

THE CAMBRIDGE PLATONISTS

# CAMBRIDGE

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BENJAMIN WHICHCOTE

by Mary Beale (1682)

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# THE CAMBRIDGE PLATONISTS

edited by C. A. PATRIDES

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FOR L. J. LUDOVICI

κρεῖττον ἕνα φίλον ἔχειν πολλοῦ ἄξιον ἤ πολλοὺς μηδενὸς ἀξίους



# General Preface

The Stratford Library has been formed for the student, teacher and general reader who is interested in Elizabethan and Jacobean life and literature. Further editions of Shakespeare's Works, or *The Faerie Queene*, or Jonson's Works will not be provided, nor will the Library duplicate readily available editions of any poet or dramatist. The editors hope to reprint what is generally unavailable outside the great libraries and microfilm and photostat collections, or available only in expensive and rare complete editions.

The first four publications in the Stratford Library are as follows: a selected works of Nashe (providing more than half his total writings and including four works in their entirety, Pierce Penniless, Summer's Last Will and Testament, The Terrors of the Night and The Unfortunate Traveller); an anthology entitled The Elizabethans' America (reprinting letters, reports and pamphlets about the New World); a collection of Elizabethan Narrative Verse (offering twelve examples in this kind from the anonymous 'Fable of Ovid treting of Narcissus' to Giles Fletcher's 'Christs Victorie and Triumph'); and a selected non-dramatic works of Dekker (including the first full version of Lantern and Candlelight and Pound Wise and Penny Foolish).

In preparation are volumes devoted to Sir Thomas Wilson's Art of Rhetoric with generous selections from Fraunce's Arcadian Rhetoric and other works, and to material illustrating Elizabethan and Jacobean concern with witchcraft and demonology.

It is the general policy of the series to present its texts in modernised form. Editors have been asked to reparagraph, repunctuate, substitute italic type for roman, or *vice versa*, wherever they consider that such changes will avoid unnecessary confusions or obscurities. However, this volume on the Cambridge Platonists retains the spelling, and the numerous Greek and Latin quotations (including some Hebrew phrases), for two important reasons. As a number of the reprinted texts were first published in the mid-seventeenth century, and the rest after the Restoration, the spelling and punctuation do not present the difficulties which a reader encounters with earlier-printed texts; had any



vi General Preface

changes been made they would have been limited and therefore pointless. The lengthy quotations from Greek and Latin were retained because they demonstrate, by their very presence on the page and the pattern they create, the nature of the mode of thinking which the Cambridge Platonists endeavoured to resuscitate.

Editors have provided annotations, a glossary or an index, whichever seems appropriate, and also textual notes, collating substantive changes to the copy-text and briefly discussing its special authority. Each volume has an introduction dealing with any topic that will enhance the reading of the texts. We have not aimed at minute consistency between each volume, or even between each item in a single volume; editors have been encouraged to present these texts in the clearest practicable manner and with due consideration of the fact that many of the works reprinted have hitherto been 'known about' rather than known, more honoured or dishonoured in scholarly works than read and enjoyed as substantial achievements and records of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

JOHN RUSSELL BROWN BERNARD HARRIS



# Contents

A 1 1 1	page
Acknowledgements	viii
Abbreviations	xi
A Note on Method	xxv
Biographical Sketches	xxix
A Reading List	xxxi
'The High and Aiery Hills of Platonisme':  An Introduction to the Cambridge Platonists	I
'The Use of Reason in Matters of Religion'	
BENJAMIN WHICHCOTE	42
'The Manifestation of Christ and the Deification of Man' BENJAMIN WHICHCOTE	62
'The Unity of the Church maintained by sincere Christians' BENJAMIN WHICHCOTE	77
'A Sermon preached before the House of Commons'	
RALPH CUDWORTH	90
'The True Way or Method of attaining to Divine Knowledge'	128
'The Excellency and Nobleness of True Religion'	
JOHN SMITH	145
'The Purification of a Christian Man's Soul'	.,
HENRY MORE	200
An Antidote against Atheism, Books I-II	
HENRY MORE	213
'The Digression concerning the Plastick Life of Nature, or an Artificial, Orderly and Methodical Nature'	
RALPH CUDWORTH	288
Appendix: Selections from Whichcote's Moral and Religious Aphorisms	326
Index	-
muex	337



