was not long in coming. More was keenly aware of the speculative atmosphere of his generation; that atmosphere had penetrated his chamber walls, and he saw with grievous misgiving the worldly, materialistic leadings of the speculative mood. He saw the purely mechanistic aspects of Descartes' philosophy grip the imagination of his intelligent countrymen; he was dismayed at the whole-hearted enthusiasm with which scores embraced the frank materialism of Hobbes; and he resolved to try to stem the advancing tide of atheism and materialism by writing of things basic in the religious life in a style and manner which would win the respectful attention of philosophical minds and would edify pious persons of less pretentious intellects. Whether at that time he consciously formulated a code that should serve to guide his prose ministry, is not known. Probably not; but some fifteen

years later (1664), under the spur of objections raised against certain arguments in The Grand Mystery of Godliness, he drew up a statement of the nature and scope of his prose writings. There he wrote:-

I avow to all the world, that there is no real clashing at all betwixt any genuine Point of Christianity and what true Philosophy and right Reason does determine to allow, but that as Aristotle somewhere speaks ... there is perpetual peace and agreement betwixt Truth and Truth, be they of what nature or kind so ever.

... I conceived that there was assigned naturally to my care such a Province as this, namely, To manage the truth of our Religion in such a way as would be most gaining upon men of more Rational and Philosophical Genius, the present Age abounding so much with such. 34

In his efforts in the direction of the program announced in the preceding statement, More professed to be guided by the following "rules":

Rule I. He must be sure not to deny any thing which he whom he would convince does hold and allege upon clear and solid Reason: and especially must he be tender of denying it as repugnant to the Christian Faith; Unless it be plainly and really contrary to the Infallable Oracles of Holy Writ.

Rule II. He must, having once admitted the Conclusions of his Antagonist as Rational, occasionally shew how no Point of the Christian Faith is in anything weakened or prejudiced by them.

Rule III. That himself is to make choice of such Principles or Conclusions of Philosophy as, having no real repugnancy with Scripture, and also of themselves the most unexceptionably tenable and demonstrable, and most easily accordable with the Attributes of God and the Phaenomena of Providence; and such as will prevent or answer the greatest Objections the Atheist can excogitate against either the Existence of God or the Immortality of the Soul and a Reward in the World to come.

[In consequence of this rule, More declares,] I think I am at least excusable for making choice of some main points of Cartesianism and Platonism. For flinging out the fond conceit of the Aristotelians, who

produce Substantial Forms ex potentia materiae, & admitting and avowing with Des-Cartes that the Matter is everywhere of one homogeneall nature as to the substance it self, we have the most demonstrable grounds imaginable for the necessarily inferring the Existence of God, and that the Soul is a Substance Immaterial and Separable from the Body.

Rule IV. That though it be not necessary, yet it were very desirable, that the above-said Philosophick Principles he makes choice of were not only not really repugnant to the Divine Oracles, but had some kind of countenance and approbation from them, as being either couched somewhere continually under the Letter or History as a more Inward and Mystical Meaning thereof, or as being glanced at in some short passages in the very Letter if self. ... A special instance whereof may be that in the Prophet Baruch, which countenances that stupendous Vastness of the Universe, such as it is according to the Principles of Des-Cartes and the compute of Astronomers, Copernicans especially, who make the Orbit of the Annual course of the Earth but as a Point in respect to that immense distance betwixt the Stars and us.

Rule V. That although the Philosophick Theorems, as well those he makes choice of himself as those he admits in his Antagonist, were solid and rational in themselves, nor really repugnant to the Work of God; yet it is fitting, both in regard to the Capacities of the Vulgar, and also some more useful Opinions of Expositors and Writers in the Church, to avow and admit these Theorems no farther then as Rational; but for their absolute reality and truth, to be more wary and reserved in the Assertion thereof.

More's writing ministry--preaching at his finger's ends, as he called it--began in the late 1640's. In 1645 the Book of Common Prayer was proscribed by Parliament, and the Church of England dropped out of sight as a living organism. A collapse of such magnitude could not fail to exert a demoralizing effect, particularly upon the landed gentry and the nobility. More sensed an immediate relationship between the collapse of an important external manifestation of religion and an inner attitude which might easily pass into

absolute atheism. Perhaps he encountered actual reactions in that direction from students committed to his care; at any rate, he began a philosophical justification for belief in the existence of God, which was offered to the public in 1652. The volume, bearing the title An Antidote against Atheisme, marshals evidence from the Platonic doctrine of innate ideas, from phenomena of conscience and universal worship, and from the apparent design in Nature to support his point. That the work was gratefully received may be inferred from the fact that a new printing was issued the next year, and a second edition was brought out two years later, in 1655. Thereafter, it appeared again in A Collection of Several Philosophical Writings (1662), in Latin in his Opera Omnia (1675-79), and once after his death, in a new edition of A Collection of Several Philosophical Writings printed in 1712.

The next work of philosophic significance appeared in 1659. That work, The Immortality of the Soul, was unquestionable provoked, in part at least, by Thos. Hobbes' materialistic writings. The Elementia Philosophia de Cive (1642 & 47), Human Nature (1650), Leviathan (1651), and De Corpore (1655) variously express the notion of the sufficiency of material forms as furnishing a satisfactory explanation of human life and conduct, and as offering sufficient justification for hedonistic aspirations. So virtual an exposition of a monism of matter affected More as red cloth is supposed

to affect a bull, for he was, perhaps unconsciously but none the less actually, moving toward a monism of spirit. Consequently, he began in 1656 or 1657 a philosophic justification of the reality and immortality of spirit. In the Immortality he first engages to demonstrate the validity of the concept of soul as immaterial by producing arguments from the Nature of God, the order and effect of motion, the phenomena of motion in the world, and apparitions, by relating these arguments from the presence of common notions, the power of choice, and remorse of conscience. To the material tending to establish his second principal argument he adds an inquiry on the seat of the soul's residency in the body, a discussion of animal spirits as the active agents of the soul, and a theoretical statement of the activities of the soul in the human state. These matters fill two "books"; a third "book" describes the possible states and powers of the soul after death, explicates the idea of a Spirit of Nature, and concludes with a discussion of the probable effects of a "Universal Catastrophe" upon the soul. While this volume went through no subsequent separate editions, it was included in both the 1662 and 1712 editions of the Collection of Philosophical Writings, and in the Opera Omnia.

In 1660 More published an exposition and defense of historical Christianity under the title An Explanation of the grand Mystery of Godliness, commonly referred to simply as The Mystery of Godliness; but aside from its attempt to

identify the Christian Trinity as a conscious modification of the Platonic Triad, and a tracing of the Platonic Hypostases to an Hebraic origin,³⁵ the volume has not much of large philosophic import. It was, however, one of the most popularly received and widely circulated of his writings. "For twenty years together," says Ward, "after the Return of King CHARLES the Second, the Mystery of Godliness, and Dr. MORE's other Works,³⁶ ruled all the Booksellers in London."

The next volume of philosophic interest, the Enchiridium Ethicum, appeared in 1666. More seems to have looked upon this as the third member of a trilogy; for in the Preface thereto he writes: "He [the author] owns that ... having long ago employed his Talent, in demonstrating, from the foundations of Natural Theology, that there was a God; and that the Soul of Man was Immortal; he thought it not incongruous to add now a third Treatise concerning Life and Good Manners; such as might lead Men into the knowledge, and the fruition of the rest."³⁷ The work was designed "to excite the Minds of Men unto Virtue," and represents "the Sense and Emanations of his own Mind upon this Subject," supported by copious quotations from the ancients.

It is interesting to note in passing, that More's activity in producing this book was resented vigorously by Ralph Cudworth, Master of Christ's College, who in 1665 practically accused More of trying to beat him to press with the ethical treatise. Actually, so far as the situation can be ascer-

reconstructed on the basis of the letters of both parties to a mutual friend, the circumstances were these: Sometime in 1664 Cudworth delivered a sermon, presumably at the College, wherein he dealt largely on matters of moral good and evil. His friends and associates, of whom few were closer than Henry More, urged him to write a book on the subject, and he apparently did project such a piece of labor. Somewhat later, friends of More pressed him to undertake a similar work, and, after some hesitation--for he was then busy at another task--he engaged to do it. He informed Cudworth of his new undertaking, whereupon the latter remonstrated with such effect that More promised to drop the work. His friends persisted so continuously, however, that he resumed the task and published the treatise in Latin in 1667. Whatever dis-gruntlement Cudworth may have felt was apparently assuaged by the facts that More's treatise was relatively short and was published in Latin. As a matter of fact, Cudworth never succeeded in completing his more comprehensive moral system; and the fragment was not received in print until some thirty years after his death, when, in 1731, a grandson edited the MS and had it published as A Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality.

In a very real sense More's positive philosophical contributions find their period in the Ethicum; for, although the Divine Dialogues is undeniably important, and in three of the five dialogues undeniably philosophical, it contains

nothing intrinsic that is not dealt with in the poems or the prose trilogy, or both. The Divine Dialogues has importance in this: that it embraces in relatively brief compass, and in a new literary form, the most important and characteristic ideas displayed in his earlier work. The student who desires to see the man in relation to the momentous philosophic currents in the midst of which he moved, can find him here most understandably and most pleasurably--but more of this when we come to the actual study of the Dialogues. It may be that More was himself aware that he had said all that was in him to say, for we find him writing to Anne Conway in the spring of 1666, "When I have done these dialogues I will vex myself with no more scribbling." ³⁹ Of course, he did not stop there; but he did not afterwards write, for all his "scribbling," anything really significant or new.

As a matter of fact, we find some years earlier evidences of a new swing of interest. In the Mystery of Godliness (1660) he displays a noticeably marked interest in scripture as a more satisfying purveyor of certitude than pure philosophy. He regrets that this awareness had not come sooner, for it would have "extinguished that so ardent desire of philosophizing which seized me when I was very young." ⁴⁰ Thereafter, as Powicke points out, he manifests an increasing interest in Scripture, and he becomes an ardent student thereof, especially of the prophetic and apocalyptic portions.

A survey of the list of his published works will reveal the prominence of that interest, especially from 1669 until his death.

The phenomenon of More's philosophical deterioration may, however, be approached from another angle--one that rests upon a tenable psychological basis and is, in some respects, more credible than either of the preceding explanations of his decline. It is to be remembered that for a few years following his baccalaureate, More was deeply convinced that a genuine and satisfying knowledge could come only through an immersion of the individual life in the life and will of God. He never got completely away from that concept; the Antidote and the Immortality were but attempts to make clear, to less immediately moved minds, the tenability of a universal scheme in which such a mode of knowledge would be recognized as normal, while the Ethicum was a handbook, designed to show men the way of living that would make human participation in the Divine attainable to all who would venture. They were, however, expositions addressed to matter-conditioned intelligences; that is, to persons who, not being mystic adepts, relied upon sense for the key to the meaning of things. Then came, in rapid succession, the plague and the great fire, both widely proclaimed and widely accepted as visitations of God upon a wicked and degenerate people; a people whose degeneration, in increasing measure, consisted in a virtual deification of reason, the perverted

(because so utterly matter-conditioned) human manifestation of the true Intelligence which underlay the universe. It may well be that these two national calamities were for More the determining evidences necessary to convince his mind anew of the futility of earthly wisdom and of human reason as modi operandi in attaining the spiritual end of being. Thereafter he ventured no more into realms of philosophic speculation; and for himself he attempted to recover the spiritual raptures which he had experienced thirty years before, in his study and in the fields about Cambridge.

If the shift in interest had come fifteen years later, it might, with reasonableness, have been attributed to other causes, such as, for instance, Anne Conway's final and complete abandonment of philosophy and her subsequent acceptance of the Quaker faith. For twenty-five years she had looked to him for intellectual stimulus and spiritual advice, the while cruel pain, with increasing intensity, racked her frail body; but, as it was, her defection could do no more than to accentuate the drift already manifested several years earlier.

One or two other aspects of More's life ought to be emphasized, although they do not contribute as directly to the fuller understanding of the Divine Dialogues as most of the material here included. I refer to his belief in ghosts and his scientific knowledge and interest. That he should devote considerable parts of the Antidote against Atheism and

the Immortality of the Soul to argument hinging upon tacit acceptance of apparitions is apt to strike us as highly ridiculous; that he should declare the miraculous conception of Jesus to be altogether reasonable, and cite in all seriousness Vergil's reference to mares impregnated by the wind as confirming that reasonableness, seems nothing short of folly to a modern rationalist. It seems only fair, however, to point out that More was, in his own mind, consistently rational; for if, as he professed to believe, matter is nothing more than a convenient potentiality whereby non-material realities may be rendered objective, and if all power is resident in the non-material God-Intelligence-Soul Triad, then anything may happen to any portion of matter, as seems good to the all-creating Trinity. Likewise, therefore, the fact and activity of ghosts are both natural and consistent phenomena in a universe organized on a spirit basis.

More was, however, a man who, while he believed in the possibility of ghosts, never saw a ghost performance. Not only did he never see one, but he made every reasonable effort to check up on the authenticity of such phenomena as were reported to him. A Conway tradition relates how he conducted a personal investigation of reputed ghostly behaviour near Ragley, the Warwickshire estate of the Conways. In company with Valentine Greatrakes, the Irish stroker, More went to the cottage of an old woman who was supposed to be suffering from an incurable disease. The old woman, one

Alice Slade, declared that a shrouded figure, sighing continually and speaking in a far-away voice, called to her every night. She said that the figure would rise through a stone slab in the floor, and that she could hear the sighing sound, even in the daytime, whenever she lay on her cot. While Greatrakes attempted to cure the old woman of her physical malady, More undertook to check up on the ghost. Stooping low over the slab, he, too, heard a murmuring sound. Assisted by some bystanders, he removed the slab, revealing the entrance to an underground cavity. Entering, he found himself on the threshold of a large vault, the walls of which dripped water continuously. Probing about, he presently found a tiny rill trickling over a projecting rock. That rill was the ghost; for the delicate gurgling, reverberating through the vault, produced the sound which Alice Slade took for the sighing of a departed spirit.

I digress to recount the incident because it is significant of More's temper of mind. Believing as he did in the reality of ghosts, and acknowledging that some persons apparently possess powers whereby they perceive and converse with them, he did not hesitate to subject such a report to such reasonable tests as might be devised. The willingness to explode something which one would like to accept is not a trait of an essentially credulous mind. Credulity, like every other term of human nomenclature, is relative; and the term and the application thereof vary in content and signifi-

cance with the angle of observation, ratiocination, and experience. More's credulity, since it is consonant with his basic assumptions, is not of minutiae but of first postulates; and it may not be held in contempt until psychological inquiry establishes beyond shadow of doubt that the mystic experience, which is yet the validation-beyond-reason for the truth of the concept of a spirit-activated universe, is induced, directed, and the revelation contingent thereupon eventuated by purely physical states of being.

The degree of his scientific knowledge and interest is another curious factor in More's personality. He was apparently thoroughly grounded in astronomical theories and celestial mechanics, for he drew up a series of designs to explain certain references to the Copernican theory of the organization of the solar system, one of the most interesting being that accompanying his explanation of the phenomena of tides, under the old theory of vortices and fluid space.⁴² In middle life he became interested in hydrostatics. He was very proud of a set of hydrostatical instruments devised for him by Francis Mercury Van Helmont;⁴³ and he evidently performed some experiments in that field, for he published some objections to conclusions drawn by his eminent contemporary, Robert Boyle. More was, also, a member of the Royal Society, and its meetings were among the few things which could lure him away from Cambridge.

An unaffected piety which won for him the sobriquet, the "angel" of Christ's; a concern for externals so inconsiderable that he could subscribe with equal facility to both the Covenant and the Engagement;⁴⁴ a probity so irreproachable that the worst his enemies could do was to charge him with overstaying his leave from the College by one day; a prolific pen which established him as the literary representative and exponent of the so-called Cambridge Platonists; a tutorial proficiency which made him sought after by titled fathers; a determination to eschew any semblance of vainglory which led him to refuse flattering and lucrative offers from persons high in royal favor and power; and a keen interest in philosophy, science, and religion which brought him into such a distinguished and varied company as Descartes, Hobbes, Spinoza, Robert Boyle, Isaac Newton, George Keith, George Fox, and William Penn, not to mention such political figures as Lord Conway and Sir Heneage Finch, and such colorful eccentrics as Sir Kenelm Digby, Joseph Glanvill, Francis Mercury Van Helmont, and Valentine Greatrakes -- such, in part, was the curious personality of Henry More.

Notes to Chapter One

1. Ward's Life of the Learned and Pious Dr. Henry More has been made widely accessible by The Theosophical Publishing Society (London), which in 1911 published a text of the Life edited by M.F. Howard. All quotations and references to the Life are from the Howard edition.

2. Nicolson, Marjorie Hope. Conway Letters. Yale University Press. 1930.

3. Ward, Op. cit., p. 71
4. In the Dedication to Philosophicall Poems (1647) More refers to the winter evenings of his childhood when his father read aloud from the Faerie Queene, "a Poem as richly fraught with divine Morality as Phansy."
5. Ward, Op. cit., p. 59.
6. Translated from the Preface of the "First Philosophical Volume" of the Latin edition. The translation is Ward's. Cf. the Life p. 59-60.
7. Ward, Op. cit., p. 60-61.
8. Ibid., p. 62.
9. Ibid., p. 62-63.
10. Cardan (Geronimo Cardano), Italian philosopher, mathematician, and physician. 1501-76. Scaliger, Julius Caesar. Italian poet and philologist. 1484-1558.
11. Ward, Op. cit., p. 65.
12. This translation was made by More, some thirty-five years after the composition of the original stanza, for the benefit of his friend, Anne Conway. In the letter in which the translation appears, More wrote: "I one morning in my bed translated my Aporia as well as I could, though not so perfectly exact as I desired in the last verse but one. The rest are well enough and run thus," The translation given by Ward -- whether made by More or another is, I think, unknown -- differs chiefly in the line which gave More so much trouble when he attempted to render it for his correspondent. There the last two lines run
 "Lies, Night-dreams, empty Toys, Fear, Fatal Love,
 This is my Life: I nothing else do see."
 The subtitle in the translation given by Ward is Inviousness and Emptiness.
13. Ward, Op. cit., p. 64.
14. Plotinus. Egyptian philosopher. 205-270 A. D. Of him more anon, for Henry More was greatly influenced by this philosopher's interpretation of Plato's doctrines of the soul and of ideal forms.
15. Marcellius Ficinus. Italian philosopher of the Renaissance. 1433-99. He led More to see the usefulness of "Platonism" to Christian apologetics. Mercurius Trismegistus. Mythical Egyptian philosopher.

16. Ward, Op. cit., pp. 64-65.

17. Ibid., p. 65.

18. Ibid., p. 67

19. The translation of this stanza is also from the letter to Anne Conway referred to in note 12. Of these stanzas More wrote: "I writ my Aporia first, when I was an undergraduate; and after I was Master of Arts my Euporia." This fragmentary statement constitutes about the only key to the duration of the "intra paucos annos." He received his Bachelor's degree in 1635 and his Master's in 1639; the interval of intellectual and spiritual desert wandering was, therefore, something over four years. For these translations and quoted comments thereon Cf. Conway Letters, pp. 299-300. In the translation given by Ward the subtitle of this second stanza is Fulness and Perviousness. Cf. Life, p. 68.

20. Ward, Op. cit., pp. 69-70

21. Fr. Preface to the Mystery of Godliness.

22. Quoted fr. Ward, Op. cit., pp. 89-91.

23. Ward, Op. cit., p. 147. More writes an interesting passage in his Scholia on Enthusiasmus Triumphatus. From comment on certain peculiar powers of Valentine Greatrakes, the Irish stroker, he turns to a personal illustration: "This I can speak by experience of my self, especially when I was young, that every night when going to bed I unbutton'd my Doublet, my Breast would emit a sweet aromattick smell, and every year after about the end of Winter, or approaching of the Spring, I had usually sweet Herbaceous Scents in my Nostrils, no external object appearing from whence they came. Nay, my Urine would smell like Violets, which made me very much to wonder at the mistake of that famous Physician and Philosopher Henricus Regius [pupil of Descartes and subsequent perverter of a part of that worthy's teaching], That no body's Urine smelt sweet but from some Medicine taken inwardly; whereas I know the contrary to happen in my own certain knowledge. I remember some forty years ago, that one Winter evening pulling off my shoes, and setting them to the Fire, my Chamber-fellow coming into the room at the same time presently cry'd out, What a mighty smell of Musk or Civet is here! At which I smilingly desiring him to draw near and smell of my Shoes, which he did, but soon found a different smell there."

24. Ward, Op. cit., p. 149.

25. Ibid., p. 150.

26. Ward, Op. cit., p. 152.
27. Ibid., p. 168.
28. Cf. with the compacted statement of Plotinian cosmogony in chapter V. p. 187-190.
29. More's statement extracted from the "To the Reader" of the Philosophicall Poems.
30. Cf. Psychozoia. Canto II. stanzas 1-23.
31. Though he continues to hold that the heights of philosophy are dangerous to the seeking soul, More seems later to have acquiesced to the philosophic notion that sin, or vice, is relative rather than absolute evil. Cf. Chap. V. P. 204.
32. Origen. 185-254. A Christian writer and teacher of Alexandria.
33. Cf. Appendix A for an extended note on The Infinitie of Worlds.
34. This and succeeding quotations are from the Apologia appended to the Modest Enquiry into the Mystery of Iniquity. Cf. Bibliography.
35. Cf. The Mystery of Godliness, chapter four of Book One.
36. Ward, Op. cit., p. 177.
37. "Extract of Dr. More's Epistle to his Reader" to An Account of Virtue, the English rendering of the Enchiridium Ethicum. London. 1690. Republished in 1930 by the Facsimile Text Society, New York.
38. The letters of Cudworth and More to their mutual friend, Dr. John Worthington, in which they reveal their respective positions in this literary tiff, are preserved in Worthington's Diary, (vol. 2. pp. 157-167), edited for the Chetham Society by James Crossley and published 1847-1886.
39. Conway Letters p. 273.
40. Quoted without notation by F.J. Powicke in The Cambridge Platonists, London and Toronto, 1626. Cf. p. 157.
41. Cf. The Mystery of Godliness Book III, chap. 18, sec. 4-5.
42. Cf. Notes on Psychathanasia in Philosophicall Poems.

43. Van Helmont, Francis Mercury, the erratic son of the Belgian chemist, Jean Baptiste Van Helmont. During several years he exerted considerable influence upon More. Cf. Chap. II. p. 22 ff.

44. Articles imposed upon all office-holders by the Presbyterian and Royalist Parliaments in 1645 and 1662 respectively.

Chapter Two

Certain indications of a mystical and philosophic bent in More's youth have already been remarked: that "deep and solitary genius" whereof he spoke in the character of Bathynous, that venture in independent thinking for which his uncle threatened to use the stick, and that solemn avowal made on the playing ground at Eton. When as a youth of seventeen he came up to Cambridge, pantingly eager for knowledge, he fell into a series of relationships which tended, almost from the first, to accentuate those introspective proclivities native to his character.

The first of those relationships was with Robert Gell, the tutor to whom More was assigned when he came up from Eton. In their first conversation, Gell pressed the boy to know whether he had "a Discernment of Things Good and Evil". More replied, "I hope I have" - although, as he later wrote: "At the same Time I was conscious to my self, that I had, from my very Soul, a most strong sense, and savory Discrimination, as to all these matters."¹ Gell was a "Median," i.e., a member² of the group led by Joseph Mede, which steered a middle course between the "too loose" High Church party, on the one hand, and the "too precise" Puritans, on the other. He was not a sectarian. He believed that saintliness of character had no necessary connection with any special system of religious thought, and he declared that saints - sharers "of the divine nature" and communicants with "the Father, and his Son

Jesus Christ, and ... the Spirit" - though they may be found on the earth, belong to "no visible Church, no sect upon earth; for such are all sects, works of the flesh. And whosoever ... saith, he is of this or that sect, condemns himself out of his own mouth." ³ Gell, who was greatly influenced in his thought and teaching by the doctrines of Cabbalism and the Hermetic mysteries, was given to an allegorical interpretation of Scripture, and was especially interested in the prophetic books of the Bible. That he exerted a very real influence upon his pupil can scarce be doubted, when it is recalled that More early manifested an early interest in Cabbalism, the Hermetic doctrine, and scriptural prophecy - an interest that came back upon him with redoubled force when he withdrew from the realm of philosophy per se - and that he was wont to assert an aloofness from sects and sectarianism. How like the sentiment which constitutes the essence of the foregoing quotation from Gell's Remaines, is that reply to Vaughn in Preface to the Second Lash of Alazonomastix: "I should dissemble in the Presence of Heaven, if I should not say I am above them; as I am above all Sects whatsoever as Sects: For I am a true and free Christian; and what I write and speak, is for the Interest of Christ." ⁴

One cannot be dogmatic in asserting that the influence of Gell was responsible for these attitudes in More, for they are likewise to be found in the person and method of Dr. Mede.

Although the pupil-tutor relationship was more constant and intimate, it is a matter of fact that More came under the immediate influence of Mede in his Greek studies. Mede, too, was committed to the excellency of allegory as furnishing a most profitable key to Scriptural interpretation, and as the recognized leader of the "Median" moderates in the three-cornered Cambridge religious set-up, he may justly be regarded as the fosterer of More's native bias toward liberalism. How much he owed to Mede's anti-Romanism may be questioned. The son of a Puritan magistrate would probably carry away from his home environment all the incentive he would ever need in that direction, but it is quite possible that Mede's defense of set Liturgical prayers and the altar had a definite influence upon More's subsequent liberal attitude toward their introduction in the college chapels. In speaking of More's looking upon Roman Catholicism as the "Grand Mystery of Iniquity, or Secret working of Satan," Ward links his name with Mede's thus: "These things also, with the most Learned Mr. MEDE, and many Others, he conceiv'd in the deepest and most Tragical Figures, to lie delineated in the Visions and Prophecies of Scripture."5 Ward discloses another link between Mede and More when he writes:

He [More] breaks out into a very high and no less Just Encomium upon that Great Writer, and (as he well called him) incomparable Interpreter of Prophecies, Mr. Joseph Mede; and then proceeds thus: "Upon whose account I am not ashamed to profess, that I think it Clear, both out of Daniel and the Apocalypse, that the Scene of things in Christendom will be in due time very much changed; and that for the better." 6

Bullough concludes, perhaps justly and adequately, that "The vigilant tolerance and moral emphasis of Mede prepared More's mind for the influence of Whichcote."⁷

There seems to be no doubt that the most potent personal influence exerted upon More during crucial Cambridge days was that of Benjamin Whichcote. It was he who broke, as it were, bread of life when ardent studies in natural philosophy had fruited in utter scepticism in More's mind; and it is probably not without significance that More's return to certainty begins about the time Whichcote was appointed to the Sunday afternoon lectureship at Trinity Church.

Not much is known about Whichcote before he came into prominence as the leader of the "Latitude men," or "Cambridge Platonists," as they were called by their enemies. His first tutor in Emmanuel College was the Anthony Tuckney who subsequently attempted to silence his pupil's voice. Upon being graduated M.A. in 1633, he was elected a fellow in his College, and four years later, ⁱⁿ 1637, he received the Trinity Church appointment. His success in that much bepreached city was instantaneous and sustained. How much the success was due at the outset to his eager youthfulness - he was only twenty-eight - may not be known, but indubitably its continuance depended upon something vastly more important. In the first place, his sermons were not mere read sermons; they were delivered with warmth and force; they were made things of life by the genuinely attractive personality of the preacher. In

the second place, they were surcharged with the idea that religion is life - the most natural as well as the most noble life in men who realize the full stature of their being. In the third place, they boldly proclaimed that reason was not only consistent with the highest type of religious life, but that true reason and true religion were really identical. Small wonder, therefore, that the puzzled, harassed Henry More jostled shoulders with eager undergraduates, intellectual Fellows and Masters, and curious townsmen in the crowded aisles of Trinity church.

The central ideas around which Whichcote's lectures were woven can perhaps be most readily grasped from the interchange of letters between him and Anthony Tuckney. When Tuckney left Cambridge in 1629 - first to go into Lincolnshire as assistant and successor to John Cotton, then to go to London as one of the Westminster Assembly of Divines - Emmanuel College was moving along sedately and safely in an orthodox Calvinistic groove. When he returned as Vice-Chancellor of the University, in 1648, he found a noticeable change. The town seemed to be a veritable hotbed of Arminianism, and, what grieved him particularly, Benjamin Whichcote seemed to be its chief oracle. For three years he spoke openly against the new teachings and avoided his erstwhile pupil. Finally, in September 1651 at the Instigation of one who was a friend of both, Tuckney addressed a communication to Whichcote, in which he set forth

his grievances. The latter replied in defense of his position and teaching, and eight letters, four from each party, passed back and forth before the debate was concluded.

Powicke has a concise summary of Tuckney's charges in his volume, The Cambridge Platonists.⁹ They were, briefly, as follows: (1) That Whichcote taught that, inasmuch as some points of Christian doctrine are not vouched for by Scripture, good and pious men might honestly and without mutual hurt disagree on them. In Tuckney's estimation such teaching was both "unsafe and unsound." (2) That Whichcote exhorted religious parties to make use of such parts of Scripture as they all agreed upon, rather than to talk overmuch about confessions of faith and catechisms. This clearly marked him as a covert Arminian in the eyes of Tuckney. (3) That Whichcote argued for "liberty of prophesying." That his declaration: "Truth is Truth, whoever speaks it, and I will readily agree with Papist, Socinian, or any, so far as he asserts it; because it is not his but God's,"¹⁰ was exactly the kind of championship of free speech as characterizes Arminians and Socinians. (4) That "Whichcote seemed to preach a merely subjective view of the Atonement; for he was understood to hold that 'it doth not operate on God but on us'; and has as its end 'not to reconcile God to us but us to God.'" This was, said Tuckney, "Divinity which my heart riseth against." (5) That, in short, there was something strange and new in Whichcote's teaching - a strangeness and a newness which Tuckney attributed to too much study

of "other authors, more than the Scriptures; and Plato and his schollars above all others."

That his old friend and tutor should insinuate that he had gone over to the Arminian position astonished Whichcote. "In a thousand guesses," he wrote, "you could not have bin farther off from the truth. ... What is added of Socinians and Arminians, in respect of mee, is groundless. I may as well be called a Papist, or Mahometan, Pagan or Atheist. ... You say you find me larglie in their Apologia; to my knowledge I never saw or heard of the book before!"¹¹

As for his becoming immersed in philosophy, Whichcote replied firmly: "The time I have spent in Philosophers I have no cause to repent of; and the use I have made of them I dare not disowne: I heartily thank God, for what I have found in them; neither have I, upon this occasion, one jot less loved the scriptures. I find the Philosophers that I have read, good; so farre as they go: and it makes me secretlie blush before God when I find eyther my head heart or life challenged by them, which I must confesse I have often found." And he adds, "I have thought it profitable to provoke to jealousie lazie or loose Christians, by Philosophers; as Paul did the Jewes, by the Gentiles, entertaining the faith of Christ."¹²

To the criticism that he asked for freedom in prophesying, and for the right to apply reason to the understanding of Scripture and to the exposition of Christian ideas, he answered: "Every Christian must think and believe as he finds cause.

Shall he speak in religion otherwise than he thinks? Truth is Truth, whoever hath spoken itt or however itt hath bin abused. If this libertie be not allowed to the Universitie wherefore do wee study? We have nothing to do butt to get good memories and to learn by heart."¹³

The debate ended with Whichcote's writing: "If we differ there is no help for it: Wee must forbear one another. ... If you conceive otherwise of me than as a lover and pursuer after truth, you think amisse. ... Wherein I fall short of your expectation, I fail for truth's sake."¹⁴

The controlling theme in all Whichcote's teaching and writing is his unshakable conviction that there is something built into his very framework, which links man's soul to God, thereby making religion as natural and normal a manifestation of human activity as eating and breathing. Tennyson's "Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet" is but another and later phrasing of the same underlying conception. Among the Aphorisms are several which convey the sense of that conviction; for example, "Reverence God in thyself: for God is more in the Mind of Man than in any part of this world besides; for we (and we only here) are made after the Image of God." The Spirit of a Man is the Candle of the Lord; Lighted ¹⁵by God, and Lighting us to God."

Next to this dominant theme, and, indeed, inextricably interwoven with it, is the proposition that reason, free and

untrammelled, is the working of the "seed of God." Therefore, the most truly rational man is the most truly religious:

If we be in the true use of Reason, we may see cause for what we do in the way of Religion; but if we be ignorant, we are neither rational nor religious. ...
If [a man] be rational, then he discerns the reason of the thing; and the reason of the thing, if he comply with it, is Religion. ...

The Effects and Products of his Reason and Religion are the same, in a person that is truly religious; his Reason is sanctified by his Religion, and his Religion helps and makes use of his Reason; So that in the subject it is but one thing; you may call it, if you will, religious Reason, and Reason made religious; they are not divided or separated; but the Union is more intimate and near, as these Principles are more Immaterial and Spiritual. 16

As to the use he made of philosophers, Whichcote refers to such concepts as the gradations of life, vegetal, sensitive, rational, and divine; the winged soul; the Hermetic and Plotinian upward and downward motions of the soul; the immanence of the Divine Principle; and the soul's mystic quest for union with the Divine Principle. However, he makes no ostentatious or determinative use of the ideas he employs; he uses simply and naturally such as illustrate or illuminate the point he is, at the moment, engaged in explaining.

The religious life, as Whichcote interpreted it, is characterized by a refinement of temper and a governance of conduct. "In short a man is accomplished by two things. 1st. By being enlightened in his intellectual faculties. 2dly. By being directed in his morals to refuse evil and to do good." 17

On the one hand, enlightenment may lead to experiences of mystic union, the highest achievement of the soul while in the

bed

body; on the other hand, the immediate aim of religion is to induce the subject "to follow the plain directions of our Lord and Saviour, to live according to his rules, and to endeavour to be in his spirit."¹⁸ A man believes, not because he must, but because he wants to believe. He is converted, not by an arbitrary act of God, but by the coincidence of God's power and man's will. The fruit of conversion is moral effort; the key to both is self-surrender.

He that puts on Christ must put off himself: for the image and form of Christ is self-denial; for Christ put himself in the form of a servant, and a servant parts with his own will. He that would be like unto Christ, must live in entire self-surrender. ¹⁹

More does not anywhere specifically acknowledge his debt to Whichcote, for, as Bullough observes, the latter's influence was "pervasive rather than systematic"; but knowing, as we do, the inwardly submissive and mystical cast of More's mind, the tendency to trust reason in matters of faith - exemplified in the adolescent revolt against the doctrine of election - and his quiet conviction of the imperative quality of moral goodness, we do not find it strange that Whichcote's teaching should have been a veritable light unto More's feet during the days of self-confessed perplexity. With these things in mind, our assurance of the realness of that influence is tremendously augmented when we recall that More, the one outstanding literary voice of the Latitude movement, was the only member of the group who was not an actual pupil of Whichcote. We may believe, on the basis of the subsequent

trend of his life, that he was particularly influenced by Whichcote's defense of reason in religion, and by his emphasis upon self-denial. It was undoubtedly the compulsion of the latter idea, abetted by his natural bent toward mysticism, that led him into ~~the~~ reading excursions in Plotinus, Ficino, and the "little book" - excursions which drew him swiftly and surely to those far reaching moments of illumination. In a like manner, the influence of Whichcote's defense of reason in religion inspired him to the execution of his best prose.

There were undoubtedly other personal Cambridge influences, but these of Gell, Mede, and Whichcote were the distinctly formative ones, about which one may speak with confidence; and it was particularly through Whichcote that More was exposed to what may be called the impersonal Cambridge influences, though they are impersonal only in the sense that they emanated from books and, thereby, stand in contrast with the personal-contact influences of the aforementioned men.

The subtlest of the impersonal influences was that which More was accustomed to call Platonic - the influence which reveals itself in such characteristic ideas as the notion of perfect ideas residing in the God-head, of the phenomenal world being a modified projection of those ideas through the active agency of the Soul of the World, of the human spirit's divine origin and quality, of the soul's existence apart from body, and of soul's ascent or decline as it approaches or recedes

from the Divine Mind. From what is already known of More's youthful temper and religious experience, it seems safe to assert that he possessed an intuitive apprehension of these notions prior to his finding them expressed in Platonic literature. Whether that apprehension came by imperceptible stages as a result of revellings in Spenserian allegory, or whether it came with equal unobtrusiveness during the hours of solitary musing on matters beyond his years, is more than can be precisely determined; but when his Cambridge masters introduced him to Platonic texts, many of the notions therein displayed were "as gentle rain" upon his groping mind, bringing into flower what was already there in all potentiality.

