DAWES HICKS LECTURE ON PHILOSOPHY

MENTAL HEALTH IN PLATO'S *REPUBLIC*

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THE concept of mental health was Plato's invention. Metaphors drawn from sickness are no doubt as old as metaphor itself, and the first recorded application of the Greek word for 'healthy' was to a sound argument rather than to a sound body (*Iliad* 8. 524). Hebrew and Greek poets used such metaphors on occasion for states of mind, and especially for passion, rage, and madness. Thus Aeschylus' Prometheus is reminded that words are the healers of sick anger (1. 378) and Xerxes' mother in the *Persae* describes the rash ambitions of her son as 'a disease of the mind' (1. 750). The Lord told Isaiah to shut the eyes of his people, lest they be converted and healed (Isa. 6 : 10) and to Jeremiah he promised to heal the disloyalty of Israel (Jer. 3 : 21). But nothing in Greek thought before Plato suggests that the notion of a healthy mind was more than a metaphor; and nowhere in the Old Testament is sin represented as a sickness of the soul.[1] It was Plato who in the *Gorgias* developed the metaphor in unprecedented detail, and in the *Republic* crossed the boundary between metaphor and philosophical theory.

'Bodies and souls', says Socrates in the *Gorgias*, 'can each be in good condition, can they not?'—and he uses the medical term *euexia*. Real *euexia* must be distinguished from apparent *euexia*, though only a doctor or trainer may be able to detect the difference in the case of the body. In the soul, too, there is a condition which counterfeits *euexia*, and there are arts corresponding to the skills of the doctor and the trainer, namely the arts of the lawgiver and the judge. These arts are therapies which minister to what is best in the soul (464a ff.).

Later in the same dialogue we are told that one's property, one's body, and one's soul can all be in an evil state (*πονηρία*). If one's property is in a bad state, that is poverty, if one's body is in a bad state, that is disease, and if one's soul is in a bad state that is vice. These three evils may be relieved by the ministrations

[1] See also Sophocles, *Ajax*, 59, 186, 452; Euripides, *Bacchae*, 948; *Orestes*, 10; Liddell and Scott, s.vv. *ἰάομαι*, *ἰατρός*, *νόσος*, *ὑγίεια*; A. Oepke in Kittel, *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, iv, 1086.

of three arts: the art of making money, the art of medicine, and the art practised by judges. By now the axe is fully ground, and Plato can administer the blow he has been preparing: to avoid punishment for one's misdeeds, if a judge is like a doctor, is as foolish as to avoid a visit to the surgeon out of fear; except of course that it is worse to live with an unhealthy soul than with an unhealthy body (479c). The allegory is worked out in detail: the pains of judicial punishment are the surgery and cautery of the soul (480b ff.); the desires of an unwell soul should be restrained like the unhealthy appetites of a diseased body (505a). But all this is no more than an allegory, whose point is expressed by Plato in a 'geometric proportion' (465): as medicine is to cookery, so justice is to rhetoric: medicine provides a healthy diet, while cookery flatters taste. The trial of Socrates will be like that of a doctor prosecuted by a cook before a jury of children, who are fonder of sweets than they are of bitter medicine (521d–e). Clearly, all this need not imply that there is literally such a thing as mental health, any more than it implies that there are mental sweetmeats. When Socrates speaks of a healthy soul (479c, 525e, 526d), or of psychic disease (481b, 512b), he need be no more committed to a theory of mental health than an Englishman who speaks of food for thought or mental indigestion is committed to a theory of mental dietetics.

In the *Republic* allegory gives way to theory building. The difference is made by the doctrine of the tripartite soul. The *Republic* is dominated by two quasi-medical ideas: the idea of an organism, and the idea of a function or characteristic activity (ἔργον). The theme of the dialogue is the nature of justice in the state and in the soul; and both state and soul are portrayed as organisms, as complexes of parts with characteristic functions. Justice in state and soul is what health is in the body, namely, the right functioning of the elements of the organism.

There is nothing surprising in the attempt to apply medical concepts to politics and moral psychology. As Jaeger has observed 'the medical art was the only field in which the Greeks of the classical period had arrived at a fairly exact observation and understanding of the processes of nature' (*JHS* 1957 (54), 256). When medicine is the most successful discipline, then the scientific study of the mind or of the state will seem best cast in the medical model. Similarly, Hume, who lived when the most successful science was mechanics, hoped to discover the mechanics of the mind, and offered the principle of association of ideas as the psychic counterpart of gravitation (*Treatise*

I. 1. v). Some of the prestige enjoyed in the eighteenth century by the principle of gravitation attached in Plato's time to the doctrine of the balancing of humours.

Alcmaeon had said that health was a balanced constitution (*ἰσονομία*) of the different powers (*δυνάμεις*) of which man was made up: wet, hot, dry, cold, sour, sweet (Galen xix. 343, quoted by Jones in the Loeb edition of Hippocrates, p. xlvii). The Hippocratic author of *On Ancient Medicine* (*c.* 420 B.C.) agrees that health is a harmonious mixture or blending of the constituents of man, but regards the humours (phlegm, blood, yellow and black bile) as more relevant constituents than the philosophical abstractions of hot and cold and wet and dry. Other authors disagreed about the number and nature of the humours, but in all of them, in the words of W. H. S. Jones, 'there is one common principle, that health is a harmonious mingling of the constituents of the body' (ibid., p. 1).

Plato inherited this conception of physical health. In the *Symposium* the physician Eryximachus is able to prove that medicine is under the direction of the god of love, for the doctor 'must be able to reconcile the jarring elements of the body, and force them, as it were, to fall in love with one another. Now we know that the most hostile elements are the opposites—hot and cold, sweet and sour, wet and dry, and so on' (186d). In the *Timaeus* we are told 'There are four natures out of which the body is compacted—earth and fire and water and air—and the unnatural excess or defect of these, or the change of any of them from its own natural place into another . . . or any similar irregularity, produces disorders and diseases' (82b).

Plato's originality was in applying this fashionable theory to the disorders of the soul. To do this he had to locate in the soul elements corresponding to the elements or humours of the body. Once the elements have been located, mental disease can be analysed as a disturbance of the peace between them. Evidences of conflict are not far to seek, and Plato anatomizes the soul in accordance with them. The canonical tripartite division of the soul is described in Book Four, and we will consider that first instead of any of the suggested bipartite divisions to be found elsewhere (e.g. 431a, 602e).