# Acknowledgements

'He is not a modest man,' wrote Benjamin Whichcote, 'who thinks himself wise enough to find-out Truth by Himself: without submitting his Thoughts to Examination and Trial among others.' Not prepared to argue with Whichcote, I have sought and obtained the assistance of scholars on both sides of the Atlantic. I should like to express my gratitude to Professors William B. Hunter of the University of New Hampshire, Sears Jayne of Queens College of The City University of New York, and Ernest Tuveson of the University of California at Berkeley, for their indispensable suggestions on this edition in general and on my Introduction in particular; to Dr Dorothee Finkelstein of Yale University, Dr Jason P. Rosenblatt of the University of Pennsylvania, Dr Gordon Leff of the University of York, Dr Henry J. Blumenthal of the University of Liverpool, and my Greek friend Photios K. Litsas, for their assistance with the annotation of passages in Hebrew, medieval Latin, and Greek; to Mr C. B. L. Barr of the York Minster Library for shedding abundant light on several passages in Latin; and to Professors A. H. Armstrong of the University of Liverpool, Alvin B. Kernan of Yale University, W. K. Pritchett and Wayne Shumaker of the University of California at Berkeley, and R. C. Zaehner of All Souls College, Oxford, for various important recommendations. I am also grateful to Professor Marjorie H. Nicolsonherself a pioneer in our understanding of the Cambridge Platonistswho encouraged me to attempt this edition just as she has always lent me her indispensable support.

The frontispiece of Mary Beale's portrait of Whichcote is reproduced by permission of the Master and Fellows of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. I am particularly obliged to Dr F. H. Stubbings, the Librarian of Emmanuel, for providing me with details on Mary Beale (1632/3–1699), the reputable if prolific and variable painter whose best known work includes portraits of churchmen. Dr Stubbings also introduced me to Mr Richard Jeffree who is preparing with Miss Elizabeth Walsh a full-scale biography of Beale, scheduled for publication in the near future. Interested readers may in the meantime



# Acknowledgements

1X

consult the biographical details in Edward Croft-Murray and Paul Hulton, Catalogue of British Drawings (London, 1960), I, 198–9, with further references; and the accounts by Ida Procter in Country Life CXXVII (1960), 1242–3, with three plates; and especially by Elizabeth Walsh, 'Mrs Mary Beale, Paintress', The Connoisseur, CXXXI (1953), 3–8, with thirteen plates. Mr Jeffree informs me that Mary Beale was related by marriage to both Whichcote and Cudworth. An earlier version of the portrait reproduced here is available at Lambeth Palace.

Another portrait of Whichcote is in the Provost's Lodge, King's College, Cambridge. I am grateful to the Provost for arranging to have me inspect it and to Mr John Saltmarsh for providing the limited information available on it. The portrait is anonymous and its date of composition unknown.

The selections in this volume are reprinted from copies on deposit at the British Museum. I am grateful to the Trustees of the British Museum for permission to reprint, and to the staff of the Reading Room for assisting me in more ways than is possible to mention here.

Several works of reference have been extremely useful, notably the superb lexica of the Greek language by Henri Estienne, Θησανρὸς τῆς ελληνικῆς γλώσσης, rev. ed. (Paris, 1831–65), 8 vols., and D. Demetrakos, Μέγα λεξικόν τῆς ελληνικῆς γλώσσης, ed. I. S. Zervos (Athens, 1936–50), 9 vols. I am also indebted to three past editors of the Cambridge Platonists: J. L. Mosheim, who annotated Cudworth's True Intellectual System in 1733; H. G. Williams, who edited Smith's Discourses in 1859; and F. I. Mackinnon, who edited More's Philosophical Writings in 1925. Finally, Professor Geoffrey Bullough's edition of More's poems (1931) has restored me to sanity more often than is perhaps wise to confess.

Gerald A. Cragg's edition of *The Cambridge Platonists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968) came to my attention when the present volume was already in the hands of the printer. Prefaced by a survey of the principal tenets of Cambridge Platonism, the edition provides readings in modernised spelling and arranged under distinct headings. Unlike Mr Cragg, I have not deleted classical quotations for the fundamental reason stated by the general editors (above, p. vi), and I have excluded Culverwell because he has not 'penetrated to the centre of Cambridge Platonism' (see below, p. xxvi). But I am gratified that Mr Cragg and I have independently contributed to the resuscitation



x

# Acknowledgements

of the Cambridge Platonists. It was indeed time that 'the school of Plato' in seventeenth-century England became known to a wider audience.