The particular application of Platonic concepts in interpreting the universe and its manifestations, especially reason and the human soul, came to More through Plotinus, who looked upon the whole creation as a coordinated and unified projection of a central threefold Divinity, which has its lowest intellectual power display in the reasoning, or human, soul, which, in its turn, has its highest possible destiny in the creating Godhead. This Plotinian Platonism afforded More an intellectual validation for what in his own soul he thought must be true; and the assurance that these things might be apprehended by normal men was a balm to his soul, mistrustful of its own mystic experiences. The intelligible concept of a profoundly ordered universe inflamed the poet within him, so that he stood in solemn wonder before a quickened world.

It was inevitable, however, that More should seek a Christianization of these concepts; and it seems altogether probable that he would have ventured a transmutation, had he not found one, ready to hand, in the writings of the churchmen. In Justyn Martyr²⁰ he found the proposal that the Platonic "doctrine of ideas," despite its error in mistaking intellect, rather than love, as the dominant characteristic of God, was a forerunner of Christian teaching. In Clement of Alexandria²¹ he found one of the many attempts to indentify the Platonic intelligibles with the doctrine of the Trinity. In Pseudo-Dionysius²² he read confirmation of his own feeling of the incomprehensibility of God.

The two writers who exercised the greatest influence upon him, in the way of giving a Christian coloring to Platonic notions, were Marcilius Ficinus and the unknown author of Theologia Germanica. Ficinus, or Ficino, a Florentine scholar of the days of the Medici, was self-committed to the task of finding in Greek thought a rational basis for Christian theology. To him Platonism was the unfolding of certain fundamental concepts belonging to no one generation or school; on the contrary, according to him, it began before the man whose name it bears appeared, and it continued down through the philosophers to the Church Fathers. Under his pen the "doctrine of ideas" became a "doctrine of the Good, to which Beauty and Truth are mere handmaids."²³ The Good he identified with God,

whose creative power is Love. That creative Love proceeds from God and exists in Good; it is active by necessity, and all created things are products of its activity. With him religion is the most exalted activity of the soul - the one thing definitely setting man apart from the rest of the animal creation. The business of the soul, in its religious functioning, is to seek out the Good, which can be discovered by Love alone.

This interpretation of Christian thought gave More a rational justification for his revolt against Calvinism. "Ficino's theory of love united the human with the divine by means of an immanent Grace which was not the arbitrary gift of God to a few chosen, but the light of the world, the force of intellect and faith, the very life of all men." ²⁴ To him, the primary importance of Jesus lay in men's realizing that he was the justification of the jointure of the human and the divine in our flesh-bound lives, rather than the agency of a miraculous atonement.

But, great as was the influence of Ficinus upon Henry More, the influence of the Theologia Germanica was greater. It was, indeed, the deciding factor in his conversion after the Cambridge spiritual upset. Of it he wrote, in the account of his life appended to the Latin edition of his works:-

But of all the Writings of this kind, there was none, to speak the Truth, so pierced and affected me, as that Golden little Book, with which Luther is also said to have been wonderfully taken, viz, Theologia Germanica:

.... That which he doth so mightily inculcate, viz.: that we should thoroughly put off and extinguish our own proper Will; that being thus Dead to our Selves we may live alone unto God, and to do all things whatsoever by his Instinct, or plenary Permission; was so Connatural, as it were, and agreeable to my most intimate Reason and Conscience, that I could not of any thing whatsoever be more clearly or certainly convinced. Which Sense yet ... that truly Golden Book did not then first implant in my soul, but struck and rouz'd it, as it were, out of the Sleep in me; which it did verily as in a Moment, or the twinkling of an Eye. 25

The volume, which Luther first caused to be published in 1516, was written sometime in the fourteenth century as a kind of manual of mystic techniques. The unknown author proclaims that true knowledge of God is impossible through learning; for, he argues, the creature must empty itself of all that pertains to it as a creature before that which is perfect can be known. Sin is in life, he asserts, as a result of the creature setting itself up in opposition to God. Self-will is the progenitor of Hell and all its devils. He proposes that if Self-will is rigorously denied by the soul, God may be experienced in blessed union. Moreover, the soul may be so trained in abnegation that the mystic union may be entered into at will. The practice of introspection is the first step toward the experience; the soul must know itself - what it is, whence its origin, what its powers, and what God may do in, for, and to it. The second step is the practice of patience, the outgrowth of suffering. Suffering is inescapable if one would know God, and much of it accompanies the despair which introspection induces in the soul; for he who gazes upon himself

without delusion sees himself so completely unworthy that it is a marvel to him that the other creatures of the earth do not fall upon him and rend him to pieces for presuming to continue to live. The true Christian oscillates between this despair and a feeling of blissful repose.

Introspection and patience purify the soul and prepare it for the next stage of progression toward the mystic relationship. That next stage is one of enlightenment, and it begins when the soul succeeds in rejecting all thoughts and desires except such as would be entertained by God if He were in the flesh. The stage may be of long or short duration, depending upon the soul's ability to evade certain dangers which present themselves on this level: it must avoid spiritual pride and the temptation to live apart from moral law, and it must resolutely turn aside from the "False Light" set up by desires of the flesh posing as spiritual longing. The false light leads men to believe that its possession lifts them above the necessity of continued humility and the observance of the demands of conscience. It leads them into following their own desires and notions of spiritual propriety. It induces them to trust in self-acquired knowledge, in preference to God as the proper object thereof. The "True Light," which the soul must follow if it would rest in God, is that of Love. Love alone is the genuine expression of the will of God.

The final stage, that in which the soul is made one with God, is indescribable. "And what then further would happen

to the soul, or would be revealed unto her, and what her life would be henceforward, none can declare or guess. For it is that which hath never been uttered by man's lips, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive."²⁶ Thus taught the unknown "Friend of God"; and how whole-heartedly More adopted the spiritual regimen described therein may be in some measure comprehended from a remark of Ward's: "He reduced himself in his First Conflicts to almost Skin and Bone."²⁷

These impersonal literary influences constitute the "Platonic" wellsprings from which the flood of More's thought proceeds in part. The central concept of a spiritual unity is from Plato; the rationalization thereof in terms of the universe and humanity is from Plotinus; the broad outlines of Christian coloring is from Ficinus; and the devout mystical turn is particularly from the unknown German monk. Not that these were the only springs which nourished his spirit; they are the "Platonic" springs which, joining with those emanating from Christian Scriptures, were most determinative in his thinking. At best, his Platonism is never very exact. It is Platonic only in so far as the central notion of the reality of ideas was first vocalized by Plato.

In the preface to Psychozoia, More reveals something of the freedom he exercised in combining elements of pagan philosophy with Christian doctrine. There he wrote in part:-

Ahad, Aeon, and Psyche ... this is that famous Platonicall Triad: which though they that slight the Christian Trinity do take for a figment; yet I think it no contemptible argument, that the Platonists, the best

and divinest of Philosophers, and the Christians, the best of all that do professe religion, do both concur that there is a Trinity. In what they differ, I leave to be found out according to the safe direction of that infallible Rule of Faith, the holy Word.

In the mean time I shall not be blamed by anything but ignorance and malignity, for being invited to sing of the second Unity of the Platonick Triad, in a Christian and Poeticall scheme, that which the holy Scripture witnesseth of the second Person of the Christian Trinity. ... For if it be not all one with Christ, according to his Divinity; yet the Platonists placing him in the same order, and giving him the like attributes, with the Person of the Sonne in Christianity, it is nothing harsh for me to take occasion hence to sing a while the true Christian Autocalon, whose beauty shall adorn the whole Earth in good time; if we believe the Prophets.

Now this Eternall life I sing of, even in the midst of Platonisme; for I cannot conceal from whence I am, viz. of Christ: but yet acknowledging, that God hath not left the Heathen, Plato especially, without witness of himself. Whose doctrine might strike our adulterate Christian Professors with shame and astonishment; their lives falling so far exceeding short of the better Heathen. How far short are they then of that admirable and transcendent high mystery of true Christianisme? To which Plato is a very good subservient Minister; whose Philosophy I singing here in a full heat; why may it not be free for me to break out into an higher strain, and under it to touch upon some points of Christianity.

One further word belongs here: The freedom of spirit which led him to weave a Christian tapestry over a Plotinian world order, prompted More to borrow freely from any ancient source in which he found aught that would add to the variety and faithfulness of his pattern. He did not hesitate to substitute Ficino's idea of love, as the vital force actuating the One, for Plotinus' Beauty or Being, and he unhesitatingly expanded his figure to permit the use of Cabbalistic symbols in explaining his conception of the Universe. He,

likewise, abandoned any and all ancients whenever his concept of things varied notably from theirs; for example, he put aside the concept of a finite world in favor of an infinite one which he hinted at in Psychozoia and definitely projected in The Infinitie of Worlds. Throughout More's writings we have, in fact, not so much the universe and human life interpreted in terms of the ancients, as interpreted by More and adorned with confirmations from Platonic and other sources that make for intelligibility. A sentence in the "Epistle to the Reader" appended to the Enchiridium Ethicum, throws a great deal of light upon his temper and method in this respect:-

His chief intention was, To pour forth the Sense and Emanations of his own Mind upon this Subject; Yet that he very often, and most respectfully, had concurr'd with many of the Ancients: And had even produc'd their very Words and Sentences, that it might the more appear, how by comparing and fortifying them with his own, he had not so much affected Singularity in this Undertaking, as restitution of Morals to their pristin State.

It is characteristic of all of More's writings that they are the "Sense and Emanations" of his own mind. It was always "more his Endeavor to find out what was True in it self, than to search out what Others had said before him. And having found out what he thought to be True and Useful, then was he wont (as he would facetiously add) to look abroad for God-²⁸ Fathers, that might answer for and Patronize it."

These were the impersonal, the literary, influences which, impinging upon More's consciousness with peculiar force during the period of intellectual and spiritual un-

certainty, exerted a profound spell over his mind: a spell which found its particular and immediate expression in the Philosophical Poems, but which also colored to a distinctly noticeable degree all his significant work.

Outside the circle of Cambridge influences, personal and impersonal, which ripened his personality and conditioned his outlook on life at large, three other forces exerted pressures sufficiently great to energise certain activities in More. Each proceeded from a contemporary personality, and each provoked a characteristic reaction. They were, in the order of their appearing, Rene Descartes, Thomas Hobbes, and Francis Mercury Van Helmont.

Just when More became acquainted with the writings of Rene Descartes, is not precisely known. James Crossley remarks in a note in his edition of The Diary and Correspondence of Dr. John Worthington (Manchester, 1847): "Dr. Henry More, though he differed in some points from Descartes, had the highest opinion of that philosopher, whose metaphysics, through the strong recommendation of More and John Smith, of Queen's College, had become highly popular at Cambridge²⁹"; but the observation does no more than pave the way for a conjecture --and that by no means necessary -- that Smith introduced Descartes' writings to his friend. We know that Sir Kenelm Digby knew and admired Descartes as early as 1637, the date of the anonymous publication of the Discourse on Method, and that in 1641 Sir Kenelm went into

Holland for the express purpose of meeting the French philosopher; but although we know that Sir Kenelm succeeded in stirring the interest of some of his English friends, it is not possible to trace the Cartesian influence to Cambridge any more clearly than is indicated in a letter in which one Josias Allsop refers to his uncle, John Allsop, as having introduced the works of Cartesius to the Cambridge group, thereby occasioning the More-Descartes correspondence. The John Allsop to whom reference is made was exiled from England shortly after the impeachment of Archbishop Laud in 1640, and the More-Descartes exchange of letters took place after December, 1648, so that no more than a possible outside date is suggested by the Allsop letter.³⁰ Miss Nicolson asserts that More knew of Descartes before 1644, the date of the publication of the latter's Principles of Philosophy, chiefly, one infers, on the strength of the Allsop reference; but, in reality,³¹ no evidence as yet unearthed justifies the fixing of a very definite date anywhere between 1640 and 1648 as marking the beginning of More's acquaintance with Cartesian ideas.

It is possible that he may have known of Descartes when he wrote the Infinite of Worlds, or, to be more exact, when he wrote the "To the Reader" appended to that poem. But, however and whenever More made the acquaintance, the real evidence is first decisively revealed in the brief interchange of letters which began in December, 1648, and was cut off by Descartes' death in February, 1650. The correspondence

was provoked by Descartes' identification of extension with body, and by his theory that the brute creation is actuated by purely mechanical principles.

At first More was filled with delight and admiration by Descartes' utterances -- a reaction elicited in part, we may believe, by the air of fresh aliveness which characterized them, and by the expression of ideas which, if not actually held in common by both, were so naturally and spontaneously accepted by More that they seemed to have always been entertained by him. In the first letter More wrote: "These fine productions of your genius are really as dear to me as if they had been the children of my own brain. In a sense, indeed, they appear to be my own -- so entirely have my thoughts run in the same channel in which your fertile mind has anticipated me."³² The compliment, which, it must be admitted, has something of the odor of adulation, was, really, the preamble to a debate.

In the Psychozoia, following his Plotinian lead, More had figuratively represented the Divine Presence as actually extended in all creation. Descartes, in claiming that the characteristic of spiritual substance is thought,³³ made extension the peculiar attribute of matter, and declared that space itself is material, differing from what is commonly called matter only in the way it is perceived by the mind.³⁴ In the initial letter of the correspondence More contents himself with suggesting that Descartes did not really mean to imply that spirit is unextended, that God and spiritual

creatures are without any actual projection into the world; but upon Descartes' failure to concede extension as a necessary attribute of either God or spiritual creatures, More attacked his identification of matter and space, insisting that motion can only be satisfactorily accounted for by allowing space to be characterized as penetrable and immovable. Then, having found opportunity for challenging the concept of spirit as unextended, More assailed the idea of the mechanical operation of the brute creation. He argued,³⁵ as he did elsewhere at greater length, that animal actions are initiated and controlled by "animal spirits" which, while not identical with the World Soul, occupy a position and a relation in the animal economy analogous to that of the World Soul in creation generally.

More derived no appreciable satisfaction from this interchange of opinions, which was terminated, as previously noted, by the death of Descartes; but these differences of opinion did not impair his appreciation of the excellencies in Descartes' physical and mathematical treatises, and in the Method. During the year following Descartes' death, More wrote: "Des Cartes' Philosophy is indeed a fine, neat, subtil thing. ... Other Natural Philosophies, in respect of Des Cartes', are even less then a few Chips of Wood to a well-³⁶erected Fabrick." A few years later, in May, 1655, he wrote to M. Clerselier, who was engaged in editing Descartes' works: "There is no philosophy, indeed, except perhaps the Platonic,

37
 which so firmly shuts the door against Atheism." In the
Appendix to the Defense of the Philosophical Cabbala (date
 undetermined) he wrote:

For mine own part, (but not without submission to
 better Judgments) I should look upon Des Cartes as a
 man more truly inspired in the knowledge of Nature,
 then any that have professed themselves so these
 sixteen hundred years; and being even ravished with
 admiration of his transcendent Mechanical inventions,
 for the salving of the Phaenomena of the world, I
 should not stick to compare him with Bezaliel and
Aholiab, those skilful and cunning workers of the
 Tabernacle, who, as Moses testifies [Exodus 35:32.]
 were filled with the Spirit of God and they were of
 excellent understanding to find out all manner of
 curious works, 38

His admiration creeps out again in the preface to The
Immortality of the Soul, where he writes:

I think it is the most sober and faithful advice
 that can be offered to the Christian World, that they
 would encourage the reading of Des Cartes in all public
 Schools or Universities. That the Students of Philo-
 sophy may be thoroughly exercis'd in the just expression
 of the Mechanical powers of Matter, how far they will
 reach, and where they fall short. Which will be the
 best assistance to Religion that Reason and Knowledge
 of Nature can afford. 39

In a note printed in the 1712 edition of that work, however,
 More explains the reason for the foregoing recommendation:-

Namely, so it be done with that Faithfulness and
 Care, that his mechanick Philosophy may be clearly and
 entirely understood. For they that so understand it,
 will most undoubtedly be sensible of its notorious
 Defects; and that in order to the explicating of the
Phaenomena of Nature, 'tis necessary that another
 Principle be call'd in besides Matter, and merely
 mechanical Motion. But if through a certain lazy and
 stupid admiration of so eminent a Philosopher, his
 writings be recommended only to the Youth of the
 Universities, or but slightly read to 'em, they will
 contribute more to Atheism, and the Contempt of Religion,
 than to any solid knowledge of God or Nature. 40.

Definitely critical observation crops out in the "Publisher to the Reader" of the Divine Dialogues, where (assuming that More actually wrote the "to the Reader", though it will serve the argument if it be supposed that he merely assents to what "G.C."--the initials of the "Publisher"--writes) he asserts: "I am abundantly assured that there is no purely-Mechanicall Phaenomenon in the whole Universe. Nor ought that Author [More] so be understood in the comparing Cartesius with Bezaliel and Aholiab, as if he did really believe he was supernaturally inspired." A contemptuous tone creeps in, in the same piece, when he refers to "the ridiculous Noddings and Joggings of a small glandulous Button in the middle^e of the Brain" as the seat of the struggle between spirit and flesh in man.

These remarks, along with the quotations from the note referred to above, constitute definite steps toward the declared renunciation of Cartesianism which appears in the Enchiridium Metaphysicum.⁴¹ There he calls Descartes "chief of the Nullibists," and declares that the latter's theory of "mechanical causes" is inimical to all true religious belief.

Is this right-about-face to be accounted for by Tulloch's explanation that More could not "long maintain the higher altitude of pure reason to which they [Descartes' speculations] raised him"; that his reason was never a "'dry light' like that of the French philosopher, which penetrated all disguises, and brought him face to face with the secresies of

nature"; that "More loved--even in his highest exaltations of thought--the shadow of mystery; and the clear simplicities of the 'mechanical' philosophy appeared bald and false when he had time to reflect upon them"⁴²? Or is Miss Nicolson closer to the truth when she writes: "More became increasingly conscious not only of marked differences between the Cartesian philosophy and his own, but also of the effect which Cartesianism tended to produce upon youthful minds! ... He [saw] one^{after} another of his youthful students going the whole way in accepting the implications of the Cartesian mechanism," and therefore--so the implication seems to run--published a confutation of Cartesianism, in the hope that he could stem the tide of acceptance which was assuming such alarming proportions?⁴³ Or was he yielding, with mental reservations, to demands which he did not feel free to ignore, as Mullinger seems to imply when he relates:⁴⁴ "At Lambeth, the archbishop had intimated confidentially to More, that personally he was disposed to look upon the new 'free method in philosophizing' with far from unfriendly sentiments, but provided always, he added, 'that the faith, the peace, and the institutions of the Church were not thereby menaced'"; and again when he writes: "The recluse of Christ's College now found himself suddenly summoned to bear his part in the defense of those beliefs which he professed to hold most dear"? Or does Powicke surmise better when he observes that this recantation in respect to Descartes is only one instance of a

decline in intellectual acumen, which drew him apart from the group with which his name was so long associated? What bearing, if any, did Worthington's letter of November 26, 1667, have upon his intent and purpose? There Worthington wrote:

I wish you would refresh and joy me with the news of your being about a Body of Natural Philosophy. I cannot but think you are about it. ... You have as highly commended Des Cartes, as is possible, and as knowing no better method of Philosophy, you recommend it effectually in some parts of your books, whereby you so fired some to the study of it, that your letter to V.C. could not coöle them, nor doth it yet: but they are enravisht with it, and derive from thence notions of ill consequence to religion, you being sensible of this great evil, as also of the uncertainty of his philosophy throughout (as you intimated to me) you cannot but think, how much it concerns you to remedy this evil. And seeing they will never return to the old Philosophy, in fashion when we were young scholars, there will be no way to take them of [*sic*] from idolizing the French Philosophy, and hurting themselves and others by some principles there, by putting into their hands another Body of Natural Philosophy, which is like to be the most effectual antidote. And to do this will be more easy for you than any, because you have so fully consider'd it, and the chief materials for a new Phisiologie, you have more or less treated of in your other writings, the substance of which you may transfer into this book.

There is something of truth in each of the several explanations. Almost every page of More's writings bears witness to his inability to stick long to simple and clear intellection. There is not the slightest doubt that the predominating acceptance of Cartesian teaching, not only by Cambridge undergraduates but by the populace at large, was a matter of genuine concern to him. It is, likewise, undeniably true that his increasing interest in spirit phenomena did tend to set him apart from Whichcote, Cudworth, and the rest of the Latitude group. That there is some ground for

the hypothesis that he was yielding to pressure, is supported--in addition to the reported conference with the archbishop--by the facts: (1) that in 1665 More and Cudworth were the objects of suits of eviction, instituted by a disgruntled one-time colleague, who had since acquired social and political backing; (2) that, the attempt failing, the whole Latitude group were made the target of intensive opposition; (3) that the ecclesiastical licensers refused to permit the publication of the Divine Dialogues until More had modified certain sentiments; and (4) that, in contrast with this, the licenser passed the Enchiridium Metaphysicum without reading, "seeing from the very title whither it tended." That More entertained mental reservations as to the complete anti-Christianism of Descartes' works, is indicated by two revealing facts: that he continued to teach from the Dioptics, Meteors, and Principia after the publication of the anathema in the Metaphysicum,⁴⁷ and that a portrait of the French thinker hung in More's room until his death--two testimonies of the genuine admiration for Descartes which no amount of metaphysical dogmatism could wholly submerge.

As for the possible bearing of the Worthington letter, it is not unthinkable that More did feel that the burden of rectifying the effects of Cartesian influence rested upon him. To be sure, there were other forces at work popularizing the "mechanick" idea, but More was singularly unaware of what

was taking place outside the relatively narrow limits of his personal interests and contacts. That he should have dreamed of setting aside a Natural Philosophy with a metaphysical one is quite in keeping with his essential character; and that he did regard the Enchiridium Metaphysicum as an antidote for Cartesian mechanism, may be inferred from a statement in a letter to Lady Conway: "But it is as well a confutation of the Mechanick Philosophy as a Demonstration of Incorporeall Beings, and explication of their nature in general."⁴⁸

The relation between Henry More and Thomas Hobbes is much less difficult to trace. In the first place, it was of a single character: all antipathetic. Hobbes, who was one of the first Englishmen in England to become acquainted with the writings of Descartes (Sir Kenelm Digby sent him a copy of the Method the ~~same~~ year of its publication), had, like More, rejected the dualism implicit in the Cartesian argument; but in rejecting it he chose to adopt and amplify the alternative which More repudiated. That is to say, Hobbes seized upon the phenomenon of motion, which is the key to Descartes' mechanical world, and tried to apply it to the interpretation of all reality, i.e., to the activities of human consciousness as well as to the external world of things. In the second place, More's active relation to Hobbes was relatively short-lived: with the exception of occasional disparaging remarks here and there, Hobbes was definitely

put in his place--so More believed, at any rate--by the Immortality of the Soul.

Hobbes was a veritable "thorn in the flesh" for the group to which More belonged. His acceptance of God as an unknowable and, so far as human conduct in the general business of getting on is concerned, a relatively unimportant extra-world integer, together with his blatant assertion of the "natural right" of every man to fulfill his desires at the expense of any or all less strong than himself: these gave him a large and noisy following; for wily politicians, shrewd manipulators of business, and arrogant gentry of every shade and degree, whose public confession and private practice conformed so closely to Hobbes' expressed attitudes, flocked to his standard, happy to have conscience and compunction read quite out of court. It is, therefore, not surprising that conscientious divines, of every sort, assailed him vehemently, all the more because he dared to label his kingdom based upon ~~derived~~ laws, the intent of which was to modify or curb "natural right" only in so far as might be necessary in order to preserve common natural advantages, a "Christian Commonwealth." It is still less surprising that a man like More, whose strongest conviction about God was that he could be known intimately and immediately, and whose deepest thought about human life was that obedience to conscience and the virtues of humility and patience would lead to an abounding

life experience, should take up a vigorous cudgel against such a philosophy.

That cudgel he wielded once and for all in the Immortality of the Soul. There, after demonstrating the possibility of spirit by showing that the idea of a substance indivisible and penetrable is as readily comprehended by the mind as the idea of a substance divisible and impenetrable - though why either should possess its immediate properties is not demonstrable - he turns to Hobbes as the "confident exploder of Immaterial Substance out of the world," and points out the defects of his arguments.

To Hobbes' assertion that, since body and substance are synonymous and there is nothing but body in the universe, it is nonsensical to talk of incorporeal bodies, ⁴⁹ More declares that the assertion is ineligible of acceptance because Hobbes does not offer evidence in support of its validity. To a second statement that "Incorporeal Substances" have no origin-⁵⁰ al outside of dreams, fears, and superstitions, More counters that he has shown in his Antidote against Atheism (Bk.II), that "Philosophers and Christians have argued the Existence of Spirits and Immaterial Substances" from the evidences of "External Objects of Sense, that is, the ordinary Phaenomena of Nature, in which there is discoverable so profound Wisdom and Counsel, that they could not but conclude that the Order of things in the world was from a higher Principle than the blind motions and jumbings of Matter and mere Corporeal

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 Beings." To a third statement of Hobbes that, since they
 appear to persons either asleep or awake, ghosts or spirits
 are mere phantasms of the mind, 52 More crushingly retorts
 that "Sun, Moon, Stars, Clouds, Rivers, Meadows, Men, Women,
 and other living creatures" are then mere phantasms because
 they, too, appear to us whether asleep or awake. 53 To a fourth
 statement, that body is characterized by dimension, while
 spirit is thought of as having none, he replies that Hobbes
 mistakes the immediate characteristic of body, which is im-
 penetrability, rather than dimension. To a fifth argument -
 from Leviathan (chap. 12), which declares that the word
spirit of incorporeal body implies contradictions unverifiable
 by "natural understanding," and from Human Nature (Chap. 11,
 art. 5.) to the effect that it is impossible to have natural
 evidence of a spirit - More answers, first, that the word is
 not a contradiction, since he means no more by it than
"Extended Substance with Activity and Indiscerpibility," and,
 second, that natural evidence of a spirit is as plainly con-
 ceivable as the notion of a body, because the immediate pro-
 perties of spirit, "Penetrability and Indiscerpibility," are
 as readily conceived as the immediate properties of a body,
 "Impenetrability and Discerpibility," and "the power of commun-
 icating motion to Matter as easy as the Matter's reception of
 it, and the Union of Matter with Spirit, as Matter with Matter."
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The sixth and seventh propositions need not detain us, for
 one is an unimportant passage about ghosts, and the other is

practically identical with the first assertion. To an eighth argument, excerpted from *Leviathan* (Chap. 46), which contends that the notion of the spirit's being "all of it in his little finger, and all of it in every other part (however small) of his Body, and yet no more Soul in the whole Body than in any one of these parts is an utter absurdity, More replies that, accepting Hobbes' definition of place as "Imaginary Space," there is no bar to both body and spirit occupying the same place. As for the "Scholastick Riddle," it seems to have so completely "frightened Mr Hobbs sometime or other, that he never since could endure to come near the notion of a Spirit again, not so much as to consider whether it were a mere Bug-bear, or some real thing"; for it blinds him to the true immediate properties of spirit, namely penetrability and indiscernibility.⁵⁵

It must be admitted that, while one is not impressed by any particularly elevated quality of argument on the part of ~~More~~ in these passages, there is certainly no serious challenge to the reality of spirit in the contemptuous and unsupported statements of Hobbes. With respect to one of the latter's objections, More indulges in a not altogether undeserving strain of sarcasm:-

One might as well be amaz'd to observe such slight and vain arguing come from so grave a Philosopher, were not a man well aware that his peculiar eminency, as himself somewhere professes, lies in Politicks, to which the Humours and Bravadoes of Eloquence, especially among the simple, is a very effectually and serviceable instrument. And certainly such Rhetorizations as this

cannot be intended for any but such as are of the very weakest capacity. 56

Tulloch thinks that More did not regard Hobbes as an antagonist of any considerable metal; that his clumsily humorous gestures toward that gentleman reflect his failure to take Hobbes seriously; that he "was too much above it or apart from it to understand it fully, or the attraction which it possessed for many minds." ⁵⁷ It is more than probable that More did not fully understand what Hobbes was trying to do; but his devoting a fifth part of the first two books of the Immortality of the Soul to specific refutation of Hobbian quotations seems to be almost unchallengable evidence that, for the time being at any rate, he saw in Hobbes the potential destruction of all he cherished. That he seldom, if ever, made special reference to Hobbes in subsequent publications, may conceivably be due to a naive notion that he had completely demolished the basic Hobbian conception. Certain it is that he declared his own arguments to be of such lucidity and cogency that no sane man could deny them; and the assertion is, in this case, more than a rhetorical gesture.

Almost every book dealing with the relation between Hobbes and More, recounts the story to the effect that Hobbes was often heard to declare that if he should ever come to doubt the validity of his own philosophy, he would prefer ⁵⁸ that of Henry More. Tulloch thinks this is no more than a complimentary genuflection; but this writer inclines to agree with Miss Mackinnon that Hobbes saw a basic agreement between

himself and the Cambridge mystic: an agreement which looked upon the universe as a fundamental unity -- on the one hand, a unity of body, extended and interactive; on the other hand, a unity of spirit, extended and actively modifying subservient body.

The story of the influence of Francis Mercury Van Helmont can be told in brief compass: not because it was of little force, but because it began when More had passed the crest of his philosophic power and importance. It is deserving of specific treatment because Van Helmont was instrumental in turning More's attention and interests into narrow and unproductive channels. The two men became personally acquainted in the autumn of 1671, when Van Helmont came to England in the capacity of royal messenger. He brought with him, addressed to More, a letter of recommendation from Princess Elizabeth of Bohemia, patroness of Descartes, and a list of questions from one Baron von Rosenroth, a German student of Oriental and Cabbalistic literature, who, under the pseudonym of Paganus, was engaged in the difficult task of translating and editing the Zohar.

More quickly discovered a bond of common interest in Van Helmont's enthusiasm for cabbalistic literature, problems of apocalyptic interpretation, and the theory of pre-existence. At their first meeting, More bearing in mind Van Helmont's reputed skill in "Physick" and "Chymistry," told him of the strange malady of Lady Conway. The narrative so

roused the latter's attention that he went down to Ragley to observe the symptoms for himself. The upshot of the matter was that he consented to try his skill upon the disease; and, with the exception of a few necessary trips to the Continent, he remained at Ragley until his patient's death in February, 1679. Van Helmont's installation in the household which More was accustomed to look upon as his second home, cemented the friendship begun on the basis of purely intellectual sympathies. The former set up a laboratory at Ragley, and More spent many hours there in the company of its ingenious and sympathetic owner. There he became interested in hydrostatical experiments; there the two discussed prophetic Scriptural interpretation and cabbalism, to their mutual pleasure; there More discovered that Van Helmont was an accomplished designer, and the latter consented to draw designs to accompany his friend's various treatises on the prophetic books - designs which were so complete and artistic that the printer's limner could not improve upon them. Van Helmont continued to act as a kind of intermediary between More and von Rosenroth, and More apparently devoted many hours to comments, queries, and criticisms upon matters pertaining, chiefly, to cabbalistic philosophy and interpretation. Of course, Van Helmont was not wholly responsible for More's interest in cabbalism and prophecy. Almost twenty years before, in 1653, More had published his cabbalistical

interpretation of Genesis 1-3, at the instigation of Anne Conway, and his interest had been fostered by the latter's interest in Jacob Boehme, the Silesian shoemaker, whose writings More criticised anonymously in Philosophiae Teutonicae Censura (1670); while the bent toward apocalypticism was amply exercised in the Mystery of Iniquity (1664). and the last two of the Divine Dialogues (1668). It is, indeed, wholly conceivable that More would have gone off on these tangents anyway; but there is no gainsaying the fact that his interests in those directions were sharply accentuated by the enthusiasm of Van Helmont.

Something of the warm intimacy of the first few years disappeared when Van Helmont took the Quaker habit. But More was too fine a spirit to permit that act to sever their friendship; and his last letter to Lady Conway, written very shortly before her death, closes with a postscript conveying his "affectionate service to Monsieur Van Helmont."⁶⁰ A short time thereafter, More journeyed down to Ragley to stand beside his friend while their Lady was put to rest in the little parish church; and during the months immediately following her death the two engaged in their last joint labor - the preparation of Lady Anne's philosophical notes for publication. Ward incorporates in his Life a preface which, though signed by Van Helmont, he ascribes to the hand of More.⁶¹ Not many months later, in the autumn of 1679, Van Helmont left England, carrying with him the manuscript of the philosophical notes which

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he and More agreed should be published abroad. So far as we know, the two never met again. Van Helmont resumed the wanderings he had interrupted for the sake of Anne Conway, but he never neglected to speak in terms of highest praise of both her and More when he found himself in philosophic company.

It is not possible to write of influences modifying the thought of Henry More without naming Anne Finch, Lady Conway, his "Heroine pupil" and profound admirer. The whole story of their relationship has been exhaustively and feelingly told by Miss Nicolson, in the book which has already been referred to several times, namely, Conway Letters. Students who desire a closer acquaintance of these two "who were perhaps the last people in history who really understood what [the] words [Platonic love] meant," will find the Letters a curiously interesting document. The intent here is to present only such facts as will sufficiently illuminate the many references to that lady.

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Anne Finch was a sister of John Finch, a one-time admiring pupil of Henry More. Possessing a sensitive and eager mind, she read avidly in subjects which were taboo to most girls of her day. Just how and when she became acquainted with More, is not certainly known; but her first letter to him, in 1651, grew out of her reading in Descartes. The correspondence continued after her marriage, in 1651, to Edward Conway, later (1655) Viscount Conway, who, in turn,

became a good friend and warm admirer of More. More's respect for Lady Anne's intelligence led him to dedicate his Antidote against A^hteism to her; and his Conjectura Cabbalistica, though dedicated to Ralph Cudworth, was written at her express desire. When, in 1655, she became mistress of Ragley Hall, the Warwickshire ancestral home of the Conways, More made her residence his place of retreat when the University terms were over. His admiration for her was increased by his awareness that her philosophical studies were carried on despite cruelly severe fits of headache - an affliction which was beyond the powers of the greatest physicians of the realm. Their friendship ran along smoothly until a few years before Lady Conway's death. Then, in 1677, she deliberately espoused the Quaker faith, despite the admonitions of her old friend. The experience was not, however, without a compensating effect; for, out of his loyalty to her, More undertook to rid himself of his ancient and deep-rooted prejudice against all "enthusiastic" sectarian activities, and succeeded, to the extent that he came to admit that there were some good and true Christians among the Quakers.

It is worth noting that Lady Conway's final abandonment of More was not an intellectual one. Almost up to the very moment of her acceptance of Quakerism, she acknowledged the superior intellectual attitude of her friend; and when she did go over to the Quaker way, it was ^{the Quakers'} their behavior, rather than their doctrine, which won her.

reference?

I find them so still, and very serious. ... Acquaintance with such living examples of great patience under sundry heavy exercises, both bodily sicknesses and other calamities I find begets a more lively faith and uninterrupted desire of approaching to such a behaviour in like exigencies, then the most learned and Rhetorical discourses of resignation can do. ... I am not in love with the name of a Quaker not yett with what you term their rusticity, but their principles and practices as far as I am capable to judge are Christian and Apostolical; and the most of them as far as I can see or hear live as they preach. ... If they prove what they seem to be, lovers of quiett and retirement, they will fitt the circumstances I am in (that cannot endure any noise) better then others.

[She concludes]: I pray God give us all a clear discerning between Melancholy Enthusiasme and true Inspiration that we may not be imposed upon to believe a lye. The great difference of opinion in this point amongst the learned and experienced occasions much perplexity in minds less exercised, and not so well fitted for judging. 64

After her death, More's friendship with Lord Conway languished; they were too utterly dissimilar in habit and taste to be held together long by other than bonds of mutual respect, once their common interest had vanished.

One other influence must be noted, though it does not enter very largely into the Divine Dialogues, namely, that of the "enthusiastic" sectarian movements. We can understand More's intense anti-Romanism, for independent official Protestantism was still a comparative infant; but his equally intense antipathy toward any sect making claims of inspiration and illumination, is at first glance, incomprehensible, especially in the light of his own mysticism. The extravagant tone of the Alazonomastix letters seems to be of the quintessence of "enthusiasm." A part of the hostility is

traceable to a feeling that the status of Protestantism demanded that it present a solid front to Romanism; and, in that sense, his dislike of the "enthusiasts" was of a cloth with his distaste for the more regular independent bodies.

