the lifelong war which he waged against vagueness of thought and laxity of speech he made himself a singularly apt and ready reasoner.

While he regarded the improvement, not only of himself but also of others, as a task divinely appointed to him, there was in his demeanour nothing exclusive or pharisai­cal. On the contrary, deeply conscious of his own limita­tions and infirmities, he felt and cherished a profound sympathy with erring humanity, and loved with a love passing the love of women fellow-men who had not learnt, as he had done, to overcome human frailties and weak­nesses. Nevertheless great wrongs roused in him a righteous indignation which sometimes found expression in fierce and angry rebuke. Indeed it would seem that Plato in his idealized portrait gives his hero credit not only for a deeper philosophical insight but also for a greater urbanity than facts warranted. Hence, whilst those who knew him best met his affection with a regard equal to his own, there were, as will be seen hereafter, some who never forgave his stern reproofs, and many who regarded him as an impertinent busybody.

He was a true patriot. Deeply sensible of his debt to the city in which he had been born and bred, he thought that in giving his life to the spread of sounder views in regard to ethical and political subjects he made no more than an imperfect return ; and, when in the exercise of constitutional authority that city brought him to trial and threatened him with death, it was not so much his local attachment, strong though that sentiment was, as rather his sense of duty which forbade him to retire into exile before the trial began, to acquiesce in a sentence of banish­ment when the verdict had been given against him, and to accept the opportunity of escape which was offered him during his imprisonment. Yet his patriotism had none of the narrowness which was characteristic of the patriotism of his Greek contemporaries. His generous benevolence and unaffected philanthropy taught him to overstep the limits of the Athenian demus and the Hellenic race, and to regard himself as a “ citizen of the world.”

He was blest with an all-pervading humour, a subtle but kindly appreciation of the incongruities of human nature and conduct. In a less robust character this quality might have degenerated into sentimentality or cynicism ; in Socrates, who had not a trace of either, it showed itself principally in what his contemporaries knew as his “ accustomed irony.” Profoundly sensible of the in­consistencies of his own thoughts and words and actions, and shrewdly suspecting that the like inconsistencies were to be found in other men, he was careful always to place himself upon the standpoint of ignorance and to invite others to join him there, in order that, proving all things, he and they might hold fast that which is good. “ Intel­lectually the acutest man of his age,” says W. H. Thompson in a brilliant and instructive appendix to his edition of Plato’s *Phædrus,* “ he represents himself in all companies as the dullest person present. Morally the purest, he affects to be the slave of passion, and borrows the language of gallantry to describe a benevolence too exalted for the comprehension of his contemporaries. He is by turns an

*ἐραστής,* a *πρoαγωγός,* a *µαστρoπός*, a *µαιευτικoς*, disguising the sanctity of his true vocation by names suggestive of vile or ridiculous images. The same spirit of whimsical paradox leads him, in Xenophon’s *Banquet,* to argue that bis own satyr-like visage was superior in beauty to that of the handsomest man present. That this irony was to some extent calculated is more than probable ; it disarmed ridicule by anticipating it ; it allayed jealousy and propi­tiated envy ; and it possibly procured him admission into gay circles from which a more solemn teacher would have been excluded. But it had for its basis a real greatness

of soul, a hearty and unaffected disregard of public opinion, a perfect disinterestedness, an entire abnegation of self. He made himself a fool that others by his folly might be made wise ; he humbled himself to the level of those among whom his work lay that he might raise some few among them to his own level ; he was ‘ all things to all men, if by any means he might win some.’” It would seem that this humorous depreciation of his own great qualities, this pretence of being no better than his neigh bours, led to grave misapprehension amongst his contem­poraries. That it was the foundation of the slanders of the Peripatetic Aristoxenus can hardly be doubted.

Socrates was further a man of sincere and fervent piety. “No one,” says Xenophon, “ever knew of his doing or saying anything profane or unholy.” There was indeed in the popular mythology much which he could not accept. It was incredible, he argued, that the gods should have committed acts which would be disgraceful in the worst of men. Such stories, then, must be regarded as the inventions of lying poets. But, when he had thus purified the con­temporary polytheism, he was able to reconcile it with his own steadfast belief in a Supreme Being, the intelligent and beneficent Creator of the universe, and to find in the national ritual the means of satisfying his religious aspira­tions. For proof of the existence of “the divine,” he appealed to the providential arrangement of nature, to the universality of the belief, and to the revelations and warn­ings which are given to men through signs and oracles. Thinking that the soul of man partook of the divine, he maintained the doctrine of its immortality as an article of faith, but not of knowledge. While he held that, the gods alone knowing what is for man’s benefit, man should pray, not for particular goods, but only for that which is good, he was regular in prayer and punctual in sacrifice. He looked to oracles and signs for guidance in those matters, and in those matters only, which could not be resolved by experience and judgment, and he further supposed himself to receive special warnings of a mantic character through what he called his “divine sign” (*δαιµόvιov*, *δαιμόvιov σηµειov*)*.*

Socrates’s frequent references to his “ divine sign ” were, says Xenophon, the origin of the charge of “ introducing new divinities” brought against him by his accusers, and in early Christian times, amongst Neoplatonic philosophers and fathers of the church, gave rise to the notion that he supposed himself to be attended by a “genius” or “dæmon.” Similarly in our own day spiritualists have attributed to him the belief—which they justify—in “an intelligent spiritual being who accompanied him through life,—in other words, a guardian spirit ” (A. R. Wallace). But the very pre­cise testimony of Xenophon and Plato shows plainly that Socrates did not regard his “ customary sign ” either as a divinity or as a genius. According to Xenophon, the sign was a warning, either to do or not to do which it would be folly to neglect, not superseding ordinary prudence, but dealing with those uncertainties in respect of which other men found guidance in oracles and tokens ; Socrates believed in it profoundly, and never disobeyed it. According to Plato, the sign was a “voice” which warned Socrates to refrain from some act which he contemplated ; he heard it frequently and on the most trifling occasions ; the phenomenon dated from his early years, and was, so far as he knew, peculiar to himself. These statements have been variously interpreted. Thus it has been maintained that, in laying claim to supernatural revelations, Socrates (1) committed a pious fraud, (2) indulged his “accustomed irony,” (3) recognized the voice of conscience, (4) indicated a general belief in a divine mission, (5) described “ the inward voice of his individual tact, which in consequence partly of his experience and penetration, partly of his knowledge of himself and exact apprecia­tion of what was in harmony with his individuality, had attained to an unusual accuracy,” (6) was mad (“était fou”), being subject not only to hallucinations of sense but also to aberrations of reason. Xenophon’s testimony that Socrates was plainly sincere in his belief excludes the first and the second of these theories ; the char­acter of the warnings given, which are always concerned, not with the moral worth of actions, but with their uncertain results, warrants the rejection of the third and the fourth ; the fifth, while it suffi­ciently accounts for the matter of the warning, leaves unexplained its manner, the vocal utterance ; the sixth, while it plausibly ex­