C. A. P.

Langwith College University of York 16 November 1968



# **Abbreviations**

1.	Primary Sources (A): Works by the Cambridge Platonists and	
	some related writers	x
II.	Primary Sources (B): The principal editions consulted in the pre-	

paration of the present edition xiv

III. Secondary Sources: The principal commentaries on the Cambridge

Platonists and related writers, with select editions of their works xix

Sections I and III are also intended as a select bibliography of further readings in and about the Cambridge Platonists. For a more detailed bibliography see below, pp. xxxi-xxxii.

The place of publication is given only if it is other than London. Unless otherwise indicated the editions used are the first.

I.

# PRIMARY SOURCES (A):

#### THE CAMBRIDGE PLATONISTS

Cudworth, Freewill	A Treatise of Freewill, ed. John Allen (1838).
Cudworth, Imm. Morality	A Treatise concerning Eternal and Immutable
	Morality (1731).
Cudworth, Int. System	The True Intellectual System of the Universe:
	the First Part; wherein, all the Reason and Philo-
	sophy of Atheism is Confuted; and its Impossi-
	bility Demonstrated (1678). [Also reproduced in
	facsimile (Stuttgart, 1964). Cf. JLM.]
Culverwell, Discourse	Nathanael Culverwell, An Elegant and Learned
·	Discourse of the Light of Nature, ed. William
	Dillingham (1652). [Cf. Campagnac.]
More, Antidote	An Antidote against Atheisme, or an Appeal to
•	the Natural Faculties of the Minde of Man,
	whether there be not a GOD (1653).
More, Apology	The Apology of Dr Henry More, appended to
. 1 00	A Modest Enquiry into the Mystery of Iniquity
	(1664).
More, Cabbala	Conjectura Cabbalistica. Or, A Conjectural Essay
•	of interpreting the Minde of Moses, according to
	xi



xii

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More, Dialogues	Divine Dialogues, containing sundry Disquisi-
	tions & Instructions concerning the Attributes of
	God and his Providence in the World (1688), 2 vols.
More, Discourses	Discourses on Several Texts of Scripture, ed.
,	John Worthington (1692).
More, Ench. Eth.	Enchiridion ethicum, præcipua moralis philo-
	sophiæ rudimenta complectens (1666); tr. Edward
	Southwell, An Account of Virtue (1690). [Also
	reproduced in facsimile, with a Note by S. P.
	Lamprecht (New York, 1930).]
More, Ench. Met.	Enchiridion metaphysicum: sive, de rebus in-
	corporeis succincta & luculenta dissertatio. Pars
	prima: de exsistentia & natura rerum incor-
	porearum in genere (1671). [Ch. XXVII-XXVIII

**Abbreviations** 

to Cudworth.

a Threefold Cabbala: Viz. Literal, Philosophical, Mystical, or Divinely Moral (1653). Dedicated

were translated in Joseph Glanvill's Saducismus

More, Enth. Tr.

Triumphatus (1681), pp. 99–179. Cf. FM.]

Enthusiasmus Triumphatus, or, A Discourse of the Nature, Causes, Kinds, and Cure, of Enthusiasme (1656). Published under the pseudonym Philophilus Parresiastes. [Also reproduced in facsimile, with a Note by M. V. DePorte (Los Angeles, 1966).]

Angeles, 1900).]

More, Godliness

An Explanation of the Grand Mystery of Godliness; or, A True and Faithfull Representation of the Everlasting Gospel of our Lord (1660).

More, 'Grounds of Faith' 'A Brief Discourse of the True Grounds of the Certainty of Faith in Points of Religion', in

Dialogues (as above), II, 467-93.

More, Immortality

The Immortality of the Soul, so farre forth as it is

demonstrable from the Knowledge of Nature, and
the Light of Reason (1659).

Conway Letters: The Correspondence of Anne,

Viscountess Conway, Henry More, and their Friends, 1642–1684, ed. Marjorie H. Nicolson (1930).

Philosophical Poems (Cambridge, 1647). Contains Psychozoia, Psychathanasia, Antipsychopannychia, Antimonopsychia (all initially published in 1642 as Ψυχωδία platonica), Demo-

More, Letters

More, Poems



More, 'Preface'

Smith, Discourses

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#### Abbreviations

xiii

critus platonissans (first published in 1646), The Præexistency of the Soul; etc. [Also edited by A. B. Grosart (1878; repr. 1967). Cf. Bullough.] 'The Preface General' to A Collection of Several Philosophical Writings, 2nd rev. ed. (1662), pp. iv—xxvii.