The real basis of his opposition went much deeper than that; it rested upon a conviction that "vulgar enthusiasm" sprang from an unbalanced constitutional set-up, which either ignored or denied the dictates of reason. Accepting the current psycho-physiology which ascribed four tempers to the human constitution - towit: choler, sanguine, ^{ly}phlegm, and melancholy - he pointed out in one of his treatises, Enthusiasm Triumphatus (1656), that in any individual the imagination may be excited, by one cause or another, to such a pitch that it may ignore both external objects of sense and the ratiocinative activity of reason, the peculiar slant being determined by the dominant temper; and that melancholy, being the particularly religious temper, is the prime mover in "enthusiastic" manifestations, though not infrequently it is aggravated by a dash of sanguinity: which accounts for the prevalent tendency of "enthusiasts" to favor free-love.

Of the kinds of "enthusiasm," More was most intolerant of the Familists and Quakers. The founder of the first, one David George (1501-56) of Delft, was particularly obnoxious because he taught that he was the true Messiah, that the resurrection was an allegory, that there were no angels or devils, and that there were no marital obligations for the

true believers. Both he and Henrik Niclaes (Nicholas), a contemporary and the founder of the English branch of the Familists, came in for scathing criticism at More's hands.

Though they equaliz'd themselves to Christ, and made themselves Judges of the quick and the dead, yet they were more devoid of true judgment in matters of Religion than the meanest of sincere Christians: And tho' they have so deify'd, or (as they phrase it) begodded themselves all over, I might say, bedaubed themselves with the feigned and counterfeit colours, or paint of high swelling words of vanity to amaze the vulgar; yet they were in truth mere men, of shallow minds and liquorsome bodies, cleaving to the pleasures of the flesh, and so deeply relishing the sweet of this present Life, that all hope or desire of that better was quite extinct in them, and therefore their settled and radicate ignorance made them so Enthusiastically confident in their own error. 65

As goodly as he lookes [More wrote to Lady Conway], he [Niclaes] is an Infidell or Pagan canting in Scripture phrases, and in the outward dresse and termes of our Christian Religion, really undermining the ancient Apostolick truth thereof, and under the pretense of crying up the upright life taking away the necessary prop thereof which is the ancient Apostolick Fayth, without which what pressing and effectual incitements he can use to make men good I confesse I know not. ... It is a hott, crude, bold, confident high aspiring spirit in them, not the spirit of God, that sett's them [Nicolaitans and Quakers] in the midst of their Infidelity above those that are more truly the members of Christ then themselves. 66

In another letter to the same correspondent he relates seeing a Quaker burn "severall parcells of choice books amongst which was also the bible." He says he asked if any of "H. N's" (More's constant abbreviation for Henrik Niclaes) books were among the lot being burned, and that he received a negative reply. He concludes the narration of the incident with the observation:-

Truly it were a very desirable thing to the Familists that the whole Bible were burnt and every

leafe thereof burned into ashes, els H. N. will never appear to posterity to be an inspired man, but a meer Mock-Prophet, so mad and phrantick are his allusions to and interpretations of the Scripture. ... I look upon him as a pittyful assertour of seeming a prophet and desirous of becoming an head of a sect, out of a bloated pride of spirit and sense of worldly advantage, beyond which his eye could never reach. 67

In common with many of his generation, More believed that the Quakers were an offshoot of the detested Family of Love, and that their propagation in England was part of a Romanist scheme to bring about the overthrow of Anglicanism. In 1656 he declared that they were "the most Melancholy Sect that ever was yet in the world" because their particular physical manifestations were the peculiar motions of the melancholy temper, in which extreme feelings of "Fear and Joy and Love" induce fits of "trembling and quaking." In attempting to account for their "enthusiastic" behavior, he writes:

The Enthusiast in one of his Melancholy intoxications, (which he may accelerate by solemn silence, and intense and earnest meditation) finding himself therein so much beyond himself, may conceit it a sensible presence of God, and a supernatural manifestation of the Divinity, which must needs raise that passion of Veneration and most powerful Devotion, which consists of Love, Fear and Joy: which single passions have been able to kill men, or cast them into a trance. How can they then (if they be well follow'd by imagination and desire in the Enthusiast of a nearer union with this inward Light) fail to cast him into Tremblings, Convulsions, Apoplexies, Ectacies, and what not? Melancholy being so easily changeable into these Symptoms: And it is very probable that this may be the condition of those they call Quakers. 68

In the Mystery of Godliness (1660) he devotes a considerable space - seven chapters - to an attack upon Familism and Quakerism, because they deny "the Person of Christ" in his

human aspects and in his redeeming and atoning functions. Of his change in attitude toward the Quakers during the 1670's more will be said somewhat later.

Another individual "enthusiast" whom More felt called upon to censure was Jacob Boehme. Boehme's works began to excite considerable attention in England about 1644, and they seem to have come to More's attention through the Conway household. A Mrs. Elizabeth Foxcroft, a sister to Benjamin Whichcote and an aunt to John Worthington, who had become attached to the Conway ménage as companion to Lady Anne, was interested in Boehme, and roused an interest on the part of her mistress. Worthington remarks in a letter to More (Jan. 8, 1668), that on a recent visit to London he had come across one who had a commission to procure all the Boehme books for Ragley.

More entertained considerably greater respect for Boehme than for either Nicolaes or David George, and his inclusion of the former among the "enthusiasts" seems to have been almost solely on the fact that the shoemaker disparaged the place and value or reason. "I look upon J.B. in that he does so expressly acknowledge and professe the catholick orthodox fayth, to be farr the better person and to have more of God in him, and I do not doubt but ~~had~~ more of perfection then H. N., though he so vehemently declared against it." So More wrote to Anne Conway in 1669. To the same he observed later, "Honest Jacob is wholesome at the bottom though a philosopher

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but at randome." In the Divine Dialogues, speaking in the character of Bathynous, More says of him:-

But admit that J. Behmen drives all inward in his Writings ... and withal that he has healed Familism of that unsoundness and rottenness of corrupt Sadducism; yet for all that the invincible Obscurity of his Writings will prevent him being over-popular, and his mistakes in his pretended Inspirations in matters of Philosophy ruine his Authority amongst the more knowing and sagacious sort of persons. ...

I will in the first place allow him to be a very serious and well-minded man, but of a nature extremely melancholick. And in the second place I conjecture that he had been a reader of H.N. and Paracelsus his Writings. Both which being Enthusiasticall Authors fired his Melancholy into like Enthusiastic elevation of spirit, and produced a Philosophy in which we all-over discover the footsteps of Paracelsianism and Familism, Love and Wrath, Sulphur and Sal-niter, Chymistry and Astrology being scattered through all. 71

Inasmuch as "enthusiasm" of this kind has its rise in a complexional set-up, Melancholy in the case of "honest Jacob" and Melancholy-Sanguine in "H.N." and all other religious free-lovers, More believed it is possible for careful and honest persons to avoid the contagion of "enthusiasm," just as it is possible to avoid the contagion of small-pox and other noisome diseases. The cure consists of "Three excellent Ingredients, to wit, Temperance, Humility, and Reason; which as I do not despair but that it may recover those that are somewhat far gone in this Enthusiastic distemper, as I am confident it will not fail to prevent it in them that are not as yet considerable smitten." 72

By "Temperance" More means as complete abstinence from all "hot or heightning meats or drinks, as also from all

venerous pleasures and tactual delights of the Body ... that can be attain'd to. For it is plain in sundry examples of Enthusiasm ..., that the more hidden and lurking fumes of Lust had tainted the phancies of those pretenders to Prophecy and Inspiration." ⁷³ To these restrictions should be added moderate exercise in the open air, temperate dieting (with fasting if necessary), and moderation in devotion. By "Humility" he means an "entire Submission to the will of God in all things." ⁷⁴ By "Reason" he understands an attitude of mind that "will suspect every high-flown and forward Fancy that endeavours to carry away the assent before deliberate examination; ... but [will] patiently try it by the known Faculties of the Soul, which are either the Common notions that all men in their wits agree upon, or the Evidence of outward Sense, or else a clear and distinct Deduction from these. ... The Enthusiast's mistake is not only in leaving his present guide [reason] before he has a better, but in having a false notion of him he does expect. For assuredly that Spirit of Illumination which resides in the Souls of the faithful, is a Principle of the purest Reason that is communicable to the humane Nature. And what this Spirit has, he has from Christ, who is the Eternal logos, the all-comprehending Wisdom and Reason of God, wherein he sees through the Natures and Ideas of all things, with all their respects of Dependency and Independency, Congruity or Incongruity, or whatever Habitude they have one to another, with one continued glance

at once. [While] whatever of Intellectual light is communicated to us, is derived from hence, and is in us Particular Reason, or Reason in Succession, or by piecemeal. And to be thus perswaded, how powerful a Curb it will be upon the exorbitant impressions and motions of Melancholy and Enthusiasm, I leave it to any man to judge."

If any man suspect "enthusiasm," either in himself or another, the matter may be resolved by applying a threefold test. First he must determine whether the piety of the suspected person be genuine and universal; if his piety admits of practices of adultery and fornication, it is "complexional." Second, he must determine whether the suspect accepts Scriptures as the "Oracles" of God, especially such parts as attest the atoning power and divine lordship of Jesus: the true Christian accepts them. Third, he must determine whether the person observes "an universal Prudence, whereby [he] neither admits ~~or~~ acts anything but what is solidly rational at the bottom, and of which he can give a good account, let the success be what it will": the Godly man does observe it.

Nothing that More says against "enthusiasm" is to be understood as a denial of a true "enthusiasm," or of the reality of inspiration. To have wholly denied them would have been a denial of his own deepest and most precious experiences.

There has not one word ... been spoken against that true and warrantable Enthusiasm of devout and holy

Souls, who are so strangely transported in that vehement Love they bear towards God, and that unexpressible Joy and Peace they find in him. For they are modest enough and sober in all this, they witnessing no other thing to the world than what others may experience in themselves, and what is plainly set down in the holy Scriptures, That the Kingdom of God is Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost.

But in none of these do they pretend to equalize themselves to Christ, whom God has exalted above Men and Angels, but do profess the efficacy of his spirit in them, to the praise and glory of God, and the comfort and encouragement of their drooping Neighbour.

... To such Enthusiasm as this [which he allows the "diviner sort of Philosopher, such as Plato and Plotinus" to have had], which is but the triumph of the Soul of man inebricated, as it were, with the delicious sense of the divine life, ... I must declare myself as much a friend, as I am to the vulgar fanatical Enthusiasm a professed enemy. 77

That More was aware of his own predominantly melancholy temper, we know from the testimony of his first biographer and from his letters. "The Constitution of his Spirits," writes Ward, "was moreover such, if I may be allow'd to mention it, that he could on design sometimes, by thinking upon Distant external Objects, bring them as to his View; and thus continue or dissolve them, for a time, at Pleasure. He hath indeed confess'd in a certain Place; 'That he had a Natural touch of Enthusiasm in his Complexion: but such as (he thanks God) was ever governable enough; and which he found at length perfectly Subduable.'" 78

In a letter to Anne Conway, More speaks of "that real and burdensome disease of Melancholy that had so seiz'd on my body and spiritts," 79 and it requires no great stretch of the imagination to suppose that his occasional 80 fasts and his one serious attempt to abstain from wine were measures designed to keep his "spiritts" from getting

too "hott." Although he gave up the abstaining from wine, after a year's trial, because he "found it not to do so well with him," his biographer says that one of his two regrets toward the end of life, was "that he had drank Wine" - possible because even his moderate usage of the beverage had more than once demonstrated that wine not only heated his spirits, but that it also inclined him to amorousness.⁸¹

From what we know of More's bent (albeit controlled) toward "enthusiasm" of a kind, we are not wholly unprepared for his final reconciliation with, at least, the "better sort of Quakers," although, even when the process was in course of maturing, a wave of righteous resentment probably surged through him when he learned certain "Students at Aberdeen" had written in a book that "the Quakers give out that [he] is a Quaker." Concerning the incident, More wrote drily: "But nobody that knowes me can take me to be a Quaker, and they that know me not, it is some body els they mean is a Quaker, or the Image of their own brains not me."⁸²

The immediate agents of More's rapproachment with Quakerdom were his friends, Anne Conway and Van Helmont. As early as 1667 Lady Anne's readings and conversations with her companion, Mrs. Foxcroft, had prepared her for an interest in the Quaker movement. Although there were undoubtedly some of the sect in the vicinity of Ragley, her infirmity, as well as her social rank, kept Lady Anne from any first-hand knowledge about them. When, however, Van Helmont came to take up his

abode there (1671), his insatiable curiosity, linked with his interest in Boehme and his natural bias toward "enthusiasm," paved the way for a closer knowledge and the final surrender of both himself and Lady Conway to the Quaker faith. Van Helmont probably had no acquaintance with the sect before his settling in Warwichshire, and but for the fact that a group of Quakers began to hold meetings in the vicinity a few years after his arrival, he might not have involved Lady Conway and himself in such profound changes, or Henry More in the series of contacts which led to his shift in point of view.

At any rate, conjectures aside, whatever may have been his motives, Van Helmont attended the Quaker meetings so assiduously that in November, 1675, Anne Conway wrote to More: "Monsieur Van Hellmont is growne a very religious Churchman; hee goes every Sunday to the Quakers Mettings." ⁸³ One month later, while visiting in London, More heard from Lord Conway a rumor that the Viscountess had turned Quaker; and, though he assured his Lordship that the report was groundless, he straightway wrote to his friend:-

I am fully persuaded, your Ladiship has tasted of a better dispensation then to soile yourself by professing any sect, though you may lawfully and justly commend what good there is in any, that is holy righteous within, and no blott on your honor. They are an errant sect as well as others, and there are good and bad amongst them. And a man may be exquisitely good and not be of their sect, but not so and be of it. This I speak for more caution, but I think it in a manner needlesse, to one of that perspicacity and judgment that your Ladiship is of. ... I converse freely with them... as a physicion converses with the sick. But the sadnesse

is that most men are quite dead in a maner, and so incapable of the most concerning converse." 84

A few weeks later he reverted to the rumor thus:-

Madame you are free, and I desire your Ladiship never to list yourself to any Sect, but you may be civill to all that are good of any. Which advice I believe I gave you about 30 yeares agoe, or at least as soon as ever I was acquaint with you. And though Monsieur Van Helmont go to their meetings, yett I would advise him by all meanes to abstaine from using their garb in Hall ro speech.

[Shortly thereafter he wrote again:] Mr Van Helmont though he goes so diligently to the Quakers meetings I hope will retain his liberty still and be of the election sect, taking what is Good but leaveing out any thing that will lessen him or make him seem worse. And I have thought of it now of late, that when any man quaker dines at Ragley, it were better, and it may be more easy to them, to come in after grace is sayd, and so after dinner to go out before it is sayd. I think this would be farr more decorous, and I believe as acceptable to them.

To this he added a postscript:

Since my writing of this, I heare there are Quaker meetings at Ragley with Monsieur Van Helmont. ... I hope all sincere Christians will meet together in Heaven at last. 85

In reply to the letter with the ominous postscript, Lady Conway informed More of her intention to substitute Quaker maidservants for those presently engaged in her service, and she told him that she did not concur with his proposal respecting meals and prayers. She assured him, however, that Van Helmont neither held meetings at Ragley nor wore the habit of the sect. Thereafter, for two years, the correspondence kept clear of any reference to particular events relating to Quaker progress at Ragley; then More spent a summer recess there, during which time, though Quaker guests had

frequent access to her, he saw Lady Anne not more than two or three times. Of their correspondence from that time until her death, a year and a half later, only one letter from More remains extant. Both she and Van Helmont had adopted the Quaker faith in spite of his earnest exhortations.

While these physical events were taking place, More had engaged in an increasing number of intellectual encounters with professed Quakers. Among them was George Keith, who is reported to have said that More's Mystery of Godliness - in which, as before noted, the author devoted seven chapters to a refutation of Familism and Quakerism - first turned him toward the Quaker way of life. Just when the relationship between these two began is not certain, but in 1670 More expressed his opinion that Keith was the "best Quaker of them all", objecting only to his being so "rudely and unjudiciously schismaticall."⁸⁶ Four years later he had "9 or 12 hours discourse" with Keith at Cambridge, and found him "a man very considerably learned, or a good witt and quick apprehension, and which is best of all, heartily breathing after the attainment of the new life of a Christian."⁸⁷ He further notes that Keith seemed to be taken by the idea of a "Spirit of Nature." On the occasion of that long conversation, Keith introduced Robert Barclay, whose intellectual power and cogency were in considerable measure responsible for More's express change of attitude, though he reverted to a theological position which More had been arguing against, at least implicitly, for a generation.⁸⁸

In the autumn of 1675 More met several prominent Quakers⁸⁹ in London, among them John and George Whitehead and William Penn, the latter of whom wrote to Lady Conway: "I have been with H. Moor, who is better acquainted with us then formerly: and will I hope right us to the world."⁹⁰ More found John Whitehead to be a "sensible tender person," but he experienced difficulty with George, because the latter suspected his intentions and resented being "catechized." About the same time, Keith brought More two of Isaac Pennington's books,⁹¹ which read as if their author were a "downright good man." Likewise about the same time, More and Keith entered upon an extended argument, triangulated through Lady Conway, on the question of the extension of Christ's body throughout the external creation, a position which led More to protest: "But really he is lyable to over headstrong Enthusiasm, and has too lubricous a reason and luxuriant phancy." In the same letter in which he complained thus of Keith, More wrote:-

W. P. and others were very desirous that I should give the Quakers a better testimony then they [the public] do. For they are very unrighteous in their formes of rayling against them and making them nothing better then the Church of Rome. But for my part as I found some Quakers better, then I have represented them, so I have found others such as have confirmed me in my opinion of their Familisticalnesse, so that I cannot pronounce for the generality of their Sect. ... I told George [Keith] in my Scholia, I may take occasion to say something better of some of them, but I cannot by any meanes undertake for them all. ⁹²

However much More admired individual Quakers, once he had made their acquaintance, he remained unshaken in his conviction that their body was an offshoot of the Family of Love.

I was told by one, when I was up to London last, who was acquainted with the Familists, and in a maner received into their sect, that these very Familists that he was acquainted withall, to the number of about twenty, was downright Quakers as soon as that forme appeared. And I must confess I alwayes looked upon them as Familists onely armed with rudenesse and an obstinate Activity. ... That they are hardly come from all points of Familisme, is plain [f]or that they stick so much at the externall Mediation of our Saviour. But to make this mediation of Christ in us, is a wonderfull forced thing, and nothing but that blind infidel spirit of Familisme could ever have ventured on it.

Elsewhere in the same letter, however, he shows a more friendly feeling:-

There are some things which I hugely like in the Quakers and wish all Christians would imitate them in. ... I promised ... G. K. ... I might take occasion to give some Testimonie of some things I observed in him, better then I had assurance of in any other of the Quakers, and so of W. P. and some few more. ... I am glad to see them now so well as they are, and there are some good things in them, that are sincere amongst them, egregiously good, and I wish that all the world was but gone so far toward the best, and it would be a good symptome. 93

But for all this show of friendliness for Anne Conway's sake, More continued to fear that Quakerdom, and all other dissenting forms of Protestantism, would bring only ruin and disaster. How much personal disappointment and secret bitterness underlay the last preserved letter from him to Lady Conway, we may never know; but there is no mistaking the tenor thereof.

It is the concern of every serious man so to live that he will not be much surpriz'd or amazed si coelum ruat, if the whole frame of the world break about our eares, as it does in a maner when the fabrick of our little world is to be demolished by disease or violence. I pray God fitt us all for the worst of times, and give us timely repentence to avert the just judgments of God that are hanging over the wanton heedlesse and unthank-

full protestant Churches. For the stink and [stench?] of them have too long offended the nostrills of the Almighty so that it may be just with God to cast a dunghill upon a Dunghill and to overthrow Protestantism with Poperie. 94

It is just to observe that More was attracted to and approved of such Quakers as made use of the principle of reason, and that he continued to distrust the generality of the sect because they were victims of "melancholy enthusiasm" who were not amenable to reason. It is significant that the men for whom he entertained the greatest respect, Keith and Barclay, were men of intellect, who he hoped would one day outgrow their present allegiance. Had he lived a few years longer, to have witnessed Keith's banishment from the sect, he would have felt immensely set up at the substantiation of his long cherished conviction that rational men must come at last to a rational faith.

95

As Miss Nicolson observes, it remained for a succeeding generation to perceive clearly what More may have vaguely suspected in later years: that the Cambridge Platonists, or, more particularly, More himself, and the Quakers were moving toward a common goal -- a religious life surrounded by a minimum of formality and based upon a maximum of mystically perceived spiritual verity: a life, not of creed but of deed, of moral goodness free from hypocrisy and sham. Their mutual differences arose not so much from disparity of circumstance of birth and station -- for the Quakers attracted men of gentle blood and high station -- as from a divergency of essential

attitude. Whereas the Quakers, for the most part, denied or distrusted the applicability of reason to matters of faith, and placed a kind of premium on emotional manifestations, More profoundly distrusted overt emotionalism, and believed with complete conviction that right reason was the distinctive link between human and supra-human levels of existence, and that, therefore, it was with entire propriety, if not necessity, applicable to matters of faith.

Each of these influential factors, some of them formative, some of them provocative or contradictory, revolves in one way or another around the principle of reason. The early ones, the Cambridge influences, personal and literary, were naturally chiefly formative. That of Descartes was both confirmatory and contradictory: confirmatory in that the French philosopher's method was grounded in reason, and in that the principle was applied to the problem of the Divine Being; contradictory in that it denied to that Divinity powers and qualities consistent with itself. That of Hobbes was chiefly contradictory, in that Hobbes' wavering in the matter of applying rational tests to the problem of the Divine Nature, coupled with his brash and blatant materialism, led More to a refutation of Hobbianism. That of Van Helmont was teasing, in that he was chiefly instrumental in directing More's thought into either freakish or unprofitable asides. That of Anne Conway was confirmatory, in that her enthusiasm for philosophical and theological matters encouraged More in critical

exposition, and provocative, in that her suffering gave him his most difficult assignment in the application of reason. That of the "enthusiastic" sects was chiefly contradictory, because of their emotionalism and distrust of reason, and mildly corrective, in that knowledge of individual cases modified in some measure his disapprobative attitude toward their kind.

Notes on Chapter Two

1. Quoted without notation by Geoffrey Bullough in his Introduction to the Philosophical Poems of Henry More, Manchester, University Press, 1931. q.v. p. xv.
2. Joseph Mede, a fellow of Christ's College, and the foremost apocalyptical scholar of his generation.
3. Fr. Gell, Robert, Remaines. Vol. II. p. 483. Quoted by Bullough, Op. cit., p. xv.
4. Quoted by Ward, Op. cit., p. 194.
5. Ward, Op. cit., p. 184.
6. Ibid., p. 188.
7. Bullough, Op. cit., p. xv.
8. The doctrine of the followers of Jacobus Arminius, who objected chiefly to the Calvinistic doctrines of "particular election," "limited atonement," and predestination. They objected to the first two because they made of no avail attempts to "save" the non-elect, and to the last because it made God the logical cause of sin.
9. Cf. Powicke, Op. cit., pp. 56-57. The statement of Tuckney's charges follows closely that of Powicke.
10. This and other quoted fragments from the correspondence, in this digest of Tuckney's charges, are from Powicke, Op. cit., loc. cit.

11. From the Tuckney-Whichcote correspondence. Quoted by Jones, Rufus, Spiritual Reformers of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, New York, 1914. q.v. p. 294.
12. From the Tuckney-Whichcote Correspondence. Here quoted from Bullough, Op. cit., p. xix.
13. From the Tuckney-Whichcote correspondence. Here quoted from Jones, Op. cit., p. 295.
14. Ibid., p. 296.
15. Cf. Aphorisms in Campagnac, E.T., The Cambridge Platonists, Oxford, 1901. q.v. p. 65ff.
16. Fr. the sermon, The Works of Reason. Cf. Campagnac, Op. cit., p. 49 ff.
17. Quoted by Bullough (Op. cit., p. xx.) from Chalmers, J., The Works of the learned Benjamin Whichcote, D. D. 4 vols. Aberdeen, 1751. q.v. Vol. I. p. 69.
18. Ibid., Vol. II. p. 82.
19. Ibid., Vol. I. pp. 348-9.
20. Justin, surnamed the Martyr. c. 100-165. One of the earliest of the Christian apologists.
21. Otherwise Titus Flavius Clemens. c. 150-215.
22. A MS ascribed to the fifth century which More thought to have been written by an Athenian convert of St. Paul.
23. Bullough, Op. cit., p. xxix.
24. Ibid., p. xxx.
25. Translation fr. Ward, Op. cit., p. 65.
26. Translation fr. Bullough, Op. cit., p. xxxiv.
27. Ward, Op. cit., p. 124.
- 28 Ibid., p. 171.
29. Op. cit., Vol. I. p. 300.
30. The Allsop letter, which is among the Walker MSS in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, as it bears upon the question of the date of the introduction of Descartes' writings to

Cambridge, was reproduced in part in an article on "The Early Stages of Cartesianism in England," written by Marjorie Hope Nicolson, and published in Studies in Philology, xxvi, 1929.

31. Cf. Conway Letters, p. 42.

32. Translation from Tulloch, John, Rational Theology in England in the XVIIth Century. Edinburgh and London, 1874. q.v. p. 369.

33. Cf. Meditations II.

34. Cf. Principles I, 53 and II, 10.

35. The Immortality of the Soul, Book II, Chap. xvii, Sec. 3; ~~see~~ Chaps. vii-xviii passim.

36. Fr. The Second Lash of Alazonomastix. Quoted by Ward, Op. cit., p. 103.

37. Cf. Tulloch, Op. cit., p. 373. Ascribed to a letter from More to Descartes by Sorley, W. R., A History of English Philosophy. New York and London, 1921. q.v. p. 78.

38. Op. cit., Chap. 1, Sec. 9.

39. Op. cit., Sec. 15, p. xiii.

40. Op. cit., loc. cit.

41. The Enchiridium Metaphysicum is More's last gesture in the way of philosophic dissertation. Published originally in Latin (1671), it has never been put into English, chiefly because it is no advance over what he wrote elsewhere. The treatise is a focussing of all his former arguments against limiting extension to matter.

42. Cf. Tulloch, Op. cit., pp. 376-7.

43. Cf. note 30, page 58 ante.

44. Mullinger, J. B., The University of Cambridge, London, 1888, and Cambridge, 1911. q.v. pp. 646-7.

45. Cf. Powicke, Op. cit., p. 159.

46. Worthington's Diary. Vol. II, Pt. 2. p. 254.

47. Cf. Letters 242, 243, 245, and 246 in Conway Letters, p. 392 ff.

48. Cf. Conway Letters, p. 303.

49. Cf. Leviathan, Chap. 34.
50. Physics, Pt. 4, Chap. 25.
51. The Immortality of the Soul, Bk. I, Chap. 10, Sec. 2.
52. Physics, Pt. I, Chap. 5, Sec. 4.
53. The Immortality of the Soul, Bk. I, Chap. 10, Sec. 3.
54. Ibid., Sec. 5.
55. Ibid., Sec. 8.
56. Ibid., Sec. 6.
57. Tulloch, Op. cit., p. 365.
58. Cf. Ward, Op. cit., p. 114; Tulloch, Op. cit., p. 366; and Mackinnon, F.I., The Philosophical Writings of Henry More, New York, 1925. p. 290.
59. Through the interest and influence of Van Helmont, Von Rosenroth became attached to the household of the Count Palatine of Sulzbach, under whose patronage he translated into German the works of the elder Van Helmont, the Vulgar Errors of Sir Thos. Browne, and More's The Immortality of the Soul. His great work, however, was the Latin translation of the Sohar and other cabbalistic writings, under the title Kabbala Denudata, Frankfort, 1684.
60. Conway Letters, p. 448.
61. Op. cit., p. 206 ff.
62. The MS was published in Amsterdam in 1690, and was translated into English two years later as The Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy. The little volume, never widely known, aims to set forth a system of thought based upon Cartesianism enlarged and modified by cabbalism.
63. Conway Letters, p. xiv.
64. Ibid., p. 422.
65. Enthusiasmus Triumphatus, Sec. 40.
66. Conway Letters, p. 297.
67. Ibid., p. 304.
68. Enthusiasmus Triumphatus, Sec. 29.

69. Conway Letters, p. 297.
70. Ibid., p. 306.
71. Dialogue V, Sec. xv & xviii.
72. Enthusiasmus Triumphatus, Sec. 51.
73. Ibid., Sec. 52.
74. Ibid., Sec. 53.
75. Ibid., Sec. 54.
76. Ibid., Sec. 62.
77. Ibid., Sec. 63.
78. Ward, Op. cit., p. 86.
79. Conway Letters, p. 96.
80. Cf. Ward, Op. cit., p. 123.
81. Cf. Ward, Op. cit., p. 123 and Conway Letters, pp. 328-9.
82. Conway Letters, p. 425.
83. Ibid., p. 409.
84. Ibid., p. 414.
85. Ibid., pp. 416 and 419.
86. Ibid., p. 307.
87. Ibid., p. 391.
88. Cf. Powicke, Op. cit., p. 167 and Conway Letters, p. 380.
89. George Whitehead (c. 1636-1732) was one of the influential early Quakers. John Whitehead (1630-96), a converted ex-soldier was apparently not related to George.
90. Conway Letters, p. 404.
91. Isaac Pennington, eldest son of a Lord Mayor of London, was first a Seeker and then a Quaker.
92. Conway Letters, p. 416.
93. Ibid., p. 418.

94. Conway Letters, p. 447.

95. Ibid., p. 379.

Chapter Three

The possible relation between the Great Plague and the London fire and More's decline of interest in philosophizing has been elsewhere remarked.¹ There it was said that the two events - coming at a time when More's interest in Scriptural interpretation was ascending in proportion to an apparent decline in philosophical enthusiasm, and being interpreted as visitations of divine anger upon a generation which was using its heaven-bestowed reason in elaborating mechanistic theories and material ends - may have been the actually determinant factors in convincing More that earthly wisdom and human reason, applied to philosophy, were futile instruments in promoting the spiritual ends of being. Here the intent is to raise the question as to what bearing, if any, those major events may have had upon the Divine Dialogues, as to either occasion or substance.

First as to occasion. According to his almost invariable custom, More spent the summer recess of 1665 at Ragley. Although the plague, which broke out in London in June, was a positive threat at Cambridge when the October term came due, More reported for duty and, apparently, remained at Christ's College for several weeks after Parliament passed the bill permitting the Colleges to discontinue. A letter to Robert Boyle, the physicist, is addressed from Christ's College, November 27, 1665. Shortly thereafter, however, More went down

to Ragley, accompanied by Cudworth, Worthington, Whichcote, and George Rust. How long his companions remained there is not known - Worthington, at least, was not there after the middle of January 1666 - but More probably remained until the University authorities announced that the March term would convene as usual. During the following July the plague broke out afresh and, one surmises from certain oblique remarks addressed to Lord Conway in June, 1667, that More probably spent most of that academic year at Ragley, with the exception of a short interval in the early part of 1667. The plague, therefore, by making necessary the discontinuance of the Colleges from November, 1665, until some time in 1667, gave More at least a whole year of complete freedom. The University table of matriculations shows that there were no admissions during 1666, and the figures for 1667 probably begin with the March or October terms, since up to the change in calendar reckoning, in 1752, the year was looked upon as beginning with the feast of the Annunciation, i.e., on March 25th. The plague was also instrumental in bringing together at Ragley four or five of the persons who are supposed to figure in the Divine Dialogues. That More was actually at work on them during that prolonged recess, we know from two sentences in a letter to Lady Conway in April, 1666: "The gentlemen in the arbour do talk on as your Ladship conjectures, they are in their 3rd meeting. Which if I had a papyr which is at Ragley, I think I could finish before my returne thither."

So much for the occasional relationship between the plague and the Dialogues. Can as plausible a substantial relation be established? The substantial relation is even more plausible than the occasional. That Huxley does not exaggerate when he asserts that the plague was regarded as a stroke of heaven-sent retributive justice, ³ one can readily verify by a most casual examination of the literature of the period. One might safely venture to assert that there was not a single drawing room, bar, or stoop in all England, where the relationship between the plague and Providence was not discussed one way or another. It is a practical certainty, therefore, that, although the immediate gathering of the company previously named was to witness the efforts of Valentine Greatrakes to alleviate the sufferings of Lady Conway, More and the other guests spent many hours, not to say days, in discussing the ways of Providence, the attributes of God, and the relation of current events to the "last times" and, by easy routes, the whole problem of Revelations. That the plague is not specifically referred to is, of course, accounted for by the fiction that the dialogues took place in Athens, though the fiction has but the slightest sort of tenuosity, as the most casual reading of the work will reveal.

In respect to form, the Divine Dialogues stand in a line of noble descent. The genre first came into being when Plato conceived the idea of clothing philosophical substance in a modified mime-like cloak. The product of that idea, the

original Platonic dialogues, differs from the mime in that it places, in its most finished literary form, some emphasis upon character depiction and carries an idea, or group of ideas, through to a relatively complete expression; whereas the mime had simply dramatized events, without either character development or conscious manipulation of material. This is not to say that the material of the dialogues of Plato is consciously ordered; ostensibly it is not so ordered, being for the most part attempts at recreating the discussions between Socrates and one or more other persons.

Significant dialogue remained chiefly philosophical until Cicero, when it took on a distinctly expository tone. The De Oratore, for example, is an amplified and finished restatement of what Cicero had previously said about oratory, done, so he tells us in the introduction, at the request of his brother. Cicero intended his dialogues to be like Plato's, according to his own statement in De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum; but whereas Plato gave us "thought in the making, as it is formulated and shaped in the actual speech of men," Cicero gave us "his own developed thought [put], with such arguments as may naturally be raised against it, into the mouths of his various speakers." ⁴ The next distinctive dialogue came from Lucian, who made the form the vehicle for the expression of his satirical criticism of superstition and fallacious philosophy.

These three masters of the dialogue form have bequeathed to the ages the master-patterns for all writers in that genre. Naturally enough, since the fostering of learning in the western world was for so many years a function of the Church, the Ciceronian or expository influence was predominant in such dialogues as appeared on the Continent and in England up to the seventeenth century, when the Platonic and Lucian influences were revived: the one in England, the other in France.

The Platonic dialogues are characterized, in the first place, by a certain living element; that is to say, the dialogues are the reported conversations of real people, one of whom, Socrates, is unchallengeably real to every reader, whatever shadows may hover over other individuals in the conversations. In the second place, the characters of the Platonic dialogues are not only real in the sense that they were once living people, but, also, in the sense that they live for the reader by virtue of definite characterizing elements which Plato introduced into the compositions. There is in the Platonic dialogues a definite interplay of character, as well as of idea; and there is in the best of them an appreciable and appreciated balance between personality and the search for truth. Finally, the Platonic dialogues are singularly free from dogmatic solutions. A problem is introduced - the meaning of friendship, in the Lysis - and talked about until the person who raises it admits that it does not mean any of the

things he has been led into declaring it might mean; then the entire conversation is cut off by some natural interruption.

While there is no denying that the expository motif is strong in the Divine Dialogues, there are sufficient other considerations which establish their Platonical quality, and which warrant the declaration that Henry More, rather than Lord Shaftesbury or Bishop Berkley⁵, introduced the Platonic dialogue into English literature. When she wrote the dissertation previously referred to, Miss Merrill was evidently wholly unaware of either the Divine Dialogues or the dialogue elements in Psychozoia. She therefore ascribes the introduction of the Platonic dialogue into English literature to Lord Shaftesbury.⁶

It is evident, in the first place, that More regarded the Divine Dialogues as Platonic, for he laid the scene in Athens, the locale of the original dialogues. In the second place, their substance is philosophic - at least three fifths of it. In the third, there is strong presumption that, though the finished dialogues reflect a purposive arrangement of material, the subjects considered were actually talked over by at least four of the seven persons represented. In the fourth, there is ample evidence of a conscious effort to achieve an interplay of character, as well as an exchange of ideas, and as in reading Plato one frequently comes away with clearer impressions of persons than of ideas, so in reading the Divine

Dialogues, one is grateful for the relative clarity and consistency of the characterizations. Finally, there is, especially in ^{the} first three dialogues, a manifest air of reasonableness. If the arguments move steadily toward a predetermined goal, and one gets a pretty clear impression that the goal is predetermined, the device of having the sceptic arrive at agreement by a series of intellectual assents maintains the essentially philosophic tone of the conversations.