II

Having enumerated the three classes in the State, guardians, auxiliaries, and craftsmen, Socrates suggests that the soul too contains three elements (*εἴδη*).

'Do we', he asks, 'gain knowledge with one part, feel anger with another, and with yet a third desire the pleasures of food, sex, and so on? Or is the whole soul at work in every impulse and in all these forms of behaviour?'[1] To settle the question he appeals to phenomena of mental conflict. A man may be thirsty and yet unwilling to drink; what impels to an action must be distinct from what restrains from it; so there must be one part of the soul which reflects and another which is the vehicle of hunger, thirst, and sexual desire (439d). These two elements can be called reason (*τὸ λογιστικόν*) and appetite (*τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν*). Now anger cannot be attributed to either of these elements; for anger conflicts with appetite (witness Leontius' indignation with himself for his necrophilic desires) and can be divorced from reason (children have tantrums before they reach the years of discretion) (441b). So we must postulate a third element in the soul, temper (*τὸ θυμοειδές*), to go with reason and appetite.

This division is based on two premisses: the principle of non-contrariety, and the identification of the parts of the soul by their desires. If X and Y are contrary relations, nothing can unqualifiedly stand in X and Y to the same thing; and desire and aversion are contrary relations (437b). The desires of appetite are clear enough, and the desires of temper are to fight and punish; but we are not at this point told anything about the desires of reason. No doubt the man in whom reason fights with thirst is one who is under doctor's orders not to drink: in which case the opponent of appetite will be the rational desire for health.

In Book Nine we are told more about the desires of the three parts. The lowest can be called the avaricious element, since money is the principal means of satisfying the desires of appetite. Temper seeks power, victory, and repute, and so may be called the honour-loving or ambitious part of the soul. Reason pursues knowledge of truth: its love is learning. In each man's soul one or other of these elements may be dominant: he can be classed accordingly as avaricious, ambitious, or academic (580c–581b).

Looking back, we can see that the three parts of the soul and the three corresponding characters are perceptible from the beginning of the *Republic*. The venerable Cephalus, enthroned in his courtyard, speaks of old age. Many lament it, he says, for they can no longer make love or make merry, and their families show them no respect; but he finds that as bodily pleasures

[1] The *Republic* is quoted in Cornford's translation with occasional slight modifications.

grow dim those of the mind become keener. Old age, that is, leaves appetite unsatisfied, and temper ruffled; but the pleasures of reason are stronger than ever (392).

Later in Book One, Socrates needs to show that no one is willing to rule without being paid. If a man is to consent to rule 'he must have his recompense in the shape of money or honour, or of punishment in case of refusal'. The three characters are discernible: clearly, the first two rewards are the incentives of the avaricious and ambitious; but the third is not obvious and Glaucon asks for clarification. Socrates explains that this is the recompense of the best type of men, who will rule only for fear of being ruled by their inferiors (347a). This foreshadows the reluctant return of the philosopher kings to watch over the community in the cave (519–21).

Book One also foreshadows the theory that injustice is a falling-out of the elements of the soul. Even thieves cannot prosper without honour among themselves, Socrates reminds Thrasymachus, and in the individual also 'injustice will make him incapable of accomplishing anything because of inner faction and lack of self-agreement, and make him an enemy to himself' (352a). In the final argument with Thrasymachus we are introduced to a concept of psychic flourishing which Plato knows cannot be justified until the investigation of justice has been carried to a deeper level (354b).

The first step to this is the listing of three types of good in Book Two. There are goods chosen for their own sakes without regard to their effects (e.g. harmless fleeting pleasures), goods chosen for their own sakes and for the sake of their effects (understanding, sight, and health), and goods chosen for the sake of their effects only (the art of healing and the making of money). Glaucon places justice in the third class, and Socrates undertakes to show it belongs to the second. Glaucon's position is similar to that of Socrates in the *Gorgias*, for the justice discussed there was judicial punishment, and Socrates' theme was that it was in the criminal's interest to take his medicine (357b–358b).[1]

Describing the ideal state, Socrates has some harsh things to say about doctors. Their presence in the state is a sign that something has gone wrong (405e). It is disgraceful to need a doctor, not for wounds or seasonal infections, but because of sloth and overeating (405c–d). The poor cannot afford to be hypochondriacs, but the rich who have no work to do are

[1] The *Gorgias* analogy is applied from time to time in the discussion of the primary education of the guardians (e.g. 401c; 403c; 405c).

encouraged by their doctors to be valetudinarians (407b). How different the practice of Aesculapius: he would cure those capable of returning to civic duties by a brisk treatment of drugs and surgery, 'but treatment, he thought, would be wasted on a man who could not live in his ordinary round of duties and was consequently useless to himself and society' (407d). Plato's admiration for the art of medicine clearly went hand in hand with a contempt for the practice of doctors and a presumption that most patients were malingerers.

In the *Republic* as in the *Gorgias* doctors are compared with judges. But there is a difference between the two. It does not matter if a doctor is himself unhealthy: for doctors do not treat the body with the body, but with the mind. A judge, on the other hand, 'rules soul with soul', and though he must know what injustice is, he must not draw upon his own experience of it in order to diagnose the crimes of others (508e). But in the Ideal State, drastic measures are to be taken to see that the demand for both doctors and judges is strictly limited. 'They will look after those citizens whose bodies and souls are constitutionally sound. The physically unsound they will leave to die; and they will actually put to death those who are incurably corrupt in mind' (410).

Thus far, as in the *Gorgias*, Socrates has been working with a simple contrast between soul and body: what medicine is to the body, justice is to the soul. But now this simple scheme is complicated. One might think, Socrates says, that gymnastics were for the body, and music (literary and artistic education) for the soul. But no, both are for the soul: gymnastics is to benefit the temper (*θυμοειδές*), the high-spirited principle, and music for the academic or philosophical nature in us (410d). Excessive gymnastics lead to boorishness; too much music makes effeminate. The purpose of a balanced education is 'to bring the two elements into tune with one another by adjusting the tension of each to the right pitch' (411d). Thus we are introduced to the notion of psychic harmony.

A different bipartition of the soul is made when Socrates discusses expressions such as 'self control' and 'self mastery' as synonyms for temperance. 'The phrase means' he says 'that within the man himself, in his soul, there is a better part and a worse; and that he is his own master when the part which is better by nature has the worse under its control' (431a). These bipartitions are not in conflict with the canonical tripartition of 435: on the contrary, they introduce, in two pairs, the three

elements of the later division. The contrast between the two branches of education introduces reason and temper, but does not mention appetite since education is to control, not to develop, appetite. The worse part of the soul which is to be mastered is appetite (cf. 431c), and reason and temper are lumped together as the better part of the soul just as guardians and auxiliaries, in the same passage, are treated as a single class in the state.