More, Reply

The Second Lash of Alazonomastix; conteining a solid and serious Reply to a very uncivill Answer

to certain Observations (Cambridge, 1651).
Published under the pseudonym Alazono-

mastix Philalethes.

Norris John Norris of Bremerton, Christian Blessedness: or, Discourses upon the Beatitudes (1690).

Select Discourses, ed. John Worthington (1660),

[Cf. HGW.]

Sterry, Discourse Peter Sterry, A Discourse of the Freedom of the

Will (1675).

Sterry, Sermons Peter Sterry, The Rise, Race, and Royalty of the

Kingdom of God in the Soul of Man. Opened in several Sermons upon Matthew 18. 3. As also The Loveliness & Love of Christ set forth in several other Sermons upon Psal. 45. v. 1, 2

(1683).

Whichcote, Aphorisms Moral and Religious Aphorisms . . . published in

MDCCIII, by Dr Jeffery. Now re-published, with very large additions, by Samuel Salter (1753). [Also edited by W. R. Inge (1930).]

Whichcote, Discourses Several Discourses, ed. John Jeffery (1701-

1707), 4 vols.

Whichcote, Dogmata Θεοφορούμενα Δόγματα: or, Some Select

Notions, ed. 'Philantropus' (1685).

Whichcote, Letters Eight Letters of Dr. Antony Tuckney, and Dr.

Benjamin Whichcote ... written in September and October, MDCLI (appended to Salter's

edition of the Aphorisms, as above).

Whichcote, Sermons Select Sermons, ed. Anthony, Third Earl of

Shaftesbury (1698).

Worthington, Discourses John Worthington, Select Discourses (1826;

initially edited by the author's son in 1725).



xiv

ANCL

#### Abbreviations

#### II.

# PRIMARY SOURCES (B):

#### EDITIONS CONSULTED

Aelian, De nat. an. De natura animalium, ed. R. Hercher (BT:

1864), I.

Albinus 'Alcinous', Διδασκαλικός [Didascalicus], in

> Platonis dialogi, ed. C. F. Hermann (BT: 1884), VI, 153–89; tr. George Burges, in The Works of

Plato (1854), VI, 241-314.

Alexander Aphrodisaeus Φυσικαὶ καὶ ἠθικαὶ ἀπορίαι [Quæstiones natur-

ales et morales], ed. L. Spengel (Munich, 1842). Ante-Nicene Christian Library (Buffalo, 1884

Apollonius Rhodius 'Aργοναυτικά [Argonautica], tr. R. C. Seaton

(LCL: 1912); with the Greek text.

Aristophanes, Nubes Νεφέλαι, tr. W. J. M. Starkie, The Clouds (1911);

with the Greek text.

Opera, ed. E. Bekker (Berlin, 1831-70), 5 vols.; Aristotle tr. W. D. Ross et al. (Oxford, 1908-52), 12

Athanasius, De Inc. Περὶ τῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου

> [De Incarnatione Dei Verbi], tr. James Ridgway (Oxford, 1880); with the Greek text.

Confessiones, in PL, XXXII, 659-868; tr. A. C. Augustine, Conf.

Outler, in LCC, VII, 31-333.

De civitate Dei, in PL, XLI; tr. John Healey Augustine, De civ. Dei

(1610), rev. R. V. G. Tasker (1945), 2 vols. The Letters of Saint Augustine, tr. J. G. Cun-

ningham, in Works, ed. Marcus Dodds (Edin-

burgh, 1872-75), vols. VI and XIII.

AV The King James ('Authorised') Version of the

Bible (1611).

Works, ed. James Spedding, R. L. Ellis and Bacon

D. D. Heath (1857-74), 14 vols.

Boethius De consolatione philosophiae, tr. I. T. (1609),

rev. H. F. Stewart (LCL: 1918); with the Latin

BTBibliotheca scriptorum graecorum et romanorum

Teubneriana (Leipzig, 1849 ff.).

Chalcidius Platonis Timaeus interprete Chalcidio cum eiusdem

commentario, ed. J. Wrobel (BT: 1876).

Augustine, Letters



Abbreviations

ΧV

Cicero, De nat. deo.