These are the specific considerations which entitle the Divine Dialogues to the credit of being the first English examples of the Platonic dialogue form. In opposition to these five favorable considerations, two characteristics may be brought forth as constituting clear-cut divergences from strict Platonic structure: first, More did not use the narrative method in unfolding his dialogues - throughout he adheres to the dramatic conventions of recording only direct speech and of indicating the speaker by placing his name at the beginning of the lines ascribed to him - and, second, he makes distinct use of the dramatic theory of decorum. These divergences, to which may be added another - the creation of one or two characters not actually present at the presumed conversations - do not seriously affect More's claim as the first English writer to use the Platonic dialogue; for although certain aspects of the dialogues of Shaftesbury and Berkeley reflect a closer adherence to the Platonic standard, they, at the same time, reveal grosser essential deviations than do the Divine Dialogues.

The Divine Dialogues consists of five conversations between seven friends in Athens on five successive days. They fall naturally into two parts: the first, consisting of three dialogues, deals with the "Attributes and Providence of GOD," the second, containing the two remaining dialogues, treats of "the KINGDOM of GOD Within us and Without us AND OF His special PROVIDENCE through CHRIST over His CHURCH from the Beginning to the End of all Things."⁷ The conversations take place in a bower in the garden of one of the characters, a citizen of Athens. The characters, with "some allusion to their names," are as follows:-

Philotheus, A zealous and sincere Lover of God and Christ, and of the whole Creation.

Bathynous, The Deeply-thoughtful or profoundly-thinking man.

Sophron, The Sober and wary man.

Philopolis, The pious and loyal Politician.

Euiator, A man of Criticism, Philologie and History.

Hylobares, A young, witty and well-moralized Materi-
alist.

Cuphophron, A zealous, but Airie-minded, Platonist and Cartesian, or Mechanist.⁸

The Socrates of the group - Socrates only in the sense that he is the ~~chief~~ protagonist of the assembly - is Philotheus, the courteous, even-tempered, and sympathetic teacher who allays the fears of the "wary" Sophron, edifies the "pious" Philopolis, and soundly converts the personable adversary of the piece, Hylobares, whose only weak trait is the extraordinary ease with which he surrenders before the not-always-convincing explanations of Philotheus. The butt of the conversations is, oddly, Cuphophron, the genial host, whose

airy-mindedness leads him to set himself up as "Advocate-general" for both heathenism and the Church of Rome. Bathynous and Sophron play relatively inactive roles: the former emerging, chiefly, when the discussion involves depths of abstractions, and the latter constituting a kind of wailing chorus against the dangers of discussing too freely matters which might better be accepted on faith. The remaining member of the "Septenary," the scholarly Euistor, contributes such illumination as history and other ancient commentary can offer. He is the putative author of the dialogues, since, at the earnest request of a "noble friend," he reduced them to writing from memory, from notes made on the spot, and from correspondence with the several participants.

At least two attempts have been made to identify the actual persons who lie concealed behind the fictitious character names in the dialogues. In 1911 M. F. Howard, who edited the Ward Life published by the Theosophical Publishing Company, made an essay in that direction. He prefaces his identifications with the declared assumption that the Divine Dialogues were conceived and executed as a kind of peace-offering to Ralph Cudworth, whose feelings had been ruffled by More in the Ethicum incident. Philotheus, the solver of Hylobares' difficulties, and the expositor of the kingdom of God, is, therefore, regarded as an idealization of Cudworth: the idealization consisting chiefly in the obliteration of the "pathetic disillusionment and distrust of the world" which characterized

his otherwise admirable character.¹¹ Howard refers to a portrait of Cudworth hanging in Christ's College, which, by its face of "intellectual power and sensitivity, with knit brows and keen eyes," suggests the authentic basis for the Philo-¹²thean characterization. Bathynous is identified with More, the identification being based upon the poetic and mystical qualities in his nature. Sophron is taken to be George Rust, Dean of Connor and Bishop of Dromore; Euistor, John Worthington,¹³ editor of John Smith's sermons and the works of Joseph Mede; and Philopolis, Sir Heneage Finch, subsequent Lord Chancellor and Earl of Nottingham. The last assignment was presumably made on the basis of Cudworth's dedication of his Intellectual System to Sir Heneage. Hylobares, Howard identifies with John Locke, hinging the identification upon the fact that Locke resided for several years with Sir Francis Mascham, Cudworth's son-in-law, and upon a legend, which he admits to be probably mythical, to the effect that Locke was converted by Cudworth. The most unlooked-for identification, however, is that of Cuphophron with Francis Mercury Van Helmont, in whom More, "with his stronger mind and principles and keen insight," suspected "the 'enthusiast' or fanatic, and¹⁴ possibly the adventurer."

One does not feel particularly impelled to question Howard's identifications until one reads the last two. Then it becomes a matter of keen awareness that, in at least these two attempts to lay upon real persons for the fictitious

dialogue characters, Howard has lost his perspective. Locke was a comparatively unknown Oxford tutor when the Divine Dialogues were composed. It is doubtful whether More had so much as heard of him then. Certain it is that his name does not appear in the More-Conway correspondence. As for his residing in the home of Damaris Cudworth, Sir Mascham's wife, that did not occur until some time after Cudworth's death. The association of the name of Cuphophron with that of Van Helmont is equally improbable. The latter was known to More by name as early as 1653, but he was not personally known to any of the Cambridge group until his visit to that city in 1671, when he brought letters of introduction to More; and the Divine Dialogues had then been in print for more than three years. A probable basis for Howard's Cuphophron-Van Helmont identification lies in an erroneous passage in an ¹⁵ article, published in 1880, in which it is said that the Belgian eccentric was present at Greatrakes' attempt to cure Lady Anne. Incidentally, one gets the impression, from the identifications of Sophron and Hylobares with Sir Heneage and John Locke, that Howard thinks of the Divine Dialogues as being actually centered about Cudworth; whereas, in fact, any attempt at finding the real persons of the dialogues must recognize that they center most emphatically in and about Henry More.

That fact is adequately realized by Miss Nicolson (of the Conway Letters) who also tries to solve the mystery of the

persons of the dialogues. She concurs with Howard in the identity of Philotheus and Bathynous. She thinks Euistor may be John Worthington; Sophron she does not attempt to identify. 16 Philopolis she takes to be Viscount Conway; Hylobares, Thomas Baines; and Cuphophron, Anne Conway's brother, John Finch.

The identification of Philopolis with Lord Conway, rather than with Sir Heneage, seems reasonable, not only because the supposed conversations took place at Ragley when Conway was present, but also, and more particularly, because he was closer to More than was Sir Heneage. The linking of Thomas Baines and John Finch with Hylobares and Cuphophron involves an admitted "dream license," for both these gentlemen were abroad when the arbourites convened. In 1662 they had, with the consent of the College of Physicians, returned to Italy for further study, and they remained there until some time in 1671. The association of these names with the Divine Dialogues goes back for its justification to the time when those two young gentlemen were favorite, though sceptical-minded and quixotic, students of More in the days of his early tutorship. Supposing for the moment that the identification is justified, and it must be admitted that it is much more probable than that achieved by Howard, there is a singular fitness in having Finch, the most widely travelled of the little group, attempt to justify the ways of the heathen. The chief objection to this particular identification lies in the supposition that More would submit a favorite pupil and the beloved brother of

his "heroine pupil" to such severe and, frequently, contemptuous criticism as Cuphophron is subjected to in the course of the dialogues. Though one ^{grants} the convention of "mutually permitting one another the liberty of Philosophizing without any breach of Friendship," ¹⁷ it is next to impossible to contemplate More's conversing freely with Anne Conway about the Divine Dialogues the while he drew so uncomplimentary a portrait of her brother; even Platonic love could scarce endure that.

It is possible, of course, to regard the characters as wholly fictitious type creations. One may even see in them, in turn, certain characteristics of More himself, as G. P. H. Pawson does when he writes: "Philotheus is the spokesman of More's weightiest conceptions, but not, surely the complete reflection of his character. The author's wit and sense of humor finds an outlet in Cuphophron; his love of learning and talent for story-telling in Euistor; his patriotism in Philopolis. And Hylobares reminds us of More's early admiration ¹⁸ for Descartes."

It is perhaps a kind of academic lunacy to venture further suggestions touching the identity of any of these characters, but it seems only fair to observe that there is as strong circumstantial evidence to support the association of Benjamin Whichcote's name with that of Philotheus, as that which substantiates the association of Ralph Cudworth's. Whichcote was present at Ragley at least once during the time when the supposed conversations took place; the description,

"a zealous and sincere lover of God and of the whole creation," is more strictly applicable to Whichcote than to Cudworth; and he was, one may well believe, the most immediate personal influence in More's recovery from spiritual depression thirty years before. He was perhaps not so dogmatic as Cudworth, but neither was Cudworth so open-minded and calm as he. Any attempt at identifying the characters would be lacking in justification were it not for the obvious suggestiveness of the character of Bathynous. That, primarily, and the intriguing convergence of persons, place, and external circumstance at about the same time the idea of the Divine Dialogues must have been born, are undoubtedly responsible for the efforts that have been expended in that direction. Moreover, it must be admitted, the Dialogues acquire a noticeably increased interest if the reader can feel that flesh and blood people once discussed with such apparent interest matters which this generation either accepts without question or casts into the limbo of profitless or outmoded concepts.

More took considerable care in giving a natural and consistent quality to his characters. In the role of the publisher, the unknown G.C., he tells us:

Lastly, For the observation of Decorum of Persons, though it be not neglected or transgressed in any part of the Five Dialogues, yet it is more full and articulate in these Three; whereas the peculiar Character of Hylobares had no occasion distinctly to show it self in the Two last. But the Character of all the others are more or less discernable in all Five, but most of all that of Cuphophron. In the Character of which Person the Dramatist seems to have been judicious even to Physiognomonicall Curiosity, he intimating him to be one of

so little a Stature. Which comports excellently well with that gait of Manners, that versatility of Wit, and lightness of Humour, that discovers it self all along from the beginning to the end in the person of Cuphophon. For this qualification of Physiognomie, to men of little stature, their Heat and Spirits being something over-proportionated to the bigness of their Bodies; which makes them quick and chearfull, and of a sudden apprehension, obnoxious to Raptures and exalted Resveries, though reaching short, or else shooting over, and not easily hitting the Truth. Which therefore agrees well with the Platonicalness of Cuphophon's Genius. Besides it may be the Author may have some regard to the littleness of Des Cartes his Stature, of whose Wisdome Cuphophon is introduced such an excessive Admirer. As if lesser-sized Bodies were the fittest Sheath or Case for a Cartesian Wit. Not to note farther, that Plato also was of no procere Stature.

This, of course, sounds artificial, if not forbidding; but it is none the less the reflection of a conscious desire to make his characterizations conform to received notions of decorum. Furthermore, the reader will discover that the several persons behave and speak in accord with the brief characterizations given them in the description of the characters: even the somewhat precipitous conversion of Hylobares is anticipated in his quality of being "well-moralized." Actually, the qualities and traits of the characters are revealed with considerable deftness. Philopolis' patriotic temper and service and Hylobares' moral soundness are naturally presented in the preliminary conversation before their actual appearance on the scene; Cuphophon's shortness of stature is jokingly referred to by himself when he is asked to play on the theorbo; Euistor's habit of twisting his mustache furnishes the illustration for a point made by another member of

the group; while the "wit" of Hylobares and the airy-mindedness of Cuphophron may be discovered on almost every page whereon their speeches appear.

Pawson has a fresh and piquant characterization of certain of the characters in his chapter on More. There he writes:-

There is Cuphophron, the host, "a light and airy-minded Platonist," always ready to champion a lost cause, so that he is "advocate-general" in succession to Descartes, the Paynims, and the Papists. There is Philotheus, ... He bears the brunt of stating most of the views which the author has predestined to victory. He scarcely ever descends to humour, and, though even-tempered and courteous, is rather a prig. Eupopolis [sic] is a loyal statesman, a man of affairs unused to philosophical discussion, who propounds the queries touching the kingdom of God at the beginning, and from time to time breaks silence when there is a chance to assert his patriotism. Hylobares is Philotheus' understudy. His function is to relieve the protagonist whenever the discussion moves in shallow waters. He is not error-proof; indeed, he starts as a materialist, and at the outset questions the Existence and Providence of God. His difficulties have to be met before Philotheus can proceed to unravel the enigmas of apocalyptic Scripture. Father [sic] Euistor, "a man of history, philology, and criticism" is the recorder of the conversations. He supplies circumstantial evidence of historical facts and classical erudition. 20

The Divine Dialogues, begun at Ragley in the early part of 1666, were ready for the licenser by late autumn of 1667. The entire work was not published at one time. The first part, containing Dialogues IV and V, dealing with the kingdom of God, received the licenser's stamp December 20, 1667, and appeared in print sometime before March 27, 1668; the second part, containing Dialogues I, II, and III, recording the conversations on the attributes and providence of God, was passed

by the licenser March 22, 1668, and appeared sometime during the summer of that year.

The reasons for publishing the dialogues in this reversed order are by no means clear. The excuse offered in the "Publisher to the Reader," that it was "the will of the Author: of which no worse Construction ought to be made, then that, as it seems, he had a greater Concern for the Interest of Christianity then for the Curiosities of Philosophy," is not convincing. Galley-proof of the entire work was sent to Worth²¹ington, before December 27, 1667, probably simultaneously with the sending of another proof to the licenser. Yet, why, if the licenser refused to approve the first three dialogues in December, 1667, did More write Anne Conway on March 27, 1668, that they were submitted to the licenser "above a month agoe"? We know that the licenser, Samuel Parker, objected to passages about prescience in the first dialogue and to a passage on pre-existence in the third. Of those difficulties More wrote:--

The former I satisfyde him in sending something to be inserted in the first Dialogue that I might mitigate that passage, and make it looke lesse like my own Assertion. And this being done the first two Dialogues passe the Licenser, as I desired, and the third Dialogue was cutt from the two first according to my own request, that I might see whether by inserting anything into it or changeing it, I could make that passable too. Which having come to my hands I tryde accordingly, and by inserting a page or two more, in which Philotheus, Hylobares and Cuphophon talk, I think Sophron too, it wound off so the stress and dogmaticalnesse that appeared before touching preexistence, that third Dialogue has passed the license too. 22

Was it that More, already feeling the storm-clouds of opposition approaching, thought it expedient to submit the most orthodox section to the new Lambeth chaplain first as a kind of disarming measure, so that he might be less critical of speculations which the author wrote into the other section? Or does the fact that Parker was himself the author of a criticism of "Platonick Philosophie" and of another work in which he expressed his own views about pre-existence of souls²³ account for the apparently more critical examination of the first three dialogues? Whatever the reasons may be, the fact remains that the two parts were published separately, the second part several months before the first.

Upon receipt of the Divine Dialogues in proof, Worthington approved the printing but deplored the number of errors, which he supposed might be due to the compositor's unfamiliarity with More's "little hand and close writing."²⁴ At the same time he declared his opinion that it would have been better if More had translated the Greek quotations into Latin, as he [Worthington] had earlier suggested, because so many people would not be able to get the sense of the Greek. In a subsequent letter he informs More that he has read the first four dialogues so "as to score under words for italic letters,²⁵ and to mend the letters, which were more hard to read." He urges More to get some one else to do the proof reading, that is, some one other than More, because an author's mind is

ordinarily so full of the thought that he is negligent of mechanics. He deplores the addition of "the 7 Hymns to these Dialogues, where they will be less taken notice of." He²⁶ thinks they are worthy of a more advantageous presentation.

The general title page of the British Museum copy of the first edition of the Divine Dialogues informs the reader that they were "Collected and compiled by the Care and Industry of Franciscus Palaeopolitanus," while the separate title page for the first three dialogues substitutes the initials "F.P." for the spelled out name on the general title page, and the title page to the last two dialogues has no reference to the compiler. This ordinarily unimportant information is here given because a request from Worthington, under date of March 24, 1668, when the first three dialogues were not yet off the press, seems to indicate that the title page of the separately published "Kingdom of God" dialogues underwent some alteration in the course of printing. Worthington wrote: "I desire you to bring with you the two Dialogues, though with the old title page, it being no matter among friends, but for public sale F. P. is best."²⁷ The quotation implies that the first impressions bore the name Franciscus Palaeopolitanus, and that later impressions displayed only the initials F. P. Crossley's note only adds to the confusion, for he says: "The initials 'F. P.' given on the title page of vol. i. as those of the editor, are extended on the title page of vol. ii. into 'Franciscus Palaeopolitanus.'" The only thing that emerges

clearly from this little "tempest in a tea-pot" is the presumption that the British Museum copy, upon which the present study is based, was printed, or assembled and bound, as if simultaneously or jointly printed - that is, after the separate publication of the "Attributes and Providence" dialogues. 28

The anonymous publication of the Divine Dialogues precipitated some little debate over their authorship. Inasmuch as More had never made use of the dialogue form in prose - he had used it to some extent in the Philosophical Poems - many people attributed the authorship to other persons. "Some are confident I am the Author, others that Dr. Worthington or one Mr. Halliwell [one of the fellows at Christ's]," More wrote to Lady Conway: a statement which is substantiated by Worthington, who remarks to a friend, in the spring of 1669, "The late Divine Dialogues, when they came out first, were said to be composed by me." 29

Apparently the "Kingdom of God" dialogues were not particularly well received. In the letter to Anne Conway just quoted from, More also wrote: "If your Ladiship be no more concerned in the dialogues then many here, there is no great fear that they should tempt you to over-read your self." Their indifferent reception seems to have led More himself to believe that they were of dubious value, for some six months later he wrote: "When those 3 Dialogues come out, I will send My Lord [Conway] a copy of them, but these that are already out will I believe but seem tedious to him. They will most seasonably accompanie

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the other if at all." The "Attributes and Providence" dialogues seem to have had a better reception. More is reticent about them, but a remark of Worthington's is partially revealing. Sometime in the late summer of 1668 he wrote to More: "It seems the divinity of the D.D. does not go well down with some of your neighbors. I do not know, what they should pretend to be distastefull, except it be what I hinted before. I thought there would be more recking at some theologicall documents in the 2 last, which were first." 31

No evidence as to the size of the first edition is available. It was apparently widely read, and it seems altogether reasonable to believe that Lord Shaftesbury and Bishop Berkeley, both of whom subsequently wrote philosophic dialogues, were acquainted with More's work in that form. No other English edition appeared during More's lifetime, but a second edition was published in 1713 by "Joseph Downing in Bartholomew-Close near West Smithfield," 32 and a third edition of the "Attributes and Providence" dialogues, with a publisher's preface, was issued by Robert Foulis, at Edinburg, in 1753. All five dialogues were printed in the Opera Omnia, where, curiously, they appear separately: the "Attributes and Providence" dialogues at the end of the first philosophical volume, and the "Kingdom of God" dialogues at the end of the second philosophical volume. The second edition contains a supplement to dialogue three, as well as several scholia. What relation the supplement may have to the original difficulty of getting the first three dialogues past the licenser, is not known.

Readers who have become acquainted with Henry More through the medium of either his verse or "straight" prose will experience a pleasurable feeling in reading the Divine Dialogues if they read the conversations in their proper numerical order. One comes away from More's verse, except from the all too few flashes of natural poetry, with a kind of mental grogginess. The strain of trying to recognize multinominal personifications, wandering in the shadowy depths of Platonized Hebrew-Christian mystical philosophical jungles, is more conducive to somnolence than to illumination. One's encounters with his prose are more satisfying; he knows, at least, where the author is going. He may be stupefied occasionally by displays of erudition, startled by unlooked for leaps of an agile mind, and bored by seemingly irrelevant digressions; he may be discontented with the too confident assumptions of disputed bases and the specious character of a good deal of the arguments; he may even doubt that the author ever legitimately places the flag of conquest upon the field of dispute; but he will experience, nevertheless, a delight of sorts in the relation of thought to experience, and in the frequent bursts of personal enthusiasm and conviction which pervade and flavor all More's prose.

The occasional flashes of naturalness which enliven the discursive tedium of the philosophic prose, become the most immediately experienced quality of the Divine Dialogues. It is true that there is as much curious and recondite learning

in this work as in any of the conventional prose discourses, but there are seven distinct and separable persons in the Dialogues, each of whom is a kind of specialist in learning; and we relish that in seven which seems affectatious or pretentious in one. There are digressions, unlooked for turns, specious and inconclusive arguments; but these are the unavoidable concomitants of spontaneous conversation. And the trick of relating thought to experience, which so pleasantly enlivens the "straight" prose, takes on a noticeably greater force in the dialogue form, as well as adds an authentic quality to the Dialogues themselves. One need not look far for evidences of naturalness in the conversations. It is pleasurably and convincingly present in the sequences which introduce and conclude the several dialogues - sequences in which, incidentally, qualities and supplementary characteristics of the several persons are unobtrusively introduced. It is fortunately present in the interrogative and explanatory interruptions in the necessarily long or involved expositions of abstractions and mysteries.

In addition to the quality of naturalness, the Divine Dialogues display a second major quality which is conspicuously absent in the bulk of More's composition, namely: unity and completeness of parts. In a letter to a friend, Worthington writes that More's "books are best at the second reading, and then consider'd most closely: and one part of the book

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does illustrate another" - a virtual admission of a lack of the quality just named. That criticism is, happily, not so particularly applicable to the Divine Dialogues. Dialogue I, for example, develops with a really remarkable consistency and completeness, considering the expansive discursiveness of the Antidote against Atheism, the exposition of the arguments for the existence and attributes of God. Dialogues II and III discuss - discursively, to be sure, but with the question consistently present - the Providence of God. Only toward the end of Dialogue III do materially digressive questions occur, and they are there naturally introduced as minor difficulties which somewhat embarrass the mind of Hylobares. In a like manner, Dialogues IV and V move with reasonable directness through a series of questions pertaining to the kingdom of God. If the accident of having to convince but one person in the two sets of conversations, Hylobares in the first three, and Philopolis in the last two, is directly responsible for the progress and relative concentration of the arguments, we have additional reason for rejoicing that More adopted the dialogue form in this work.

Among lesser literary characteristics may be noted the deliberate introduction of humor into the Dialogues. The only other of More's works in which one feels secure in asserting the incorporation of conscious humor, is Psychozoia, the first of the Platonical songs of the soul. There one recognizes the stroke in the characterizations of Don Psittaco, Graculo, and

Corvino - personifications of Calvinistic pedantry, Aristotelian Scholasticism, and Ecclesiastical absolutism, respectively³⁴ - and in the description of the worship of the birds. In the Dialogues humor ranges through wider fields, extending from such play upon words as Hylobares' remark, "You went out of your house when you came into your garden," uttered after hearing Cuphophron admonish his serving-boy to inform any one who should inquire for him at the house, that he had "gone out,"³⁵ to such deeply rooted characterizational utterances as Cuphophron's "Metaphysicks were not Metaphysicks, Hylobares, if they were not mysterious," and his grandiose "An universalized spirit ... will not be at loss for an Apology for any Phaenomenon."³⁶ The most sustained conscious humour is perhaps found in the badinage directed at Hylobares because of his "whistling"³⁷ on his "Flagellet."

It is interesting to compare the Divine Dialogues with other early English examples of philosophic dialogue, particularly in the light of Miss Merrill's declaration that Lord Shaftesbury's The Moralists is the earliest example of the kind. The Shaftesbury piece, the full title of which is The Moralists, a Philosophical Rhapsody, was published in 1709, forty-one years after the Divine Dialogues. Although there is no direct evidence that Shaftesbury was acquainted with the Divine Dialogues, direct reference to Enthusiasmus Triumphatus,³⁸ and the assertion of Robert Foulis, editor of the third edition of the Divine Dialogues, that Shaftesbury was fond of the

Ethicum, together with the fact that the Dialogues were popular enough to justify two post-mortem editions, warrant the assumption that he was familiar with them.

The Moralists reverts in form to the narrative style of presentation, and it consists of a report of a group of conversations between the narrator and certain persons. They begin with a deprecation of the present state of society and strive to assert that the world may become all that is potential in it when and if men recognize and respond to the instinct for the Good and Beautiful, which is able to impel a man to virtuous living. The argument is not lacking in nobility, but it has not the drive of conviction: Shaftesbury was too obviously the gentleman-dabbler in aesthetics. In his efforts to convince his readers, other gentlemen and ladies of fashion, that a gentleman may be something of a philosopher without being a pedant, he transmits the essential insincerity of his position to the style of the dialogues themselves. The striven for naturalness and ease is neither easy nor natural.

In comparing More and Shaftesbury in their capacities as dialogists, one observes first the greater superficial Platonicalness of the Moralists, for it is cast into the authentic narrated-dialogue mould. But once that superficial authenticity is admitted, there is little else to say for Shaftesbury. The Divine Dialogues are more redolent of essential conviction, at least so far as the protagonist and his "deeply-thoughtful" friend are concerned, and neither Hylobares nor

Cuphophron are entirely men of straw. Philopolis and his "kingdom of God" must be ignored for the moment, because the dialogues in which they occupy the central positions are patently not philosophical in any restricted sense of the word. While it may be claimed that the speech and manners of the persons of the Dialogues are not wholly natural and easy, as, for instance, in the protracted and sometimes vulgar abuse of the host, it must be remembered that we are in the presence of a select company, whose several peculiar characters, as well as their common general character, are formally declared before the conversations begin. And since More does not employ the narrative method, wherein the author is more palpably responsible for the particular and general behavior of his characters (because he thereby reports their manners and reactions instead of permitting the reader to imagine them from the content, tone, and tempo of the several speeches), the major test which the Divine Dialogues must stand is, whether the characters are or are not reasonably easy and natural in the light of their previously declared peculiar and general qualities; and they meet that test acceptably. So far, then, as a comparison between the Divine Dialogues and the Moralists is concerned, the former, while less like the Platonic pattern in some particulars - the employment of narrative linkage and the matter of leaving the adversary unconvinced - have a more authentic note of sincerity and are, within the defined limits, more easy and natural. The

average reader will certainly find them more interesting and readable than the Moralists, though both fall considerably below the more rapid-paced dialogues of Plato, or of their English companion pieces, the Berk^{ley} dialogues.

When we turn to The Dialogue between Hylas and Philoneus and Alcipron, ~~the~~ Bishop Berk^{ley}'s offerings in ~~the~~ dialogue form, we confront the Divine Dialogues with superior contestants; for it is generally conceded that ~~the~~ Berk^{ley}'s dialogues constitute the nearest approach in English literature to the Platonic standard. The Hylas and Philoneus, published when Berk^{ley} was twenty-eight (1713), is almost completely lacking in setting, and is noticeably deficient in characterization; but it presents the subject matter with such urgency and in so limpid a style as to give to the conversations an unmistakable preeminency both as pure literature and as philosophy. In spite of the abstruseness of the ideas presented, the Socratic development carries the reader along with a satisfactory degree of comprehension at a minimum of effort and delay. Alcipron, which appeared nineteen years later (1732), is a more deliberate and inclusive piece of work, in which the author provides a tangible setting for his conversations, and improves measurably upon his characterizations, somewhat at the expense, it must be admitted, of the sense of urgency and eagerness; it retains, however, the essential simplicity and clarity of expression which characterizes the Hylas and Philoneus. But, even with these improvements, Alcipron falls

short of the ideal pattern, in that the emphasis is upon ideas at the expense of the characters. The excellency of the Berkley dialogues lies, as Miss Merrill points out, in "absolute sincerity of purpose" and "transparent beauty of style." The Divine Dialogues are equally sincere, but they seldom display the crystalline lucidity of either Hylas and Philoneus or Alcipron. The native inclusiveness of More's mind operated to preclude that sharp and distinct focus of attention which is the first prerequisite to lucid expression, and the same characteristic explains why the Socratic method was never quite effectively displayed by him. For all this, however, the Divine Dialogues approach the Greek standard more nearly than Berkley's best in the greater balance between character and thought - and that effect is not achieved by the relative obscurity or difficult nature of the thought.

Notes on Chapter Three

1. Cf. ante Chap. I. p. 18.
2. Conway Letters, p. 273.
3. Cf. On the Advisableness of Improving Natural Knowledge
4. Merrell, Elizabeth, The Dialogue in English Literature, New York, 1911. q.v. p. 5.
5. Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671-1713). Pupil to Locke, philosopher and virtuoso. Works published in three volumes, entitled Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times, in 1711.
George Berkley (1685-1753) Irish Bishop and philosopher. Probably best known for his rejection of the idea of abstract matter.

6. Cf. op. cit., p. 85.
7. From the title pages of the first and second volumes respectively as displayed in the British Museum copy of the first edition.
8. From the list of characters preceding the Dialogue I.
9. Cf. The "Epistle" in the forepart of Vol. I.
10. Cf. ante Chap. I, pp. 27-8.
11. Ward, op. cit., Intro. p. 16.
12. Idem.
13. John Smith (1616-52), a pupil of Whichcote's and the most vigorous thinker of the Cambridge group. His powers were cut off by his early death.
14. Ward, op. cit., Intro. p. 17.
15. Langston, C.J. "Lady Conway and Valentine Greatrakes, the Stroker," Argosy. vol. XXX. pp. 378-87.
16. In the index to Conway Letters Worthington's name is linked with that of Sophron, while Euistor is not even listed. In the text, however, Miss Nicolson supposes Euistor to be John Worthington. q.v. pp. 254-55.
17. A statement appearing below the list of personae preceding the Dialogue I.
18. Pawson, G.P.H. The Cambridge Platonists, London, 1930. A not particularly scholarly but interesting and suggestive essay on the subject. q.v. p. 61.
19. Cf. ante p. 100.
20. Pawson, op. cit., pp. 60-61.
21. Cf. Worthington's Diary, pp. 260, 263.
22. Conway Letters, p. 294.
23. A Free and impartial censure of the Platonic Philosophie, Oxford, 1666. An account of the nature and extent of the Divine Dominion and Goodness, especially as they refer to the Origenian Hyothesis concerning the Preexistence of Souls, Oxford, 1667.

24. Worthington's Diary, Vol. II. Pt. 2. p. 261.
25. Ibid., p. 262.
26. Idem.
27. Ibid., p. 268.
28. This almost completely irrelevant problem is really quite maddening. Does Crossley's reference to "vol. i." mean the first three dialogues, which were published last, or the last two dialogues, which were published first. If he means the former, then "vol. ii." refers to the last two dialogues, which were published first; if the latter, then to the first three dialogues, which were published last. Thank God, the Scriptural reference to precedence is not so complicated, else neither first nor last might be ever.
29. Worthington's Diary, p. 315.
30. Conway Letters, p. 295. Italics mine. Incidentally, persons who feel inclined to challenge the identification of the characters of the dialogues may find here indirect evidence that Philopolis is not intended to personify Lord Conway, for in that event Conway ought to be particularly interested in the kingdom of God dialogues, since, under that system of identification, he is supposed to have asked for the discussion of the subject.
31. Worthington's Diary, p. 280.
32. From the title page of the second edition.
33. Worthington's Diary, Vol. I. p. 242.
34. Canto II.
35. Dial. V. i.
36. Cf. Dial. I. xxxiv and
37. Cf. Dial. II. xxxvi and III. i.
38. Cf. Characteristics, Vol. iii, Ed. 1714, pp. 65-68 passim.
39. Op. cit., p. 102.

Chapter Four

The curious reader will find much to engage his attention in the Divine Dialogues. The queer old custom of spitting in a dog's mouth to give him courage, the explanation of the reported Virginian habit of shaving but one side of the face, and the account of the men of Arcladan who lie in child-bed for their wives, to name but three out of a score or more, will delight those whose tastes run to unusual customs and traveller's tales; the dream of Bathynous and the vision of Theomanes will appeal to those who have a liking for records of mystical experience; and the reasons advanced to account for a board rising to the surface of a body of water, will at once interest and amuse those who have some knowledge of modern physics. The geometry-minded will find several neat demonstrations and at least one proposed theorem which will cause them to scratch their heads in puzzlement; the astronomy and physics-minded will discover historically interesting observations on gravitational theory and celestial mechanics; while the philosophically inclined may ~~al-~~
steep themselves
~~most literally wallow~~ in speculations as to the nature of time, space, and matter - to say nothing of cosmogonies and theories of the soul's existence.

Aside from these variegated, and in some instances superficial, interests, the Divine Dialogues involves definite and historically important considerations. It has already been

remarked that the work is a kind of epitomizing document, phrasing in new form the almost static content of voluminous earlier writings in both verse and prose. As such a document it reflects, to some extent, the more significant influences displayed in chapter two. Some of those influences are so closely drawn into the very woof of More's mind as to be almost indistinguishable: such, for instance, is the apocalypticism of the kingdom of God dialogues, and such the so-called Platonism of the whole composition. Indeed, were it not for one or two references to Joseph Mede, on the one hand, and for not many more to Plotinus, Ficino, and others of the Platonic tradition, on the other, the reader might lay the work aside wholly unaware the either apocalypticism or Platonism was, at least in part, an acquired intellectual attitude. One influence, however, the most active of all the contemporary influences, is unmistakable; the reference is, of course, to that exercised by Rene Descartes. In this and the next chapter, an attempt will be made to demonstrate the interplay of More-Descartes and More-"Platonic" thought relationships as the Divine Dialogues reveal them. The former are both interesting and important because of their contemporary character, the latter, because the unobtrusive nature of the "Platonism" is likely to deceive unwary readers.

Inasmuch as the whole range of the More-Descartes interrelation is involved in the Divine Dialogues in its most compact and most readable form, and inasmuch as a careful study

of that inter-relation has never been made - beyond what is revealed in the More-Descartes letters - it seems a not unprofitable thing to attempt it here;;and the task takes on ~~an~~ added significance when it is realized that it involves a restatement of the celebrated Theory of Vortices, which for nearly an hundred years dominated the speculations of European thinkers as to the structure of the universe - a theory now so dead that none of Descartes' English translators have taken the trouble to include that portion of the Principles¹ in their translations.

As was pointed out in the chapter on influences, More's attitude toward the contents aspect of Descartes' works was of a mixed character. Toward some, notably the essays on Optics, Meteors, and Geometry, he maintained a generally steady enthusiasm; towards others, the Method, Meditations, Principles, and Passions of the Soul, he displayed, at first, enthusiasm tempered with judicious reservations, convinced, in the main, that the author at once illuminated the world and served the Faith. Later, the reservations gained an ascendancy, not primarily because he felt that Descartes' intentions were anti-religious, but because he observed with distress that men were absorbing the mechanical theories without heeding the professed pious intent behind them. In his attitude toward the method aspect of Cartesianism More never wavered; for him, as for Descartes, a "clear and distinct conception" of a thing was the test of its truth. The only

modification to that general principle he ever entertained was the conviction that "clear and distinct conception" was not necessarily dependent upon ordinary rational processes; that is to say, that intuitive perception is as valid as ratiocinative conception. For himself, indeed, an intuitively perceived truth took precedence over truth perceived by the unaided powers of the mind, as is demonstrated in Dialogue I, where the intuitively perceived proposition "That the Primordials of the World are not Mechanicall, but Spermatieall, or Vital" is set up in opposition to the Cartesian conception of a mechanically derived universe.

The Cartesian points of view are first proposed in the Divine Dialogues by Hylobares; but upon his early defection, the positions are valiantly defended by Cuphophron who, though occasionally staggered, never admits the defeat of his liege lord. The opposition rests chiefly with Philotheus, by virtue of his function as solver of Hylobares' difficulties, though Bathynous frequently interjects pertinent criticism, and Sophron occasionally beats the drums of fear.

The interplay of ideas does not follow any definite pattern in the Dialogues; it occurs as their several aspects relate to the series of questions proposed by Hylobares. It seems best, therefore, in the interests of clarity, to ignore the chance order of the conversations and to organize the material about a more obvious and logical sequence, employing the dialogue interplay either as vehicles for stating the

problems or for illustrating the method and degree of disapproval or approbation.

The various threads of conflict center around concepts of the nature and attributes of God, the nature and extent of matter, the nature and powers of the soul, the physical organization of the universe, the explanation of animal behavior, and sundry subsidiary ideas derived from these. Since it will not be possible to discuss them with the degree of separateness which the foregoing series seems to indicate, owing to unavoidable interlocking, it will be the main endeavor of this section to trace the inter-relation through these broad divisions.

First as to the evidence of God's existence. Descartes' earliest statement of the rational ground for belief in the existence of God hinges upon the supposition that the mind entertains the idea of "Perfect Being" as clearly and distinctly as it entertains the idea of a sphere, a triangle, or any other simple geometrical figure.

