In a previous article we made some observations on one of the components of the "twofold way", that is, on the ἐγγύω or ethics. Clement is convinced that natural man cannot stand before God. There is a special state of mind required to be in contact with God, and for the sake of this contact man starts working on himself. The previous article was meant to indicate points of agreement with Plato.

Clement has one more component of the twofold way which he generally calls "gnosis". Anyone who is at all conversant with Clement's works will have seen that to him gnost is the acme of religious life. He uses the word gnost for various activities of spiritual life which are connected with each other, but culminate in the contemplation of God, of truth, etc. More than one investigator has made the complaint that Clement does not give a clear definition of such contemplation, although he is not chary of definitions. To mention only two of these authorities: after mentioning a few of such indications as are given by Clement,
Völker continues: "was alles reichlich unbestimmt gehalten ist" ⁵, and Camelot makes the following pronouncement: "Il ne faut pas s'attendre à trouver chez Clément une définition ferme et précise de la gnose orthodoxe; ici plus que jamais, il est extrêmement difficile d'étreindre cette pensée et de l'exprimer en formules rigoureuses et définitives" ⁶.

As — with Festugière — we are of the opinion that with gnosis there is question of Platonic influence⁷, we think the best plan will be to examine what Clement meant by τὰ νοητὰ and their contemplation. With these words we seem already to have landed in the midst of Platonism. For just like Plato Clement distinguished a κόσμος νοητὸς and a κόσμος αἰσθητὸς. He does not care about the relation between these two. His work lacks any specification about the metoče. This is a feature which he has in common with the Platonizing philosophers of Imperial Rome, for also in Albinos e.g. this part of the doctrine of the ideas no longer plays a part. "Die Erklärung hierfür ist, dass der Gegensatz intelligibel-sinnlich nicht mehr auf wissenschaftlicher Erkenntnis baut, sondern als praktisch-religiöses Postulat aufgestellt ist" ⁸. It is true, Clement thinks that η βάρβαρος φιλοσοφία also knows the distinction between the κόσμος νοητὸς and the κόσμος αἰσθητὸς, of which one is the archetypos, the other the eikōn⁸ᵃ, but he does not elaborate this thought into a cosmological view. In a religious sense, however, the κόσμος νοητὸς is all the more important. In str. 2, 5, 1 he quotes a pronouncement of the Sapientia Salomonis. In his view the opening words refer to the κόσμος αἰσθητὸς. What follows is more important: ἔξεις δὲ καὶ περὶ τῶν νοητῶν αἰνίττεται δὲ ὄν ἐπάγειν ἀφάντα καὶ ἐμφανῆ ἔγνων. ἦ γὰρ πάντων τεχνίτες ἐδίδαξέ με σοφία'. This is, he says, a brief summary of the programme of our philosophy: ἔχεις ἐν βραχεὶ τὸ ἐπάγγελμα τῆς καθ’