De natura deorum, ed. C. F. W. Mueller (BT:

1878); tr. Francis Brooks (1896).

Cicero, De officiis

De officiis, tr. Walter Miller (LCL: 1913); with

the Latin text.

Cicero, Disp.

Tusculanae disputationes, tr. J. E. King (LCL:

1927); with the Latin text.

Clement of Alexandria

Λόγος προτρεπτικὸς πρὸς Ελληνας [Cohortatio ad gentes],  $\Pi$ αιδαγωγὸς [Pædagogus], and  $\Sigma$ τρώματα [Stromata], in PG, VIII–IX; tr. William Wilson, in ANCL, IV and XII.

Damascius

Περὶτῶν πρώτων ἀρχῶν [De primis principiis],

ed. J. Kopp (Frankfurt, 1826).

Descartes

Philosophical Works, tr. E. S. Haldane and G. R. T. Ross (Cambridge, 1911–12), 2 vols.

Diogenes Laettius

Βίοι καὶ γνῶμαι τῶν ἐν φιλοσόφοις εὐδοκιμησάντων [De vita et moribus philosophorum], tr. R. D. Hicks (LCL: 1925), 2 vols.; with

the Greek text.

Empedocles

The Fragments of Empedocles, tr. W. E. Leonard

(Chicago, 1908); with the Greek text.

Epictetus, *Ench*.

'Εγχειρίδιον [Enchiridion], ed. Anon. (Dublin, 1796); tr. P. E. Matheson (Oxford, 1916), II,

213-38.

Eusebius, H.E.

Έκκλησιαστική ἱστορία [Historia ecclesiastica], tr. J. E. L. Oulton (LCL: 1926–32), 2

vols.; with the Greek text.

Ficino

Marsilio Ficino, Opera (Basle, 1576), 2 vols. (numbered consecutively). [The Commentarium in convivium Platonis, ed. & tr. Sears Jayne, University of Missouri Studies, XIX (1944),

**S**1.]

Galen, De usu partium

Περὶ χρείας μορίων, ed. G. Helmreich (BT: 1907-9), 2 vols. [Also consulted: the Latin

translation *De usu partium corporis humani*, ed. N. R. Calabrio (Paris, 1528).]

Hermes

'Hermes Trismegistus', *Hermetica*, tr. Walter Scott (Oxford, 1924–36), 4 vols.; with the

Greek text.

Hierocles, Aur. carm.

Eἰς τὰ τῶν Πυθαγορείων χρυσὰ ἔπη ὑπόμνημα [In aurea Pythagorae carmina commentarius], in Fragmenta philosophorum græcorum,
ed. F. W. A. Mullach (Paris, 1860), I, 416–84;
tr. William Rayner (Norwich, 1797).



xvi

LCC

LCL

NT

Longinus

Hippocrates, Epid.

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	Linden (Leyden, 1665), vol. I.
Hobbes, Leviathan	Leviathan, or the Matter, Forme & Power of a
	Common-wealth Ecclesiasticall and Civill (Ox-
	ford, 1909; being a reprint of the 1651 ed.).
Homer, Iliad	'Ilias, tr. A. T. Murray (LCL: 1924-5), 2
	vols.; with the Greek text.
Homer, Odyssey	'Οδύσσεια, tr. A. T. Murray (LCL: 1919),
	2 vols.; with the Greek text.
Hyginus	Fabulæ, ed. B. Bunte (Leipzig, 1857).
Iamblichus, De myst.	Περὶ μυστηρίων [De mystiriis], ed. T. Gale
	(Oxford, 1678); tr. Thomas Taylor (2nd ed.,
	1895).
Iamblichus, Vit. Pyth.	Περί τοῦ Πυθαγορείου βίου [De vita Pytha-
-	gorica], ed. L. Deubner (BT: 1937); tr. Thomas
	Taylor (new ed., 1926).
Julian	The Works of the Emperor Julian, tr. W. C.
	Wright (LCL: 1913-23), 3 vols.; with the

**Abbreviations** 

'Επιδημιῶν βιβλία [Epidemiorum libri], in Opera omnia. græce & latine, ed. J. A. van der

Baillie et al. (Philadelphia, 1953 ff.). The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.,

1912 ff.).
Περὶ ὕψους [De sublimitate], tr. W. R. Roberts

(2nd ed., Cambridge, 1907); with the Greek

Greek text.