Recurring to the idea of a Perfect Being [he wrote in Part IV of the Method], I found that the existence of the Being was comprised in the idea in the same way that the equality of its three angles to two right angles is comprised in the idea of a triangle, or as in the idea of a sphere, the equidistance of all points on its surface from the center, or even still more clearly; and that consequently it is at least as certain that God, who is this Perfect Being, is, or exists, as any demonstration of geometry can be. 2

This basic Cartesian argument received two additions. The first, when, in addition to the proposition that existence

is a necessary part of the idea of Perfect Being, he advanced the thought that the fact of his possessing the idea of an "infinite substance" (and such he defines God as being), argues the existence of that substance. In support whereof he wrote in Meditations III:--

Thus it is absolutely necessary to conclude ... that God exists: for though the idea of substance be in my mind owing to this, that I myself am a substance, I should not, however, have the idea of an infinite substance, seeing I am a finite being, unless it were given me by some substance in reality infinite. 3

The same conclusion is somewhat more succinctly stated in "Proposition II" of the "Reasons which establish the Existence of God," towit: "The existence of God is demonstrated, a posteriori, from this alone, that his idea is in us." The second addition, also concisely stated in the "Reasons," is "The existence of God is also demonstrated from this, that we ourselves, who possess the idea of him, exist."⁴

In the Antidote against Atheism (1652), More's first argument for the existence of God is a long one revolving about the same center as Descartes' basic statement. It does not follow therefrom that More adopted the argument because Descartes made effective use of it. Anselm had used it six hundred years before, and, though the Schools had rejected it, More may have taken it up before reading Descartes. That is in itself, however, of no particular consequence. Of greater significance is More's declaration first published in the preface to the Antidote, wherein, speaking of the solidity of his arguments, he wrote:--

I borrowed them [the arguments] not from Books, but fetch'd them from the very nature of the thing it self, and the indelible Ideas of the Soul of Man. ... I intended not to impose upon the Atheist, but really to convince him. And therefore Des-Cartes, whose Mechanical Wit I can never highly enough admire, might be no Master of Metaphysicks to me. Whence it is I make use but of his first Argument only, if I may not rather call it the Schools, or mine own. For I think I have managed it in such sort, and every way so propt it and strengthened it, that I may challenge in it as much interest as any." 5

The other arguments employed by Descartes, More rejects because, as he writes in the same place, "I durst not trust to them, unless I had the Author's Wit to defend them, who was handsomely able to make good any thing. But they seem to me to be liable to such evasions as I can give no stop to."

When we turn to the Divine Dialogues we find, somewhat to our surprise, that the argument from the necessary existence of the innate idea is barely mentioned, and is then commented upon disparagingly. In Section 13 of Dialogue I, Philotheus is trying to secure from Cuphophron a clear statement of his grounds for believing in the existence of God. After according lukewarm assent to the authority of the Church, the universal phenomenon of worship, and the fact of miracles as evidence, Cuphophron takes the initiative thus:

Cuph. I will tell you, O Philopolis, because I see you so hugely desirous, what is the main Philosophicall Basis of my belief in a God.

Philop. What is it,

Cuph. The innate Idea of God in my minde: the arguings from thence seem to be undeniable Demonstrations.

Philop. I believe they are the more prevalent with you because they are Des-Cartes his.

Cuph. It may be so. And they are so convictive, that I do securely disregard all that other way of arguing from the Phaenomena of Nature.

Philop. I have read those reasons of Des-Cartes, but they seem to me to be hugely high and Metaphysicall, and I meet with many men who look upon them as Sophisticall; most men some of them, others all. But it is the privilege of you high and exalted Wits to understand the force of one another's Notions best.

Cuph. I must confess, O Philopolis, there is an extraordinary and peculiar congruity of spirit betwixt me and Des-Cartes.

Philop. I but we ought to consult the common good, O Cuphophon, and not decry more vulgar intelligible Arguments, or affect such a Philosophy as will exclude all from laying hold of God but such as can soar so high as you raised Wits can. Arguments from the Phaenomena of the World are far more accomodate to a popular understanding.

Cuph. Therefore I talk at this rate onely in our free Philosophicall Meetings.

Philop. It is discreetly done of you.

Hyl. Well, Cuphophon, you may hug your self in your high Metaphysicall Acropolis as much as you will, and deem those Arguments fetched from the frame of Nature mean and popular: but for my part, I look upon them as the most sound and solid Philosophicall Arguments that are for proving the Existence of a God.

One is strongly inclined to suspect the validity of Philopolis' emphasis upon such arguments as the vulgar mind can comprehend, for there are many subsequent flights into abstractions which would task such minds more than the argument from innate ideas. Without question we are here witnessing the virtual repudiation of an earlier favorite idea, and with no more justification than the rumor that some persons look upon it as "Sophisticall" and that it is too abstruse to be appreciated by the popular understanding. The apparent repudiation becomes more puzzling when we examine the scholia to both the Antidote and the Appendix - which include comments written as late as the preparation of those volumes for the Opera Omnia, i.e., up to eight years after the publication of

the Divine Dialogues - and find that More does not only nowhere repudiate the argument, but, on the contrary, reiterates his faith in its validity. In a scholium on Bk. I, Chapter 8, Section 3, referring to a critic, one S.P., he writes:-

He reckons me in the number of those who esteem those Arguments of Cartes, viz. One in the third Meditation on the first Philosophy, the other in the fifth, as much as Archimedes's demonstrations; whereas I always had a very mean opinion indeed of that argument in the third Meditation, and which is put in the second place in Princip. Philop. Part I. Art. 17, as you may see in the Preface to the Antidote against Atheism, Sect. 6. But the other Argument which first occurs in ~~the~~ Principles, I always judg'd firm and solid (especially being apply'd the same way I use to apply it.) 6

The iteration is again unmistakable in the scholium on Bk. I, chapter 9, section 3, towit: "The idea of a God, or of a Being completely and absolutely perfect, plainly argues his existence, And his Existence doth not altogether take away, or prevent the Existence of any thing which is not dependent of it self as the original of all things." ⁷

While it is true that we do not know that these scholia were written after 1667, we do know that he had ample time thereafter to clarify his position with respect to this phase of his agreement with Descartes if he had deemed such a procedure necessary. In fact, the longer we contemplate this particular interplay, the more we are inclined to believe that this is a case of evasion rather than of repudiation, an evasion necessitated, perhaps, by a momentary need; and the conviction deepens when we discover both Philotheus and

Bathynous, some few pages later, calmly using the terminology of the argument, though it is not there linked with the name of Descartes.⁸

When we turn from the idea of God to his nature, we immediately encounter an interplay of ideas which reveals the basic incompatibility of More's and Descartes's respective thought systems. There is virtual agreement in their definition of God: the one (More) defining him as "fully and absolutely Perfect Essence or Being," the other as "the supremely perfect substance";⁹ but they quickly and unmistakably disagree as to his essential attributes. For Descartes those attributes are infinity, eternity, immutability, omnipotence, and omniscience; for More they are eternity, immutability, omnipotence, omniscience, spirituality, and omnipresence. Of the attributes they ascribe to him in common, they differ first with respect to eternity. To that essential quality More links a time concept. Hylobares objects to the Scholastic insistence that the eternity of God is an eternal present (nunc permanens), on the ground that such a notion rules out the idea of successive duration or time. Bathynous upholds his objection, and insists that successive duration is inescapable where necessary existence is involved, as it is in the idea of God. He amplifies the notion by pointing out that the eternal duration of God "contains virtually in it all the successive duration imaginable," and that He is always "present" to that successive duration as "the channel

of a river" is always present to "the water that passes through it." Philotheus offers the interpretative comment that "We apply our own fluid successive Duration to the stedly Permanency of the eternall Duration of God: whose Duration, though stedly and permanent, and without all defluxion and succession ... is notwithstanding such as the most infinite successive Duration past can ever reach beyond, nor ¹⁰ future ever exhaust."

With Descartes, eternity is never defined; but the term seems to carry the sense of an unchangeable fact of being, and is, therefore, more closely related to the concept of immutability than to that of duration. This relation is hard to indicate by specific reference to particular phrasing in Descartes, but a reading of certain portions, particularly Parts III and V of the Meditations will probably assure the dubious reader of the validity of that statement of relationship.

The idea of omniscience presents to More the same difficulty that omnipotence does to Descartes, namely, the reconciliation of free-will in man with either fore-knowledge or fore-ordination in God. Both men evade any clear solution of the problem. Descartes, equally convinced of free-will and fore-ordination, declares that "we should soon be embarrassed in great difficulties if we undertook to harmonise the pre-ordination of God with the freedom of our will, and endeavour-¹¹ ed to comprehend both truths at once." He takes refuge in the

recollection "that our mind is limited, while the power of God ... is infinite."¹² More, through the person of Philotheus, attempts to iron out the seeming contradiction by taking something away from the absolute aspects of both omniscience and free-will. In the first instance he argues that "to foresee that a free Agent will pitch upon such a part in his choice, with knowledge certain and infallible, is to foresee a thing as certain even when it is uncertain; which is a plain Contradiction or gross Mistake."¹³ In the second instance he contends:-

Though ... the Souls of men are in some sense free; yet I do as little doubt but there are or may be infinite numbers of Actions wherein they are as certainly determined as the brute Beasts. And such are the Actions of all those that are deeply lapsed into Corruption, and of those few that are grown to a more Heroicall state of Goodness. ¹⁴

When Philotheus has thus spoken, however, Bathynous, who may be looked upon as More's especial mouthpiece, breaks into the discussion of the problem by pleading the same consideration Descartes uses.

For all it looks so repugnantly that there should be a certain foreknowledge of what is free and uncertain, yet it seems more safe to allow that Privilege to the infinite Understanding of God, then to venture at all to circumscribe his Omniscience. For though it may safely be said, that he does not know anything that really implies a Contradiction to be known; yet we are not assured but that may seem a Contradiction to us that is not so really in it self. As for example, To our finite Understanding a Quadrate whose Diagonal is commensurate to one of the sides is a plain Contradiction, and we conceit we can demonstrate it to be so, that is to say, that the Ratio of the one to the other is unconceivable and undefinable. But dare anyone to be so, ~~to~~ as to affirm that the Divine Intellect

self, whose Comprehension is infinite, cannot define to it self the Ratio of a Diagonal Line in a Quadrate to the Side thereof? 15

This proposal Philotheus accepts as a "safe and sober Solution of the present Difficulty," adding that what he had previously said should be looked upon as "spoken by way of Essay ... and according to the sense of others rather than mine own." 16

Although More had probably noted Descartes' appeal to the infinite powers of God in dealing with the problem of free-will, it is by no means a necessary assumption that he took his lead from that author. Their agreement at this point may be suspected as being due to the still alive tendency to evade clear solutions by reference to the finite capacity of man's mind. So far as More is concerned, two other possibilities are here involved. On the one hand, in Bathynous' appeal to the infinite power of God, and in Philotheus assent thereto, we may see More covering his tracks in the same way Descartes did when he professed to believe that the world was created with all its present perfections, but considered that it would assist our understanding of things generally if we could imagine a few "understandable" and "simple" principles which would enable us to look upon the world as though it had come from some seeds, i.e., come to pass by some process of evolution, and then proceeded to unfold his theory of vorticular creation. That is to say, it is possible that the "Essay" of Philotheus really does represent More's notion about the

relation of free-will to omniscience, and we may justify the supposition by reference to the Immortality of the Soul (Bk. II, chapter iii, sections 16-21), where More offers precisely the ideas here spoken by Philotheus. On the other hand, it is possible that by 1667 More had actually regressed to the Bathynous position, for there was undeniably in him an ingrained tendency to swing from rationalism to mysticism. One is inclined to believe that the first proposed alternative is the true one, chiefly on the grounds that here, as in the case of the innate idea argument for the existence of God, More had ample time to correct the position taken in the Immortality, if he had so desired. At the same time, if this interpretation be accepted, one is somewhat disconcerted by the deception involved: it is so foreign to More's usual temper. Yet the procedure at this point, considered alongside the apparent desertion of the argument from the idea of God, acquires significance; it points at what has already been hinted at, namely, that for some reason or reasons the Divine Dialogues are not so straightforward as some of his earlier pieces.

There remain of the essential attributes of God, three: infinity, spirituality, and omnipresence, none of which is ascribed by both Descartes and More, at least not in the same sense. The term infinite was reserved by Descartes exclusively for the Deity. It had for him no numerical or extensional meaning, but conveyed solely the notion that the nature and

power of God are incredible of comprehension in the finite minds of men. With More the term had a wider signification, as we shall presently observe. The remaining attributes, those of spirituality and omnipresency, while not peculiar to More, took on, by reason of his placing them in strict opposition to certain primary Cartesian postulates, a force and significance that have influenced subsequent philosophical thinking in at least one direction.

The problem of the spirituality of God is introduced by Hylobares, who professes to be disturbed by it because he cannot entertain the idea of a non-material entity. He is quickly brought to admit that the notion of a material Deity is absurd, but he insists that the idea of spiritual being is impossible, or, at least, incredible on account of the Scholastic absurd figuring of thousands of spirits standing on a needle's point, and of the soul being at once and wholly in a man's head and in his foot. He is reminded that the inability to comprehend an idea is no argument against its reality; that he has already conceded that the works of Nature as clearly indicate the operation of an "Intellectual Principle" as does the De Sphaera & Cylindro of Archimedes; and that, therefore, since it is absurd to suppose either the Divine Mind or Archimedes' intellect to be material, there must be an immaterial substance in the world - in other words, a spiritual substance. Conceding the point, Hylobares comes to the crux of the difficulty thus:-

Methinks I could wish the nature of a Spirit were more unknown to me than it is, that I might believe its Existence without meddling at all with its Essence. But I cannot but know thus much of it: whether I will or no, that it is either extended, or not extended; I mean, it has either some Amplitude or Essence, or else none at all. If it has no Amplitude or Extension, the ridiculous Hypothesis of the Schools will get up again, and millions of Spirits, for ought I know, may dance on a Needle's point, or rather, they, having no Amplitude, would be nothing. If they have any Amplitude or Extension, they will not be Spirits, but mere Body or Matter. For, as that admired Wit Des-Cartes solidly concludes, Extension is the very essence of Matter. 17

So, indeed, Descartes had contended, though not in those exact words. He preferred to call matter "corporeal substance" or "body," meaning thereby that thing "which is the immediate subject of local extension, and of the accidents that presup-¹⁸ pose extension, as figure, situation, local motion, etc." At the same time he distinguished between body, i.e., extended substance, and mind, a "created substance," of which the one distinctive distinguishing character is that it thinks. The¹⁹ only difference between mind and God is, by implication, that, whereas mind is created and dependent, God is uncreated and independent. Both God and mind are essentially thinking entities. Mind and body, or - since we are relating the concepts to those of Henry More, who preferred the word matter - mind and matter may not only be conceived as entirely separable, but, at least by the power of God, in their pure states²⁰ actually separate. As substances, mind and matter have, according to Descartes, a kind of par value, because they require only the postulate that God is in order to establish themselves

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as valid concepts. This created, unthinking, extended matter is not only the essence of all projected forms - external sense perceptible objects - but is, also, the essence of that so-called nothingness, vacuum, space, or what you will, in which objects of definite figuration are located.

For, in truth, the same extension in length, breadth, and depth, which constitutes space, constitutes body; and the difference between them lies only in this, that in body we consider extension as particular, and conceive it to change with the body: whereas in space we attribute to extension a generic unity, so that after taking from a certain space the body which occupied it, we do not suppose that we have at the same time removed the extension of the space. 22

This essential identity of matter and space, Descartes tries to demonstrate by imagining all the sensible qualities of an object removed so that there remained only the property of extension, which would be indistinguishable from the extension of the space occupied by the body. 23

The general outline of the disagreement between More and Descartes as to the essential properties of matter, and by consequence, of mind or spirit, and the general character of More's arguments, have been set forth in some degree by several persons, most comprehensively, perhaps, by Tulloch; and with that we have here no concern. The immediate object is to illuminate the controversy as it is presented in the Divine Dialogues, so that the student who reads these pages may have an adequate understanding of the direction and force of the conversations without delving into supplementary material, the immediate relationship of which may be not always clear.

Elsewhere, notably in the Immortality of the Soul, More's opposition took the form of a constructive examination of the properties of spirit by reference to certain axioms. Here the denial of the Cartesian identification of extension and matter is more directly achieved, albeit the aim is the same as that in the Immortality, namely, the validation of the idea of spirit as extended and activating the behavior of terrestrial, as well as celestial, bodies.

Hylobares, it will be remembered, had come to the Cartesian conclusion that extension is the essential property of matter. Philotheus declares that the conclusion, together with its corollary, that every extended thing is matter, is an "upstart conceit of this present Age," and he observes, with evident sarcasm, that "the world has hitherto been very idle" if all the experiments in vacuum phenomena are to be rendered nugatory by Descartes' assertion "that it implies a Contradiction there should be any." ²⁴ This Hylobares admits to be unsettling but not conclusive. He concurs with Philotheus that motion has extension, but insists that the extended property of motion cannot be distinguished from the extension of the matter that is moved; and he persists in this opinion until confronted with the proposition that an arrow shot vertically into the air, and a line drawn from the top of the axis to the periphery of the base of an upright cylinder, describe motions in an extension separate from that of the air and the cylinder respectively. The proposition,

demonstrated by reference to a water glass standing on a table in the arbor, so staggers Hylobares that he declares himself completely convinced of "the existence of the ancient Democritish Vacuum, and withall that Extension and Matter are not convertible terms; for which yet Cartesius so much contends." He adds whimsically: "This Conceit is struck quite dead with the point of the Arrow describing a curvilinear Line in the steady Aequinoctial Circle. And if it should ever offer to flame out again into life in my thoughts, I would use the Conicum as an Extinguisher to smother it." ²⁵ Whereupon, Cuphophron, feeling that somehow his beloved master is being overcome, declares that Descartes meant that real extension and matter are identical, that the extension wherein the arrow and line described movements is imaginary. At this, ²⁶ Hylobares and Euistor call upon Diogenes Laertes and Aristotle to support the reality of the Vacuum, and Hylobares puts the screws on Cuphophron by reminding him that Descartes would agree that the vacuum is real, inasmuch as it is "extended, and measurable, and the like." ²⁷

Up to this point the Cartesian doctrine of matter has not been really affected, for Descartes himself contended that space, the "Democritish Vacuum," is extended; and that is the only point established thus far. The distinguishing More slant begins with Hylobares' assertion to Cuphophron: "it seems evident that there is an extended Substance far more subtile then Body, that pervades the whole Matter of the Universe." ²⁸

This observation moves Bathynous to declare:-

O Hylobares! Thou art become not only a Disciple, but a very able Champion for the truth of Immaterial Beings, and therefore art not far off from the right apprehension of the Nature of God. Of whose Essence I must confess I have always been prone to think this subtle Extension to be a more obscure shadow or adumbration, or to be a more general and confused apprehension of the Divine Amplitude. For this will be necessarily, though all Matter were annihilated out of the World. Nay indeed, this is antecedent to all Matter, forasmuch as no Matter nor any Being else can be conceived to be but in this.

It is [he continues] an Extension plainly distinct from that of Matter, and more necessarily to be imagined in this distinctness than that Extension of Matter, and [is] therefore a ground infinitely more certain of the Existence of an infinite Spirit than the other of indefinite Matter. For while that Extension which Cartesius would build his Matter on is conceived movable, this Spirit is necessarily supposed in [that] which it moves. ... So, ... this is the Extension onely ... which must be coincident with the Essence of God, and ... a Spirit, because it pervades the Matter of the Universe. 29

Here, then, is the first definite contradiction - that space is not material - and the first step toward establishing the extensional nature of spirit; for if non-material space is extended - and that notion is not challenged - then other non-material entities, spirits, for instance, may be extended. As a matter of fact, the argument goes further than strict logic will carry it, for the extension of a genus - spirit - is assumed from the admitted extension of a single individual of a species - space.

Bathynous maintains his point, despite Cuphophron's assertion that space must remain, in his mind, if God were removed from the world - a position assumed by Descartes, though

not admitted by him, in his explanation of a moved-matter derived universe - by pointing out that it is a contradiction to suppose God's being exterminated out of the world; and he rounds off his argument by declaring " that God which you did exterminate, that is to say, conceived exterminable, was a figment of your own: but that Extension which remains to you whether you will or no, is really and identically coincident with the Amplitude of the Essence of God." ³⁰ Hylobares utters the high point of this phase of the argument when he confides his new apprehension that "Extension being thus necessarily applicable as well to imaginary things as to real, it is rather a Logicall notion than a Physicall, and consequently is applicable to all Objects as well Metaphysicall ³¹ as Physicall."

The point achieved, More might have moved immediately to his next topic, if the stubborn insistence of Cuphophron had not offered the opportunity to ridicule a Cartesian explanation of the relation between an object and the space it occupies. Some pages back reference was made to Descartes' illustrating his theory of the essential identity of an object with the space it occupies, by supposing an object - a stone - stripped of all secondary characters, such as color, weight, hardness, and shape, and remarking that the mind would be unable to distinguish between the object and the surrounding space. Here, when Cuphophron, pressed to declare where the imaginary cone, described by the line in the cylinder,

is located, answers that it is located in a "possible Extension" of which the glass cylinder is the actuality, Hylobares throws him into complete confusion by the sophistical supposition that if the glass cylinder were removed and a second cylinder put in its stead, the two cylinders would be identical and would be occupying two places at the same time, since a possible extension can produce but one actual extension in the world. Hylobares also disposes of the virtual identification of space with the object occupying it by inquiring of Sophron, who proposed it, how it is possible for a thing immovable (the space occupied by the glass) to be the genus of a thing movable (the glass). He, likewise, reiterates for Sophron's benefit a previous declaration, that the space in which the arrow and the line describe their respective figures is not imaginary, since it exists independently of any act of imagination.

At the end of the third dialogue, as the last important contribution to the discussion of attributes and Providence, Bathynous recurs to his notion of space being somehow coincident with the Divine Amplitude in the declaration: "This marvellously-anticipative Eternity is the proper and necessary eternal Duration of God, ... as that inmost Extension or Amplitude which will necessarily remain after we have imagined all Matter, or what-ever else is removable, removed or exterminated out of the World, is to be look'd upon as the permanent Expansion of Amplitude of the radical Essentiality of God."

Having confuted the materiality of all extension to the satisfaction of Hylobares, Philotheus instructs the young enquirer in the true essential qualities of matter, which are "Self-disunity, Self-impenetrability, and Self-inactivity": by which he means that matter has no inherent power to cohere, to penetrate, or to move. Left to itself, he explains, matter would be no more than a "Congeries of mere Physicall Monads" because there is no bond in matter itself capable of unifying it, in part or in toto. Cuphophron suggests that Descartes has made rest the principle of union, but Philotheus quickly involves him in an admission that rest and union are identical, an admission which destroys the logical validity of the principle. ³³ There being no question but that matter is impenetrable and inactive - Cuphophron does not challenge these ascribed properties because Descartes subscribed to them - Hylobares, adopting the point of view that matter and spirit are antipodal, asserts that spirit is essentially characterized by self-unity, self-penetrability, and self-activity, meaning thereby that spirit is its own bond of union, that it may be conceived as being anywhere without any radical diminution of its essential power, because its extension is not corporeal, and that it possesses the power to modify itself or to move matter in such ways as it will to do. By virtue of the first essential quality he acknowledges spirit to be physically indivisible, and by the second he understands the soul's capacity of being wholly and completely aware of what affects any conceivable part of its extension.

These concepts of spirit and matter are, of course, not peculiar to More; they belong to the whole sequence of Platonic speculation, and they are presented here, not because of any intrinsic novelty they possess, but solely because their reassertion by More and his associates (contemporaneously with the new general interest in natural philosophy and the wide popularity of Descartes' unquestionably intriguing description of a mechanical universe), threw into sharply relieved juxtaposition two distinct world views.

Having once established the notion of God's spirituality - a notion involving the necessary establishing of the idea of an extended spirit by reason of Hylobares' easy acceptance of the Cartesian theory that all extension is material - Hylobares assents to the notion of His omnipresency, objecting only that there is a genuine repugnancy to thinking of God as present in foul places of the earth. This objection affords Cuphophron an opportunity to propose a solution which has its implied origin in Descartes.

Cuph. I am very glad of the opportunity of the shewing the usefulness of a peculiar Notion I have of the Omnipresency of God, to solve such Difficulties as this of Hylobares.

Hyl. For the love of truth, good Cuphophron, declare it.

.....
Cuph. That God is no-where: ...

Hyl. Ha ha he. Cuphophron, this is a subtil Solution, indeed, ... If all the Atheists in Italy, in England, in Europe, should hear this pious Solution of thine, they would assuredly with one voice cry out, Amen, venerable Cuphophron.

.....
Philoth. I suppose that Cuphophron's meaning is, that God is no-where circumscriptive.

Cuph. I mean that he is no-where essentially.
Philothheus.

Philoth. Monster of Opinions! 34

The implied or causal origin of this conceit lies in Descartes, at least so far as Cuphophron's championing it is concerned. Descartes recognized two classes of substance: thinking and corporeal. Corporeal substance has extension in place; thinking substance has no extension, and therefore no place. The thinking substances are God and mind. The latter is specifically declared to be non-extended, that is, to have no place; hence, to be nowhere. ³⁵ The positive statement is not made about God, but it is an inevitable cross-over to assert that if mind is nowhere, then God, who is also thinking substance, is nowhere, too. The implication is equally clear in the mechanical universe idea. To be sure, God is supposed to have divided the extended matter of the universe into equal areas and to have started them spinning, and he is assumed as keeping the total of continued motion equal to the total quantity of original motion; but, that assumed, there is no further necessary reference to him in the activity of either the stellar universe or the earth.

Cuphophron agrees that he will concede that God is everywhere if he can be convinced that He was ever present anywhere. He also consents to the proposition that God's essential attributes are inseparable from His essence; whereupon Hylobares quickly confounds him by observing that God must have been essentially present in the universe when by His

omnipotence He gave it its first motion. At this point Bathynnus roundly declares that "that Atheisticall Plot laid against the Existence of God in that bold Assertion, (That there can be no extension or Amplitude, but it must necessarily be Matter) being defeated by the Notion of the essential Omnipresence of God, to make sure work, and to Baffle the Truth, they raised this sublime and elevated Fiction, that instead of God's being every-where, according to the universal Opinion of all sober men, that his Nature is such that he can be no-where: without which far-fetch'd Subterfuge they could never have born two faces under one hood, and play'd the Atheist and Deist at once, professing God was no-where, and yet that he was." ³⁶ There is no mistaking the severe tone of this charge, or, though it is a specifically oblique reproof of Cuphophron, that it may readily understood as including Descartes in its sweep.

Somewhat taken aback by Bathynnus' heat, Cuphophron protests that he designs no plot against Deity, for he only means that God is nowhere as an "Intellectual Spirit," adding that he holds all spirits, including his own soul, to be nowhere: a position he resolutely refuses to surrender although he can no more deny that the individual soul is as manifestly present in the body as God was present in the world at its first moving. He is sure that his own individual soul moves his own particular body, because it is "vitally united" only to his body, but he thinks that union is effected by a kind of

"emanative Efficacy" that proceeds from the soul. Unable to explain how that can be, and unwilling to abandon his position, he takes refuge in the bland assertion: "Metaphysicks were not Metaphysicks, Hylobares, if they were not mysterious." ³⁷ When pressed to explain the grounds of his notion, Cuphophron replies in terms either specifically or inferentially Cartesian, as, for instance, that ~~the~~ mind "thinks such things as are no-where, as many Moral, Logicall, and Mathematicall Truths" ³⁸ and that "though we doubt whether there be any Matter or any Extended thing in the world, yet we are even then aware that we are res cogitantes." ³⁹ He concludes his argument thus: "Wherefore our Thoughts having no Relation or Applicability to Extension, they have no Applicability to Place, and consequently neither they nor our ⁴⁰ Mindes are anywhere." The validity of the conclusion is attacked by Hylobares, on the grounds that it would be just as logical to assert that the mind is somewhere because it thinks of things that are somewhere, and that thoughts may be related to both time and place.

At the conclusion of this particular contest, Cuphophron looses a somewhat unexpected temporizing declaration. Philopolis remarks that it seems unfortunate that such manifest friends as the arborites do not agree more completely in their opinions, and Cuphophron replies:

Cuph. That is a thing we do not so much as affect, unless it be in those things that are necessary for proficiency in Piety and Vertue.

Philop. Are then Opinions of God's being no-where and of his being every-where alike conducive to Vertue and Piety?

Cuph. Yes, Philopolis, if they be rightly understood. For he that says that God is no-where, holds notwithstanding that his Providence and protective Presence is every-where. So that it is no discouragement to Vertue and True Piety. Wherefore the case stands thus betwixt Hylobares and my self. He has a great zeal against my Opinion of God's being no-where, for fear it should be thence inferred that there is no God at all: And I have as great a zeal for my Opinion, because if I acknowledge God any-where, I must acknowledge him extended, and to me it is all one to acknowledge an extended God, and no God at all. For what-ever is extended, is either Matter, or as un-uncapable of Cogitation or Perception as Matter it self. 41

This is another of those passages which give pause to the student of the Divine Dialogues and its author. Descartes could not have given a better apology for the implications of his concept of mind and God as over against body. If this passage is really and consciously what it seems to be, namely, an interpretative apology for a phrase of offense in Descartes, then the apparent repudiation may be neither so sweeping or so definitive as some of More's written statements seem to affirm.

The interplay of ideas growing out of the More and Descartes concepts of the nature and attributes of God, as developed in the Divine Dialogues, does not greatly differ in content and scope from the manner in which it is developed in earlier writings of our author - the chief difference being in the angle of approach and in the relatively greater intensity of the argument in the dialogues. But the examination now

takes us to a phase of interplay which is more pronounced in the Divine Dialogues than elsewhere, namely, that centering about the concept of a mechanical universe.

Students of this generation are familiar enough with this concept, and with the earlier expressed notion of mechanically motivated animal behavior; but any appreciable knowledge of, particularly, the Theory of Vortices is as generally lacking as, say, knowledge of Conestoga wagons; yet for something like an hundred years after its exposition in the Principles (1644), the theory, with its concomitant interpretation of the phenomena of bodies, dominated Continental speculation in natural philosophy, and precipitated the subsequent flood of materialistic speculation in English philosophy. The theory is now so completely defunct that, so far as this writer knows, no appreciable account of it exists in English literature. Neither of the recognized translations⁴² of Descartes' philosophical works includes it in the selections from the Principles. In order to provide the reader with a grasp of the theory sufficient to enable him to understand the reasons for More's specific reactions thereto, the following account is somewhat freely adapted from the French text of Messrs. Charles Adam and Paul Tannery.

After warning his readers that what he is about to propose as a satisfactory explanation of the phenomena of the heavenly bodies is to be looked upon purely as an hypothesis - the chief merit of which lies in the fact that it seems to

explain what we are able to observe of stellar and planetary behavior in terms of mechanical laws - and after admitting that he intends to adopt certain assumptions which are generally looked upon as false, namely, that the heavens and the earth were not by a single creative act made in their present state of perfection, he begins the exposition of his theory with a "Supposons donc, s'il vous plaist" - Let us suppose, then, if you please - that in the beginning God divided the matter of the universe into relatively equal areas and started them spinning in diverse planes. As these arbitrarily established masses revolve, their uneven edges are ground off in immeasurably fine particles, thereby permitting the masses to assume the proportions of spheres. These finely ground particles, travelling at tremendous velocities, occupy first the blank spaces between the surfaces of the spheres; then as that extremely fine matter accumulates in excess of the actual quantities needed to fill the irregular inter-sphere areas, the particles are driven by the operation of centrifugal force along the circumferences of the spheres until they come to a pole from whence they flow to the center of a spinning mass. There, spinning more rapidly than the grosser general matter of the spheres by reason of the heightened speed acquired in the inter-sphere crevices, they become nuclei of the several spheres or vortices - so called because each sphere, looked down upon from a point in the line of its axis, looks much like a whirlpool. These nuclei constitute

what we call fixed stars. Through the continuous operation of centrifugal force the central core of spinning matter - first matter Descartes calls it, though it differs from the general matter of the vortices only in the size and speed of its particles - presses against and filters through between the particles of the general - second - matter. Arriving at the periphery of the sphere from which it rayed, it moves along the periphery until it comes to a pole and then it returns to a center, not necessarily the center from whence it just came. That raying of first matter we call light; that generality of second matter we call space.

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By the operation of a third "law of nature" (which declares that while a small body loses none of its motion in collision with a larger, the larger loses in force of movement what it transfers to the lesser), individual particles of "first matter" colliding with smaller particles of its own kind, transfer to those smaller particles some of their force of motion, and, thereby slowed up, they tend to cohere with such other particles of equal size and velocity with which they chance to collide. If and when such slowed-up particles cohere in considerable numbers (too numerous to be mathematically expressed) they tend to become opaque, thereby obstructing the passage of the "first matter" - light. These opaque areas in the case of the sun, we call "spots." The spots may be broken up by frictional movement and rejoin the stream of "first matter," or they may continue to grow in extent until

the whole nucleus is covered, an event by which the star becomes cold or dead. If the "dead" star does not come back to life by frictional destruction of the opaque encrustation, and if the surrounding vortices are of unequal size and force, the vortex of the encrusted star may be consumed by its neighbors to such an extent that the star itself may actually be drawn into the vortex of a neighboring star.

Once its own proper vortex is destroyed by absorption, a star becomes either a comet or a planet. If the opacity and motion of the errant star is greater than the force of the general matter of the vortex into which the star has been drawn, at the point of its deepest penetration, the wanderer will drift out of the immediate vortex in the line of the curve it followed in entering; and drifting thus through the "second matter" of successive vortices, the interstellar wanderer^{er} becomes a comet. If, on the other hand, the combined effect of its heaviness and independent motion should result in its finding a level in the vortex of the absorbing star where the combination of movement and outward thrust equals its own heaviness and motion, the absorbed star becomes a permanent member, a satellite as it were, of the absorbing vortex, and it is called a planet.

Such are the salient features of the Cartesian mechanical universe; and, taking into account its basic plausibility, coupled with its being proposed by one of the most forceful thinkers of his generation, one is hardly surprised to find

that a world just reawakening to the possibilities of reason based primarily upon observation should have greeted it enthusiastically.

At first acquaintance More seems to have been inclined to look upon the whole interpretation as a piece of harmless speculation. His attention focussed upon descartes painstaking examination into the grounds of knowledge, with its basing the validity of all knowledge upon the assumption of God's existence, More was blinded to the potential deviltry in the theory of siderial evolution. At any rate, that seems to be the inference from his recommendation that the Cartesian philosophy should be imparted to all Cambridge undergraduates: an inference justified by the addition, some years later, of the qualification that in teaching the "mechanick" theory preceptors should take especial care to point out its defects, in order that students might escape the invitation to atheism derivable therefrom.⁴⁴ In asserting that he seems to have been blinded to the potential deviltry in the concept of a mechanical universe, it is not to be thought that More was unaware of its shortcomings. Indeed, as early as 1652 he insisted upon the necessity of recognizing another principle as providing adequate understanding of the phenomena of creation. He went so far, in fact, as to declare, though without substantiating argument, that Descartes erred in supposing that the "laws of Nature" outlined by him would result in round⁴⁵ stars.

It is not possible to state with any degree of precision just when More began to realize the danger to religion in the "mechanick" theory. The realization may have arrived simultaneously with the popular acceptance of Hobbian mechanized motivation. It may have come to pass when, somewhat later, young men, strongly inclined to accept the theory without questioning, began to come up to the Colleges. This much is certain - that by 1666 he was sufficiently disillusioned to take up cudgels against the theory in no uncertain terms.

Early in the first dialogue Hylobares interrupts Philotheus' appeal to the evidences of design and order in Nature as pointing to the fact of God, to inquire why the "necessary Mechanical Law of Motion of Matter" may not provide sufficient causation for that palpable order, referring to the fact that the base angles of an isocetes whose sides are twice as long as the base are twice as large as the angle at the apex, supposing that such a triangle could be produced by purely mechanical action. Philotheus reminds him that, though his observation is necessarily true, there is no material necessity that three such lines should ever join themselves in such a pattern; and he declares that matter, being fluid and unstable, must be shaped by some "Intellectual" principle. Thereupon, Hylobares rejoins that he was trying to say neither more nor less than "Cartesius", who declared that "the Mechanicall Deduction of Causes in the explication of the Phaenomena of the World is as close and necessary as Mathematicall Sequels."