Once the three parts of the soul have been introduced in Book Four the way is open for the identification of justice with mental health. Justice in the state meant that each of the three orders was doing its own proper work (*τὰ αὑτοῦ πράττειν*—a phrase which can be translated, according to one's political sympathies, either as 'minding one's own business' or 'doing one's own thing'). 'Each one of us likewise will be a just person, fulfilling his proper function, only if the several parts of our nature fulfil theirs' (442a). Reason is to rule, educated temper to be its ally, both are to rule the insatiable appetites and prevent them going beyond bounds. Like justice, the other three cardinal virtues relate to the psychic elements: fortitude will be located in temper, temperance will reside in the unanimity of the three elements, and wisdom will be in 'that small part which rules . . . , possessing as it does the knowledge of what is good for each of the three elements and for all of them in common' (442a–d).

Justice is a prerequisite even for the pursuits of the avaricious and ambitious man. 'Only when a man has linked these parts together in well-tempered harmony and has made himself one man instead of many, will he be ready to go about whatever he may have to do, whether it be making money and satisfying bodily wants, or business transactions, or the affairs of state' (443e). Injustice is a sort of civil strife among the elements, usurping each other's functions. 'Justice is produced in the soul, like health in the body, by establishing the elements concerned in their natural relations of control and subordination, whereas injustice is like disease and means that this natural order is subverted.' The object of the whole exercise is achieved when Glaucon agrees that since virtue is the health of the soul, it is absurd to ask whether it is more profitable to live justly or to do wrong. All the wealth and power in the world cannot make life worth living when the bodily constitution is going to rack and ruin: and can life be worth living when the very principle whereby we live is deranged and corrupted? (445b).

This point established, Socrates goes on to observe that there are as many types of character as there are distinct varieties of political constitution: five of each (445d, cf. 544e). The first and best constitution is called monarchy or aristocracy—if wisdom rules it does not matter whether it is incarnate in one or many rulers. This is described in the long central section on the education of the philosopher king (471c–541). Then Socrates goes on to describe the four other types of character and constitution: timocracy, oligarchy, democracy, and despotism (543c).

Tidy-minded students of Plato sometimes ask: if there are three parts of the soul, why are there four cardinal virtues, and five different characters and constitutions? The second part of this question is easier to answer than the first. There are five constitutions and four virtues because each constitution turns into the next by the downgrading of one of the virtues; and it takes four steps to pass from the first constitution to the fifth. It is when the rulers cease to be men of wisdom that aristocracy gives place to timocracy (547e). The oligarchic rulers differ from the timocrats because they lack fortitude and military virtues (555b). Democracy arises when even the miserly temperance of the oligarchs is abandoned (555b). For Plato, any step from aristocracy is a step away from justice; but it is the step from democracy to despotism that marks the enthronement of injustice incarnate (576a). So the aristocratic state is marked by the presence of all the virtues, the timocratic state by the absence of wisdom, the oligarchic state by the decay of fortitude, the democratic state by contempt for temperance, and the despotic state by the overturning of justice.

But how are these vices and these constitutions related to the parts of the soul? The pattern is ingeniously woven. In the ideal constitution the rulers of the state are ruled by reason, in the timocratic state the rulers are ruled by temper, and in the oligarchic state appetite is enthroned in the rulers' souls (553c). But now within the third part of the tripartite soul a new tripartition appears. The bodily desires which make up appetite are divided into necessary, unnecessary, and lawless desires. Necessary desires are the ones which cannot be got rid of and which do us good to fulfil, like the desires for plain bread and meat. Unnecessary desires are those which can be got rid of by early training, such as a taste for luxuries (559a ff.). Lawless desires are those unnecessary desires which are so impious, perverse, and shameless that they find expression normally only in dreams (571 ff.). The difference between the oligarchic, demo-

cratic, and despotic constitutions depends upon the difference between these types of desire. In the oligarchic state a few men rule, in the democratic state the multitude rule, in the despotic state a single man rules. All these rulers are governed by their appetites. The few rulers of the oligarchic state are themselves ruled by a few necessary desires (554a); each of the multitude dominant in the democracy is dominated by a multitude of unnecessary desires (559c); the sole master of the despotic state is himself mastered by a single dominating lawless passion (572e).

Socrates makes further use of the tripartite theory to prove the superiority of the just man's happiness, as promised to Glaucon at 445b. A man may be classified as avaricious, ambitious, or academic according to the dominant element in his soul (579d). Men of each type will claim that their own life is best: the avaricious man will praise the life of business, the ambitious man will praise a political career, and the academic man will praise knowledge and understanding and the life of learning. It is the academic, the philosopher, whose judgement is to be preferred: he has the advantage over the others in experience, insight, and reasoning (582c). Moreover, the objects to which the philosopher devotes his life are so much more real than the objects pursued by the others that their pleasures seem illusory by comparison. The pleasantest, as well as the most virtuous, course for the other elements in the soul is to obey reason. 'All the desires of the ambitious and of the avaricious part of our nature will win the truest pleasures of which they are capable if they accept the guidance of knowledge and reason and pursue only those pleasures which wisdom approves' (587a). Next there follows the famous piece of arithmetical prestidigitation by which Socrates proves that the kingly life of the philosopher is 729 times pleasanter than the life of the passion-ridden tyrant.

At the end of Book Nine we bid farewell to the tripartite soul with a vivid picture. Appetite is a many-headed beast, constantly sprouting heads of tame and wild animals; temper is like a lion; and reason like a man. The beast is larger than the other two, and all three are stowed away within a human being. Injustice starves the man, profligacy feeds fat the monster, ill temper gives too much licence to the lion. 'On the other hand to say that justice pays is to assert that all our words and actions should tend towards giving the man in us complete mastery over the whole human creature, and letting him take the many-headed beast under his care and tame its wildness, like the gardener who trains his cherished plants while he checks the

growth of weeds. He should enlist the lion as his ally, and caring for all alike should foster their growth by first reconciling them to one another and to himself' (589b). 'Thus the entire soul, restored to its native soundness will gain, in the temperance and righteousness which wisdom brings, a condition more precious than the strength and beauty which health brings to the body in proportion as the soul itself surpasses the body in worth' (591a).