Lucretius De rerum natura, ed. J. Martin (BT: 1963);

tr. Cyril Bailey (Oxford, 1910).

LXX The Greek version of the OT: the Septuagint

(third cent. B.C.?). [The Greek text edited by Alfred Rahlfs (8th ed., Stuttgart, 1965), 2 vols.] M. Aurelius Antoninus,  $T\tilde{\omega}\varsigma$   $\tilde{\epsilon}i\varsigma$   $\tilde{\epsilon}\alpha vr\dot{o}v$  [Ad

The Library of Christian Classics, ed. John

Marcus Aurelius M. Aurelius Antoninus,  $T\tilde{\omega}_{\varsigma}$   $\epsilon i_{\varsigma}$   $\epsilon \alpha v \tau \dot{o} v$  [Ad seipsum], tr. C. R. Haines (LCL: 1916); with

the Greek text.

NPNF Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo: 1st Series, 1886 ff.; 2nd Series, 1890 ff.).

The New Testament [the Greek text edited by Kurt Aland et al. (New York etc., 1966)].

Origen, De princ. Περί ἀρχῶν [De principiis], in PG, XI, 115-

414; tr. G. W. Butterworth (1936).

Origen, Cont. Cels. Κατὰ Κέλσου [Contra Celsum], in PG, XI, 641-

1632; tr. Henry Chadwick (Cambridge, 1953).



Pico

Plato

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**Abbreviations** 

xvii

Orpheus 'Orpheus', Orphicorum fragmenta, ed. Otto Kern (Berlin, 1922). [The Hymns of Orpheus, tr.

Thomas Taylor (1792).]

OT The Old Testament [the Hebrew text edited

by R. Kittel (Stuttgart, 1945), 2 vols.].

Ovid, Met. Metamorphoses, tr. F. J. Miller (LCL: 1916),

2 vols.; with the Latin text.

Pausanias Έλλάδος περιήγησις [Descriptio Graeciae], tr.

W. H. S. Jones (LCL: 1918-35), 5 vols.; with

the Greek text.

PGPatrologia, Series graeca, ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris,

1857 ff.).

Philo Philo, tr. F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker

> (LCL: 1929-41), 9 vols.; with the Greek text. Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Opera omnia (Basle, 1572). [De hominis dignitate, De ente et uno, and Heptaplus, tr. C. G. Wallis. P. J. W. Miller, aud D. Carmichael (New York,

1965).]

Pirke Aboth Pirke Aboth—The Ethics of the Talmud: Say-

> ings of the Fathers, ed. & tr. R. Travers Herford (1945; repr. New York, 1962).

PLPatrologia, Series latina, ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris,

1844 ff.).

Platonis dialogi, ed. C. F. Hermann and M. Wohlrab (BT: 1887–94), 6 vols.; tr. B. Jowett

(4th rev. ed., Oxford, 1953), 4 vols. Έννεάδες [Enneades], ed. R. Volkmann (BT: Plotinus

1883-4), 2 vols.; tr. Stephen MacKenna, 3rd ed., rev. B. S. Page (1956). [The definitive edition of the Greek text is now in progress, ed. P. Henry and H.-R. Schwyzer (Paris,

1951 ff.), 3 vols.]

Plutarch Τὰ ἡθικὰ [Moralia], in Opera, ed. F. Dübner

(Paris, 1839-41), III-IV; tr. by several hands,

ed. W. W. Goodwin (1870), 5 vols.

Porphyry, Vit. Plot. Περὶ τοῦ Πλωτίνου βίου [Vita Plotini], in

Plotini opera, ed. P. Henry and H.-R. Schwyzer (Paris, 1951), I, 1-41; tr. S. MacKenna (in the Plotinus edition cited above), pp. 1-20.

 $\Pi v \theta \alpha \gamma \delta \varrho o v \beta i ο \varsigma [Vita Pythagorae], in Opuscula$ Porphyry, Vit. Pyth.

tria, ed. A. Nauck (BT: 1860), pp. 14-39.

Στοιχείωσις Θεολογική [Institutio theologica], Proclus, Inst. th.



xviii Abbreviations

tr. E. R. Dodds (Oxford, 1933); with the

Greek text.

Proclus, Primum Alc. Εἰς τὸν Πλάτωνος πρῶτον ᾿Αλκιβιάδην [In Platonis primum Alcibiadem commentaria], ed.