Philotheus admits that Descartes' deductions have a kind of mathematical sequence but declares that failure successfully to apply mathematical method to the adequate exposition of phenomena convinces him all the more that such a method must ever fail. He challenges Hylobares to produce a single instance of purely mechanical causation. Hylobares proffers "the Earth's being carried about in this our Vortex round the Sun." This instance would be conclusive, Philotheus admits, were it not for certain conflicting facts: first, that matter being essentially disunited could never of its own action produce a cohering vortex; second, that granting it came into the sun's vortex in the manner described by Descartes, the earth's atmosphere must have become separated from it, because when heavy and light objects are thrown into the air the lighter always separates from the heavier, or vice versa; and, third, that supposing centrifugal thrust to be as strong as Descartes declares, the earth, or any opaque agglomeration of matter, would be ground up between the spheres. Since, therefore, he continues to argue, there is no such destruction either of the earth or of separate objects in its

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second and third regions, it follows that "some diviner Principle ... cancels the Mechanical Laws for the common

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good." In substantiation of this cancelling of mechanical laws, Philotheus refers to the fact that though an area of water is much heavier than that of a piece of wood, wood will nevertheless rise to the surface of water.

These arguments and examples so impress Hylobares that he asks whether Descartes succeeded in demonstrating any phenomena to be truly and wholly mechanical. Philotheus replies:

He thinks he has solved all mechanically he treats of. But, to deal freely, I find none of his Solutions will hold by mere Mechanics: ... Nay, I will adde at once, that the simplest and first Hypothesis of his, That all the Matter of the Universe was first cast into small parts equal in motion and magnitude, and that hence the Suns or Start and Vortices arose ... (by the mutual fridging of those Particles one against another) into the first and second Element, ... this first Original of things is most grosly repugnant to the actual proportion of these Elements one to another. For from this Mechanicall way, so stated as he has declared, it will follow that the [vortex of the] Sun overflows the Orbit of Saturn no less then ten millions four hundred eighty four thousand Semidiameters of the Earth: which one would think were intimation sufficient [from size considerations alone] to give us to understand, that the Primordials of the World are not Mechanicall, but Spermatieall, or Vital; not made by rubbing and filing and turning and shaving, as in a Turner's or Blacksmith's Shop, but from some universal Principle of inward Life and Motion containing in it the seminal forms of all things. 49

Although these assertions - and they are in good measure no more than assertions - suffice to sway Hylobares, the dispassionate reader is by no means convinced. Philotheus' first objection ignores Descartes' express supposition that the first motion was impressed by God, and that He sustains, without reference to the number, size, and speed of the several vortices at any subsequent moment, a sum of motion equal to that of the initial impression; his second objection does not take into account ^{that any} agglomeration of the "first matter" in sensible quantity, even that as relatively diffuse as the earth's atmosphere, possesses a heaviness greater than that of the

"second matter" of any vortex, and that, therefore, the gravitational drift to the center of mass accounts for the earth retaining its atmosphere, even while finding its proper level in the star to which it belongs; and his third objection ignores the fact that the phenomena of opacity and consequent heaviness would, of themselves, prevent the annihilation of the earth by friction between the exterior superficies of the vortices, even as they make possible the settling toward the center of the vortex until the earth finds its level of suspension. The floating wood argument was probably effective, for the relative weights of equal volumes of substances was at that time unknown. The force of the argument about the distance involved in the notion of the extent of the solar vortex is, as it is stated, incomprehensible. It is assumed, as the bracketted phrases indicate, that the intent is to declare that the very idea of such an immense extension of matter moving as a unit, is in itself an absurd concept.

At any rate, it seems evident enough from the arguments advanced by Philotheus, that More had a not very clear grasp of the operations of Descartes' imaginary system of vortices; and at this distance it seems obvious that the most effective weapon More might have used against the seemingly anti-religious implications of the theory, would have been an insistence upon the undeniable fact that Descartes had to assume a First Mover and Present Sustainer as the necessary condition of his universe. Indeed, one is at a real loss to understand why More did not employ that weapon, unless one supposes that

materially-minded enthusiasts forestalled it by asserting that the Method, the Meditations, and the first part of the Principles were deliberate blinds erected by Descartes to prevent such a humiliation as the Church visited upon Galileo. But, be that as it may, there is no gainsaying that the arguments levelled against the "mechanick" theory are unexpectedly inept.

As usual, Cuphophron comes to the defense of the French philosopher; admitting that the Cartesian deductions sometimes fall short of mathematical certainty, he declares his faith in the mechanical philosophy: "It is not the error of the Art," he asserts, "but of the Artist." To this Philotheus rejoins that Descartes' failure in satisfactorily explaining the "general strokes of Nature," is a strong presumption that the method is false; and he invites Cuphophron's attention to certain phenomena which he thinks are more readily verifiable than theories of vorticular generation of heavenly bodies, namely, the facts (1) that men do not feel, even when they are at a point on the earth's surface nearest the sun, the effects of the centrifugal thrust of the "second matter" which is supposed to hold the earth in its place, and (2) that a bullet fired into the air returns to the earth though its initial velocity be equal to that of the earth itself. These two phenomena, Philotheus avows, are conclusive demonstrations that pure mechanics do not determine the behavior of objects. Cuphophron prophetically remarks that things now deemed mysterious may be rendered exceedingly uncomplicated as the result of advanced studies in the behavior of physical bodies,

and for this presumptive utterance he is severely criticized by Sophron, who declares:-

I have very much wondred at the devotedness of some mens spirits to the pretence of pure Mechanism in the solving of the Phaenomena of the Universe, who yet otherwise have not been of less Pretentions to Piety and Vertue. ... Of which Mechanick pronity I do not see any good at all. For it looks more like an itch of magnifying their own or other mens wit, then any desire of glorifying God in his wise and benign Contrivances in the works of Nature, and cuts off the most powerfull and most popular Arguments for the Existence of a Deity, if the rude career of agitated Matter would at last necessarily fall into such a Structure of things. Indeed if such a Mechanicall Necessity in the Nature of Matter were really discoverable, there were no help for it: And the almighty seeks no honour from any Man's Lie. But their attempts being (as) frustraneous, and the Demonstrations to the contrary so perspicuous, it is a marvell to me, that any men that are vertuously and piously disposed should be so partially and zealously affected in a Cause that has neither Truth nor any honest Usefulness in it. ... That way of Philosophizing that presses the Final cause ... seems to me far more pleasing and delicious then this haughty pretence of discovering that the Frame of the World owes nothing to the Wisedome of God." 51

This particular phase of the inter-relation is concluded in a brief passage between Bathynous and Cuphophron which is worth noting because it contains at once words of praise and condemnation.

Bath. All things must out ... in the promiscuous ferments and ebulliencies of the spirits of men in this Age, that the Wisedome which is the genuine fruit or flower of the Divine Life may in succession of time triumph over the most strutting attempts or performances of the highest natural Wits.

Cuph. What wisedome is that which flows out of the Divine Life, O Bathynous?

Bath. That which leads to it; which the Mechanicall Philosophy does not, but rather leads from God, or obstructs the way to him, by prescinding all pretence of finding his Footsteps in the works of the Creation, excluding the Final cause of things, and making us believe

that all comes to pass by a blinde, but necessary, Jumble of the Matter.

Cuph. Well, be the future Fate of things what it will, I doubt not but Cartesius will be admired to all posterity.

Bath. Undoubtedly, O Cuphophron; for he will appear to men a person of the most eminent wit and folly that ever yet trode the stage of the Earth.

Cuph. Why of wit and folly, Bathynous?

Bath. Of wit, for the extraordinary handsome semblance he makes of deducing all the Phaenomena he has handled, necessarily and Mechanically, and for hitting on the more immediate material Causes of things to a very high probability.

Cuph. This at least is true, Bathynous. But why of folly?

Bath. Because he is so credulous, as not only to believe that he has necessarily and purely Mechaniczzly solved all the Phaenomena he has treated of in his Philosophy and Meteors, but also that all things else may be so solved, the Bodies of Plants and Animals not excepted.

Cuph. Posterity will be best able to judge of that. 52

Bathynous' criticism of Descartes is not to be looked upon as embracing More's whole estimate of the man. It is particularly lacking in the positive aspects of his attitude, but it does unerringly reveal the one unforgivable thing - the presumption that he could explain the world of things and creatures without God, though, it must be repeated, the criticism involves a not too accurate acquaintance with the details of the theory and forgets or ignores Descartes' assumption of God as the First Mover and Sustainer.

Before one passes from this examination of More's most sustained opposition to the mechanical-universe idea, it ought to be observed that although Sophron declares the mechanic "Cause has neither Truth nor any honest Usefulness in it," More willingly enough accepts the principle of mechanical

control and operation. It is necessary, however, to note carefully the terms used in displaying the degree of approval. The principle is limited solely to phases of control and operation: it is denied any power of ultimate causation. In the dialogue passage just quoted, Bathynous admits that Descartes has hit upon "the more immediate material Causes of things to a very high probability"; and, somewhat further along in the Dialogues, Philotheus makes declarations which the reader may conceivably take to be verbal acceptances of the Cartesian mechanical universe if he does not observe closely the terminology used.

Hylobares, displaying his difficulties about the idea of God's Providence, wants to know why God does not protect the brute creation from chance injury. Philotheus answers:-

God has made the World as a complete Automaton, a Machine that is to move upon its own Spring and Wheels, without the frequent recourse of the Artificer; for that were but a Bungle. Wherefore that the Divine Art or Skill incorporate into Matter might be manifest, absolute Power does not interpose, but the condition of every thing is according to the best Contrivance this terrene Matter is capable of. Wherefore these ill Accidents that happen to living Creatures testify that there is nothing but the ordinary Divine Artifice modifying the Matter that keeps up the Creature in its natural condition and happiness. Whereby the Wisedome of God is more clearly and wonderfully set out to us; notwithstanding the frailty of the Matter, yet the carefull Organization of the Parts of a Creature does so defend it from mischief, that it very seldom happens that it falls into such harms and casualties as you specifie. But if an immediate extraordinary and absolute Power did always interpose for the safety of the Creature, the efficacy of that Intellectual Contrivance of the Matter into such Organs and Parts would be necessarily hid from our knowledge, and the greatest pleasure of natural Philosophy would come to nothing. 53

Somewhat later, in a different connection, Philotheus utters a very similar sentiment:

He intends the World should be an Automaton, a self-moving Machina or Engine, that he will not perpetually tamper with by his absolute power, but leave things to run on according to that course which he has put in Nature. For it is also the perfection of his Work to be in some sort like its Artificer, independent; which is a greater Specimen of his Wisedome. 54

In both these speeches we find the words "Automaton" and "Machina" applied to the world. It is pictured as moving upon its own "Spring and Wheels." The "immediate causes" of its behavior are the "cause[s]" which he has "put in Nature." If Descartes had only occasionally reminded his readers that God is the sustaining force behind the "laws of Nature," as he initially assumed, More's antagonism toward the mechanical universe would have been a more patently mistaken thing than it is.

In his declaration about the folly of Descartes, Bathynous refers to the one remaining phase of More's disagreement with that thinker, namely, the causation of animal behavior. This particular phase does not enter largely into the Divine Dialogues - a fact which is something of a cause for wonder, considering the noise More made about it in other places. Although an explanatory note might serve to give the reader an understanding of the bearing of the few direct references to it in the conversations, a brief statement of the problem is here presented in order to round out the discussion of the inter-relation.

In the Discourse on Method, Part V, Descartes declares his conviction that brutes have no souls and outlines an explanation of brute behavior on the basis of mechanical operations. He proposes that, given the organic structure plus a God-bestowed "fire without light," somewhat similar to the heat produced by drying hay, the blood is the sufficient agent of activity. Certain basic functions, such as digestion, for instance, are carried on either by some part of the blood or by the heat distributed by it. The more immediate agencies of muscular activity he assumes to be a very subtle substance, animal spirits, which, rising as a very refined vapor from the blood as it leaves the heart, mounts to the brain from whence it is dispatched through an intricate system of tubes to all parts of the body. On strictly brute levels the animal spirits function in rigid conformity to the distribution and properties of the several organs. A dog, for instance, keeps an injured foot off the ground simply because the brain, having received by a predisposition of organization the impulse which registered as pain, sets in motion a flow of spirits into certain leg muscles which by their expansion mechanically and necessarily lift the foot from the ground.

In the Passions of the Soul (1649), wherein he attributes such mechanical motivation to some kinds of human behavior, Descartes writes:

We must finally remark that the machine of our body is so formed that all the changes undergone by the movement of the spirits may cause them to open certain pores in the brain more than others, and reciprocally

that when some one of the pores is opened more or less than usual ... by the action of the nerves which are employed by the senses, that changes something in the movement of the spirits and causes them to be conducted into muscles which serve to move the body in the way in which it is usually moved when such an action takes place. In this way all the movements which we make without our will contributing thereto (as frequently happens when we breathe, walk, eat, and in fact perform all those actions which are common to us and to the brutes), only depend on the conformation of our members, and on the course which the spirits, excited by the heat of the heart, follow naturally in the brain, nerves, and muscles, just as the movements of a watch are produced simply by the strength of the springs and the form of the wheels. 55

Descartes also enunciates in the Passions of the Soul (I, xxx-xxxiv) his theory that the dispatch office or control tower from whence the spirits are set in specific motion, is a small gland in the brain "so suspended above the duct whereby the animal spirits in [the brain's] anterior cavities have communication with those in the posterior, that the slightest movements which take place in it may alter very greatly the course of these spirits; and reciprocally that the smallest change which occurs in the course of the spirits may do much to change the movement of this gland." Every conceivable motion of this gland by mechanical necessity imparts motion and direction to some portion of the animal spirits. In addition to moving and being moved by the animal spirits, every motion of which determines some purely mechanical movement, this curious gland is regarded by Descartes as being the "principal seat" of the "rational soul" in man; and this "rational soul" or "mind," whose distinctive property is its thinking function, can move the gland, and does move it whenever

any bodily activity involving the will is to be effected. Thus, beginning with the activating of the pineal gland by the soul or by the animal spirits, all bodily movement is mechanical in execution. In the case of brutes, to whom Descartes concedes no power of thought, movements are mechanical in origin as well as in execution.

More accepted as a matter of course the general schema of mechanical execution of physical movements through the agency of the animal spirits: that had been the dominant physiological explanation since Galen, and he was at first inclined to agree with Descartes that the pineal gland is the chief seat of the soul; but he was from the first more than sceptical about the validity of the notion that the movements of that organ could account for either the variety or intensity of bodily movement.⁵⁶ Closer attention to what was involved in making that gland the chief residence of the soul - considerations of the phenomena of memory and imagination - led him subsequently to declare that that organ could not be the seat of the soul, and he proposed that the animal spirits themselves are the substance in which the rational soul has its particular lodging and that its throne, as it were, is where those spirits congregate in their purest form, namely, in the fourth ventricle of the brain.

More never consented to the notion of purely mechanical human or brute behavior, because such a notion was incompatible with his secure conviction that all creation is vital - a

composite of some order of soul, seminal, brute, or rational, and some projection of matter adapted to the powers of the soul to which it is joined. So that here, as in the mechanical universe situation, it is not sufficient with More that God be supposed to have created the brute organism and to have implanted therein a mysterious fire. Every atom of the organism, every aspect of the invisible flame, and every manifestation of activity in either, is for him a display of vital power.

This phase of basic disagreement receives little emphasis in the Divine Dialogues. The first reference to it is made by Cuphophron, who thinks the notion of brute "Machina's" is useful because it eliminates from the discussion of Providence the bearing of the "cruelty and rapacity of animals"; for if they have no souls, if they are mere machines, then neither man's restraint nor their own cruelty impugns Providence: restraint and cruelty being experienced only in the soul. To this Hylobares replies that reflection, foresight, and "deep resentment" are not present in brute suffering, and since the total of pain is negligible as compared with the total of pleasure derived from the natural functions of the brute life, Providence is not seriously affected anyway. Thereupon Philopolis declares that the Cartesian notion is itself a blow at Providence, because God would be at fault if, having made creatures with a capacity for experiencing
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"vital happiness," he made them "mere senseless Puppets."

The only other reference occurs parenthetically in a passage wherein Philotheus expresses a greater regard for the "Moral Happiness" of prudent, patriotic, and pious men, than for the "Philosophicall Happiness" of men like Descartes "whose gross Extravagancies (such as making Brutes mere Machina's, the making of every Extension really the same with Matter, his averring all the Phaenomena of the World to arise from mere Mechanicall causes) will be more stared upon and hooted at by impartial Posterity, than any other pieces of wit he may have light on can be admired or ⁵⁸applauded."

The parenthesis just quoted embraces the whole important total of the More-Descartes differences: the identification of extension with matter, with its inevitable conflict as to the nature and essential properties of God and the human soul; and the mechanical theories of stellar and brute behavior, with their implicit denial of "vital" creation. As we have seen, the extension-equals-matter and the mechanical-universe angles receive fairly extensive treatment in the Divine Dialogues; the second, in fact, receives a more voluminous handling than in any other of More's writings, and although the brute "machina" conflict is not dealt with in any large way, there is no mistaking More's attitude toward it. Yet, curiously, we turn from this review of their respective thoughts on these subjects with the distinct feeling that, for all his show of love of reason, More's reactions toward at least two of them were not rational. One feels that he was

either too engrossed in certain phases of Descartes' exposition to observe the general layout of his work, or misled by a panicky surge which kept him from seeing clearly some of the phases against which he reacted most vigorously. The latter feeling is especially noticeable in respect to the two mechanical theories. As was pointed out in the discussion of the mechanical-universe inter-relation, the arguments advanced against the theory reveal, in some instances, a misapprehension of the Cartesian exposition that in a more critical day would be distinctly reprehensible, while the apparently complete ignoring of the specific assumptions as to God's initiative and sustaining activity, in both the spinning vortices and the senseless brutes, seems to be an extremely illogical, not to say unjust, course of action. The procedure in the last respect appears all the more irrational because we are not able to find in the Divine Dialogues a clear cut explanation of reason or reasons for the general attitude of opposition. We finally arrive at an understanding of the real basis for the opposition only by going back to his earlier expressed theory of "vital" creation - to the "Spirit of Nature" and the hierarchy of souls - to a metaphysical incompatibility for physical exegesis.

As one looks somewhat more narrowly at the interplay of ideas as it is displayed in the Divine Dialogues, and as one recalls the swift dismissal of the ontological argument for the existence of God, the practical elimination of the brute "machina" notion, and the relative expansion of the mechanical

universe opposition, certain queries come insistently to mind. Considering, for the moment, the stellar and brute mechanism theories as one, as in a real sense they are, why does More shift his strongest attack from the brute to the stellar phase? Why does he so definitely slur over the ontological argument for which he had had so pronounced an affection some years earlier? What bearing, if any, does the ostensible form of the Dialogues have on the foregoing queries? Finally, what are the real implications of the inter-relation here set forth as they bear upon More's attitude toward Descartes?

The shift in emphasis from the brute "machina" to the stellar vortices is probably the result of the same forces that influenced More to amend his recommendation concerning Cartesian mechanics in the preface to the Immortality of the
 59
Soul. That is to say, the reaction against the theory of vortices was not so much a reaction against the theory itself - More frankly accepted at least a part of it in his explanation of the tides - as it was a reaction against the uncritical acceptance of the theory by irreligious men who gleefully made it, along with the brute "machina" argument, a chief cornerstone of an atheistic outlook upon life and the world. That may partially, though rather illogically, explain why he did not make use of the obvious argument referred to earlier in the chapter, namely, the reminder that Descartes explicitly prefaced his theory of vortices exposition with the supposition that God initiated and sustains the motion by which

alone the theory could be conceived as operative. Or it may be that a middle-aged swing to the mystical extreme of his young manhood, heightened by the notion of divine manipulation of the affairs of the world as exemplified by the plague and the fire, led him to see clearly for the first time that the universe of mechanically evolving vortices left no place for his concept of a Spirit of Nature. The latter suggestion, or something very akin to it, seems to be implied in the scholium on Immortality I, xi, 9. where, commenting upon a statement about God's initiating and sustaining the motion of matter, he writes:-

This was spoken after the way of Des-Cartes: As if in a certain manner, not much differing from a mechanical Impulse, God at first impress'd Motion on the Matter, and it also immediately himself. Whereas it is much more likely, that God immediately imparted Motion, and that not mechanical, but vital to the Spirit of Nature; and that this Life created and implanted in this Spirit of Nature by God, from the Beginning mov'd and enliven'd, as it were, the Matter of the World in such a beautiful and regular manner as we see. 60

The two surmises are not, however, mutually exclusive, and it may very well be that they operated together to produce the effect we observe.

The phenomenon behind the second query, the evident slurring of the Descartes argument from the idea of God, is distinctly puzzling. As was remarked when the fact was first noted, More neither strikes it out nor modifies it in the Opera Omnia, and it is not actually denied here in the Divine Dialogues; it is simply relegated to a place of inferior emphasis, whereas it is boldly defended as the first considerable

proof of God's existence in the Antidote against Atheism. Three possible explanations suggest themselves. The first, that having recently had cause to add a repudiation of the theory of vortices to his earlier opposition to the brute mechanism notion and the theory of the all-extension of matter, More fears that he may have been mistaken in his former enthusiasm for the ontological argument and, under the spell of that fear, withdraws the emphasis given it before; the second, that, rendered uneasy by the attempts which had been made to unseat him at the College, he takes a prudent course which he hopes will mitigate some measure of opposition; the third, that having once made a great deal of noise about the idea of God and desiring to preserve the anonymity of the Divine Dialogues, More goes through the gesture of minimizing the force and usefulness of the argument in order to turn surmises concerning authorship away from himself. The last explanation is the most palatable and, incidentally, may throw some light upon the present opposition to the mechanical-universe idea and upon the almost absolute silence about ghostly phenomena.

Not much certainty can be attached to any necessary relation between the ostensible form of the Dialogues and the attitudes expressed therein. All difficulties about the interrelation would be dissipated, so far as its complications in the Divine Dialogues are concerned, if we accept the work for what it pretends to be, i.e., a fairly accurate transcript

of actual conversations carried on by seven persons whose identities lie concealed behind the dialogue character-names; for it might then be insisted that the only Descartes references which necessarily represent More's personal attitude in 1666 are those made by Bathynous. In that event we would have only the "wit" and "folly" passage quoted in this discussion. If, on the other hand, the work be looked upon as having its inspiration in a series of actual conversations in which the dominant attitudes were those ascribed to the several speakers by the author, but as having the speech minutiae supplied and, possibly, amplified by More, the problem persists. Inasmuch as in the present exposition the latter notion of the relationship of the author to the several speeches has been assumed, the queries propounded are not extraneous, and the proffered solutions may possess validity.

The last query remains unanswered, to wit: what are the real implications of the inter-relation here set forth as they bear upon More's attitude toward Descartes? Generally speaking, the detailed study of its display in the Divine Dialogues does not materially change the observations made
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in chapter two. It may be regarded, however, as modifying somewhat the severity of Tulloch's conclusion and as strengthening the suggestions that the published reaction was inspired in part by dismay at the uncritical manner in which the Cartesian mechanical theory was being accepted, by the efforts being made during this interval to oust him from his

fellowship, and by the warm exhortations of his friends that since he had done so much to make Descartes popular he should undertake to correct the manifest damages of the popular acceptance of that thinker's suppositions for fact. It would be folly to attempt to deny that More publicly anathematized what the world accepted as Cartesian philosophy; but even as Cartesian philosophy became something quite different from the letter of Descartes' writing, so this writer is disposed to believe that More's literal abjuration of Descartes was not in entire consonance with his inner personal feeling. The portrait on More's chamber wall speaks more revealingly than the abjuring pen.

Notes on Chapter Four

1. Translations from the French and Latin texts of Descartes' works generally available to English readers are those made by Veitch, John (A Discourse on Method [including Meditations and selections from the Principles], Everyman's Library.) and Haldane, Eliz. S. & Ross, G.R.T. (The Philosophical Works of Descartes [including Rules for Direction of the Mind, Method, Meditations, Principles, The Search after Truth, The Passions of the Soul, Notes against a certain Programme, and the Objections and Replies], Cambridge, 1912 7 1931.)
2. Trans. By Veitch. Cf. Everyman's ed. p. 30.
3. Ibid., p. 104
4. Ibid., p. 234, 235.
5. Op. cit., pp. 3-4, (edition of 1712).
6. Cf. Philosophical Writings, ed. 1912, p. 145.
7. Ibid., p. 152.
8. Cf. Dial. I. xv.

9. Cf. Antidote against Atheism, I,iii,2. and "Raisons" Def. 8.
Adam & Tannery ed. Oeuvres. vol. 9. p. 125.
10. Dial. I.xv.
11. Principles I. xl. Veitch trans.
12. Ibid., Sec. xli.
13. Dial. I. xx.
14. Idem.
15. Idem.
16. Idem.
17. Dial. I. xxiv.
18. "Reasons." Veitch trans.
19. Cf. Principles I, liv.
20. Cf. "Reasons"; Proposition and Demonstration IV.
21. Cf. Principles, I lli.
22. Principles, II,x.
23. Principles, II, xi.
24. Dial. I, xxiv.
25. Dial. I, xxvi.
26. ⁱDogenes Laertes, or Laertius, c. third century A.D.
Author of Lives of the Philosophers.
27. Dial. I, xxvii.
28. Idem.
29. Idem.
30. Idem.
31. Idem.
32. Dial. III, xl.

33. Cf. Dial. I, xxix. The clearest demonstration of such a principle in Descartes' writing, is to be found in Principles III, lxxxviii et seq., where he describes the formation of spots on the surface of stars. q.v. in Adam & Tannery, v. 9. p. 153 ff.

34. Dial. I, xxxii.

35. Cf. Meditations III, p. 104 Everyman's edition.

36. Dial. I, xxxiii.

37. Ibid. xxxiv.

38. Cf. Meditations V. p. 121 Everyman's edition.

39. The first edition reads "Recogitantes," which is obviously a typographical error. The editor of the third edition makes it read as above. For the Cartesian bearing of this speech cf. Method IV. p. 27, Everyman's edition.

40. Dial. I, xxxv.

41. Dial. I, xxxvii.

42. Cf. note 1 this chapter.

43. Cf. Principles II, xxxvii-xl. This so-called third law of nature was the key to the Cartesian theory of vortices. The "law" was undermined by the work of Christiaan Huygens (1629-1695), but it continued to live for many years. The final downfall came in 1740, when the French Academy prize for an essay on the tides was shared between a Cartesian and three Newtonians.

44. Cf. ante Chapter Two, p. 61.

45. Cf. Antidote against Atheism, Bk. II, i, 4.

46. Dial. I, vii. Cf. Principles III, xliii. for the probable source of Hylobares' rejoinder.

47. Descartes postulates three regions in the earth: the pure inner fire, the porous earth crust, and the atmosphere. Cf. Principles IV, iii-v.

48. Dial. I, vii-ix. passim.

49. Dial. I, x.

50. Ibidem.

51. Dial. I, xii.
52. Idem.
53. Dial. II, x.
54. Dial. II, xix.
55. Op. cit., I, xvi. Translation of Haldane & Ross.
56. Cf. esp. Appendix to the Antidote against Atheism, Chap. X.
57. Dial. II, xi.
58. Dial. III, iii.
59. Ante. Chapter Two, p. 61.
60. Philosophical Writings, edition of 1712. p. 44 of the Immortality of the Soul.
61. Q.v., esp. ante pp. 62-66.

Chapter Five

Henry More's "Platonism" was never of a singularly pure character, even in the early days of great enthusiasm. His chief source of information was the third century mystic pagan and philosopher, Plotinus; and the key to the understanding of More's being drawn to him lies in the fact that they shared, pagan and Christian, the mystic attitude. For both, God is the ineffable One, the human soul a differentiation of the Divine Nature, and the whole world a quickened thing: for both, the supremacy of mind or soul over body and matter is unquestioned; and for both, the human soul's highest activity is a striving toward the Godhead - but that said, their basic agreement ends. The details of Plotinus' system are unmistakably colored by pagan fatalism, whereas that of More is as unmistakably colored by Christian hope.

One can scarcely read a single book of the Enneads ¹ without being made aware of some aspects of the Plotinian world order, for every subject under discussion is referred to and interpreted in the light of that world order. The most immediately revealing is, perhaps, Ennead V, which deals with the world order as it is affected by and related to the Divine Mind. There the universe is conceived as emanating from a central primary divinity, variously called the One, the Good, the Beautiful. Of this One nothing can properly be declared save that it is. To predicate it in any way is to limit that which is by nature illimitable. Unity and goodness are

ascribed to it only as accommodations for our minds. By spontaneous overflow, as the sun radiates light or as a spring wells over, the One produces the first created being: the Divine Mind. That in its turn flows out into an "active power," the Soul. These three - the One, the Divine Mind, and Soul - constitute the all-creating initial hypostases. After them, specifically after Soul, come "Sense" and "Nature," external created things; for Soul does not beget a single offspring, as do the One and the Divine Mind: it "images" itself by taking a downward movement whereby its various capacities draw to themselves some portions of matter and assume bodily form. In plant life "the more rebellious and less intellectual" phases of Soul are the animating principle; in animals the Soul faculty of sensation is the begetter; in man, as he is a human soul, a reasoning principle has entered. Soul as the All-parent is bound to all; the Divine Mind, though it knows all, is actively involved only where there is an intellectual functioning, that is, only so far down the scale as the human soul; the One is in all as it is in Divine Mind and Soul, though in a sense it may be said to be more immanent where the Intellectual Principle is present, because the Intellectual Principle is nearer to the One than is Soul. As it is natural for the Divine Mind to contemplate the One though it moves out toward Soul, and as Soul turns toward its "priors" and generates the world of body-forms, so is it natural for separate Soul extensions to turn back toward their parent Soul.

The individual man-soul, in the world of time and space, is a composite creature, an ensouled thing. As a thing of sense it is a body; as a creature of rational powers it is an ensouled body. The body itself is important only as the shaped habitation of the indwelling soul. The body is divisible; the soul is indivisible. The body is subject to increase, diminution, or amputation; the soul is subject to none of these. The body is composed of several members, any of which may be subjected to mutilation without any sensation in any other part thereof; the soul is an all-pervading unity, immediately and wholly aware of any and all stimuli applied to the body it inhabits.

Though the soul's natural motion is toward the Intellectual Realm from whence it sprang and in which the ideal-form of its particular body-form exists eternally, and though once released from union with body the soul may remain unbodied so long as it partakes of the Divine Mind, it may through successive embodiments decline from relative heights as a reasoning soul to relative depths as vegetal soul in the event that ⁱⁿ its union with body it resists its natural impulse to move Godward, and that it chooses to sacrifice reason to sensation. If it obeys the natural impulse to move back toward the Divine, the soul may actually achieve moments of absorption in the Divine. This absorption it may achieve by resolutely and completely turning its back upon the accidents

pertaining to its composite existence, that is, upon sensation and sense-conditioned reason.

As a composite thing the soul functions at its composite best when it engages in intellection; as a portion of Soul its power and knowledge is limited only by the strength of its desire to move toward the Divine.²

There seems to be little reason to doubt that More came to Plato and "Platonism" through Plotinus; in fact, there is strong probability that his nearest approach to the older philosopher was through his third century interpreter. All the evidence that More gives of knowing about Plato and his thought could have come through Plotinus and later commentators. He consistently confuses ideas that have unmistakable Plotinian earmarks with those of Plato, and his admiration for the latter is based more emphatically upon the idea of the soul's return to God than upon the more definitely Platonic notion of the hypostatic Triad; in fact, More's application of the Triad notion is pronouncedly influenced by its Plotinian interpretation.

In his earlier work, notably in the Song of the Soul, the "Platonic" dependence is much more obvious than it is in, say, the Divine Dialogues. In the former it is explicit; in the latter it is rather more implicit. And precisely because it is more implicit in the Divine Dialogues, we are able to derive therefrom a clearer picture of the nature and extent of his "Platonism" than from the early poems. There it is

Plotin and Plato everywhere, and the manifest ardor of the young poet may lead the reader to overestimate the extent of his acceptance of "Platonic" concepts. In the Divine Dialogues, with its immediately Cartesian background, we are under more or less obligation to look for particular "Platonic" strains, and in the looking we become more acutely aware of their actual limits.

It is not to be thought that every point of similarity between More's writing and that of Plotinus reflects an immediate or direct influence, for the "Platonic" philosophy was greatly admired by most of the Middle Age mystics, with many of whose writings More was undoubtedly acquainted. It is not known to what text of the Enneads More had access, though it was in great likelihood that of Ficino, to whom, therefore, More probably owed the idea of the service "Platonism" could³ be made to render Christianity. The aim here, then, is not to contend that every similitude is derived from Plotinus but, simply to observe the likenesses and similarities wherever they can be found in the Divine Dialogues, so that an adequate notion of the nature and extent of his "Platonism" at the time of their composition may be achieved. With these qualifications in mind we turn to the dialogues themselves.

The reader's attention is first drawn to an apology for the apparent slight of "Platonism" introduced in the person and speech of Cuphophron, who argues that sin is only a lesser good since it springs from self love, a characteristic found

in all animal creation by virtue of the creative act of God.⁴
 The "Publisher" reminds the reader that, after all, Cuphophron is an "Airie-minded" Platonist; that his emphasizing a more pagan aspect of "Platonism" is no condemnation of the many excellencies of that system of thought; and that, in a sense, Cuphophron performs a service by demonstrating in his own person how dangerous a good thing may be in the hands of a shallow enthusiast.

In the dialogues proper we find a few statements indicating the unquestioned acceptance of at least two "Platonic" concepts. The first is Philotheus' assertion "That the Primordials of the World are not Mechanicall, but Spermat⁵icall, or Vital"; the second, also spoken by Philotheus, that "there is a gradual descension of the Divine Fecunditie in the Creation of the World."⁶ These are simply variants of the ideas expressed over and over again by Plotinus, that (1) creation is the immediate result of the energizing activity of the Primal Triad working through Soul and projecting into body-forms the ideal-forms existing in the Divine Mind, and (2) that creation displays a hierarchy of souls ranging from the vegetal soul of grasses and trees through animal, human, and aerial souls up to the very Soul of the Primal Triad, each fixed by the measure its participation in the faculties of intellection, sensation, or mere being. One might almost take the following quotations from the Enniads to be actually from More's pen, so thoroughly are they in keeping with the attitude

expressed in the two sentence speeches of Philotheus just quoted.

Let every soul recall, then, at the outset the truth that soul is the author of all living things, that it has breathed the life into them all, whatever is nourished by earth and sea, all creatures of the air, the divine stars in the sky; it is the maker of the sun; itself formed and ordered this vast heaven and conducts all that rhythmic motion; and it is a principle distinct from all these to which it gives law and movement and life, and it must of necessity be more honourable than they, for they gather or dissolve as soul brings them life or abandons them, but soul, since it never can abandon itself, is of eternal being. ...

There is from the first principle to ultimate an outgoing in which unfailingly each principle retains its own seat while its offshoot takes another rank, a lower, though on the other hand every being is in identity with its prior as long as it holds that contact. 7

There is even a noticeable akinness in the inclusive character of the style. For the actual exposition of these ideas in More, we must look outside the Divine Dialogues, chiefly in the Immortality of the Soul and the Song of the Soul; in the Divine Dialogues, beyond such demonstration as Philotheus makes of anti-mechanism, they are almost completely taken for granted.

The Platonic notion of the nearness of the human soul to the Divine, which Plotinus reflects in such phrases as "Soul ... is ... an image of the Intellectual-Principle" and "nothing separates them [the human soul and the divine] but the fact
8
that they are not one and the same," is almost identically expressed by Philotheus when he reminds Hylobares, "Thy Mind is
9
the Image of the eternall and immutable Intellect of God."

Likewise, the Plotinian concept of a physical and intellectual regimen which enables earnest and desirous souls to approach the Divine to such nearness that they share in the Divine Consciousness, warmly described in Ennead I.8., is not only implied in the dream of Bathynous,¹⁰ but is also explicit in the speech of Philotheus wherein he remarks, "There is a kind of Sanctity of Soul and Body that is of more efficacy for the receiving or retaining of Divine Truths, then the greatest pretences to Discursive Demonstration."¹¹

Such instances of substantial agreement are comparatively rare. Particular terms and relationships within the comprehensive whole of the soul-created universe are interpreted as, after all, we should expect by More and Plotinus with considerable divergences. Those divergences are due in part to circumstantial accidents; for example, with the third century Roman pagan, God is impersonal and, consequently, his commonest designation is "the One," while with the seventeenth Christian, God is personal and, again by consequence, his commonest designation is "the Good." With Plotinus the emanative creativity is motivated by a necessity-of-being; with More it is motivated by a necessity-of-love. In other respects the divergences are due to More's accommodating some terms to the common speech of his generation: specifically, he deserts the older philosophic meaning of matter and frequently identifies it with body, a term which with most careful thinkers has a distinctly different meaning.