III

The modern reader of the *Republic* is reminded of another tripartite soul. Freud, towards the end of his life, replaced the dichotomy of conscious and unconscious with a threefold scheme of the mind. 'The mental apparatus', he wrote, 'is composed of an *id* which is the repository of the instinctual impulses, of an *ego* which is the most superficial portion of the id and one which has been modified by the influence of the external world, and of a *superego* which develops out of the id, dominates the ego, and represents the inhibitions of instinct that are characteristic of man' (xx. 266).[1]

Freud's id is very similar to Plato's appetite (*επιθυμητικόν*). As appetite is the source of the desires for food and sex (437c, 580e), so the id is filled with hunger and love and instinctual drives (xx. 200; xxii. 73). As the monster appetite is much larger than little reason (442c, 580e, 588d), so the id is 'a mental region more extensive, more imposing, more obscure than the ego' (xx. 194). The id is reigned over by the pleasure principle, and knows no morality or judgements of good and evil (xxii. 74); just so, the result of pandering to appetite is that pleasure and pain reign in one's soul instead of law (607a). 'The logical laws of thought', Freud tells us, 'do not apply in the *id*, and this is true above all of the law of contradiction. Contrary impulses exist side by side, without cancelling each other out or diminishing each other' (xxii. 73). So too, because of appetite the soul can be called 'full of diversity and unlikeness and perpetually at variance with itself' (561).

Id differs from appetite in one respect: all that happens in the id is and remains unconscious, while much of appetite is conscious. However, Plato, no less than Freud, thinks that each of us has innate desires of a kind commonly thought shameful, and that these desires, like the instinctual drives of the id, surface only in dreams. 'In sleep the wild beast in us, full-fed with meat

[1] References to Freud are to the Standard Edition of his collected works.

or drink, becomes rampant and shakes off sleep to go in quest of what will gratify its own instincts . . . In phantasy it will not shrink from intercourse with a mother or anyone else, man, god, or brute, or from forbidden food or any deed of blood' (491d). The Oedipal character of the dreams is particularly striking; though of course Freud warns us 'the straightforward dream of sexual relations with one's mother which Jocasta alludes to in the *Oedipus Rex*, is a rarity in comparison with the multiplicity of dreams which psychoanalysis must interpret in the same sense' (XIX. 131 ff.).

In contrast to the id which contains the passions, the ego, Freud tells us, represents what may be called reason and common sense (XXII. 76). It has much in common with Plato's *logistikon*. Both reason and ego go to sleep at night (XVIII. 109, 51c). Reason is the part of the soul most in touch with what is real, just as the ego is devoted to the reality principle (585c ff.; XX. 194) though of course Plato will not agree with Freud in identifying reality with the external world perceived by the senses. Like reason, the ego has the task of controlling instinctual desires, choosing harmless moments for their satisfaction or diverting their expression (XX. 201). Using the metaphor of the *Phaedrus* Freud compares the ego to a rider and the id to a horse. 'The horse supplies the locomotive energy, while the rider has the privilege of deciding on the goal and of guiding the powerful animal's movement.' But the ego's control is not absolute. It is like a constitutional monarch, without whose sanction no law can be passed, but who hesitates long before imposing his veto on any measure put forward by Parliament (XVIII. 59). Constitutional monarchy found no place among Plato's constitutions, but we are reminded of the oligarchic man whose base desires are only tamed, held down under stress of fear for his fortune (554). But it is the task of psychoanalysis to strengthen the ego's hold on the id (XXII. 80), just as it is the task of philosophy to strengthen reason's control over appetite. Freud and Plato use the same metaphors to describe the mechanism of control. Freud speaks in hydraulic terms of the operation of the id as a flow of energy which can find a normal discharge, be channelled into alternative outlets, or be dammed up with disastrous results. So too, when Plato wishes to prove that a life of philosophy will promote temperance, he says 'we surely know that when a man's desires set strongly in one direction, in every other channel they flow more feebly, like a stream diverted into another bed. So when the current has set towards knowledge and all that goes

with it, desire will abandon those pleasures of which the body is the instrument and be concerned only with the pleasure which the soul enjoys independently' (485d).

There remains the superego and the temper (*θυμοειδές*). The superego is introduced as an agency which observes, judges, and punishes the behaviour of the ego, partly identical with the conscience, and concerned for the maintenance of ideals (XXII. 66). It is strongly personified by Freud, and is described as upbraiding, abusing, and humiliating the ego (XXII. 60); rather as Leontius' temper says to his eyes, when overcome by the morbid desire to stare at the corpses 'there you are, curse you: feast yourselves on this lovely sight' (440a). Temper and superego are alike in being non-rational, punitive forces in the service of morality, the source of shame and anger with oneself; but they differ also in many ways. Temper is present in children from the start (441a), whereas in young children the part which is later taken on by the superego is played by parental authority (XXII. 62). Moreover, temper is directed as much against others as against oneself, whereas the superego is directed exclusively towards the ego. Some of the superego's functions are ones which Plato would attribute to reason: for instance 'becoming the vehicle of tradition and of all the time-resisting judgements of value which have propagated themselves in this manner from generation to generation' (XXII. 67). However, the superego is, in a way, like the temper in being the source of ambition—though not necessarily political ambition. 'The superego is the vehicle of the ego ideal by which the ego measures itself, which it emulates, and whose demand for ever greater perfection it strives to fulfil' (XXII. 65).

Both Freud and Plato regard mental health as harmony between the parts of the soul, and mental illness as unresolved conflict between them. 'So long as the ego and its relations to the id fulfil these ideal conditions (of harmonious control) there will be no neurotic disturbance' (XX. 201). The ego's whole endeavour is 'a reconciliation between its various dependent relationships' (XIX. 149). In the absence of such reconciliation, mental disorders develop: the psychoses are the result of conflicts between the ego and the world, the neuroses in general are the result of conflicts between the ego and the id, and narcissistic neuroses such as melancholia (depression) are the result of conflicts between the id and the superego (XIX. 149 ff.). Plato has no such worked out theory. The four characters other than the aristocratic are not explicitly called illnesses, though the

despotic constitution is referred to as 'the fourth and final disease of society' (544c). Moreover, the symptoms of the mental conditions of the timarchic, oligarchic, democratic and despotic men are vicious conduct rather than the eccentricities of the neurotic or the delusions of the psychotic.

