

were most anxious to appear, especially in the case of Jesus, as the faithful guardians of the Law of Moses. Joseph was sent very likely because he was the regular go-between and had also denounced Jesus and arranged for his arrest in the name of the priests. For it is certain that in both cases the priests did not go in a body to Pilate. At the burial Joseph was present as the official witness but took, very naturally, no active part in it. While scholars have been unable to locate Arimathæa in Palestine, it may be possible to find the place somewhere else in the Roman Empire. It may be the name of Rome itself. For Joseph was undoubtedly able to converse with Pilate in Latin. He, therefore, must have been born and raised in the Jewish diaspora, and that in the city of Rome, and his name was Joseph of Rome.

YANG MING.¹

BY HARDIN T. MCELLAND.

THE principal feature of the Yang Ming philosophy is supplied in the meaning of its name, which may be translated "positive enlightenment," and as it thus implies a growth of the rational and noetic intelligence, its natural function is to compose the fiery passions and support the soul of man on its hazardous journey through the material world. The Japanese General Nogi was a student of the Yang Ming philosophy, having attended the Grotto for several years, whence he came by that supreme poise of soul which made him worthy of the rank of general; and which showed the world why it was that no amount of Russian opposition or cruelty to prisoners could deter his set decision to advance to the capture of Port Arthur which was the pivot of the whole Russo-Japanese war. But on the later decease of his Mikado he found greater honor in *hara-kiri* than in lonely survival—better to die "the positive death" than to become a negative factor in post-mortem devotion.

A tranquil life is built, first, in the freedom from fear of externals; second, the construction arises well apart from any doubt of the capacity of one's internal powers, either of their presence or influence. A third element so often overlooked, is the clear discernment that although all existences are potentially the same, yet some are merely extentional while others are intentional. The powers of

¹ The Yang Ming philosophy has now become the composite production of the school of the Yang Ming Grotto, founded in Japan in the first quarter of the sixteenth century by the famous Chinese idealist Wang Yang Ming (1472-1528); cf. *Monist*, Jan., 1914.

man, then, are sluggish and latent on the one hand, and volatile and patent on the other. By similar analysis we might say that there are but two dimensions in the universe—extention and intention—which work *outwardly* as matter, and *inwardly* as spirit; out as meaning and in as the interpretation of life. The last of each of these antitheses holds constant to its purpose, while the first of each pleasures in a variable chaos which does not seem to have any intelligible law other than the material. And yet we do the best we can under the circumstances and blandly acknowledge that the beauty of the one is complementary to the goodness of the other, and that both happily conjoin to aid in the alethial culture of the cosmos. Our only assertion seems to be the negative platitude that a mere chance-ruled concourse of atoms would make a poor, inanely dull habitation, a cheerless mode of non-instructive clay where lacks our chiefest redivivus Thought and all its accessory virtues.

That materialist, the Hindu Makkhali, gained no real philosophic advantage when he argued that all religion, art, politics, and science were but the shrewd invention of man to more easily govern his brothers. If this idea should ever prevail men would then be exiled from their native state, to be forced to lay in a store of interpretation and wisdom from an impossible external source. A spring of hope bubbles in the more vital exertions of the mind against this radical externalism, and we are consoled with the notional balm of our soul's analogy to its parent organism, God. All of us, at some time or other in our mental career, become uneasy and make a few slashes at established truth, hoping to set up, instead, our own (perhaps personally true) convictions for the rest of the world to admire and practise. And how many do we find brooding over the forlorn hope of some day proselyting the whole universe so as to traduce the sparkling fountain of others' joy! But their sad fate soon shows a derelict mind, a psychic vagabond whose only aim in life is to affirm negation and establish the doctrine of ultimate annihilation. The Yang Ming philosophy shows that we should rather disavow such proclamations by seeing the shortcomings of the materialist's psychopathic afflictions; and, better, that we should hold it a far more truly philosophical principle to *try to vindicate our search*, even though it appears to be so often a merely improvised adventure.

Poise of soul is the ultimate requisite of life. It is the foundation of every moral establishment, and brings all builders to a trust in the basic responsibility of men. With what attitude would or should we bear the absence of a friend, a relative, lover,

or any other heretofore "helpful to our cursory existence," so that the soul might preserve the calm courage of its sublime nature? That of suffering an irreparable loss or deprivation? Of thanking Atropos for a ridding service? Or, third, that of knowing it is but the absence of that which is *not* of the true nature of the person or thing departed? Both consuming love and superficial attachment would have the first; hate and selfish ambition wassail the second; while for the third, is there any means other than a love of wisdom and spiritual composure which will incline and persuade a man to claim the tranquillity of its perception? Birth or entrance, death or departure, require no more of joy or sorrow than any other of nature's incidents. The peaceful mind is not muddled with a rushing of blood as in a passion, nor does it weaken with the anemic pale of fear or other scar of ignorance. In his moral pursuits, the man of equanimity never seeks the indulgence of attaching too great an egotistic importance to each valence of his love, for he very well knows a latent vanity lurks therein, and that every foible is merely a frenzy of our selfish grasp. No, the philosophic mind will seek to enjoy nothing but calm detachment, maintaining its superposed divinity by exercising its majestic, though perfectly natural faculty of living in, going through, and finally passing beyond the universe. The very *nowness* of the Yang Ming instruction lends argument to its principle of "positive non-assertion," which reclaims our cursive contemplations and redeems our erstwhile pride of intelligence.

Does a man consider the highest goal of human endeavor to be the desire for a prolonged propinquity between himself and surrounding things? Misers are not disposed otherwise. The fact rather is this: To *be* is not to monopolize all the urgencies of the universe, not the materialist's defamation of divinity from a misoptic covetousness of it. But much more truly natural does it obtain when there is the cloyless alimentionation of an aspiring exertion to not only *be*, but to *become*, if only to become better or more intelligent.

Pray, then, observe closer and see if the man is free from the pathos of pride, the ignobility of ignorance, or the distress of dissembling. For, if he attends strictly to the beauty of being (whose better part is its constant and melioristic becoming), where may the legions of seeming sit that they may be his council?

This is the argument of the Yang Ming philosophy. This is a brief statement of its positive principle that the soul of strength is composure, that the soul of composure is spiritual enlightenment.