

[§ 11. THE DISCIPLES CONTRASTED WITH THE PUPILS  
OF SOCRATES]

The disciples of Jesus had sacrificed all their other interests, though to be sure these were restricted and their renunciation was not difficult; they had forsaken everything to become followers of Jesus. They had no political interest like that which a citizen of a free republic takes in his native land; their whole interest was confined to the person of Jesus.

From their youth up, the friends of Socrates had developed their powers in many directions. They had absorbed that democratic spirit which gives an individual a greater measure of independence and makes it impossible for any tolerably good head to depend wholly and absolutely on one person. In their state it was worth while to have a political interest, and an interest of that kind can never be sacrificed. Most of them had already been pupils of other philosophers and other teachers. They loved Socrates because of his virtue and his philosophy, not virtue and his philosophy because of him. Just as Socrates had fought for his native land, had fulfilled all the duties of a free citizen as a brave soldier in war and a just judge in peace, so too all his friends were something more than mere inactive philosophers, than mere pupils of Socrates. Moreover, they had the capacity to work in their own heads on what they had learned and to give it the stamp of their own originality. Many of them founded schools of their own; in their own right they were men as great as Socrates.

## [§ 12. THE NUMBER OF DISCIPLES FIXED AT] TWELVE

Jesus had thought fit to fix the number of his trusted friends at twelve, and to these as his messengers and successors he gave a wide authority after his resurrection. Every man has full authority for the diffusion of virtue, and there is no sacrosanct number of the men who feel called to undertake the founding of God's kingdom on earth. Socrates did not have seven disciples, or three times three; any friend of virtue was welcome. In a civil polity, it is appropriate and necessary to fix the number of the members of the representa-