Moreover, even in the normal case, the Freudian ego seems to have no such security as reason has in the soul of the philosopher king. At best, it is a servant rather than a master. It serves three tyrannical masters, whose claims are divergent, the external world, the superego and the id. It feels hemmed in on three sides, threatened by three kinds of danger. 'It is observed at every step it takes by the strict superego, which lays down definite standards for its conduct, without taking any account of its difficulties from the direction of the id and the external world, and which, if those standards are not obeyed, punishes it with tense feeling of inferiority and of guilt. Thus the ego, driven by the id, confined by the superego, repulsed by reality, strives to master its . . . task of bringing about harmony among the forces and influences working in and upon it; and we can understand how it is that so often we cannot suppress a cry "Life is not easy" ' (xx. 78).

The reason of the oligarchic man, likewise, is a servant not a ruler. The throne is occupied by appetite. 'He will instal another spirit on the vacant throne, the money-loving spirit of sensual appetite, like the great king with diadem and golden chain and scimitar girt at his side. At its footstool on either side will crouch the two slaves he has forced into subjection: reason and ambition' (553d). We are reminded of a passage from *The World as Will and Idea* which Freud called 'intensely impressive' and loved to quote. In it Schopenhauer says that it is the joke of life that sex, the chief concern of man, should be pursued in secret. 'In fact', he goes on, 'we see it every moment seat itself, as the true hereditary lord of the world, out of the fullness of its own strength, upon the ancestral throne, and looking down from there with scornful glances, laugh at the preparations which have been made to bind it' (Freud, xix. 221).

IV

The tripartite theory is not Plato's last word in the *Republic* on the nature of the soul, and it is time to take account of the context in which it was first introduced. The *Republic* is dialectical in structure, and we must look at the position which the notion of mental health occupies in the dialectic.

In a well-known passage of Book Six Plato criticizes mathematicians because they start from hypotheses which they treat as obvious and do not feel called upon to give an account of. The dialectician, in contrast, though starting likewise from hypotheses, does not like the mathematician immediately move down from hypotheses to conclusions, but ascends first from hypotheses to an unhypothetical principle, and only then redescends from premiss to conclusion. Dialectic 'treats its assumptions, not as first principles, but as hypotheses in the literal sense, things "laid down" like a flight of steps up which it may mount all the way to something that is not hypothetical, the first principle of all; and having grasped this may turn back and, holding on to the consequences which depend upon it, descend at last to a conclusion' (511b). The upward path of dialectic is described again in Book Seven as a course of 'doing away with assumptions and travelling up to the first principle of all, so as to make sure of confirmation there' (533c). The phrase just translated (by Cornford) 'doing away with assumptions' has caused trouble to commentators, who wondered whether *τὰς ὑποθέσεις ἀναιροῦσα* meant refuting hypotheses or turning them into theorems. The literal meaning of the phrase is surely clear enough: *ἀναιρέω*, to take up, being the plain opposite of *ὑποτίθημι* to lay down. The phrase means 'taking up what has been laid down' or 'unhypothesizing the hypotheses'. What this amounts to, we shall see in a moment. The dialectician is further described as the man who 'demands an account of the essence' (*λόγος τῆς οὐσίας*) of each thing (534c); and it appears that the unhypothetical principle he ascends to must be the Idea of the Good; for we are told that he must be able to 'separate and distinguish the idea of the good from all else, and persevere through everything in the battle of refutation (*διὰ παντῶν ἐλέγχων*), eager to refute (*ἐλέγχειν*) in reality and not in appearance, and go through all these things without letting his argument be overthrown' (534b–c, trans. Robinson, *Plato's Earlier Dialectic*, 171).

The dialectician operates as follows. He takes a hypothesis, a questionable assumption, and tries to show that it leads to a contradiction. When he reaches a contradiction, he next tests the other premisses used to derive the contradiction, and so on in turn until he reaches a premiss which is unquestionable.

Dialectic is based on eristic, a tournament in which one contestant defends a thesis which the other contestant attacks by asking questions which must be answered yes or no. The questioner's aim is to get an answer incompatible with the original

thesis—this is a refutation, a successful *elenchus*. The defendant's aim is to survive the elenchus with his thesis unrefuted. Eristic, apparently, consisted solely of elenchus and was primarily a training-game in logic; dialectic was a form of search for truth, and did not stop at elenchus but proceeded to the examination of the admissions which led the answerer into the elenchus (cf. Ryle, *Plato's Progress*, 102 ff.).

All this can be illustrated from the first book of the *Republic*; and the illustration will show how the thesis that justice is the health of the soul forms a rung of the dialectical ladder. The first elenchus is very brief. Cephalus puts forward the hypothesis that justice is telling the truth and returning what one has borrowed. Socrates asks: is it just to return a weapon to a mad friend? Cephalus agrees that it is not; and so Socrates concludes 'justice cannot be defined as telling the truth and returning what one has borrowed' (331c–d). Cephalus then withdraws from the debate and goes off to sacrifice.

If this were eristic, that would be the end of the game: fool's mate. But this is dialectic, we are seeking the essence (*λόγος τῆς οὐσίας*) of justice. So we must examine the further premiss used in deriving the contradiction. The reason why it is unjust to return a weapon to a mad friend is that it cannot be just to harm a friend. So next, Polemarchus, the heir to Cephalus' argument, defends the hypothesis that justice is doing good to one's friends and harm to one's enemies (332b ff.). The refutation of this suggestion takes longer; but finally Polemarchus agrees that it is not just to harm any man at all (335e). The crucial premiss needed for this elenchus is that justice is human excellence (*ἀνθρωπεία ἀρετή*). It is preposterous, Socrates urges, to think that a just man could exercise his excellence by making others less excellent. Polemarchus is knocked out of the debate because he accepts without a murmur the premiss that justice is human excellence; but Thrasymachus is waiting in the wings to challenge that hypothesis. Justice, he says, is not excellence, but weakness and foolishness, because it is not in the interest of its possessor (338c, 348c). It takes nearly twenty Stephanus pages and some complicated forking procedures to checkmate Thrasymachus; but when he finally agrees that the just man will have a better life than the unjust man, he is driven to agree by a number of concessions he makes to Socrates. For instance, he agrees that the gods are just (353a), that human excellence makes happy (548c), that each thing has a function that it does best (353a), that excellence is doing one's function well (353b), and

that the function of the soul is to deliberate, rule, and take care of the person (353d). Given these premisses,[1] the elenchus is a fair one, and does not depend, as it seems to at first sight, on a quibbling identification of doing good with doing well. But of course the premisses need arguing for, and can all be questioned. Most of them are questioned elsewhere in the Republic: the assumption that the gods are just, for instance, is eloquently challenged by Adeimantus in Book Two (364 ff.).