L. G. Westerink (Amsterdam, 1954).

Proclus, Primum Eucl. Εἰς τὸ πρῶτον τῶν Εὐκλείδους στοιχείων [In

primum Euclidis elementorum librum commentarii], ed. G. Friedlein (BT: 1873); tr. Thomas

Taylor (1788-9), 2 vols.

Proclus, Tim. Εἰς τὸν Τιμαῖον Πλάτωνος [In Platonis

Timaeum commentaria], ed. E. Diehl (BT: 1903-1906), 3 vols.; tr. Thomas Taylor (1820), 2 vols.

Pseudo-Dionysius
'Dionysius the Areopagite', Πεοὶ τῆς οὐρανίας ἱεραρχίας [De coelesti hierarchia], Πεοὶ θείων

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xix

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xxi

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xxiii

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# A Note on Method

The selections in this volume begin with three sermons by Whichcote, all published posthumously and thus much later (1685 ff.) than all but one of the discourses reprinted here. But Whichcote still deserves priority of place since he was the first publicly to utter the tenets characteristic of Cambridge Platonism (1636 ff.). He is also, by common consent, the group's acknowledged leader.

Whichcote's sermons are followed by Cudworth's sermon before the House of Commons (1647), the only exposition of Cambridge Platonism ever addressed to such an influential body. The sermon was published on the express 'desire' of Parliament.

John Smith is allotted the next place as the individual most directly in the line of descent from Whichcote and Cudworth. His *Discourses* first appeared posthumously in 1660 but were delivered for the most part sometime after 1644.

Henry More presented a number of problems. The selection of appropriate extracts from his works was repeatedly frustrated by his verbosity and repetitiveness, his fondness for digressions, and his frequent lapses into absurdities. In the end I decided to present him in as favourable a light as might be possible. The sermon which here introduces us to his thought (published posthumously in 1692) is representative not so much of his usual style as of his loyalty to Cambridge Platonism. The two books of An Antidote against Atheism (1653) flatter him even more, but then I have not reprinted either its later additions or its third book (I have given only its chapter headings, below, pp. 286 f.). His poetry was also excluded from these pages since More himself described it once—rather accurately I think—as 'A rude confused heap of ashes dead' (Ad Paronem, line 13). I have space only for his description of Dæmon, King of Autæsthesy ('Self-sensedness,' explained More helpfully):

he himself is quite divided Down to the belly; there's some unity: But head, and tongue, and heart be quite discided: Two heads, two tongues, and eke two hearts there be.

xxv



xxvi

## A Note on Method

This head doth mischief plot, that head doth see Wrong fairly to o'reguild. One tongue doth pray, The other curse. The hearts do ne're agree But felly one another do upbray:

An ugly cloven foot this monster doth upstay.

(Psychozoia, II, 27)

More said once that his father had 'from childhood tuned mine ears to Spencers rhymes'. It does not seem to have helped.

The tendency toward 'philosophy' apparent in More's Antidote culminates in Cudworth's True Intellectual System of the Universe (1678) which provides the last selection in this volume. My choice of Cudworth's 'digression' on Plastic Nature was dictated by its central importance to the book itself, to Cudworth's development since he addressed the House of Commons in 1647, and to Cambridge Platonism considered as a philosophical system. But as Cambridge Platonism is not primarily a philosophical system, I decided that a reminder to that effect would not be out of place. Thus the present volume ends with an appendix which moves us beyond Cudworth's Plastic Nature to the quintessence of Cambridge Platonism inherent in Whichcote's Moral and Religious Aphorisms (1703; revised, 1753).

My failure to include a number of other writers often associated with the Cambridge Platonists may come as a surprise. There are in particular two candidates. One is Peter Sterry, extracts from whose work were edited by V. de S. Pinto under the title Peter Sterry: Puritan and Platonist (1934). The other is Nathanael Culverwell whose Discourse of the Light of Nature was abridged by E. T. Campagnac for his anthology The Cambridge Platonists (1901). I am however persuaded that neither Culverwell nor Sterry ever penetrated to the centre of Cambridge Platonism; both hovered on its circumference. Culverwell's loyalty to Calvinism and Sterry's denial of free will are sufficient of themselves to set both men in diametric opposition to Whichcote, Smith, Cudworth and More. Culverwell's Discourse is moreover quite different from what it appears to be in Campagnac's edition. Its careful abridgment there has improved its style considerably. Worse, its last two chapters were not reprinted, yet it is precisely in those two chapters that Culverwell (as his first editor in 1652 noted) forced reason to 'bow the head and worship, and then lay it self down quietly at the feet of Faith'. The Cambridge Platonists would have regarded such an abject surrender of Reason as treasonable.