Beginning with the concept of the Supreme, one observes that More differs from Plotinus in his understanding of the essential character of God. They agree as to his indivisibility but not as to his extension. Extension with Plotinus means extension in time and space (as it did with Descartes), and since He is eternal and infinite, God cannot be looked upon as extended. "Extension is of body; what is not of body, but of the opposed order, must be kept free of extension" - so it is written in Ennead VI.¹² Whether More got his idea of extension as a necessary property of any substance from a confusion of badly assimilated concepts from several sources,¹³ or whether it was for him a logical deduction from the concept of God's omnipresency, may never be known. It is a matter of record that that idea was the primary basis of his quarrel with Descartes, and it remained with him through life as a settled conviction.

Be that as it may, however, Descartes was nearer the letter of Plotinus in this respect than was More, though his literal adherence was the cause of his going as far astray on the question of God's omnipresency, as More's doctrine of extension led him astray in denying God's logical nowhereness. For Plotinus God was at once everywhere and nowhere: everywhere by the creative activity of Soul, the Third Hypostasis; nowhere by definition, since he is illimitable and whereness is limitation. More has, of course, the same reason as Plotinus for declaring the omnipresency of God from philosophical

grounds, while his balking at the idea of nowhereness may be due to an inability to divorce the idea of extension from whereness, or from an unwillingness to ascribe contraries to God. He is at heart too devoutly Christian to assume easily the degree of detachment which ought to accompany purely speculative thinking.

There is no especial disagreement as to the other conventional attributes of God, though attention ought to be directed to the fact that in the philosophic discussions of the first three dialogues, More and his companions think and speak of God as God, that is, as whole without reference to the second and third of the Christian Trinity. The observation is necessary because while Philotheus speaks of the attributes of eternity, immutability, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, and spirituality as belonging to God in his own proper person, only eternity and immutability are properly ascribed to Plotinus' "One." Omniscience is an attribute of the One^{only} as the Divine Mind participates in It; omnipotence, only as powers of the Soul are from It by differentiated emanation; and omnipresence, as Soul and Mind are present to all things; while spirituality, in the sense of non-materiality, is common to Soul, Mind, and the One. Even the attribute of eternity itself is not exclusive to the One, except in the sense that time, the lower measurable aspect of the eternally immeasurable, has no conceivable relation to it. Aside from that one phase of exclusive attribution, eternity is as justifiably applied to the created universe as to Deity itself.

"Even this Universe," Plotinus writes, "has had no temporal beginning; and if we speak of something 'before' it, that is only in the sense of the Cause from which it takes its Eternal Existence."¹⁴ The idea of the eternity of things is elsewhere expressed thus:-

Notice that if we are to explain and to be clear, we are obliged to use such words as "entry" and "ensoulment," though never was this All unensouled, never did body subsist with soul away, never was there Matter unelaborate; we separate, the better to understand; there is nothing illegitimate in the verbal and mental sundering of things which must in fact be co-existent.

The true doctrine may be states as follows:-

In the absence of body, soul could not have gone forth, since there is no other place to which its nature would allow it to descend. Since go forth it must, it will generate a place for itself; at once body, also, exists. ¹⁵

Here More cannot follow Plotinus, for he finds the concept of an eternally existing universe contradicted by the accepted interpretation of the Biblical account of the creation. In fact, both More and Descartes were caught in the predicament of having to reconcile the unquestionable power of God to create from eternity, and the seeming lack of perfection of power if he did not so create, with the orthodox Christian notion of a six thousand year old creation. Both extricated themselves, as Cuphophron explains, by supposing the gross material of the universe to have been created as soon as the power of God could effect it, and then to have evolved through an indeterminate interval of time, until by a coincidence of mechanical activity or by soul direction the

universe came into specific being at the point in time revealed by Scriptural chronology.

I will smartly say at first [he declares], That the World was to begin so soon as God was, his Omnipotency being co-eternall to himself; and therefore whatever he could produce in any moment, he could produce as soon as he was, which was from everlasting. Wherefore, the Matter might have been created from everlasting, and, having a due measure of Motion imparted to it, might within a little time after have fallen into the contrivance of Vortices and Suns, according to the description of the Cartesian Philosophy; that is, say I, Mechanically, with Des Cartes, but Bathynous Spermat-ically, from an old Pythagorick Dream in a Wood. But it is not material now which way it was. For whether way soever, in process of time, after these Suns had shone through the Universe with a free Light, some of them being inveloped with Spots grew perfectly opaque, and being suck'd in by their neighbour-Vortices became Planets or Earths. 16

Being an airy-minded Cartesian and Platonist - and he is in some measure both here - Cuphophron draws a conclusion which in high probability Descartes would not consent to, namely:-

If the World did not commence so early as I have described, sith it was possible it might doe so, (but infinite Myriads of years later,) that the infinite Goodness of God is not the Measure of his Providence, but that he has been infinitely less good then he might have been to the World and to humane Souls, if they have continued but six thousand years. 17

That More does not approve Cuphophron's conclusion may be inferred from Bathynous' giving the consent of silence to the maneuvers of Philotheus whereby he so confounds Cuphophron that he cannot refute the assertion: "That though with the Holy Scriptures we admit, as all Orthodox people do, that the World was created but about six thousand years ago, yet, for
18
ought we know, it was created as soon as it could [be]."

To souls, likewise, does Plotinus allow eternity of being, as is clear from the Ennead IV. 3. 9. passage quoted above; and with this More is in virtual agreement because it offers him a basis for a favorite doctrine - the pre-existence of souls.

Turning from the attributes of Deity, and their divergent applications by More and Plotinus, to problems of the soul, we find, again, a series of partial agreements and differences. The first thing which strikes the reader's attention is the almost complete lack of reference to the complicated soul gradation theory which More elaborated so extensively in some of his earlier works. The implication is in the "Golden Key Paper" declaration that the "Primordials" of the world are "Spermatically, or Vital," but beyond two brief references, one by Philotheus and another by Bathynous, there is nothing explicit in the Divine Dialogues. Philotheus remarks that the world is from "some universal Principle of inward Life and Motion containing in it the seminal forms of all things, which therefore the Platonists and Pythagoreans call the great logos spermatit¹⁹ys of the World"; and Bathynous' observes that if he could have had "full conference" with the "Divine Sage" who gave him the two keys in the wood, he would "have found his Philosophy more Pythagorically or Platonically, then Cartesian. For there was also some mention of the Seminal Soul of the World, which some modern Writers call the Spirit of Nature,"²⁰

The reason for the paucity of reference is not difficult to understand, whether one looks upon the Dialogues as the record of actual conversations, or as a purely imaginative work. In the first supposition it might quite plausibly be accounted for by a conscious avoidance of that tangent by the persons of the dialogues, who looked upon elaborations of such phases of "Platonism" as being a particular weakness in More; in the second, it may be accounted for by the author's awareness that emphasis upon such an extra-Christian theory would probably diminish the usefulness of the work among the commonalty of readers.

The problems of the human soul are the particular soul concerns of the arborites. Her limitations and powers under Providence - these they take in their stride as they labor to satisfy Hylobares' enquiring mind. Some few general remarks about soul do, however, reveal the "Platonic" strain. We recognize in Hylobares' and Philotheus' rationalizing about Spirit (Soul), wherein they agree that it possesses attributes of "self-unity, self-penetrability, and self-activity," echoes of such bits of Plotinian exposition as:

But to that order [of things divisible] is opposed Essence (Real-Being); this is in no degree susceptible of partition; it is unparted and impartible; interval is foreign to it, cannot enter into our idea of it: It has no need of place and is not, in diffusion or as an entity, situated within any other being: it is poised over all beings at once, ... it is like the circle's centre to which all the radii are attached while leaving it unbrokenly in possession of itself.

As the rays of the sun throwing their brilliance upon a lowering cloud makes it gleam all gold, so the

soul entering the material expanse of the heavens has given life, has given immortality: what was abject it has lifted up; and the heavenly system, moved now in endless motion by the soul that leads it in wisdom, has become a living and a blessed thing; the soul domiciled within, it takes worth where, before the soul, it was stark body ... and, as an author says, "the ex-
 ercation of the Gods." 21

Although self-penetrability, the power of dilation and contraction without impairment of power of presence, is not specifically mentioned by Plotinus, yet that characteristic is at least implicated in such a phenomenon as the accommodation of soul to growing body.

Of the Plotinian concept of a two-phased human soul -- the image of the Divine Intellect which by absorption into its prior may exist wholly independent of body, and the sentient animal soul by virtue of whose presence we have physical form and presence -- there is no explicit recognition in the Divine Dialogues. Here the human soul, though not specifically defined, seems to correspond to the first phase of soul described above, which Plotinus calls the "Separate Soul, the Soul which even in its dwelling here may be kept apart." 22 Both More and Descartes refer to the relationship between body and soul as a union. Such a concept is repudiated by Plotinus who refers to the relationship as the "Two-together," a phrase which Mackenna translates as "the couplement," a relationship which exists "by virtue of the Soul's presence." 23 That "presence," as Plotinus describes it elsewhere, may be likened to that of an architect who, having built a stately mansion,

remains separate, even aloof, from the product of his skill.

He writes:-

This [figure] gives the degree in which the kosmos is ensouled, not by a soul belonging to it, but by one present to it; it is mastered not master; not possessor but possessed. The soul bears it up, and it lies within, no fragment of it unsharing. 24

If it be objected that the direct reference is here to the ensoulment of the Kosmos, attention may be called to a passage in the twelfth chapter of the same Ennead where it is written:-

The souls of men, seeing their images in the mirror of Dionysus as it were, have entered into that realm in a leap downward from the Supreme: yet even they are not cut off from their origin, from the divine Intellect; it is not that they have come bringing the Intellectual Principle down in their fall; it is that though they have descended even to earth, yet their higher part holds forever above the heavens.

The idea is again expressed in IV.3.22. thus, "The phases [of soul] present are those which the nature of body demands: they are present without being resident -- either in any parts of the body or in the body as a whole."

Cuphophron comes nearer than any other of the conversationalists to the Plotinian idea when, in attempting to evade an admission that the soul is present in the body, he declares, that the soul exercises its powers "by a certain emanative efficacy," though even he cannot avoid referring to the soul as "vitally united" to the body. No precise explanation of the nature or manner of the soul-body relationship is offered in the Dialogues, Cuphophron's essay being wholly

incidental to a larger pursuit, the establishment of the doctrine of omnipresency.

An apparently momentous divergence from the "Platonic" concept of soul as eternal and without limitation may be²⁶ fancied in Hylobares' phrase "created and finite spirit," until the reader becomes aware that the phrase is one of convenience, used to distinguish between particular spirit coupled for an interval to body, and during that interval being identified by terms strictly applicable to body alone, and general spirit.

The problems of evil and of free-will are of great concern to the characters of the Divine Dialogues. The inability to reconcile evil, both natural and moral, to the notion of the goodness of God is, in fact, Hylobares' most considerable difficulty with respect to Providence.

Nowhere in More's writings is there a philosophical enquiry comparable to that of Plotinus in Ennead I. 8. where "Absolute Evil" is identified with the shapeless, measureless, and limitless opposite of the Absolute Good, that is to say, with matter. The so-called evil soul is there depicted as not evil in and of itself: that it cannot be because as soul it belongs to the order of Good; it is described as evil when, having laid hold upon formlessness to bring forth form, it becomes enamoured of form, fixing its gaze and lavishing its care thereon, instead of keeping its face toward the Divinity from whence it proceeds.

The unreasoning phase of the Soul accepts evil--unmeasure, excess and shortcoming, which bring forth licentiousness, cowardice and all other flaws of the Soul, all the states, foreign to the true nature, which set up false judgments, so that the Soul comes to name things good or evil not by their true value but by the mere test of like and dislike. 27

Under such a definition there can be no absolute evil in the world; there is only variation in degree of good, a variation that is determined by the relative disregard or unconcern of soul for its prior. And since there can be no formal existence without form, the presence of evil to the forming soul is unavoidable; but "for those that have the strength--not found in all men, it is true--there is a deliverance from the evils that have found lodgment in the soul." For although evil is necessarily present to living being through form, good is likewise necessarily present through soul. In consequence:

Evil is not alone: by virtue of the nature of Good, the power of Good, it is not Evil only: it appears, necessarily, bound around with bonds of Beauty, like some captive bound in fetters of gold; and beneath these it is hidden so that, while it must exist, it may not be seen by the gods, and men need not always have evil before their eyes, but that when it comes before them they may still be not destitute of Images of the Good and Beautiful for their remembrance. 29

Something of this calm, rationalizing attitude is reflected in the Immortality of the Soul, where More writes:

What the ignorant call Evil in this Universe, is but as a shadowy strokes [sic] in a fair picture, or the mournful notes in Musick, by which the Beauty of the one is more lively and express, and the Melody of the other more pleasing and melting. 30

In the Divine Dialogues, More's personal spokesman, Bathynous, is singularly uncommunicative during the discussion of evil.

Twice only does he break into the conversation with observations of particular relevancy. The first time he declares that man ought to be grateful for the number of outward evils in the world.

For where they hit, they frequently put us into such capacities of seriously bethinking our selves of the duties of Piety and Vertue as we should never meet with, for all the boasts of our Freeswill, unless these heavy weights were cast into the balance to poize against our propensions to follow the Lusts and Pleasures of life, and the ordinary Allurements of the World. 31

At his second interruption, Bathynous asserts that Cuphophron's contention that sinners are in a sense religious - because they venerate the principle of self-love, which in itself is not sinful - is in effect^o justification for idolatry, the worship of a derivative instead of the Source of Derivation. Then he goes on to say that Cuphophron has done an injustice to the Platonists," for "that Notion of things having some Similitude or at least some Shadow of the Divinity in them, would draw men off from the doting on these meaner Objects, that they might approach nearer the pure and essential Fountain of these more minute Delights, and enjoy them there more fully and beatifically." But these remarks, interesting as they may be as reflecting an acquaintance with "Platonic" thought, add nothing to the solution of the problem.

The starting point of the discussion of evil in the dialogues is not definition, but recognition. Evil exists; can it be reconciled with a Providence based upon Goodness? that is the question raised by Hylobares and answered by the

company generally, though the burden of the exposition rests upon Philotheus. Philotheus makes a brave start by declaring confidently:

I dare avow to Hylobares, that there are no evils in the World that God foresaw (and he foresaw all that were to be) which will not consist with this Principle, That God's Goodness is the Measure of his Providence. For the nature of things is such, that some Particulars and Individuals must of necessity suffer for the greater good of the Whole; besides the manifold Inpossibilities and Lubricities of Matter, that cannot have the the same conveniences and fitnesses in any shape or modification, nor would be fit for any thing, if its shapes and modifications were not in a manner infinitely varied. 33

This is a good "Platonic" beginning: the identification of evil with matter, and the expression of faith in the law of compensatory balance. It is sufficiently "Platonic" that Philotheus might with perfect fitness have used two Plotinian passages to illustrate his text, to wit:

We are like people ignorant of painting who complain that the colours are not beautiful everywhere in the picture: but the Artist has laid on the appropriate tint to every spot. Or we are censuring a drama because the persons are not all heroes but include a servant and a rustic and some scurrilous clown; yet take away the low characters and the power of the drama is gone; these are part and parcel of it.

What is evil in the single Soul will stand a good thing in the universal system; what in the unit offends nature will serve nature in the total event - and still remains the weak and wrong tone it is, though its sounding takes nothing from the worth of the whole, just as, in another order of image, the executioner's ugly office does not mar the well governed state: such an office is a civic necessity; and the corresponding moral type is often servicably; thus, even as things are, all is well. 34

Philotheus is not able to follow up his text immediately, because Hylobares begins his examination of Providence by reference to matters which the older philosophers in wise ignorance did not dream of referring to Providence - such matters as why rain does not go where it is most needed, and why nature should pelt a tender foal with hailstones! More weighty and manifest evils, such as war, famine, and pestilence, Philotheus charges to greed, pride, and carelessness of human kind; even such natural calamities as earthquakes are not, according to him, necessary evidences of faulty Providence, since human perverseness frequently effects disasters fully as terrible in their waste of life. With respect to these and sundry other "natural evils" (so called because for the most part they operate in and through nature) Philotheus concludes with an illustrative remark which strongly suggests acquaintance with the first Plotinus passage quoted just previously.

God may make one part of the Creation less noble than another, nay it may be his Wisdom requires it should be so at length in process of time; as the Art of Painting requires dark Colours as well as those more bright and florid in well-drawn Pictures. Therefore I say the nature of things, even of all of them, Sin only excepted, is but less good here, not truly evil or malignant. 35

After some further exposition Hylobares agrees that things do actually seem to be accommodated, even in such phenomena as "natural evils," but he professes still to be unable to make sense of sin. At this point Cuphophron feels

inspired to offer a solution, and, invited to proceed, he presents the startling thesis that men should not be looked upon as evil because they follow the way of sinful life, for in their sinfulness they are pursuing the ends of a principle established by God for the better preservation of the animal kind, namely, that of self-love.

It was fit for Divine Providence to settle this Principle in them all, That every thing should love it self very heartily and provide for it self; as the Roots of Trees without all scruple draw to themselves all the nourishment they are capable of, not regarding what Tree withers, so they flourish, in which notwithstanding there is nothing of either Devil or Sin.... Wherefore it is better for the whole generations of brute Animals, that every one love and regard it self, then that they be all distracted and tortured with ineffectual thoughts concerning the welfare of others. We see therefore, O Philopolis, the Wisedome and Benignity of Providence, that has so firmly engrafted this Principle of Self-love, the root of undisturbed Joy and of Self-preservation, in the Animal Life. ... And those Passions in Animals that look more grimly and infernally on't, or at least seem to have a more nauseous and abominable aspect, as Wrath, Envy, Pride, Lust, and the like, they are but the branches or modifications of this one primitive and fundamental Passion Self-love.

A definition of these "passions" as they relate to self-love follows, and the crossover to "sin" is established thus:-

Wherefore we conclude that no branch of the Animal Life is simply sinfull, poisonous or diabolicall, they being really the Contrivances of the good and wise God in the frame of Nature, or else the necessary sequels of such Contrivances. And that therefore those men that are strongly inveagled [sic] in the Pleasures and allurements of this lower life are rather lapsed into what is less good, than detained in that which is absolutely evil. And it is but a perpetuall gullery and mistake, while they are so hugely taken with so small matters, they being in the condition, as I may so say, of Children and Fools, of whom it is observed, That a small thing will please them: though it be a doubt whether these things be so small and contemptible, if

that be true that the Divinest of Philosophers have asserted, That the whole World and the parts thereof are but so many Symbols and Sacraments of the Deity; every thing being either ... some more perfect image, or at least some picture, shadow, or footstep of the Divinity. Upon which if our eyes be strayed and our Affections entangled, as it is a real testimony of our approvement of the excellency of the Archetype, so are we [observe the ingeniousness of the argument] in some meaner sort religious, we adoring thus and doting upon these congruous Gratifications we receive from these particular Shadows of that perfect Good, untill we are called up to a higher participation of him. But that even those that seem to flie from God seek after him in some sort, is apparently necessary, there being nothing but Himself, or what is from Him, in the World: otherwise he could not be that absolutely-perfect Good, whose Goodness, Wisedome and Power fills all things. And I think there is no perceptive Being in the whole Universe so estranged from its Original, but it is either courting or enjoying these or some of these Attributes in some rank and measure or other, they ever trying and proving what they can doe in matters of either Pleasure, Wit, or Dominion. And the sincere and undistracted fruition of any one part of any of these has so mightily taken up the minds of some men in complexion fitly framed for such delights, that they have sacrificed even their Lives, Liberties and Fortunes, to these slighter glimpses of the great Godhead, whom they thus unwittingly and unskillfully seek to adore, and so become in a sort religious Martyrs for a part, which they that make profession of their love and honour of the entire Deity seldome are persuaded to undergoe.

Now sith it is something of God that the mindes of all Spirits (even of those that seem to be in actual Rebellion against him) are set after, it is a very hard thing to find out how he should look upon himself as disesteemed, whenas all the Creatures are mad after something or other of His, most religiously prizing it even above their own Beings. For it is onely their ridiculous mistake to cleave to that which is of less worth and moment, and therefore deserve laughter and pity more then fury and revenge. Not to adde what a childish and idiotic conceit it is, to phancie God in the similitude of some Aged tetricall person, impatient of and obnoxious to Affronts and Injuries; when neither any can be really dome him, nor any is intended against him; but men out of a debasing Modesty or Laziness of spirit take up with smaller good things. Which Solution ... may be an excellent Antidote against the rage of the more grim and severe Passions, mitigate the

harshnesses of severall Disgusts in humane life, and generally sweeten the Conversation of men one with another. 36

This "Lunatick Apologie," which must have drawn forth many a dubious and sidelong glance from the staid gentlemen of the arbor, is received by Hylobares with a strain of exalted mockery:-

Sweet Cuphophron and mellifluous, young Nestor in Eloquence, that hast conceived and raised Notions from the wafts of the Evening-air and the chequered Moon-shine, whose Tongue is thus bedew'd with bewitching speech from the roscid Lips and nectarine Kisses of thy silver-faced Cynthia! ... O touch of right Reason will so prick the tumour of thy Brain thus blown up by the perscribated influence of thy moist Mistress, the Moon, that these Notions that look now so fair and plump, shall appear as lank and scrannell as a Calf that sucks his Dam through a hurdle; and all thy pretences to right Ratiocination shall be discovered as vain and frivolous as the idlest Dream of Endymion. 37

Upon Sophron's entreaty, Hylobares proceeds to "prick the tumour"; he admits that there is nothing of harm in the "Animal Functions of Passions," for he agrees with Philotheus that "there is nothing substantially evil in the World." "But," he continues, "it is immensely manifest, that those things that are good in themselves, yet by misapplication or disproportion may cause that which is insufferably naught." 38 He cites the discordancy of an untuned instrument and declares that if the animal passions or functions "are exercised upon undue Objects or in unfitting circumstances," they become "nauseously evil." "Adultery, Drunkenness, Murther, Fraud, Extortion, Perfidiousness, and the like" - all are just such

misused "Animal Faculties." "And forasmuch as Order and Proportion and the right Congruity of things are those things in the world which are the most Intellectual and Divine, the confounding and opposing of these must be the greatest Opposition and Contradiction that can be made or devised against the Divine Intellect or Eternall Godhead. For although the Faculties of the Soul of man be but gradually differenced as to Goodness, that is to say, that some of them are better then other some, others onely less good: yet the Incongruity and Disproportionateness of the Use of them are diametrically opposite to the Congruity and Proportionateness of their Use, and have the greatest Contrariety that can be betwixt Good and Evil; and are really such, the one ³⁹ good, the other evil, not a less good onely."

As to the essential "Platonicity" of these two points of view, one need but refer to a few brief sentences from the first Ennead.

Our concern is not merely to be sinless but to be God.

.....
Is there good for all that lives? **No**: in the vile life limps: it is like the eye to the dim-sighted; it fails of its task. 40

Bathynous comment upon Cuphophron's "Platonism" has already been noted.

Unable to accept Cuphophron's exposition as reasonable, Hylobares finds that his difficulty - how the Providence of God can comport with the presence of sin - remains unanswered,

and Philotheus returns to his appointed task as the young man's tutor. Interestingly, he adopts a part of Cuphophron's theory - a veritably "Platonic" part - namely, that "although Sin be in it self absolutely evil, (as being an Incongruity or Disproportionality onely betwixt Things, not the things themselves, for all things are good in their degree) yet the Motions, Ends, or Objects of sinfull Actions are at least some lesser good." ⁴¹ This Philotheus surmises is what Cuphophron really meant by his over enthusiastic exposition - a loophole which the latter gladly takes advantage of - and, turning directly to Hylobares, Philotheus makes the power to choose lesser goods for greater the really puzzling thing in the problem of evil. The discussion from this point hinges, therefore, rather upon free-will than upon evil as such.

But before turning to free-will, we may draw another suggestive parallel between what is positive in the Divine Dialogues discussion of evil, and Plotinus. Some pages back a Bathynous speech was introduced in which he speaks of evils fitting us into the way of "seriously bethinking our selves of the duties of Piety and Vertue." Philotheus utters a similar sentiment when he argues that "the Vices of the wicked intend and exercise the Vertues of the just." ⁴² These judgments have a somewhat more extended parallel in Ennead III. 2. 5. where the philosopher writes:-

As for vice, even this brings something to the general service: it acts as a lesson in right doing, and,

in many ways even, produces good; thus by setting men face to face with the ways and consequences of iniquity, it calls them from lethargy, stirs the deeper mind and sets the understanding to work; by the contrast of the evil under which wrong-doers labor it displays the worth of the right.

With respect to free-will, as with evil, the members of the philosophic circle do not concern themselves with definitions or origins. Free-will is assumed to be a received characteristic of humanity, just as evil is accepted as a condition of fact. In this, again, they are unphilosophical philosophers: realists rather than speculators in abstractions, though in fact they dally more with speculation than with practical reality. Their function is not to define in terms of the Absolute, but to interpret in such a manner that the gulf between experience and faith may be somehow bridged.

Before a more minute review of the discussion of free-will is attempted, attention should be called to an important distinction between the ways in which Plotinus and the disputants of the Dialogues apply the term. Plotinus makes it quite clear that freedom really belongs solely to the will, that is, to the phase of the human soul which is utterly independent of body. Such freedom has, by definition, no necessary bearing upon our human lives; yet we do with aptness apply it to our lives through virtue, the disposition of soul to withdraw from the life of the body. Since, however, virtue exists by reason of the soul's turning its gaze from

body (the evidence of its downward reach) to its antecedent (the divine Hypostases) freedom is still a property of will. Its manifestation is primarily not an external but an internal act: not an action, but an attitude. When we turn to Bathynous and his friends, we read the phrase "freedom of the will," but its invariable relationship is to actions, specifically to actions as they are or are not sinful. The arborites mean, as do the generality of men today, not freedom to set the whole being toward God, but, rather, freedom to choose between separate acts or series of acts. Bearing this general distinction in mind, we may now turn to the discussion between Hylobares and Philotheus to note such specific similarities to "Platonic" thought as it may afford.

The discussion is grounded upon two assumptions: that "Liberty of Will is essential Property of the Soul of Man," and that the "Spirits of men and Angels are a middle [order] betwixt the more pure and Intellectual Spirits incapable of falling from, and the Souls of Beasts incapable of rising to the participation of Divine Happiness." ⁴³ The "Platonic" quality of the first assumption follows from the general character of the "Platonic" world order in which the "Reason[#] Principle," the higher "Soul" aspect of man, is looked upon as an image of the divine "Intellectual Principle"; and it is implicated in such passages as this:

Soul becomes free when it moves, through Intellectual-Principle, towards the Good; what it does in that spirit is its free act. ⁴⁴

The second assumption is closely paralleled by two Plotinus passages:

Now in every living being the upper parts - head, face - are the most beautiful, the mid and lower members inferior, In the Universe the middle and lower members are human beings; above them, the Heavens and the Gods that dwell there; ... The earth is but a central point....

.....
But humanity, in reality, is poised midway between gods and beasts, and inclines now to the one order, now to the other; some men grow like to the divine, others to the brute, the greater numbers stand neutral. 45

The latter figure is, indeed, employed by Philotheus in an illustrative argument. Hylobares refers to the contention of "some Philosophers" that all things are from God by "necessary emanation" wherein the middle order of men can not be disimagined, and he declares that a world without such a middle order would be less of a paradox than a world in which God acts contrary to the concepts of "Wisedome and Goodness." When Philotheus suggests that it may be better for both themselves and the universe that men should live in a fallen state, than that they should be obliterated, Hylobares concedes that it is better for men, but he demands to know how it is better for the universe. In his reply Philotheus says: "Man is betwixt the Intellectual Orders and Beasts, as a Zoophyton betwixt Beasts and Plants." Arguing from the possibility of a Zoophyton either degenerating into a plant or developing into an animal without prejudice to God's goodness, he contends that, "Man therefore being of such a mixt nature, and of so invincible a Freeness, that he may

either associate himself with Angels, or sort himself with Apes & Baboons or Satyrs of the Woods," there is no prejudice to Providence in permitting that men ascend or descend as they choose greater or lesser goods. This concludes the first phase of Philotheus' attempt to reconcile the fact of free-will with divine Goodness.

The second phase of the argument is more specifically Christian and, as such, exhibits some considerable divergences from "Platonism." It hinges upon Hylobares' notion that, considering the "vincible" nature of man's "Freeness or Liberty of Will," God should compel men to pursue the good. The phrase "vincible Freeness or Liberty of Will" is itself evidence of a lower concept of freedom than Plotinus defines. Vincible freedom is not freedom; it is susceptibility to something external to will. It implies a practical contradiction to the high doctrine that the soul makes its own decisions, that it is by eternal decree master of body.

Philotheus, following the analogy of natural light being variously reflected by the diversity of objects upon which it falls, reasons that "Divine Goodness" is not impugned or impaired by its taking on the "shapes" of "Vengeance, of Severity, of Justice, of Mercy, and the like" as it impinges upon individual human characters; and, he adds, "Free Agents, such as Men and Angels, may so behave themselves in the light of God, that they will become such

as Vengeance and Justice." ⁴⁶ The contention, at least in its surface intimations, involves the less exalted paradox of the Eternal as somehow changed by the actions of individual men, rather than the more detached, if more implacable, concept of individual men as changed according to whether their courses are toward or away from their divine Origin.

In response to Hylobares' query why the Omnipresent Divine Goodness does not give such a share of "Grace" that men might always be obedient to it, Philotheus responds that, having granted man freedom, God is bound by the gift to permit its free exercise. He does modify the declaration, however, by admitting that God may "lay violent hands upon some, and pull them out of the fire, and make them potent, though not always irresistible, Instruments of pulling others out also." ⁴⁷ This concession he makes in order to accommodate the doctrine of election. Hylobares recognizes the logical incongruity of the concession but permits it to pass unchallenged. The concession is, of course, un"Platonic"; such "elected" persons, of whom Plotinus himself was one, are, according to the pagan system, simply persons whose love of earth is negligible because their higher, intellectual soul looks so steadfastly toward the Hypostasis from whence it emanated. They are elect, to use the term, because they will to be of the elect.

The third phase of the argument takes on again a recognizable "Platonic" coloring, for it is in effect the argument

that all things are accommodated in the general frame of things. Righteous indignation requires an exciting wickedness that it may flourish. "Humility, Meekness, Patience and Forbearance" would languish without "Injurie" among men. There would be no trial for "Faith," no occasion for "Charity and Sedulity;" In short, the whole human experience would be but a "flat Story." Furthermore - and this is a purely "Christian" consideration - "the stupendous undertakings of the Saviour of Mankind, and the admirable windings of Providence in her Dramatic Plot which has been acting on this Stage of the Earth from the beginning of the World, had been all of them stopped and prevented, if the Souls of men had not been lapsed into Sin." He concludes thus:

Nothing therefore of the Divine Goodness seems to be lost, whenas the very Corruption of it, as in a grain of Corn cast into the ground, makes for its encrease; and what of it is rejected by some, is by the Wisdome of God so unavoidably conveyed upon others. ... Wherefore it being so disputable a Point, whether it be not in it self as good that there should be those that are rightly called **evil** and **wicked** in the World, as that there should be such and such viler or more mischievous Creatures on the face of the Earth, it is an unexcusable piece of Rashness to conclude, that the Permission of Sin is any such Argument against the Providence that guideth all things. 48

The general "Platonic" character of the conclusion, which applies to the larger question of evil, as well as to the more local one of free-will, will be sufficiently recognized by those who have followed the discussion thus far.

Another query of Hylobares offers "Platonic" contrasts; namely, how the "Adversity of the Good and the Prosperity

of the Wicked in this Life may be reconciled with Providence. Philotheus satisfies him with an answer under six heads, to wit: (1) that wickedness is its own punishment, for to the wicked nothing is fulfilled as God designed it should be; (2) that the wicked serve as mutual scourges, and the triumphs of the wicked over the righteous occur when and as the latter attempt to compete on grounds which properly belong to the former; (3) that the peace and security of the wicked in this world serve to remind the righteous of the compensation which the world to come offers him, whereas such evil strokes as afflict the righteous here are to be looked upon as penalties for past wickedness or as trials set for faith; (4) that there are some notable instances of exemplary punishment of wicked persons, but that wholesale punishment would prevent the mutual discomfiture of the wicked during this life and, also, would deprive the just of objective stimulants to virtue; (5) that the present prosperity of the wicked is a strong argument for future rewards for the righteous; and (6) that the life of this world is like a well contrived "Comedy," which may not be fairly judged until the last act is played, wherein "we shall see the Knight overcome the Giant."

This circuitous and self-contradictory solution, which by its very nature is kept from being a real solution, is illustrative of the dubious logic Christian apologists frequently fall into when they attempt to reconcile things

which are, in their relative extremes at least, mutually irreconcilable: the life of the spirit, whose proper movement is among spiritual entities and whose goal is self-effacement in the Good, and the life of the body, whose inevitable movement is in the midst of bodies and whose goal is self-aggrandizement by the accretion of body. A sharp contrast, this, to the detached and certain calm of Plotinian "Platonism." There problems of terrestrial inequalities are dealt with thus:

Those that are corrupted to the point of approximating to irrational animals and wild beasts pull the midfolk about and inflict wrong upon them; the victims are no doubt better than the wrong-doers, but are at the mercy of their inferiors in the field in which they themselves are inferior, where, that is, they cannot be classed among the good since they have not trained themselves in self defense.

But the evil doers have also their punishment: first they pay in that very wolfishness, in the disaster to their human quality: and next there is laid up for them the due of their Kind; living ill here, they will not get off by death; on every precedent through all the line there waits its sequent, reasonable and natural - worse to the bad, better to the good. ...

Not even a God would have the right to deal a blow for the unwarlike: the law decrees that to come safe out of battle is for fighting men, not for those that pray. The harvest comes home not for praying but for tilling; healthy days are not for those that neglect their health: we have no right to complain of the ignoble getting the richer harvest if they are the only workers in the field, or the best.

Again: it is childish, while we carry on all the affairs of our life to our own taste and not as the Gods have prescribed for our well-being. Yet death would be better for us than to go on living lives condemned by the laws of the Universe. If things took the contrary course, if all the modes of folly and wickedness brought no trouble in life - then indeed we might complain of the indifference of a Providence leaving the victory to evil.

Men directing their weapons against each other - under doom of death yet neatly lined up to fight as in

phyrrie sword-dances of their sport - this is enough to tell us that all human intentions are but play, that death is nothing terrible. ... So for misfortunes that may accompany life, the loss of property, for instance; the loser will see that there was a time when it was not his, that its possession is but a mock boon to the robbers, who will in their turn lose it to others, and even, that to retain property is a greater loss than to forfeit it. 49

Plotinus, too, makes use of the figure of the play, but the import of the figure is very different from that of the "comedy" in which the giant is overcome in the fifth act.

It goes as in a play; the poet while he gives each actor a part is also using them as they are in their own persons: he does not himself rank the men as leading actor, second, third; he simply gives suitable words to each, and by that assignment fixes each man's standing.

Thus every man has his place, a place that fits the good man, a place that fits the bad: each within the two orders of men makes his way, naturally, reasonably, to the place good or bad, that suits him, and takes the position he has made his own. ...

As the actors of our stages get their masks and their costume, robes of state or rage, so a Soul is allotted its fortunes, and not at haphazard but always under a Reason: it adapts itself to the fortunes assigned to it, attunes itself, ranges itself rightly to the drama, to the whole Principle of the piece: then it speaks out its business, exhibiting at the same time all that a Soul can express of its own quality, as a singer in a song. A voice, a bearing, naturally fine or vulgar, may increase the charm of a piece; on the other hand, an actor with his ugly voice may make a sorry exhibition of himself, yet the drama stands as good a work as ever. 50

These somewhat extended quotations are here introduced because, as nothing yet brought forth has done, they demonstrate the wide divergence in particulars that exists between men having so much of a general view in common. The single parallel between the first quotation and one phase of Philotheus' exposition (that pertaining to future rewards and

punishments) is, of course, not indicative of a "Platonic" influence in the Dialogues. That is a mode of thinking which crops out in every serious attempt to explain the inequalities of terrestrial life.