Each of the definitions debated—that justice is truth-telling and debt-repaying, that justice is human excellence—is a hypothesis. To unhypothesize a hypothesis is to call it in question, whether this results in its being refuted (like the first) or confirmed (like the second).[2] In Book One the dialectical discussion of justice has, of course, only begun. Though the counterhypotheses of the nature of justice have been refuted, and though a correct definition is hinted at in 332c, nothing positive has been established because the elenchi depend on hypotheses which, like the mathematicians', are far from unquestionable. This is made clear by Socrates at the end of the book. 'As long as I do not know what justice is, I am hardly likely to know whether or not it is a virtue, or whether it makes a man happy or unhappy' (354c).

One of the hypotheses assumed against Thrasymachus is that it is the soul's function to deliberate, rule, and take care of the person. This is taken up when the soul is divided into parts in Book Four: these functions belong not to the whole soul but only to reason. In establishing the trichotomy a further assumption is laid down: it is not the case 'that the same thing can ever act or be acted upon in two opposite ways, or be two opposite things, at the same time, in respect of the same part of itself, and in relation to the same object' (437a). Plato makes explicit the provisional nature of the hypothesis. 'As we do not want to spend time in reviewing all . . . objections to make sure that they are unsound, let us proceed on this assumption (*ὑποθέμενοι*) with the understanding that, if we ever come to think otherwise, all the consequences based on it will fall to the ground' (437a).

This hypothesis seems a harmless one, but in spite of appearances it is far from unquestionable. It is not our principle of

[1] Plus some premisses, which it would be hazardous to attempt to reconstruct, from the argument about competitiveness (*πλεονεκτεῖν*) 349b ff.

[2] That justice is human excellence is confirmed by the refutation of the counterthesis that it is foolishness. Book One has no example of a hypothesis being confirmed by surviving an elenchus, because Socrates does not accept Thrasymachus' invitation to become respondent instead of questioner (336c).

contradiction, namely, that it is not the case that both *p* and not *p*. Plato is not operating with the notion of propositional negation: he is thinking not of contradictory propositions but of contrary predicates—to be stationary *vs* to be in motion; to be attracted *vs* to be repelled. Moreover, he is not using the post-Fregean notion of predicate as what is left of a sentence if you take out a subject-term such as a proper name. The same 'contrary', for Plato, occurs in '. . . is moving his head' and '. . . is moving his arms'. Hence all the qualifications in his principle of contrariety. A man may be standing still and moving his arms, so if the principle is to hold it must specify that contraries are to apply to the same *part*; a man may be standing at one moment and sitting at the next, so we must specify that the contraries are to apply at the same *time*, and so forth. It seems clear that there is no limit to the number of extra qualifications of this sort which one might have to add to the list in order to make sure that contraries could not hold of the same subject. In fact, Plato believed that it was only of the Ideas or Forms that the principle really holds: everything except Forms is in some way or other qualified by contraries. The Form of Beauty, for instance, neither waxes nor wanes, is not beautiful in one part and ugly in another, nor beautiful at one time and ugly at another, nor beautiful in relation to one thing and ugly in relation to another (*Symposium*, 211a). Whereas all the many beautiful things in the world, as Glaucon admits in Book Five of the *Republic*, 'must inevitably appear to be in some way both beautiful and ugly'. The same is true of all other terrestrial entities, including the soul as described in Book Four: it does not really escape the ubiquity of contrariety. It would take a longer way round, Socrates warns us, to reach the exact truth about the soul (434d).

The longer way round takes us through the Forms to the Idea of the Good (504b). The tripartite theory of Book Four is only an approximation to the truth because it makes no mention of the theory of Ideas. When these are introduced in Book Five, they are used as the basis of a distinction between two powers (δυνάμεις), knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) and opinion (δόξα). Knowledge concerns the Forms, which alone really are (i.e. for any F, only the form of F is altogether and without qualification F), whereas belief concerns the pedestrian objects which both are and are not (i.e., for any F, anything in the world which is F is also in some respect or other not F). These powers are in turn subdivided in the Line passage of Book Six: opinion includes imagination (εἰκασία) whose objects are 'shadows and reflections'

and belief (*πίστις*) whose objects are 'the living creatures about us and the works of nature or of human hands'. Knowledge *par excellence* is understanding (*νόησις*) whose method is dialectic and whose object is the realm of Forms. But knowledge also includes thought (*διάνοια*) whose method is hypothetical, and whose objects are the abstract objects of mathematics, which share with the Forms eternity and unchangeability (like all objects of knowledge they belong to the world of being, not of becoming), and share with terrestrial objects multiplicity (for the geometers' circles, unlike The Circle, can intersect with each other, and the arithmeticians' twos, unlike the one and only Idea of Two, can be added to each other to make four, cf. 525c–526a).[1]

What is the relation between the four segments of the line and the three parts of the soul? Clearly, all segments represent powers or dispositions of the reasoning part of the soul, for they are cognitive states, whereas the other parts of the soul are characterized only by their desires and aversions. Opinion, in Book Five, appears to be the state characteristic not of the avaricious man nor of the ambitious man, but of the counterfeit philosopher, the lover of sights and sounds, the philodoxical man with a passion for theatre and music (487d, 480a).

Light is thrown on this by the allegory of the Cave, which is intended as an explication of the Line (514a, 517b). The prisoners are chained in the cave, facing shadows of puppets thrown by a fire against the inner wall of the cave. Education in the arts of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and harmony is to release the prisoners from their chains, and to lead them past the puppets and the fire in the shadow-world of becoming, into the open sunlight of the world of being (532). The whole course of education, the conversion from the shadows, is designed for the best part of the soul—i.e. for reason (532c); and the chains from which the pupil must be released if he is to begin his ascent are the desires and pleasures of appetite (519b, cf. 586). The prisoners have already had training in gymnastics and music according to the syllabus of Books Two and Three. Even to start the journey out of the cave you must already be sound of mind and limb (536b).