# A Note on Method

xxvii

The annotation obliged me to spend many pleasant months amidst 'the ancient and wisest philosophers'. But there were some surprises. My most anxious moment came while reading the correspondence between Whichcote and Tuckney. 'I have bin apte to think,' Tuckney protested, 'that both in your sermons and privatt discourse you do often, as it were, quote your-selfe; in uttering latine sentences and axiomes, both in Logick Philosophie Law and Divinitie, which are of your owne making.' Whichcote's reply was not very reassuring. As he put it, 'By what rule you judge; that Hee, who useth a Latine or Greek phrase or sentence in an English discourse, must needs quote; I do not understand: much less, upon that account, be thought to quote himselfe.'

My annotation of Whichcote's sermons is understandably restrained.



# Biographical Sketches

# BENJAMIN WHICHCOTE (1609-1683)

Born 1609 at Stoke in Shropshire of 'an ancient and honourable family'. Admitted pensioner at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, 1626; initially tutored by Antony Tuckney. B.A. in 1629, M.A. in 1633, B.D. in 1640. Elected Fellow of Emmanuel, 1633. Ordained deacon and priest, and appointed Sunday Afternoon Lecturer in Trinity Church, 1636. Presented to the College living of North Cadbury in Somersetshire, and married to Rebecca the widow of Matthew Craddock, 1643 (there were no children). Parliamentary appointment as Provost of King's College, 1644. Created D.D. by mandate, 1649; Vice-Chancellor, 1650-51. Advised Cromwell on toleration of Jews. Did not subscribe to the Covenant yet in 1660 lost the provostship of King's by order of Charles II. Complied with the Act of Uniformity, and was appointed to the cure of St Anne's, Blackfriars, 1662. Brief retirement to Milton in Cambridgeshire; presented to the vicarage of St Lawrence Jewry, 1668. Died in Cudworth's house at Cambridge, May 1683. All his works were published posthumously (see above, p. xiii). On his portrait by Mary Beale, reproduced here as a frontispiece, see above, p. viii.

## JOHN SMITH (1618-1652)

Born 1618 at Achurch near Oundle in Northamptonshire; his father was a farmer. Admitted pensioner at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, 1636; tutored by Whichcote, and may also have studied under Cudworth. B.A. in 1640, M.A. in 1644. Parliamentary appointment as Fellow of Queen's, 1644, where he delivered some of his discourses. Died of consumption, 7 August 1652. His Select Discourses—only ten—were published posthumously (see above, p. xiii).

xxix



XXX

# Biographical Sketches

# HENRY MORE (1614-1687)

Born 1614 in Grantham in Lincolnshire; his father was 'a gentleman of fair estate and fortune'. Educated at Eton, 1628–31. Admitted at Christ's College, Cambridge, 1631. B.A. in 1635, M.A. in 1639. Elected Fellow of Christ's, 1639, a position he retained through the interregnum and the Restoration. Declined all ecclesiastical and academic preferments, including the mastership of his College which in 1654 passed to Cudworth. Left Cambridge infrequently, more often than not in order to visit his friend Lady Conway at Ragley in Warwickshire. Devoted to a life of study, he corresponded with numerous thinkers, notably Descartes (1649). Died 1 September 1687. His works include principally those listed above, pp. xi–xiii.

# RALPH CUDWORTH (1617-1688)

Born 1617 at Aller in Somersetshire; his father was a clergyman and sometime Fellow of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. Admitted pensioner at Emmanuel, 1632. M.A., and Fellow of Emmanuel, 1639, B.D. in 1645. Parliamentary appointment as Master of Clare Hall, and election as Regius Professor of Hebrew, 1645. Held the College living of North Cadbury in succession to Whichcote, 1650. Created D.D. in 1651. Translated to the mastership of Christ's College, 1654, which he retained even after the Restoration. No details available on his marriage, but his daughter, Lady Masham, forms an important link between Cudworth, Locke and Newton. Presented to the vicarage of Ashwell in Hertfordshire, 1662; installed prebendary of Gloucester, 1678. Died at Cambridge, 26 June 1688. His works include principally those listed above, p. xi.



# A Reading List

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xxxi