

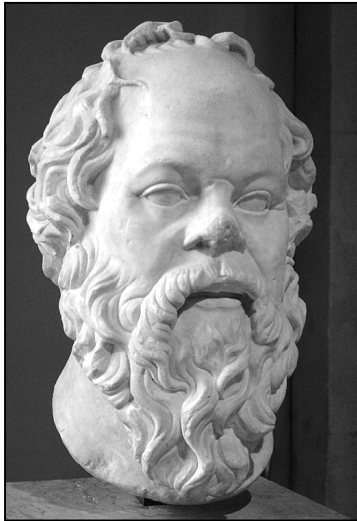
## LXV. THE PHILOSOPHER SOCRATES.

**W**HEN Pericles died, the Peloponnesian War had already been carried on for more than three years, but was not nearly at an end. As the Athenians felt the need of a leader, they soon chose Nicias to take the place left vacant by Pericles.

This Nicias was an honest man; but he was unfortunately rather dull, and very slow about deciding anything. Whenever he was called upon to see to matters of state, he hesitated so long, and was so uncertain, that the Athenians often had cause to regret the loss of Pericles.

There was another man of note in Athens at this time, the philosopher Socrates, a truly wise and good man. He was no politician, however; and, instead of troubling himself about the state, he spent all his spare moments in studying, or in teaching the young men of Athens.

Like his friend Anaxagoras, Socrates was a very deep thinker. He, too, always tried to find out the exact truth about everything. He was especially anxious to know how the



Socrates, *from the Louvre.*

earth had been created, who the Being was who gave us life, and whether the soul died with the body, or continued to live after the body had fallen into dust.

Socrates was a poor man, a stonecutter by trade; but he spent every moment he could spare from his work in thinking, studying, and questioning others. Little by little, in spite of the contrary opinion of his fellow-citizens, he began to understand that the stories of the Greek gods and goddesses could not be true.

He thought that there must surely be a God far greater than they, a God who was good and powerful and just, who governed the world He had created, and who rewarded the virtuous and punished the wicked.

Socrates believed that everybody should be as good and gentle as possible, and freely forgive all injuries. This belief was very different from that of all ancient nations (except that of Israel), who, on the contrary, thought that they should try to avenge every insult, and return evil for evil. The philosopher not only taught this gentleness, but practiced it carefully at home and abroad. He had plenty of opportunity to make use of it; for he had

such a cross wife, that her name, Xan-thip´pe, is still used to describe a scolding and bad-tempered woman.

Whenever Xanthippe was angry, she used to scold poor Socrates roundly. He always listened without flying into a passion, or even answering her; and when her temper was too unbearable, he quietly left the house, and went about his business elsewhere. This gentleness and meekness only angered Xanthippe the more; and one day, when he was escaping as usual, she caught up a jug full of water and poured it over his head. Socrates good-naturedly shook off the water, smiled, and merely remarked to his companions, "After the thunder comes the rain."



## LXVI. SOCRATES' FAVORITE PUPIL.

**A**S you have already heard, Socrates was a teacher. He did not, however, have a school like yours, with desks, and books, and maps, and blackboards. His pupils gathered about him at his workshop, or in the cool porticoes, or under the trees in the garden of the Academy.

Then, while hammering his stone, or while slowly pacing up and down, the philosopher talked to his scholars so gently and wisely, that even the richest and noblest youths of Athens were proud to call him their teacher. He also visited the house of the noted Aspasia, and was a friend of Pericles, Phidias, and Anaxagoras, besides being the teacher of three very celebrated men—Pla´to, Xen´o-phon, and Al-ci-bi´a-des.

Plato and Xenophon, even in their youth, were noted for their coolness and right-mindedness; but Alcibiades, a general favorite, was very different from them both. He was an orphan, and the ward of Pericles. His father had left him a large fortune; and, as Alcibiades was handsome, intelligent, and very high-spirited, he was made much of and greatly spoiled.

Even as a little child he was very headstrong, and, as he had no father and mother to check him, he was often led by his willfulness into great danger. We are told that once, when he saw a wagon coming down the street where he and his playmates were playing, he called to the man to stop. The man, who cared nothing for their game, drove on, and the other children quickly sprang aside so as not to be run over. Alcibiades, however,