The education allegorized in the cave then, is the education of the philosopher, not of the avaricious or ambitious man; and the four segments of the line are the four stages of his intellectual achievement. Plato illustrates the stages most fully in connection

[1] I have no space to do more than state brazenly my opinion on a very controverted matter. See Wedberg, *Plato's Philosophy of Mathematics*.

with the course in mathematics. The future mathematician, while still a chained prisoner, has had his education in the arts; being as yet a lover of sights and sounds, he will see among the shadows theatrical performances, in which, for instance Palamedes will assist Agamemnon by inventing arithmetic at the siege of Troy. This is imagination (εἰκασία) in mathematics. Once freed from his childish delight in the stage, the pupil will be taught to count and calculate for practical purposes: this will come in useful when as philosopher king he takes his turn as commander-in-chief and has to count his army (525b). (The avaricious man, of course, learns arithmetic only for base money-making purposes 525c.) This is called by Plato dealing with numbers which 'have visible or tangible bodies attached to them': in the allegory, this will be looking at the puppets after turning round from the shadows. Arithmetic properly so called will lead the pupil out of the world of becoming altogether, and teach him to study the abstract numbers which can be multiplied but not changed. In the allegory, these are the reflections in the sunlit water: reflections do not flicker like the shadows cast by the fire-light, but still a single object may have many reflections (516a). This is thought (διάνοια) just as the counting of bodies was belief (πίστις). Finally, dialectic, by questioning the hypotheses of arithmetic—researching, as we should say, into the foundations of mathematics—will give him true understanding (νόησις) of number, by introducing him to the Forms in their dependence on the Idea of Good. These Forms are the men and trees and stars and sun of the allegory (516b).

The *Republic* is concerned less with mathematical education than with moral education: but this follows a parallel path. Imagination in morals consists of the dicta of poets and tragedians (331e etc.). If the pupil has been educated in the bowdlerized literature recommended by Plato, he will have seen justice triumphing on the stage, and will have learnt that the gods are unchanging, good, and truthful (382e). This he will later see as a symbolic representation of the eternal Idea of Good, source of truth and knowledge. The first stage of moral education will make him competent in the human justice which operates in law-courts (517d). This will give him true belief: but it will be the task of dialectic to teach him the real nature of justice and to display its participation in the Idea of the Good.[1] It is the

[1] In moral education there is no stage corresponding to initiation into the mathematical objects: that is why mathematics is a uniquely valuable propaedeutic for dialectic (531d).

first stages of this dialectic that are represented for us in the *Republic* from Books One to Six.

At the end of the upward path of dialectic is the Idea of the Good (505a). A philosopher who had contemplated that idea would no doubt be able to replace the hypothetical definition of justice as psychic health with a better definition which would show beyond question the mode of its participation in goodness (504b). But as he approaches the summit of the mount of dialectic to learn from goodness itself the first principles of law and morality, Socrates, like Moses, disappears into a cloud. He can talk only in metaphor, and cannot give even a provisional account of goodness itself (506d). When next we see clearly, dialectic has begun its downward path. We return to the topics of the earlier books—the natural history of the state, the divisions of the soul, the happiness of the just, the deficiencies of poetry—but we study them now in the light of the theory of Forms. The just man is happier than the unjust, not only because his soul is in concord, but because it is more delightful to fill the soul with understanding than to feed fat the desires of appetite. Reason is no longer the faculty which takes care of the person, it is akin to the unchanging and immortal world of truth (585c). And the poets fall short, not just because they spread unedifying stories and pander to effeminate tastes, but because they operate at the third remove from the reality of the Forms (595a–602b).

In Book Ten Plato returns for the last time to the anatomy of the soul. The tripartite division of the earlier books is recalled in the first lines, but the divisions actually made in the book are all bipartite. Thus, there is one element in the soul which is confused by bent-looking sticks in water, and another element which measures, counts, and weighs. The latter is called *λογιστικόν* which is the word used for reason in Book Four. But it does not appear that the parts here contrasted are two out of the earlier triad. Rather, the contrast recalls the difference between imagination (whose objects included reflections in water) and belief (which deals with measurement and the numbers attached to visible bodies 526d). It is a contrast between two elements within the single realm of reason in the tripartite soul.[1]

In the actions represented by drama, Plato continues, there is an internal conflict in a man analogous to the conflict between the contrary opinions induced by visual impressions (603d). In

[1] This is confirmed by the use made at 602e of the principle of contrariety: 'it is impossible for the same part of the soul to hold two contrary beliefs at the same time'. Earlier, it was desires which were contrasted.

tragedy, this conflict is between a lamentation-loving part of the soul (*θρηνωδές* 606a, *ἀγανακτητικόν* 604e) and the best part of us which is willing to abide by the law which says we must bear misfortune quietly (604b). In comedy this noble element has to fight with another element which has an instinctive impulse to play the clown (606c). It is no doubt futile to ask whether these elements in the soul are to be identified with any yet mentioned. Perhaps the tragic and comic elements take their place along with appetite and temper as potential foes to reason. Certainly at 608b poetry appears along with wealth and honour as an ambition which might distract one from the pursuit of justice: the three competing lives appear to have been joined by a fourth.

The notion of mental health makes its final appearance in the proof of immortality which concludes Book Ten. Each thing is destroyed by its characteristic disease (*κακία*): eyes by ophthalmia, and iron by rust. Now vice is the characteristic disease of the soul; but vice does not destroy the soul in the way disease destroys the body (609d). But if the soul is not killed by its own disease, it will hardly be killed by diseases of anything else—certainly not by bodily disease—and so it must be immortal.

The principle that justice is the soul's health is now finally severed from the tripartite theory of the soul on which it rested. An uneasily composite entity like the threefold soul, Socrates says, could hardly be everlasting. The soul in its real nature is a far lovelier thing in which justice is much more easily to be distinguished. Our description of the soul, says Socrates, is true of its appearance; but it is now afflicted by many evils, and more like a monster than its natural self, like a statue of a sea-god covered by barnacles. If we could fix our eyes on the soul's love of wisdom and passion for the divine and everlasting, we would realize how different it would be freed from the pursuit of earthly happiness. Whether the soul thus seen in its true nature would prove manifold or simple is left an open question (611b ff.).

V

The title of this paper may well seem to contain an equivocation. By now it is abundantly clear that Plato's conception of the health of the soul is fundamentally a moral concept, so that it is surely misleading to render it by the medical notion of mental health. This is not so. Plato was deliberately assimilating a moral concept to a medical one, and the contemporary concept of mental health has a moral as well as a medical component.

