

The word "good" is a very abstract term and is impossible of exact definition. It is almost certain to be involved in opinion when defined. Therefore, like truth, it is divided into an absolute and relative aspect. The absolute aspect is impossible of understanding and the relative aspect is defined in terms of existing standards, inferring Virtue, honesty, duty, etc.

An excellent approach would be to study the series of Platonic definitions as follows:

That Universal Cause, which men have named God, is Divine Life, to which the qualities of consciousness, intelligence and virtue are intrinsic. All other things must conform to this, and be god-like.

God is good; that is, Divinity, by virtue of its own existence and its own nature, is of necessity the standard of absolute perfection, to which all other things must conform if they are to be god-like.

It therefore follows that, all who participate in God as Energy or Mind must also participate in God as Virtue, as these qualities are indivisible and essentially one.

In the process of growth, or evolution, forms partake of Divinity first, as energy or consciousness; second, as intelligence or mind; and third, as virtue or morality. It follows that virtue is one of the last of human achievements, for creatures possessing life and intelligence do not necessarily possess virtue. Virtue, while latent in all natures, is said to be possessed when it is objectified in action.

Life energizes, intellect organizes, virtue civilizes. Thus all of the constructive relationships, by which isolated creatures are finally brought into a cooperative community existence, arise from man's realization of Divinity as virtue.

Love, friendship, mercy, obligation, generosity, etc., are terms often confused with virtue. It should be remembered that virtue is a principle of right relationships. Generosity, for example, is not a virtue in itself, but becomes a virtue when directed by Wisdom and integrity. Impractical generosity cannot be regarded as virtue.

Thus, it appears that action partakes of virtue, to the degree that it is consistent with that universal fitness which is the very foundation of the world.

We must now define fitness. When we examine the universal plan, as it is manifest in the universe spread out before us, we must be particularly impressed by the rightness and orderliness everywhere expressed. To use a homely simile, there seems to be "a place for everythin and everything is in its place." The parts work together; the diversity is enclosed within in all-sufficient unity; cooperation is everywhere present. Contemplating the mystery of Divine order, we cannot fail to be impressed with a certain sense of substantial fitness. Everything is where it ought to be, doing what it ought to do. This must be the pattern of all human relationships. Thus an ex-

ample of ethics is man where he ought to be, doing what he ought to do, synchronizing personal purpose with universal purpose.

Immanuel Kant's lofty definition of ethics realized that each man must so act that, if that man's action became a universal law, it would be just and sufficient.

We are virtuous when we "fit in" to the law of life. We are moral when we live in perfect harmony with the plan of which we are a part.

The Beautiful

BEAUTY.

From Plotinus the great Neo-Platonist - we learn that beauty is essentially perfect order - in things and of things. Beauty is a certain virtue present in all bodies, in all forms and in all substances. Beauty is the true being which animates all living creatures. It is the dynamic pattern, the esthetic frame work by which the world is supported. Beauty is that peculiar fitness by which perfected natures are distinguished from imperfect natures, and perfect forms from imperfect forms. According to Plotinus, there is a certain divine consistency which is more evident in some structures than in other structures. Beginning more naturally toward certain ends; forces unfold through forms; Wisdom blossoms in space; the Divine Will, projecting itself into matter, becomes a symmetrical geometric pattern in which all the elements of beauty are perfectly present.

To the philosopher, divinity itself is the absolute standard of all perfection. One philosopher said, "Only God is Good" and in ~~1707~~ another age another philosopher said "Only God is Beautiful". By the term God we must understand the All-knowing, All-animating Spirit of the world, by whose wisdom Universal Law is manifested. The Beauty of Nature and of Man, therefore, are really the Beauty of God in Nature and in Man.

The True

TRUTH.

One of the old philosophers has said that Truth is a divine light; invisible to mortal eyes, but all-penetrating. Matter is a prism. The light of Truth, striking this prism, breaks into a spectrum, a spectrum of intellectual colors. These colors considered separately are the departments of knowledge. This knowledge is truth conditioned and broken up, but all real knowledge contains within it some element of Truth. Some part of the Whole is in all of the parts, even as some part of God is in every nature.

Man is capable of containing knowledge or of accumulating it, storing up in himself facts out of experience. But no man is capable of containing truth in himself, of collecting it or storing it up.

Thus -- the individual absorbs Knowledge, ~~but Truth absorbs the~~
but Truth absorbs the individual.

The alchemists called Truth Mercury because it was a common solvent which bound all things together. It recognizes no boundaries or divisions but penetrates all existence so universally that it can never be captured or limited by any organism.