Providence itself has some differing aspects as seen by Plotinus and More. With the former, Providence is the "Divine" presiding over the universe as the preserver of the "character" of the several orders of creation. It does not interfere or dictate; it stands simply as the guarantee of the power and right of every living thing to be according to its essential nature. Under its presidency things take by an indisputable right and an unevadable necessity the stations for which their characters fit them. If any in the rational order desire to move toward or from their origin, Providence is the guarantee that they may so move. Of itself it is moved to neither pleasure nor displeasure by the courses particular creatures take.

With More, Providence is - by inference, for he does not define it - the presidency of God in the world. But with him, as with many another Christian philosopher and theologian, Providence assumes some of the personal aspects and powers of God himself. It is therefore thought of as not merely present to the world as the guarantee of the preservation of created things and creatures in their proper characters; but, at least on the human level, it is thought of as taking vengeance upon evil-doers. At other times it

is looked upon as being so much secondary to God that he may on occasion put its operation aside in order to work his special will, as, for instance, in Philotheus' accounting for the doctrine of election.

The matters thus far presented constitute the chief grounds upon which a study of More's "Platonism" - as reflected in the Divine Dialogues - may be made. One or two items remain to be noted: items which though pertinent could not be introduced under the broad heads here used, without creating an unnecessary sort of tangency.

Incidental to Cuphophron's argument for the nowhereness of God, the question of the bearing of the theory of unity of soul upon individual experience was brought up. There Hylobares contended that if souls are nowhere they may be "as much in one man's body as another's, and one man's soul may move another man's body as well as his own." To which Cuphophron replied that though souls are nowhere they are "vitally united" to one body only. The proposition, mockingly proposed by Hylobares, reflects a Plotinian concept against which More reacted vigorously. In Ennead IV. 9. Plotinus argues that all souls are one. The argument is one of logical necessity; for, he declares, "if we reject that unity, the universe itself ceases to be one thing and souls can no longer be included under any one principle." The difficulties encountered by the experience of separate and, often, dissimilar feelings and desires by different individuals, are not explained

away; but Plotinus minimizes them by the analogy of sensation and movement taking place in a large body without the entire organism being affected thereby, and by reference to the fact that several persons may be affected simultaneously and in a like manner by the ~~same~~ exciting factor. For want of a better illustration of individual separateness and composite unity, Plotinus likens the individual soul to a part of a science. As the part is complete and unified within its special limitations but is unmistakably and inseparably participant in the whole science, so the soul is at once an entity separate and not separate.

Up to this point the Plotinian theory offers nothing to which More objects; but when the older philosopher makes his analogy a starting point for asserting that the individual soul withdraws at death into the Parent-Soul, where it remains in complete identification until an urge to go out again sends it into a new form high or low in the scale of creatures according to its bent, the seventeenth century Christian dis-
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 sents. For More the individual soul is forever one identity, one personality, one individuality. It belongs from the beginning of the world to the person it inhabits during its terrestrial phase, and it belongs to that one in the eternity of God. In his poetizing days he dedicated one of his philosophical poems, the fourth part of the Song of the Soul, to a denial of the idea of a post-death merging with either God or the Soul-of-the-World. The durability of the individual

soul there declared is unquestioned in the Immortality of the Soul, where he speculates about the residence and condition of the soul after death.⁵⁵ The question does not arise in the Divine Dialogues, and the digression is admitted on the slender grace of Hylobares' more or less whimsical argument.

Some reference has already been made to More's essential concurrence with Plotinus' notion of the eternity of the soul, at least to the extent of quoting him in support of the doctrine of pre-existence; In the Divine Dialogues, as in the Philosophical Poems,⁵⁶ and the Immortality of the Soul, More is careful to inform his readers that the idea of pre-existency is not put forward as true, but merely as a tenable and helpful hypothesis. In the Dialogue III (Sec. xxxi) Philotheus says of the hypothesis that it is suitable to assist seekers after the truth of God and the Soul, until such time as more solid evidences can satisfy them; but the inclusion of the idea in one of the glimpsed sentences of the "Golden Key Paper" of Bathynous' dream, and the pretentious list of philosophers and Church Fathers who approved it, shows how anxious More was to have the notion favorably received. On the "Golden Key Paper" Bathynous read: "All intellectual spirits that ever were, are, or ever shall be, sprung up with the light, and rejoiced together before God in the morning of the creation."⁵⁷ And though he mildly disparages persons of "peculiar humour or fancy" who cannot be persuaded without recourse to such a "high-swoln hypothesis," Philotheus earnestly argues:

If the Dream of sleeping Bathynous be a mere Dream, the most famously-wise in all Ages have dream'd waking. For that the Souls of men do pre-exist before they come into the Body, was the Dream of those three famous Philosophers, Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle; the Dream of the Aegyptian Gymnosophists, of the Indian Brachmans, and Persian Magi; the Dream of Zoroaster, Epicharmus, and Empedocles; the Dream of Cebes, Euclide, and Euripides; the Dream of Plotinus, Proclus, and Iamblicus; the Dream of Marcus Cicero, of Virgil, Psellus, and Boetius; the Dream of Hippocrates, Galen, and Fernelius; and, lastly, the constant and avowed Dream of Philo Judaeus, and the rest of the most learned of the Jews. 58

The check list of the Church Fathers is not quite so impressive; but it includes "St. Augustin, Basil, and Gregory Nazianzen" as "favorably affected touching the Opinion," and "Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Synesius, Arnobius, and Prudentius" as "express Assertors thereof." 59

With Plotinus pre-existancy of souls may mean nothing more than that the shaping soul is ever prior to body-form, or that soul pre-exists efformation in that it is part of and participant in Soul, the third of the Eternals. In either point of view the individual soul must be thought of as existing from eternity. With More, Soul - the soul aspect of God, the creative Soul of his poetic cosmogony - exists from eternity; but human souls pre-exist only from the creation of the world, that is, according to Scriptural chronology, from about six thousand years ago.

More explains, through Philotheus, that he feels favorably inclined toward the idea of pre-existancy because the notion that a pre-existent soul is implanted in a new-made

body seems more reasonable than that individual souls are propagated like and with the body seed-germ in natural procreative union, or that God creates new souls as and when bodies are propagated in the sex act. Though he writes of the descent of the soul, Plotinus is not concerned with the question of the mechanics of the descent; the treatise seeks to make plain the necessity of the soul's movement toward body-form, and expresses the conviction that it never wholly sinks below some participation in the Divine Mind.

One further comparison will bring this present survey to its close. In ~~the~~ Dialogue IV Philotheus tells Hylobares that he may keep the high truths which have been imparted to him in the discussions of the preceding days if he will cultivate the "Divine Life." Upon being asked how that life can be cultivated, Philotheus replies that the first step is the adoption of a "firm and lively Faith in the Power and Spirit of the Lord Jesus, whereby he is able to mortifie and subdue all sin in us and extinguish all selfishness, so that we become utterly dead to our selves, and as little concerned for our selves in any external gratification of worldly Honor, carnal Pleasure, mundane Power, or anything that is grateful to the mere Animal Life, as if we were not at all in being." To this first must be added "constant and sincere Devotion, and inward breathings toward the prize set before us, adding thereto a due and discreet Temperance and circumspection in all our externall deportments, that we neither act

nor speak anything from the promptings of the Selfish Principle, or in any way to gratifie our corrupt Animality." This regimen will bring on a "Self-deadness," which will be succeeded by a "spiritual Ressurrection" into the "Divine Life." "This Dispensation of Life," he declares, "is all and all to him that desires to philosophize with steddiness and solid-
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ity."

This declaration of faith in a way and a level of life on which divine truths are fully and wholly received is comparable in some respects to the Plotinian regimen described fragmentarily in the Enneads. In the first Ennead^{it}_^ is described in terms of Beauty, thus:

But what must we do? How lies the path? How come to vision of the inaccessible Beauty, dwelling as if in consecrated precincts, apart from the common ways where all may see, even the profane?

He that has the strength, let him arise and withdraw into himself, foregoing all that is known by the eyes, turning away forever from the material beauty that once made his joy. When he perceives those shapes of grace that show in body, let him not pursue: he must know them for copies, vestiges, shadows, and hasten away toward That they tell of. For if anyone follow what is like a beautiful shape playing over water -- is there not a myth telling in symbol of such a dupe, how he sank into the depths of the current and was swept away to nothingness? ...

"Let us flee to the beloved Fatherland": this is the soundest counsel. But what is this flight? How are we to gain the open sea? ...

The Fatherland to us is There whence we have come, and There is The Father.

What then is our course, what the manner of our flight? This is not a journey for the feet; the feet bring us only from land to land; nor need you think of coach or ship to carry you away; all this order of things you must set aside and refuse to see: you must close the eyes and call instead upon another vision which is to be waked within you, a vision, the birthright of all, which few turn to use. 63

These contrasting passages are of interest because, while their tones are different, their burdens and their goals are one: a plane of life whereon the soul shall experience serenity, peace, and power, a sense of eternally belonging to all that is eternally significant. The tone of the older is cool, poised, certain, shot through with a quality of ecstasy that stirs deeply and, for the moment, blinds the mind to the fact that it sings of a soul which climbs with steadfast resolution and fixed gaze, unaided and alone, toward the heights where dwells the One, alone. The tone of the other is warm, hurried, somewhat fearful, imposing a demand that the seeker place unqualified trust in a Guide who possesses unlimited power to assist the weary climber. The one is inspiring but chilling; the other prosaic but more understandable and encouraging.

Third century pagan and seventeenth century Christian -- mystics both. In the appositive phrase lies the secret of More's "Platonism." This is not to say that he was not impressed by any high and detached quality of Plotinus' effort to elucidate a coherent and rational world system; but it must be remembered that while the theory of animating-Soul--moving out and down to particular body-forms and, at the same time, reaching up and laying hold upon its divine antecedents--offers a plausible explanation for phenomena which undeveloped physiology and psychology throw no appreciable light upon, it inevitably exercises its strongest appeal upon minds kindred to that of its author. It is therefore not

unsignificant that after his revolt from the pursuit of knowledge for knowledge's sake, and his three-year search for the mystic experience, More returned to Plotinus for the cornerstone of his own world system.

While their common mystic outlook accounts for the general character of More's philosophic "Platonism," his being a Christian made certain modifications inevitable; for instance, the ascription of person to the Supreme, the allowance for the doctrine of election, and the introduction of exemplary saviorhood in the person of Jesus. His being a Christian accounts for his preferring the mystic doctrine of the "Golden little Bood"⁶⁴ to that of Plotinus, just as his being a mystic accounts for his preferring Plotinian Platonism to Aristotelianism.

In addition to these more personal reasons for More's "Platonic" susceptibility, a second factor may not be ignored; namely, his deep desire to convince men of the reasonableness of the Christian faith. Here, again, "Platonism" with its emphasis upon mind, ideal reality, and the upward journey of the soul, coupled with its parallelism of a divine Trinity, is more amenable to Christian manipulation than Aristotelianism in some of its aspects. To this second factor may be added the inclusive tendency, shared by most of the Cambridge group, which led More to seek and make use of any and all philosophical and pseudo-philosophical theories which might add to the force of his Christian apologetic.

This does not mean that More was wholly lacking in a kind of critical discrimination; for while he modified Plotinian Platonism to accommodate some phases of orthodox Christian theology, he ignored, for the most part, the sacrificial aspect of the redemptive theory and, while reticent about the problem of evil, preferred the Plotinian theory of lesser and greater goods to the absolute evil of orthodoxy.

In short, More's "Platonism," like his Cartesianism, is conditioned by his own inner sense of the eternal character of the world and of man. Willing to entertain mechanical explanations of phenomena, so long as those explanations did no injury to his concept of a vitalized universe, he rejected the theory as and when it conflicted with that universe. In a like manner, desirous of incorporating a great deal of "Platonism" because its universe was "vital," he did not hesitate to modify it to suit the needs and fit the proportions of his Christian world order. In the extent to which he adopted Cartesianism and "Platonism" he made both integral parts of his own mind and thought, though, as we have seen, contemporary reaction to the one caused him to shift his attitude toward it. His enthusiasm for Descartes was largely due to a feeling that that author's work was useful in promoting basic Christian teaching; his respect for Plotinus grew out of an inner essential identity of attitude toward the life of the soul.

Notes on Chapter Five

1. Fr. ennia, Gk. for nine. So called because the treatises are grouped in volumes of nine books each.
2. There is no pretence that this is a full statement of Plotinian concepts. It is true as far as it goes, but it goes no further than a barely necessary statement of such proportions as shall make a study of Plotinian influences in Henry More reasonably meaningful. The reader who desires a more adequate statement is referred to Section V of the explanatory notes in Vol. I. of the Mackenna translation of the Enneads, or to Dr. Whittaker's excellent little book, The Neo-Platonists. Consult the bibliography for complete data.
3. Cf. Ante. Chapter Two, pp. 49-50.
4. Cf. "The Publisher to the Reader."
5. Dial. I, x.
6. Dial. II, xx.
7. Fr. Ennead V. i.2. and 2.2.
8. Ennead V.1.3.
9. Dial. I. vii.
10. Dial. III. xxviii.
11. Dial. i. iv.
12. Q.v. 4.8.
13. Cf. Mackinnon, F.I. Philosophical Writings of Henry More. p. 283.
14. Ennead III. 7. 6.
15. Ennead.IV. 3. 9.
16. Dial. III. xxxv.
17. Dial. III. xxxv.
18. Idem.
19. Dial. I. x.

20. Dial. III. xxx. The reference to "modern Writers" includes himself. The definition of and argument from the Spirit of Nature may be found in The Immortality of the Soul. Cf. esp. Bk. III, xii-xvii. Cf. osi Psychozia I. 47.
21. Ennead IV. 2. 1. and V. 1. 2.
22. Ennead. I. 1. 10.
23. Ennead I. 1. 7.
24. Ennead IV. 3. 9.
25. Dial. I. xxxiv.
26. Dial. I. xxx.
27. Ennead. I. 8. 4.
28. Ibid. 5.
29. Ennead I. 8. 12.
30. Op. cit., III. xv. 9.
31. Dial. II. viii.
32. Dial. II. xvii.
33. Dial. II. iii.
34. Ennead III. 2. 11 & 17.
35. Dial. II. xii.
36. Dial. II. xvii.
37. Dial. II. xviii.
38. Idem.
39. Dial. II, xviii. and 7. 3.
40. Op. cit., 2.6 and 7. 3.
41. Dial. II. xix.
42. Dial. II. xxii.
43. Dial. II. xx.

44. Ennead VI. 8. 7.
45. Ennead III. 2. 8.
46. Dial. II. xxi. passim.
47. Dial. II. xxi.
48. Dial. II. xxii.
49. Ennead III. 2. 8 and 15.
50. Ennead III. 2. 17.
51. Cf. esp. Ennead III. 2. 9.
52. Cf. Dial. I. xxxii.
53. Op. cit., loc. cit.
54. For this Plotinian point of view, nowhere clearly stated, consult Enneads I. 1. 10; I. 8. 10; and IV. 8. 2 and 4.
55. Cf. Op. cit., Bk. III.
56. A poem, The Praeexistency of the Soul, was appended to the third part of the Song of the Soul in the edition of 1647.
57. Dial. III. xxviii.
58. Dial. III. xxxi
59. Some estimate of the value More attached to the doctrine of pre-existency may be derived from the fact that this is the only extended "authority" list in the Divine Dialogues.
60. Cf. Ennead IV. 8.
61. Dial. IV. iv.
62. Idem.
63. Ennead I. 6. 8. Cf. osi VI. 9. 3,4, and 11.
64. Theologia Germanica. Cf. ante chap. I. p. 51.

Chapter Six

In a day when Criticism is for the most part blatant - and therefore no criticism at all - or evasive - and therefore futile - it is refreshing to come across someone whose fundamental attitude toward life is at once positive, reasonable, and essentially ennobling. Many may feel strongly that Henry More is unworthy of such praise as the forgoing sentence involves. They may point to certain phases of his expressed attitude - his virulent anti-Romanism, with its correlative hostility to the free "enthusiastic" sects, and his latter-day exaggerated interest in apocalypticism and spiritism - and insist that these manifestations restrict its reasonableness. But these are by-products of his age: extravagances which might consistently characterize essentially reasonable men of some future generation. They are noticeable excrescences upon More's general character because they mar the basic nobility of the far more significant aspects of his ideas. Part of his wholesome general attitude is expressed in the Divine Dialogues; but, unfortunately, a considerable part of his narrower and local attitude is expressed there, too. If we could ignore the "Kingdom of God" dialogues, the more blameworthy part would be removed, though, at the same time, some of the most revealing side reflections would be lost; and while the "Attributes and Providence" dialogues do call out a greater admiration, even they are not explicit of all that makes his

general attitude positive, reasonable, and essentially ennobling.

The statement that the Divine Dialogues is an epitome of More's best thought is only partially true. The work does epitomize a great deal of it, but only a part of that is explicit; the rest is implicit in the characters of the piece. The Divine Hymns afford an oblique illustration of the point. The hymns are each divided into two parts - the "Historical Narration" and the "Application to the Improvement of Life." The Divine Dialogues, particularly the part dealing with the attributes and Providence of God, contain in one form or another specific restatements of his basic thoughts about God, the human soul, and the world; but the "application" of that thought to the correlative life of the individual man-soul is wanting. To get that, we must supplement the Dialogues with the second canto of Psychozoia and the Enchiridium Ethicum. Yet the Dialogues are so instinct with that implicit life that one has not properly grasped the significance of the work unless he is aware of the unexpressed incorporation.

The Divine Dialogues possess for the twentieth century one or more phases of three sets of values: intrinsic, historical, and literary.

By intrinsic value is meant value that inheres in ideas independent of the accidents of their expression or illustration. The first of these intrinsic values in the Divine

Dialogues is contained in the "Golden Key Paper" proposition "That the Primordials of the World are not Mechanicall, but Spermatieall, or Vital." Stripped of its local phraseology, this means, simply, that creation had its beginning in a Life, not in a Force; and the chief distinction between the two terms lies in the assumption that Life has the power to initiate motion, whereas Force has only the capacity to be moved. Such a proposition carries us successively through the Plotinian creative Triad; through the Johannine "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"; through Plato's conscious and willing "measure of all things" to the Mosaic "I AM." The proposition has intrinsic value irrespective of its utterance by any one individual, because, although the enlightened twentieth century knows as little about its actual verity as the first maundering anthropoid, it stands for innumerable thousands, ranging from untutored primitives to savants of highest repute, the inevitable and utterly necessary contradiction to any explanation of creation which makes the finest flowering^{of} human experience, the conscious and willing benignant spirit, the chance result of blind undirected force.

Although the intrinsicity of the proposition is wholly independent of its utterance by Henry More, yet, spoken by him as the recognized literary mouthpiece of a spiritually energizing thought movement in English philosophical circles, it takes on a justifiably accentuated significance. It may

be, so far as the Divine Dialogues are concerned, a middle-aged reaction against the potentialities latent in Descartes' theories about the mechanical governance of natural phenomena; but it had its inception, if not its actual expression, before More knew Descartes' theory. The first canto of Psychozoia, to press no farther, is an indubitable - if indigestible - expression of "vital" creation. The particular question of relationship is unimportant. It is of greater importance that we try to realize a kind of intellectual fallowness in mid-seventeenth century England - a fallowness instinct with an undefined yearning to blossom out in something. That something neither Scholastic education nor Reformed Christianity offered. The forthcoming Cambridge emphasis was as yet quiescent. Then, like a quick rain on a hot mid-summer afternoon, the stimulating emphasis of Descartes' basic appeal to experience beat thought seeds into the fallow soil, and vari-textured speculative organisms began to break through the surface. The only authentic English mid-century philosophic genius - for whatever individual opinions of the validity of Hobbes' theories we may hold, he must be conceded to have possessed actual genius - seized upon the provokingly intriguing mechanical explanation of natural phenomena and, with amazing conceit, advanced a virtually mechanical interpretation of all terrestrial life. In the storm of controversy that centered about Hobbes, though many spoke with greater clarity and force, none spoke a weightier conviction

than More in his Immortality of the Soul and in the Divine Dialogues. Let us admit that he obscured the strong light of his primary assumption by his exposition of orders of souls, an exposition that was as fantastic to many of his contemporaries as it is to us, though perhaps for different reasons. Let us also admit that his refutation of mechanical governance is wholly beside the point for us, in that it hinges upon the incompetence of the theory of vortices and a speculative interpretation of phenomena involving the then unknown theory of atomic weights. The intrinsic value of his restatement remains none the less unimpaired.

Hand in hand with the concept of a Life-sprung creation, goes another basic or intrinsic proposal: that a unity inheres in all reality. Although there is no specific passage to which one can point as embodying that idea, it is inseparably involved in, for instance, the all-pervasiveness of God as set forth in the discussion of his attributes. Its implicit development in More's prose philosophical writings constitutes a sort of mediating point between the all-sufficiency of matter in Hobbes and the all-reality of spirit in Berkeley. While he was unshakably convinced of the eternal reality of spirit, More was too much aware of his own flesh to doubt the actual reality of matter. His early delvings into Plotinus gave him a due to its negative character. He therefore contends that external material forms have power and significance only as the Creator assigns to specific orders of created

spirit, for purposes of habitation and governance, quantities of matter suited to the idea of the spirit-matter combination as it exists eternally in the Divine Mind. All creation is, therefore, unified by a common spirit-possession, and the unity persists despite the diversity of powers residing in the several orders of presiding spirits.

This conception of a completely spirit-controlled world places More indubitably in the line of vitalistic speculators; but that connection ought not to be permitted to blind us to a clear relation between More and Berkeley, for More's giving only temporary reality to materialized forms and his conditioning that degree of reality upon their being dominated by spirits created according to the idea existing in the Eternal Mind, is basically not far removed from Berkeley's notion that a given object has reality only as the mind perceives the idea adumbrated in the projected form. Furthermore, Berkeley insists upon the reality of the idea, as More does upon the reality of spirit, because he, as More did before him, desires to emphasize the notion that matter, per se, is not an independently existing substance. In a very real sense, therefore, Berkeley may be looked upon as the immediate successor to More, Cudworth, and Norris, though most commentators place him between Locke and Hume.

A third intrinsic value in the Divine Dialogues is the vigorous insistence upon reason as a trustworthy guide in matters of faith, as well as in matters of secular concern.

This is perhaps the most explicit intrinsic idea in the Dialogues; for, in addition to its being the presumptive method of the whole piece, the protagonist of the conversations specifically enjoins the adversary of the attributes and Providence dialogues not "to oppose false or uncertain Hypotheses, or popular Mistakes and Surmizes, or vagrant or fictitious Stories, against certain Truth, such as is discoverable every day before our eyes." And when one member of the group expresses the sentiment that it were best to acknowledge God incomprehensible, the "deeply thoughtful" Bathynous replies that such a course would be playing directly into the hands of atheists, whose most confident assumption is that "the Notion of God implies a contradiction to our Faculties." Here, again, the idea must be regarded apart from its demonstration, for the rational faculties are exercised upon physical theories which have long since been out of mode, and upon credulous tales of strange lands and stranger customs which would be derided in a present-day forum. These are, however, local accidents of thought and knowledge which no more affect the basic importance of the principle about which they happen to be organized, than do some things for which we may be jeered at three hundred years hence.

A moment's pause will suffice to remind the careful reader that this principle of the essential trustworthiness of reason is intimately related to the doctrine of the reality of spirit; for the first characteristic of the second

person of the Plotinic Triad is intelligence, that of which the intellective faculty in man is an image. The power of reason is the faculty which, added to sensation and vegetation, differentiates man from the brute creation. It is, therefore, the distinctive link between man and his creator; and it is essentially trustworthy because of that fact. The complete exercise of reason involves, according to More, something additional to the evidences of sense; it functions upon "common Notions" and deductions drawn from both sense perceptions and "common Notions." ³ A distinctly spiritual power, reason functions most actively and accurately in persons who keep their bodies in a state of controlled subservience. The particular merit of the principle of trustworthy reason in the writings of Henry More, lies in the fact that he, and the group of which he was the chief literary representative, stood almost alone among clerics in exalting and spiritualizing it. That it is still a suspect, if not an outlaw, principle in the eyes of millions may be readily ascertained by a little experimental prodding in remote or restricted contemporary circles.

More's thinking about reason took at times a distinctly mystical turn; and when he moved under the spell of that attitude he expressed notions that may be of dubious intrinsicity, but which must none the less be recognized in any honest effort to appraise the man or his works. In his mystical frame of mind More believed it possible for a man

occasionally to experience perception of truths in their eternal aspects. Such perceptions he held to be intuitive in character and to come after submission to a regimen. Though no positive judgment is offered on the intrinsicity of the idea, it is interesting to observe that a contemporary Russian philosophical writer proposes intuition as the logical⁴ next step in the development of the intellectual faculty.

The last intrinsic value ascribed to the Divine Dialogues is the thought underlying Philotheus' declaration: "It is in the power of every man to be Religious, Just and Virtuous, and to enjoy the wholesome Pleasures of the Animal life in a pious and rational way."⁵ This is in keeping with More's remark about his own body: that "'twas as good a Natur'd Beast,⁶ as tractable and Serviceable, as he could almost desire," and the point of view is wholly consonant with his theories of unified life and vital creation; for it assumes that the normal physical functions of life are congruous with the idea of man which exists in the eternal creating Mind, and presupposes, in the light of the real importance of spirit, that the animal nature, that is, the body, is the temporal instrument of the indwelling spirit - kept, as an instrument should be, under control. Thus the "gentlemen in the arbour" eat of the best in the land, but with moderation; drink good Canary, but with discretion; play and sing to edification; and banter one another like veritable school boys. More does not go to the lyrical bounds of Browning's

All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than
flesh helps soul.

He would qualify the idea by including the reminder that the mutual helpfulness is contingent upon a clear realization of the relative importance of "soul" and "flesh" - a qualification to which the later poet would probably not object.

These four intrinsics have, so far as their expression in More is concerned, an unmistakable Christian coloring; but in their essences they are such concepts as intelligent spirits of all generations cherish.

The first three dialogues, the "Attributes and Providence" ones, have historical interest as being a convenient and comprehensive, as well as a reasonably readable, presentation not only of the philosophic reflections of Henry More but also of the Cambridge "Platonists" generally. Here is their emphasis upon reason, their essential tolerance, their interest in what light antiquity throws upon the thought formulations of the times, their insistence upon the basically religious character of man, and their intrinsic humanity. Alongside this revelation of "school" thoughts, flow the broad streams of Cartesian mechanism and general materialism, chiefly as provokers of sentiments and attitudes of the "school" as represented by Philotheus and Bathynous.

Regarding these several sets of ideas simultaneously, we have in the Diving Dialogues an illuminating cross section of Restoration speculative thinking. Too long have

students of the 1660's gathered their notions of Restoration society from playwrights and diarists. Something of its steadier and soberer aspects are contained within the covers of Evelyn's diary, but in these dialogues we get a portrayal of a phase of the life of that generation of which all but the most painstaking students are too frequently unaware. Taking into account its general readability and speculative interest, except perhaps considerable portions of the "Kingdom of God" dialogues which, admittedly, have little interest for most moderns, one is justified in asserting that the work constitutes an actual document of the period which will amply repay the patient reader.

Finally the Divine Dialogues possess a mild historical interest in that they are probably the earliest example of philosophic dialogue in English.

When we come to evaluate the Divine Dialogues in its purely literary aspects, we are faced with the necessity of admitting that as pure literature there is not much to be said for it. When compared with the bulk of More's poetry and prose, however, this work does take on a distinctly positive quality. It displays a greater order, a steadier progression, and a more continuous lucidity than can be claimed for the most of his writings. It reveals considerable skill at characterization, an ability which he earlier demonstrated in the dialogue portions of Psychozoia, and justifies Ward's statement: "He was observ'd by one to have an Exact Character

of all his Friends; and also of many Great Persons of Public Note: And what Wit or Candour could adorn them with, they were sure to have from him." ⁷ The modern reader is likely to find occasion for dissatisfaction in the somewhat operose and pedantic quality of some portions of the piece, and he will certainly agree with Worthington that the presence of Latin and Greek quotations is a mark of super-arrogation.

The curious reader will find the Divine Dialogues a kind of omnibus, for the arborites were men of no mean learning. Astronomy, geometry, physics, geography, anthropology, medieval scholasticism, mythology, history, ancient and modern philosophy, music, mysticism, and, finally, apocalypticism drift on the evening breezes and flit in the checkered moonlight which penetrates Cuphophon's bower. Then, too, the Divine Dialogues may share with the Infinite of Worlds the credit for inculcating the idea of infinity in the English literary mind - that idea which came to such varied flowering in English Romanticism an hundred and thirty-odd years later. There is strong circumstantial ground for supposing as Howard does that a goodly share of Wordsworth's poetic Platonism and his mystical attitude toward Nature is traceable to More, ⁸ while both thought and style in Coleridge remind one strongly of him.

Perhaps the most distinctive literary value of the Divine Dialogues lies in their being one of the first, if not actually so, sustained attempts at pure dialogue in English

literature: the particular mode which came to distinguished and classic fruitage a century and a half later in Landor's Imaginary Conversations.

These values, chiefly intellectual, coupled with the genuinely interesting personality of the author, offer ample justification for the reprinting, with certain aids indispensable to its fullest understanding and widest appreciation, of what is still, as it was in his own lifetime, the most readable of all Henry More's voluminous writings.

But these things, Reader, thou wilt best understand by perusing the Dialogues themselves, from which I have too long detained thee by an over-tedious Preface; which I must entreat thee to impute rather to my desire that thou mightest reap a clear satisfaction without the least Scruple or Disgust, then that I have any suspicion of either thy Candour or Judgment. Farewell. 9

Notes on Chapter Six

1. Cf. Sorley, Op. cit., p. 292.
2. Dial. II. ii.
3. Cf. ante p. 83.
4. Cf. Ouspensky, P.D. Tertium Organum. pt. 2. New York. 1922.
5. Dial III. iii.
6. Ward, op. cit., p. 146.
7. Ward, op. cit., p. 144.
8. Cf. Ward, op. cit., Intro p. vi.
9. Fr. the "Publisher to the Reader."

Appendix

I. Note on the Preexistency of Souls.

So heavie prejudice lying upon us both from Naturall diffidence in so high Points, and from our common Education, I thought it fit, for securing my self from suspicion of overmuch lightnesse, to preimize this much: That that which I have taken the pains and boldnesse to present to the free judgment of others, hath been already judged of old, very sound and orthodox, by the wisest and most learned of preceding ages. ... But mistake me not, Reader; I do not contend (in this arguing) that this opinion of the Prae-existency of the Soul, is true, but that it is not such a self-condemned Falsity, but that I might without justly incurring the censure of any Vainnesse or Levity, deem it worthy the canvase and discussion of sober and considerate men. 1

I have also in consequence of this third Rule [q.v. p. 21.] taken into my Writings the Pre-existence of the Soul. And truly I think a man may within the bounds of Modesty averre it to be a very Rational and Useful opinion. But all I averre is the Rationalness of this position, not the Truth thereof. 2

II. Note on The Infinitie of Worlds.

INFINITIE of WORLDS! A thing monstrous if assented to, and to be startled at, especially by them whose thoughts this one have alwayes so engaged, that they can find no leisure to think of anything else. But I onely make a bare proposall to more acute judgments, of what my sportfull phancie, with pleasure hath suggested: following my olde designe of furnishing mens minds with a variety of apprehensions concerning the most weighty points of Philosophie, that they may not seem rashly to have settled in the truth, though it be the truth: a thing as ill beseeming Philosophers, as hastie judicative sentence Politicall Judges. But if I had relinquished here my wonted self, in proving Dogmaticall, I should have found very noble Patronage for the cause among ancients, Epicurus, Democritus, Lucretius, &c. Or if justice may reach the dead [to] do them the right, as to shew, that though they be hooted at, by the Rout of the learned, as men of monstrous conceits, they were either very wise or exceeding fortunate to light on so probable and specious an opinion, in which notwithstanding there is so much difficulty and seeming inconsistencie.

Nay and that sublime and subtill Mechanick too, Des-Chartes, though he seems to mince it, must hold infinitude of worlds, or which is as harsh, an infinite one. For what is his mundus indefinite extensus, but extensus infinite? Else it sounds onely ininitus quoad nos, but simpliciter finitus. But if any space be left out unstuff'd with Atoms, it will hazard the dissipation of the whole frame of Nature into dis-joynted dust; as may be proved by the Principles of his own Philosophie. And that there is space wherever God is, or any actuall and self-subsistent Being, seems to me no plainer then one of their koinae ennoiai.

For mine own part, I must confesse these apprehensions do plainly oppose what heretofore I have conceived; but I have sworn more faithfull friendship with Truth then with my self. And therefore without all remorse lay battery against mine own edifice: not sparing to shew how weak that is my self now deems not impregnably strong. I have at the latter end of the last Canto of Psychathanasia, not without triumph concluded, that the world hath not continued ab aeterno from this ground:

-----Extension

That's infinite implies a contradiction. And this is in answer to an objection against my last argument of the souls Immortalitie, viz. divine goodnesse. Which I there make the measure of his providence. That ground limits the Essence of the world as well as its duration, and satisfies the curiosities of the Opposer, by shewing the impossibilitie in the Creature, not want of goodnesse in the Creatour to have staid the framing of the Universe. But now roused up by a new Philosophick furie, I answer that difficultie by taking away the Hypothesis of either the world or time by being finite: defending the infinitude of both. Which though I had done with a great deal of vigour and life, and semblance of assent, it would have agreed well enough with the free heat of Poesie, and might have passed for a pleasant flourish: but the severity of my own judgment and sad Genius, hath cast in so many correctives and coolers into the Canto it self; so that it cannot amount to more then a discussion. And discussion is no prejudice but an honour to the truth: for then and never but then is she victorious. And what a glorious Trophee shall the finite world erect when it hath vanquished the Infinite; a Pigmee a Giant! 3

I incorporate practically the entire foreword to the poem because, in addition to the seeming contradiction which I wish to emphasize, it throws light upon More's writing habits, and offers some key to the More-Descartes relationship. The contradiction lies between the plain implication that More accepts the idea of infinity as true, ("I must confesse these apprehensions do plainly oppose what heretofore I have conceived"), and the equally plain implication that he believes that the world is none the less finite, ("And what a glorious Trophée shall the finite world erect when it hath vanquished the Infinite; a Pigmee a Giant!"). The seeming contradiction becomes all the more puzzling when one reads the poem itself and discovers a consistent effort to justify the idea of infinity. Some light may be thrown upon the puzzle from the last two stanzas, in which he reminds the reader that he has now painted two pictures, one of a finite world (in the last Canto of the Immortality of the Soul) and ^{another} of an infinite one, and in which he evades expressing judgment upon either. Ward says that More afterward, "on his cooler thought," retracted the idea of infinity, "not from any Deficiency in the Goodness of God, but from the Nature, as he speaks, and Incompos-
⁴sibility of the thing." Ward must be mistaken; for in the Apologia (1664) More justifies the idea on the basis of its being suggested by the prophet Baruch, and in the Divine Dialogues (III.xxiii) he has Philotheus compel Hylobares to admit its reasonableness. Ward was probably influenced in

his statement by the very elements in the Preface to the Reader to which attention is herein called, and the probability of the surmise is heightened by the fact that Ward uses a phraseology strongly suggestive of the Preface. There More wrote, "That ground [the statement, 'Extension that's infinite implies a contradiction,' found in the Immortality] ... satisfies the curiosity of the Opposer, by shewing the impossibilitie in the Creature, not want of goodnesse in the Creatour." Ward, as indicated above, ascribed More's surrender of the idea "not from any Deficiency in the Goodness of God, but from the Nature and Impossibility of the thing." (The italics are mine in these quoted fragments.) The probable answer to the puzzle is that More was trying to straddle the question in the Preface; on the one hand he is doing voluntary obeisance to a new-found idea, on the other he is trying to temper any possibly devastating effects of that idea in minds which were not in a position to grasp it and to orient it with received theological notions.

Notes on Chapter One

1. Fr. Preface to the Reader, appended to the poem, The Preexistency of the Soul.
2. Fr. The Apologia, appended to the Mystery of Iniquity. Cf. op. cit. Chap. 1., Sec. 13.
3. Fr. Preface to the Reader appended to the poem, The Infinitie of Worlds.

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