By defining justice as the health of the soul Plato achieved three things. First, he provided himself with an easy answer to the question 'why be just?' Everyone wants to be healthy, so if justice is health, everyone must really want to be just. If some do not want to behave justly, this can only be because they do not understand the nature of justice and injustice and lack insight into their own condition. Thus the doctrine that justice is mental health rides well with the Socratic theses that no one does wrong voluntarily, and that vice is fundamentally ignorance. Secondly, if injustice is a disease, it should be possible to eradicate it by the application of medical science. So Plato can offer the strict training programme and educational system of the *Republic* as the best preventative against an epidemic of vice. Thirdly, if every vicious man is really a sick man, then the virtuous philosopher can claim over him the type of control which a doctor has over his patients. To treat injustice as mental sickness is to assimilate vice to madness, as Plato often does explicitly (e.g. 329d). The point is made very early on in the *Republic* that madmen have no rights: they may not claim their property, they are not entitled to the truth (331c). But of course, by Plato's standards, all who fall short of the standards of the philosopher king are more or less mad: and thus the guardians are allowed to use the 'drug of falsehood' on their subjects (382c). The thesis that madmen need restraint is harmless only so long as it is not combined with the view that all the world is mad but me and possibly thee.

In our own day those who share a Platonic enthusiasm for the replacement of judges by doctors share some of these features of Plato's outlook. An understandable reluctance to pass moral judgements and a well-founded distrust of retributivist theories of punishment inclines many people to welcome the suggestion that all criminals are sick rather than vicious people. The suggestion is made even more attractive by the corollary that it may be possible to eradicate crime by the application of medical science. The humane and benevolent optimism characteristic of this approach is not incompatible with a certain ruthlessness in its practical application. For while we await the growth of insight in the patients and the progress of research among the doctors, the *ci-devant* criminals have to be restrained pretty much as before. But the safeguards against unjustified restraint do not have to be as rigorous as heretofore. Obviously, the standards of evidence required to show that someone is a patient requiring treatment do not have to be as rigid as those required to show that he is a guilty man meet for punishment.

These Platonic features, it seems to me, are detectable in the Mental Health Act of 1959, which introduced into English law the concept of the psychopath. 'Psychopathic disorder' is defined in the Act as 'a persistent disorder or disability of mind (whether or not including subnormality of intelligence) which results in abnormally aggressive or seriously irresponsible conduct on the part of the patient, and requires, or is susceptible to medical treatment'. The extremely broad nature of this definition was frequently remarked in the Parliamentary debates which preceded its enactment (e.g. by Lord Silkin, Lords Debates, 7 May 1959). It is clear that the diagnosis of this condition in effect calls for a moral judgement as to the limits of normal aggressiveness and the boundary between frivolity and serious irresponsibility. Lady Wootton remarked perceptively in the House of Lords that the act marked a landmark in 'a social development characteristic of the age—the encroachment of the science of medicine on the province formerly reserved for morals'. (Lords Debates, 4 June 1959). Whether or not, as Lady Wootton believed, every recidivist is *eo ipso* a psychopath by this definition, it is certain that the symptoms of psychopathic disorders to be found in textbooks remind one forcibly of Plato's description of the democratic man. Psychopathic disorder is, indeed, as much of a moral concept as a medical one. Medical authorities disagree about the nature, and indeed the very existence, of a psychopathic syndrome. The provision of the Act that the psychopath must 'require, or be susceptible to, medical treatment' is insufficient to constitute a genuine medical category. All anti-social behaviour 'requires medical treatment' in the minimal sense that it would be convenient if a drug could be found to put a stop to it. In this section, the Act appears to be, like Plato, redescribing moral phenomena in medical terms. And the Platonic corollaries follow. The Act of 1959 made it easier, not harder, for a man to be detained against his will, provided that the detention was not in prison but in a hospital.

The modern development of the concept of mental health dates from the end of the nineteenth century when Freud, Charcot, and Breuer began to treat hysterical patients as genuine invalids instead of malingerers. This, it has often been said, was as much a moral decision as a medical discovery. But most of us would feel that it was the right moral decision: and hysteria is close enough to the paradigm of physical illness for the concept of mental illness to have clear sense when applied to it. In the paradigmatic cases of illness the causes, symptoms, and

remedies of disease are all physical. In the paradigmatic cases of mental illness (e.g. schizophrenia) organic causes are known or suspected and treatment by physical methods (drugs, electroconvulsive therapy) is at least partially effective. What makes such illnesses *mental* illnesses is that the symptoms concern the cognitive and affective life of the patient: disorders of perception, belief, and emotion. In the diagnosis of whether perception is normal, of whether belief is rational, of whether emotion is out of proportion, there is a gentle slope which leads from clinical description to moral evaluation. Still, in such cases, even when diagnosis is as it were infected with morality, the relation to organic cause and physical treatment is strong enough to give clear content to the concept of disease. About such diseases—which include many which would have been recognized even in Plato's time as madness—much has been learnt in the present century, largely through the work of the psychiatrists whom Freud despised as much as Plato despised the Athenian doctors of his time. But as a result of the popularization of Freudian ideas the concept of mental health and sickness has been moralistically broadened just as it was by Plato: and Freudian theory has provided no better scientific justification of this broadening than did Plato's tripartite theory of the soul which in part it resembles. If a psychopath is given psychotherapy, we have a case in which neither the alleged causes of the condition (e.g. a broken home) nor its symptoms (e.g. petty theft) nor its cure (e.g. group discussions) have anything in common with the causes, symptoms, or cure of organic diseases. In such a case, the concept of mental illness has become a mere metaphor; and whatever value these procedures may have must be capable of commendation by something other than metaphor.

It is characteristic of our age to endeavour to replace virtues by technology. That is to say, wherever possible we strive to use methods of physical or social engineering to achieve goals which our ancestors thought attainable only by the training of character. Thus, we try so far as possible to make contraception take the place of chastity, and anaesthetics to take the place of fortitude; we replace resignation by insurance policies and munificence by the Welfare state. It would be idle romanticism to deny that such techniques and institutions are often less painful and more efficient methods of achieving the goods and preventing the evils which unaided virtue once sought to achieve and avoid. But it would be an equal and opposite folly to hope that the take-over of virtue by technology may one day be complete, so

that the necessity for the laborious acquisition of the capacity for rational choice by individuals can be replaced by the painless application of the fruits of scientific discovery over the whole field of human intercourse and enterprise. The moralistic concept of mental health incorporates the technological dream: it looks towards the day when virtue is superseded by medical know-how. But we are no more able than Plato was to make ourselves virtuous by analysis or prescription: and renaming virtue 'mental health' takes us no further than it took Plato in the direction of that chimerical goal.